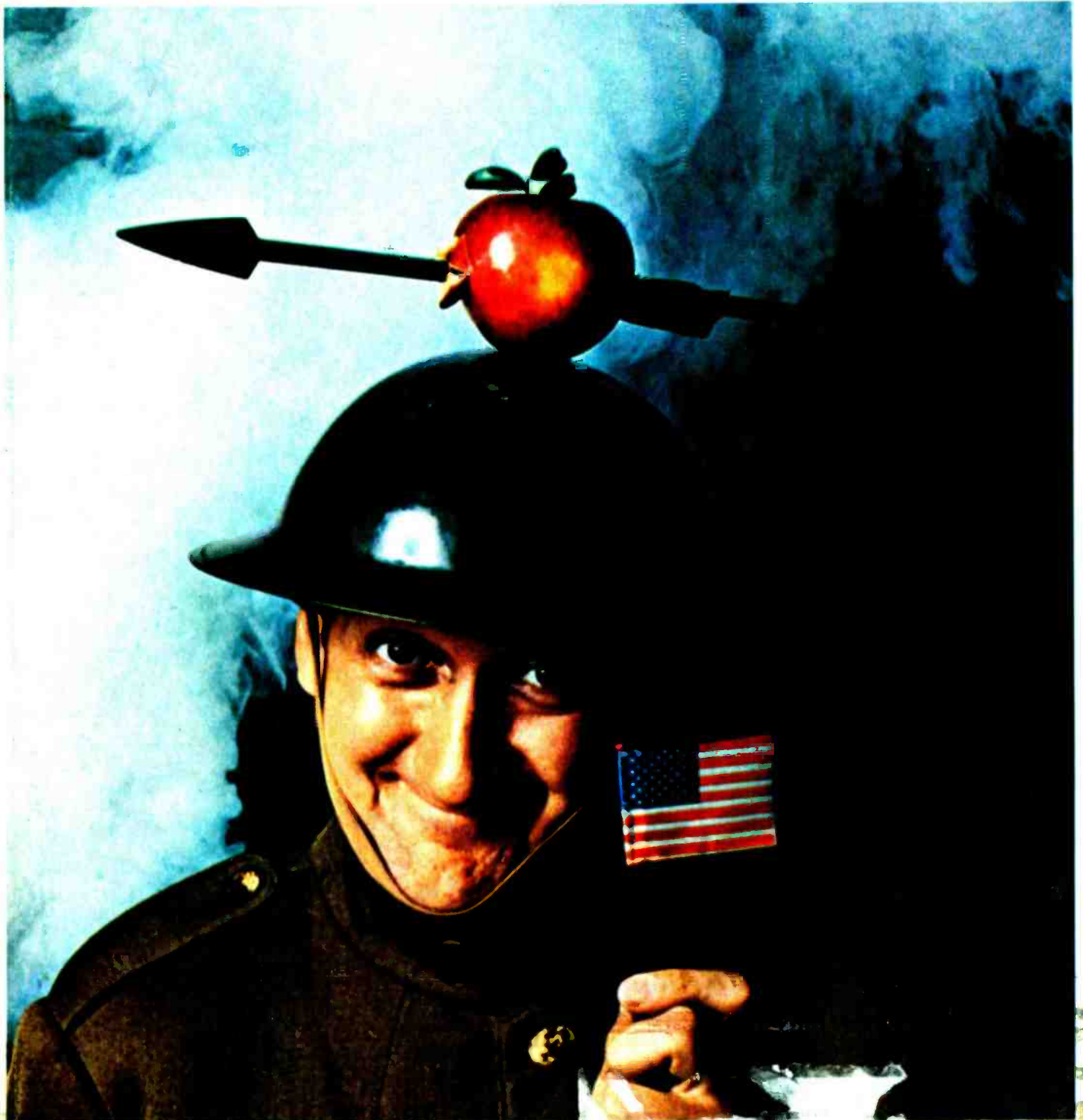


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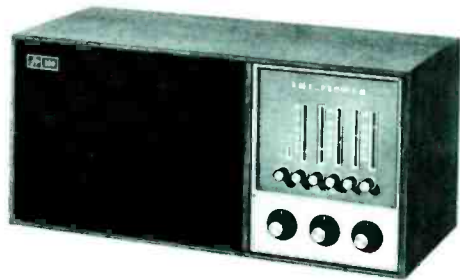


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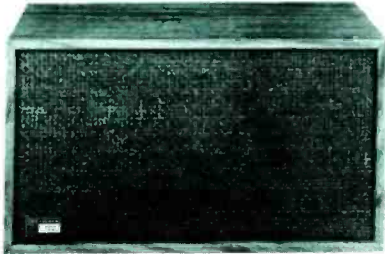
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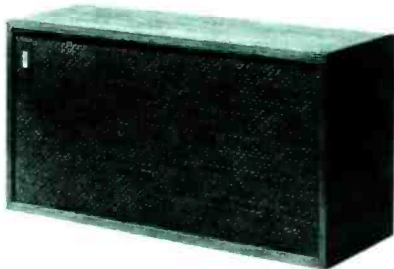
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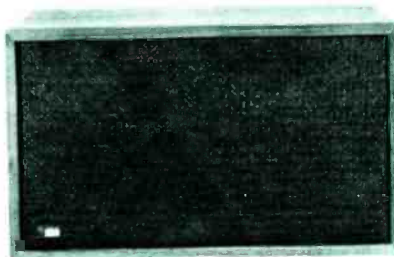
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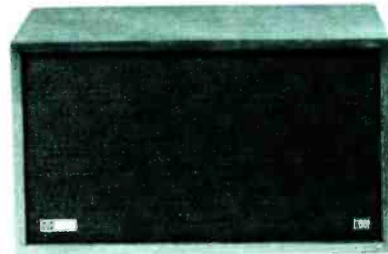
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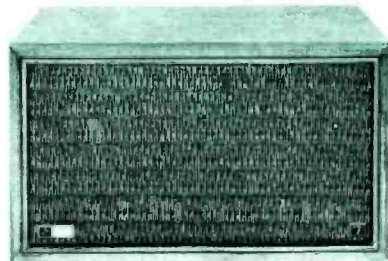
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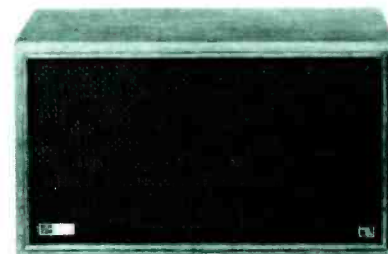
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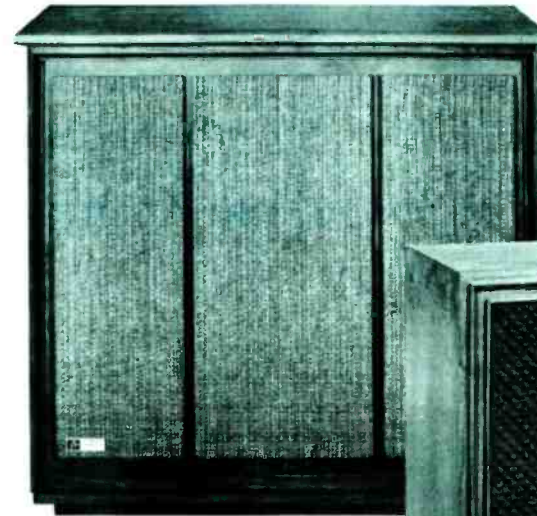
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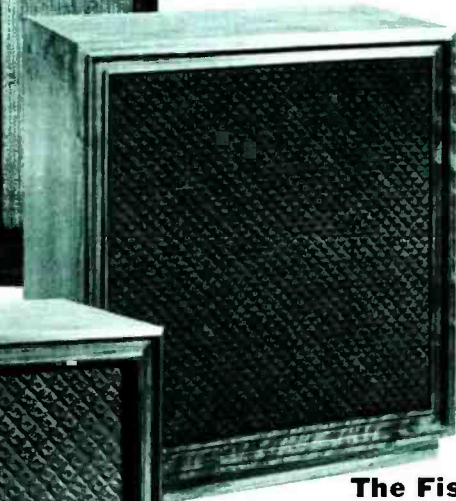
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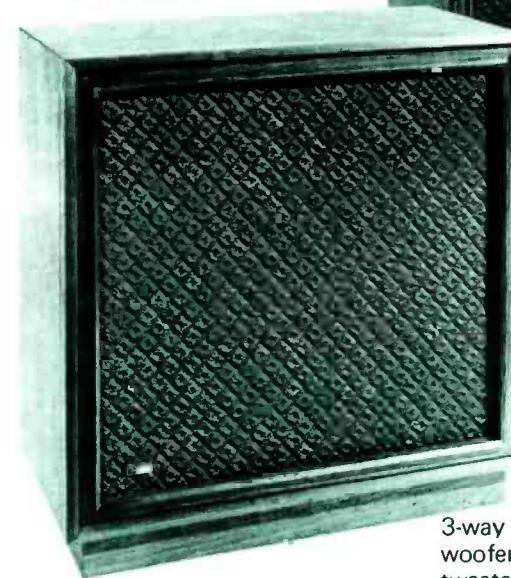
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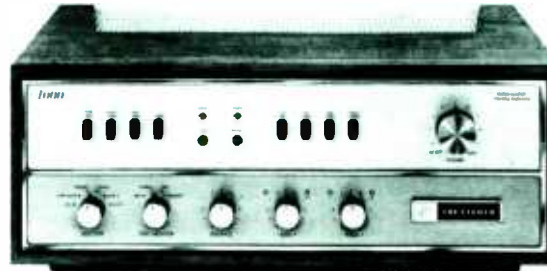
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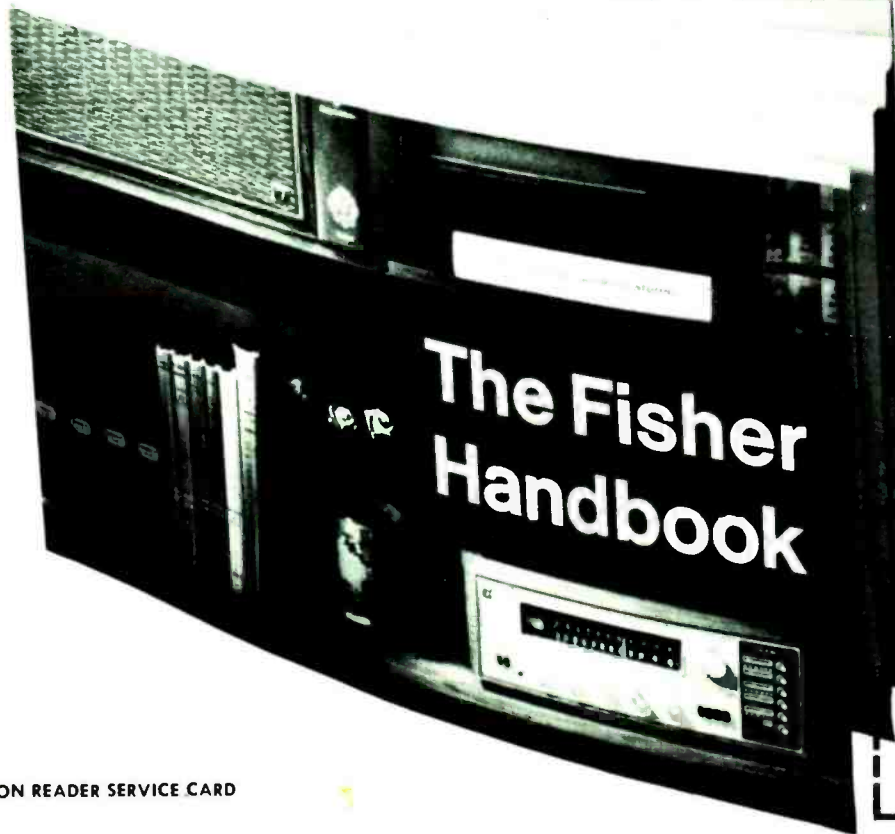
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# HIGH FIDELITY

VOL. 18 NO. 11 NOVEMBER 1968

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# Letter from the Editor

DEAR READER:

Last spring, while quiet but revolutionary plans were reaching a two-year climax in a small town in Massachusetts, a unique meeting took place in the New York studios of Capitol Records. All the classical-music directors of all the major recording companies had gathered together to discuss a mutually chilling problem: whereas over the past four years the record industry had shown a phenomenal increase of fifty per cent in sales, classical records were still back at the 1964 level. How, then, to push the classics?

During the discussion, one participant got up to say that the best place to breed new classical-music lovers—and potential customers—was in the schools. He suggested that the record companies chuck up some money to finance an exciting and imaginative music-education program, one that would acknowledge the freedom today's youth demands from its elders' categorical mentality which classifies musical *preferences* by "rock," "classical," "jazz," and similar labels. By integrating the classics with the pops, the program could subvert those deadly "music appreciation courses" blighting the land and actually let the youngsters discover the joys of good music. If the course were offered free or at nominal charge to the eternally budget-minded schools, chances were good that it would be accepted by many.

The meeting adjourned with a general agreement to think about this splendid idea and to meet again at a future, unspecified date.

Meanwhile, back in Maynard, Massachusetts, of all places, an audio manufacturer, of all people, was preparing to unveil his own project "to lead the student towards a lasting awareness of the pleasure of listening." For two years, H.H. Scott had been pouring money into "a programmed learning course designed to build a knowledge of music fundamentals." [For details, see page 50.] Aimed at eighth-grade and high-school students, the approximately three-week course would not only correlate classical and popular music, it would present the youngster with the fundamentals of high fidelity and stereo, subjects as valid to a mid-twentieth-century music education as is pinning the right titles onto the right compositions. (If a major function of art is to expand its beholder's perception, these are even *more* valid subjects.) Furthermore, since Scott would absorb the cost of the program's creation, it could be offered to schools at about 80 cents per pupil.

Now, fellow cynics, it is self-evident what Scott expects to get out of this: the same things that the record companies did. As the kids learn to love quality music and to develop a taste for quality sound, the high fidelity industry, H.H. Scott included, will benefit. But anyone who has ever met Herman Hosmer Scott will realize that this is not the entire impetus. Mr. Scott is one of that pioneer breed of audio manufacturers for whom the clear goal remains music, and their products simply the means for reaching it.

Home-free-all, record companies; you can look up now.

Next month HIGH FIDELITY does its bit for the kiddies, too, or rather for their parents who are seeking a Christmas gift for Junior to play his own records on without his mangling the family stereo set. We call it "Lo-Fi for the Small Fry." For Daddy, we've got suggestions on how to "Make the Most of Your Tape Recorder." And we will report from Switzerland on the HIGH FIDELITY/Montreux International Record Awards' "Best Records of the Year."

*Leonard Marcus*

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# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## The Negro and the Establishment

I congratulate Mr. Marcus and HIGH FIDELITY for the excellent and much needed article "Can the Negro Overcome the Classical Music Establishment?" by Herbert Russcol [August 1968]. But I must call to your attention a significant error of omission: the name of James DePreist. This brilliant young conductor won a First Prize Gold Medal in the 1964 Mitropoulos International Competition, was an assistant conductor to Leonard Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic during the 1965-66 season, has conducted the orchestras of Philadelphia, Minneapolis, Grant Park, the New York Philharmonic, and has recently been appointed principal guest conductor of the Symphony of the New World. In addition, Mr. DePreist appeared with the Chicago Symphony at Ravinia this summer and will conduct four concerts with the Rotterdam Philharmonic this coming season. There are not that many Negro conductors, and Mr. DePreist's unique achievements certainly should have been included in what was otherwise a splendid article.

Arnold Weisenthal  
Philadelphia, Penna.

Being most impressed as I was with your article on the Negro musician vs. the Establishment, finding it beautifully written and (thankfully) full of enough diversified opinions on this crucial subject from Negroes themselves to keep it from being unpleasantly dogmatic reading, I thank your magazine for bringing it to the public.

It was especially gratifying to see my friend Everett Lee's name in print in this country once again. It was my privilege to be at a concert in Stockholm when he conducted superb Stravinsky and Berwald, doing for the latter something like Bernstein did for Nielsen in Copenhagen. Lee's wife Sylvia is, moreover, one of the best operatic coaches in the business.

William Zakariasen  
New York, N. Y.

A far from unimportant footnote might be added to your generally laudable article "Can the Negro Overcome the Classical Music Establishment?" Although the Toledo (Ohio) Symphony may not be considered one of the top symphonic organizations in the country, it does boast a concertmaster of considerable artistic accomplishment, Darwyn Apple. If I am not mistaken, Mr. Apple is the first Negro to hold this position in an American symphony orchestra.

Thomas D. Dunn  
New Haven, Conn.

It was good indeed to see Herbert Russcol focus his attention in your August issue on the extremely serious problem of the Negro's pervasive absence from the current classical music establishment. I wonder how many readers even realize that Beethoven wrote his famous *Kreutzer* Sonata for a Negro violinist, George Bridgetower; or that Brazil's foremost nineteenth-century composer was a Negro, Antonio Carlos Gomes. And how many are familiar with the music of the only Negro composer ever to achieve major world-wide stature, Samuel Coleridge-Taylor?

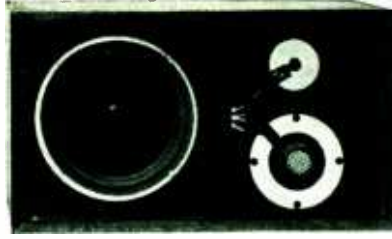
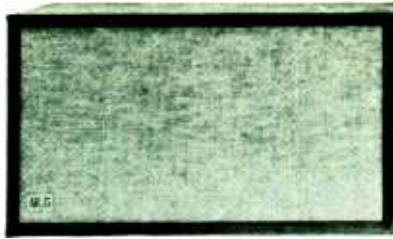
Mr. Russcol concentrates chiefly, however, on symphony players. He quotes the New York Philharmonic's violinist Sanford Allen as saying, "I'm still the only black in the 'Big Three' orchestras"—by which Allen presumably means Boston, New York, and Philadelphia. Many would today dispute his choice of the three. But even if we take in Cleveland and Chicago and speak of the "Big Five," there is only one more name, the Cleveland's cellist, Donald White. A roster of more than five hundred players with only two Negroes constitutes nothing short of a scandal.

In fairness, as I recently had occasion to point out elsewhere, the Boston Symphony's former conductor Charles Munch did appoint a Negro contrabassist, Ortiz Walton, who was on the roster from 1957 to 1962 (and it was also Munch who raised eyebrows by daring in 1952 to appoint a woman, Doriot Anthony Dwyer, as principal flutist—and a superlative appointment, too). Mr. Russcol states that the Boston Symphony is now "on the lookout for a Negro percussionist." Perhaps there was no intention of sounding condescending, but this seems to put the orchestra in the position of saying, "Everybody knows that Negroes have rhythm, so maybe we could find a black drummer." The orchestra ought to welcome Negro players of any instruments for which vacancies arise. And, despite all the disclaimers to the contrary, there are such players around, although they are not plentiful. It is up to our major orchestras to go out and actively recruit them for auditions from the minor-league orchestras and elsewhere.

If we turn to the ranks of instrumental concert soloists, the picture is no better. The sole Negro musician who bids fair really to make it big is that fine young pianist André Watts. Some years back, the late pianist Philippa Duke Schuyler created a flurry. But she did this as a child prodigy; when she grew up, her

Continued on page 8





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## LETTERS

Continued from page 6

career waned. A few other pianists—such as Margaret Bonds, Hazel Harrison, Armenta Adams, Eugene Hayes, and Natalie Hinderas—tried hard but never got very far.

The saddest aspect of this whole business, however, is that the status of the Negro instrumentalist today is worse than it used to be. If one goes back a few generations, one has little trouble finding players who managed to make substantial reputations. Among these were Edmund Dédé, José White, Basile Barès, Samuel Snaer, M. Inez Cassey, Edwin Hill, Peter O'Fate, Alexander Luca and

his sons, Henry Williams, Justin Ho'land, Samuel Jamison, David Oswald, Frederick Lewis, Thomas ("Blind Tom") Bethune, McDonald Repanti, William Bush, Joseph Douglass (son of the great Frederick), Leonard Jeter, Lucien and Sidney Lambert, Claude Brindis de Sala, Melville Charlton, Louia Jones, and R. Augustus Lawson. A partial explanation may lie in the greater demand for live concerts in the years before the heyday of radio, phonograph, and, of course, television.

The one great exception in the classical-music world is singing, an area Mr. Russcol all but failed to touch on. Here the Negro has had a far better break, although it is true that many of the

finest Negro vocalists have had to achieve success abroad before being able to make much headway at home.

Many Negro singers had enviable careers in the nineteenth century. Notable among them were Sarah Bowers, Elizabeth Taylor-Greenfield (the "Black Swan"), Thomas Bowers (the "American Mario"), the fabulous coloratura Marie Selika, Sidney Woodward, Adelaide Terry, and Sissieretta Jones (the "Black Patti"), who was signed for the Metropolitan Opera in 1892 but for some reason never actually appeared.

The early part of our own century saw such singers as Estelle Pinckney Clough, M. Hamilton Hodges, Rachel Walker, Anita Patti-Brown, Mayme Calloway-Byron, Lillian Evanti, Caterina Jarboro (the first Negro soprano to star with a white opera company in the U. S.), William Howard Richardson, Florence Talbert, Harry Delmore, Edward Matthews, Aubrey Pankey, and Etta Moten.

An important milestone occurred when the Met's manager Rudolf Bing put Marian Anderson on his opera stage in 1955, and later engaged Mattiwilda Dobbs, Gloria Davey, Martina Arroyo, Felicia Weathers, Reri Grist, Grace Bumbry, and Leontyne Price. Other Negro women to garner acclaim have included Dorothy Maynor, Anne Brown, Adele Addison, Carol Brice, Ellabelle Davis, Camilla Williams, Betty Allen, Shirley Verrett, Martha Flowers, Billie Lynn Daniels, Muriel Rahn, Inez Matthews, Charlotte Holloman, Margaret Tynes, and Ella Lee.

No one has, as far as I know, satisfactorily explained why male Negro singers have in recent decades achieved renown so much more rarely than the women. It would be hard to add many names to a list containing Julius Bledsoe, Roland Hayes, Paul Robeson, J. Rosamond Johnson, Todd Duncan, Kenneth Spencer, William Warfield, Robert McFerrin, Lawrence Winters, Lawrence Watson, George Shirley, and William Dupree.

Why have Negro singers in general found the going easier than the non-singers? A few people have posited a physiological vocal advantage on racial grounds, but this has yet to be confirmed. One obvious reason is the fact that, whereas there is no specifically Negro musical literature for instruments, there has always been among Negroes a strong tradition of song, out of which developed an enormous corpus of spirituals and ballads. Through this repertory singers have obtained a hearing, and then often been able to move on into Lieder and opera.

Then, too, one can spot a beautiful voice even when it is untrained. This is not true with instruments. As the *Boston Globe's* music critic Michael Steinberg recently put it, "It is possible to discover a promising voice in a seventeen-year-old, and then to find financial sponsorship to provide the appropriate training that will turn the owner of the voice into a competent singer. But talent for the cello is not a physically self-evident thing

Continued on page 10



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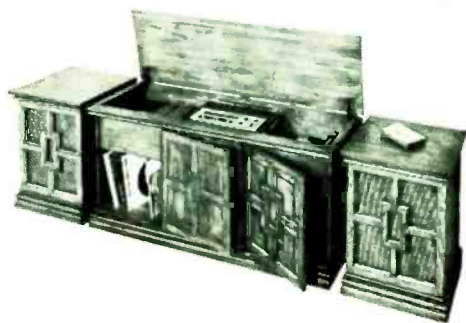
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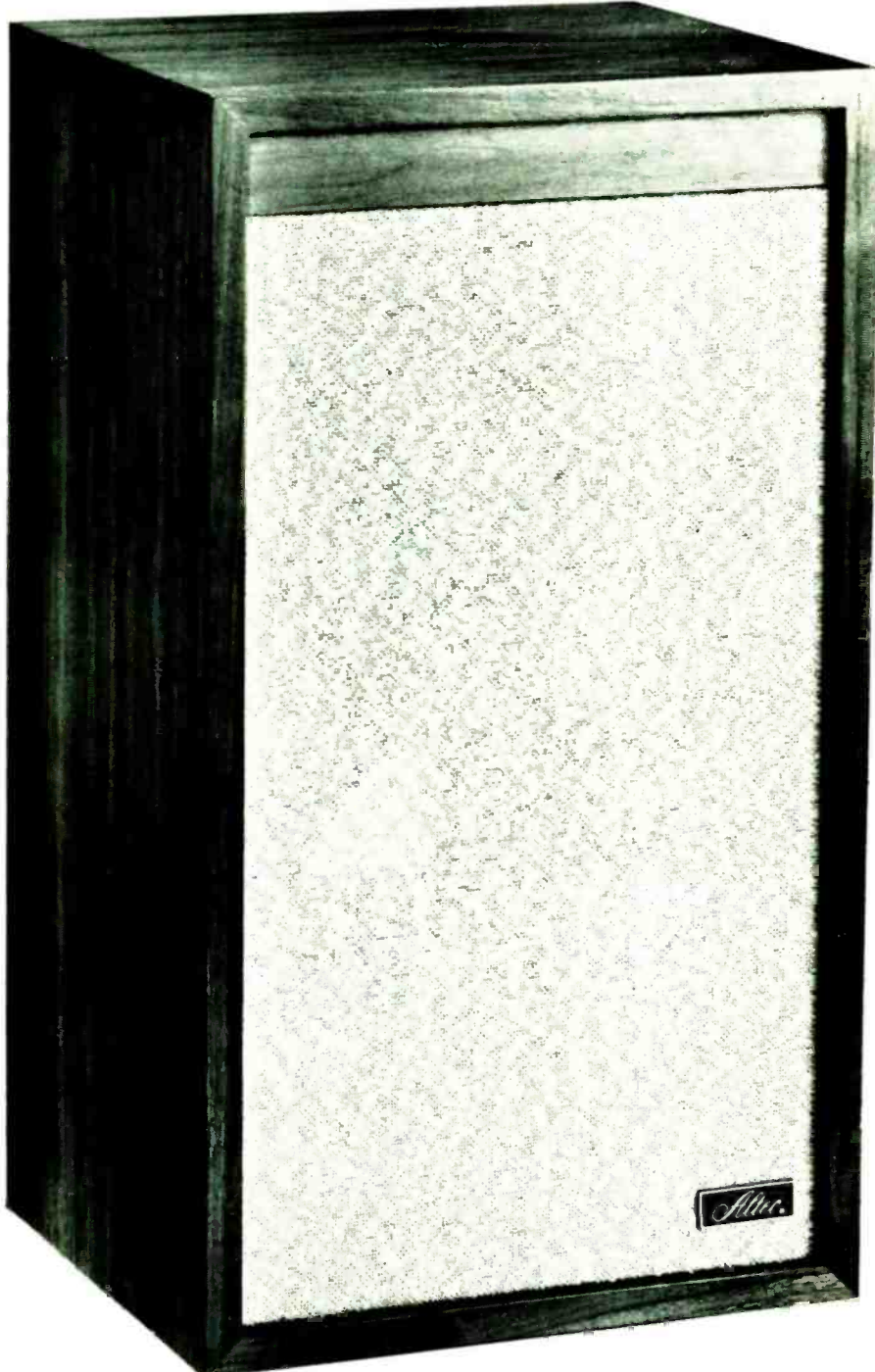


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## LETTERS

*Continued from page 8*

like a voice. It takes some contact with a cello before anyone can discover it."

For a career on an instrument, one has to start early. Most Negroes have been unable to afford the money, the time, and the effort, especially when they have not been able to point to others who have prominently succeeded. Those who *have* developed instrumental proficiency have chosen to channel their talent into popular music and jazz, where the chances of success are vastly greater.

As things now stand, gifted Negro singers can expect equal treatment with white ones. But much remains to be done in the realm of instrumentalists, as Mr. Russcol's article made clear. The racism of the wealthy whites who keep orchestras going must change. The conductors and trustees of our major orchestras have got to hire some of our best black players, and they have got to increase their Negro audience somehow. The concert tour managers must sign and place more black artists. And more efforts must be made to encourage instrumental study by Negroes of grade-school age—particularly study of stringed instruments, where a shortage of good ensemble players is likely to go on for some time. A satisfactory state of affairs will not come about overnight, but there is no excuse for continued complacency and delay.

*Caldwell Titcomb*  
Department of Music  
Brandeis University  
Waltham, Mass.

I enjoyed Mr. Russcol's article on the problems of the Negro orchestral musician. I have long believed that there is a vast, untapped potential for music in our Negro population. I was startled, however, when I read that Birmingham has five Negro orchestral players. Never having seen a Negro performer in the Birmingham Symphony (I hardly ever miss a concert), I called the orchestra's manager, who said that the Youth Training Orchestra has a few Negroes. You will be interested in knowing that we still have segregated Musicians' Unions: Local 256, White; and Local 733, Black.

*Jim Walbert*  
Birmingham, Ala.

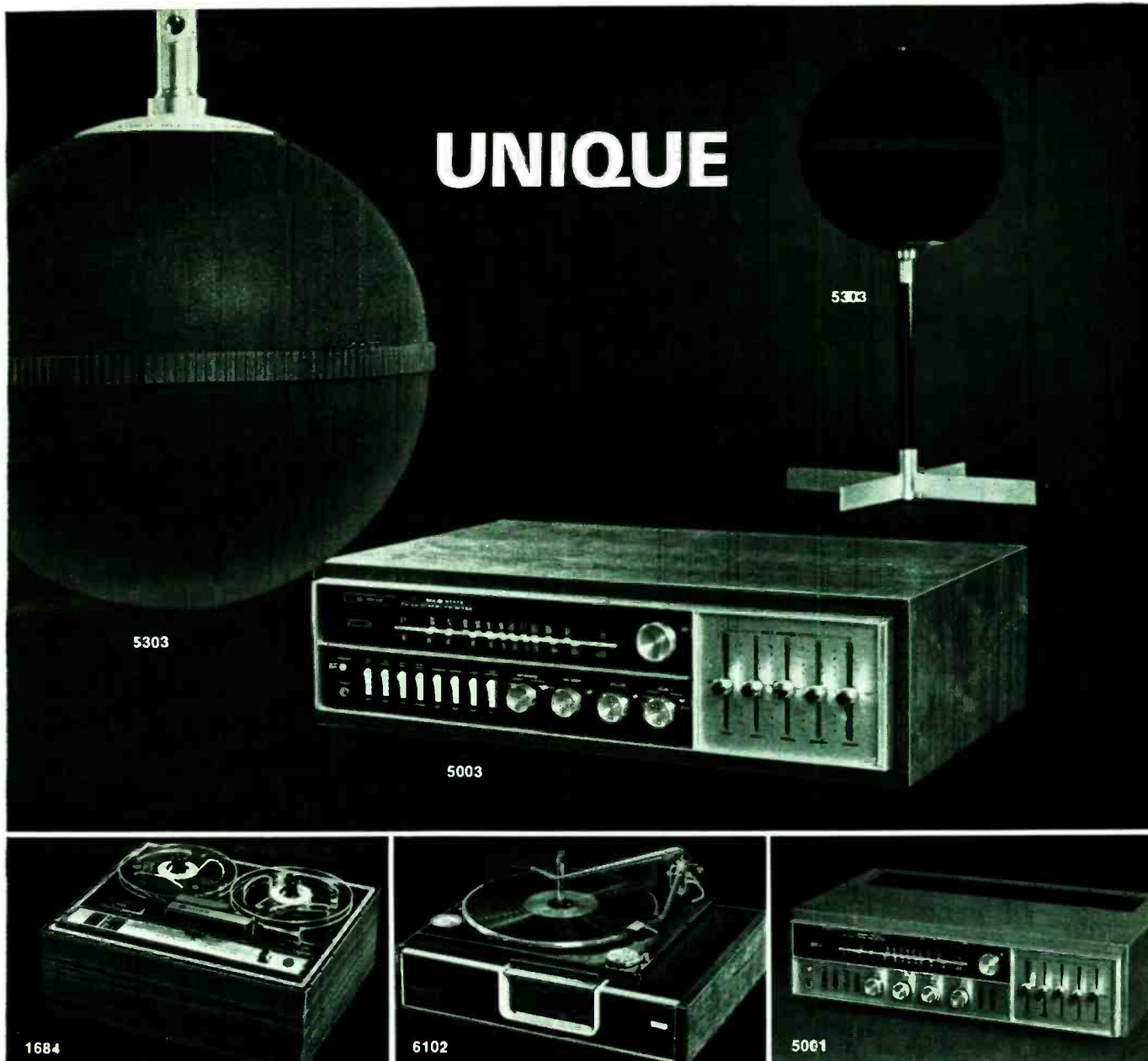
With reference to the article by Herbert Russcol, "Can the Negro Overcome the Classical Musical Establishment?" we regret that Mr. Russcol never checked his facts with us.

The statement "We're dying to get our hands on a Negro" was never made. Negro flutist Harold Jones did not audition successfully for the St. Louis Symphony, nor did he settle on a salary with the Orchestra's manager. After an unsuccessful audition, Leigh Gardine, then Acting Manager of the St. Louis Symphony, offered Mr. Jones the opportunity to audition again (a second

*Continued on page 12*



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## LETTERS

*Continued from page 10*

chance, which admittedly he probably would not have had if he had not been Negro), which he refused. The St. Louis Symphony Orchestra has two Negro members, as Mr. Russcol would have learned had he asked us.

Mr. Russcol's methods of research call into question the basic premise of his article: "The fact is that discrimination—covert or open—still operates against the hiring of Negroes for symphonic ensembles." I am convinced that today the pressure on the major orchestras to hire Negro players is far greater than any pressure not to hire them and that discrimination is not among the factors now restricting the number of Negroes in American orchestras.

*Peter Pastreich, Manager  
St. Louis Symphony Orchestra  
St. Louis, Mo.*

*Mr. Russcol replies: I did not get my facts from tea leaves, but from a spokesman of the St. Louis Symphony. I called them on April 26, 1968, they returned my call (collect), and the phone bill is with HIGH FIDELITY.*

*In any case I am happy to hear that St. Louis has two Negro members, and hope the trend continues.*

### Pleasants to Heyworth

"For as far back as there is recorded history," writes Peter Heyworth in "The Fatal Sixties" in your June issue, "prophets of doom have announced the imminent end of the world, and music has of late had more than its share of such jeremiads . . . But there is a big difference between 'the end' and 'an end' . . ." After suggesting that "we are today confronted with the most decisive break in the development of Western music since the monodic revolution at the beginning of the seventeenth century," the writer continues: "To argue that we are today confronted by an almost complete break with the past is, of course, to find oneself in strange company. From time immemorial down to Mr. Henry Pleasants, innovations have been greeted with similar cries . . ."

Mr. Heyworth might have found the association with Mr. Henry Pleasants less curious had he not failed to note that my book on this subject, published in Great Britain in 1961, was titled *Death of a Music?* (note the article "a") and that the parallel with the monodic revolution had been drawn by me in *The Agony of Modern Music* (1955), pp. 90-91, and repeated in *Death of a Music?*, p. 43. I, in turn, as noted in both texts, was elaborating upon observations made by Ernst Křenek in his *Selbstdarstellung* in 1948. Mr. Heyworth has discussed both my books in his Sunday column in the *London Observer*. May I observe in con-

*Continued on page 16*



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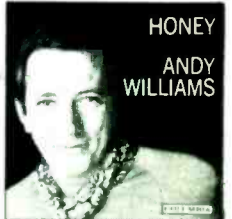


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clusion that in accepting Stockhausen's "rejection of what most of us have hitherto supposed to be the very essence of music," Mr. Heyworth has, in my view, accomplished not only a jeremiad, but also the elimination of that precious *an before end*.

Henry Pleasants  
London  
England

**Up with Lees**

This letter is addressed primarily to Gene Lees, who deserves a vote of confidence after the drubbing he received in the "Letters" column of your August issue

over the opinions of rock he had expressed in the June issue.

After seeing these complaints about Mr. Lees, I decided to go back a few issues and read some of the "Lees Side" columns for myself, a pleasure which I had foregone in the past since I am a classics fan and seldom read what appears in your "Lighter Side" section. I can see now that this was a mistake. Anyone who disagrees with Lees's general opinions has a perfect right to do so, but thoughtful readers will recognize that his ideas on Broadway, stars, and entertainment in particular are intelligent and pretty much on the mark.

Going back to the July issue, for ex-

ample, I came across Mr. Lees's high praise of Peggy Lee. Now, I'm not a particularly fond fan of Peggy, although I have enjoyed some of her songs in the past. I much prefer Doris Day; now there's a gal with the same low volume in her voice, perfect pitch, terrific acting ability, and a high-class personality which puts Peggy Lee under the sand any time. But Mr. Lees has good reasons for his opinion and I respect them—though I'll still take Doris Day.

Turning to June, we have two columns by Mr. Lees, one on Broadway's dol-drumms in which he discusses the misuse of rock or jazz music in certain shows and movies. Your letter writers missed the whole point of what Lees was trying to get across, the fact that certain kinds of music simply do not fit in with certain types of shows.

As for the "Lees Side" article ["Prediction: If McCarthy Wins, Rock Will Falter"], I, for one, agree with him a hundred per cent—it's all a lot of noise and little else . . . when you've heard one, you've heard them all. As for McCarthy, Lees was quoting someone else's quip on politics mixed with music, which is beside the point; the protesters and anti-Vietnam folks are behind McCarthy, and I doubt that his election or anyone else's would have much influence on the teenagers of our land who are so fascinated with this rock jazz.

In May, Mr. Lees turned to Malvina Reynolds, a sixty-seven-year-old songwriter and singer who is protesting the ruination of America by big promoters, such as certain streets of New York and San Francisco Bay. This column was Lees's best of the group. I haven't heard the lady sing her material, but I sympathize with her feelings of how we have lost our sense of values in this country. I hope she finds another recording company willing to take a risk with her.

Finally, in August, the month of his trial by letters, Gene turns to a nightclub owner named Stanley Blinstrub, who lost his nightclub recently in a fire. A lot of big-name entertainers got together and donated their talents for one evening's performance to raise money to build a new nightclub for Stanley. Apparently, these people think an awful lot of Stanley, and after reading the article, one understands why. He is indeed a rarity in today's philosophy of "me—number one, to hell with the rest." Connie Francis' comments in particular were encouraging. It seems Stanley deserved all this help in rebuilding his nightclub.

All of this is written to say that Gene Lees has a right to be heard—and should be read. I'm glad he didn't bother to answer his critics; they weren't worth answering.

Jac Kennedy  
Tucson, Ariz.

You know, I have to admit I found Gene Lees's June column ["Prediction: If McCarthy Wins, Rock Will Falter"] very amusing. I'm confused by his mo-

*Continued on page 20*

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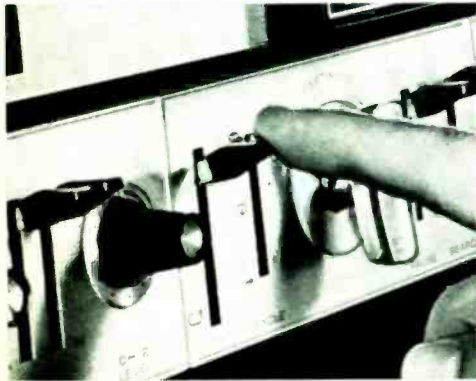
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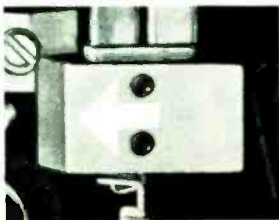
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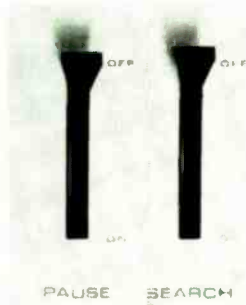
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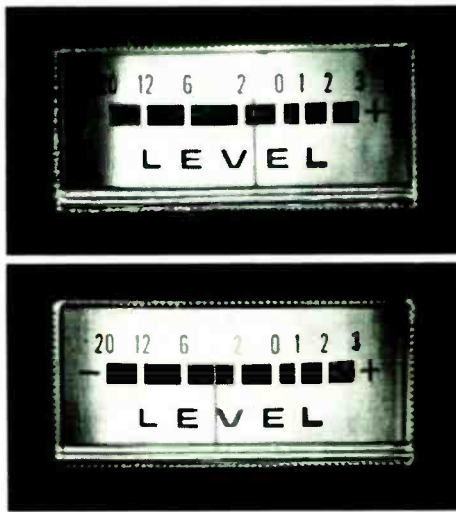
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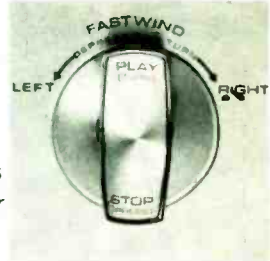
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CIRCLE 61 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

## LETTERS

*Continued from page 16*

tives, though. If it was intended as a serious column, then consider this letter as a slashing criticism. If it was meant to be a controversial satire, then this is just another added commentary.

I am eighteen, fond rock lover, fond classical music lover, all in all, a fond music lover. And I can't help but feel sorry for the music critic who tries so hard to read so much into rock and comes out with so little . . . it's agonizing. It's like looking for special religious allegories in Ed Ames's singing. I mean it just isn't there. It's just *music*. And I can see that last comment slicing deep into you—"Why, there's no such thing as 'just music.'" But that's all it is, which may explain why those who look for deeper things in music cannot stand to subject themselves to rock. What we look for is just a special series of tones which sound . . . *pleasant*, to us, proving our threshold of tolerance much higher than theirs. Which is where Mr. Lees's column comes in.

No, not dissatisfaction. That isn't the reason for rock at all. I was caught up in the outbreak of folk music a few years ago, and when folk-rock evolved, I was sucked in. I was fifteen then, and I hated rock. The Beatles and the Byrds were my reasons for liking rock. Now, you can't really call the Beatles viciously anti-Establishment.

So, the question is, why did rock evolve at all? Since there was quite an adequate supply of music on hand without rock, why did rock have to come at all?

Why? Because music's one part, though *only* one part, of a generation's *identity*. We think of the older generation as the fox-trot generation, characterized by goldfish-swallowing and the like. We think of ourselves as the rock generation, with all of our (weirdo) characteristics. The more outrageous the music, the less chance of the older generation picking it up and commercializing it, or bastardizing it, or what have you. (Example of bastardized characteristic—the hippies, and where are they now?) So the existence of an identity separate from that of another generation is insured.

Rock's existence is a statement in itself. Protest has nothing at all to do with it. Even within our own generation, candy rock (*Time* magazine has called it bubble-gum rock) has appeared, with a following composed of members too young (twelve to fourteen) to be concerned with protest and generation gaps and things like that.

So the reason we like music—rock music—isn't just because nothing is right in the world around us. We just like the music. Parents don't like it, so we like it even more, as a reaction against our parents' "closed-mindedness." But this is all deeply psychological. I can't explain it any more than that. When rock is accepted by the older generation, this shows a willingness to accept what the younger

*Continued on page 24*



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CIRCLE 55 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

## LETTERS

Continued from page 20

generation stands for. So the question is, is this really rebellion?

Doesn't the fact that many young people like myself write in to criticize your reviews show right there that we are crying out to have our culture, replete with rock music and all, accepted by you, the older ones?

John Philson  
Elverson, Penna.

### Footnote

I enjoyed Roland Gelatt's August "Music Makers" column ["Gilels-Szell Beethoven"] very much. It is gratifying to learn that Gilels is finally recording again, and with an orchestra worthy of him. I'd like to correct Mr. Gelatt on one point, however: Gilels did not finish first in the Vienna Competition of 1936; he placed second to his countryman Jakov Flier.

Stephen Wigler  
Garden City, N.Y.

### Miss Fleming Faltered

With reference to S.F.'s interesting review of Haydn's *Creation* by Bernstein, Munchinger, and Jochum [August 1968, p. 82], it does not refer to other recordings—an omission which I respectfully point out is always a little confusing to the record collector. Always, I think, a reader should be able to compare your critic's analysis of the moment not merely with some other new record, as in this instance, but *with what he owns*, especially if there has been in the past a very fine recording (even though it is no longer in the catalogue).

I own Decca Gold Label of 1956 or 1957 vintage with the Berlin Philharmonic under Markevitch and with soloists who, I think, sang beautifully twelve years ago—Irmgard Seefried, Richard Holm, and Kim Borg. I think the record has balance, reasonable dramatic impact, really fine singing. It has just a bit of distortion but on the whole reflects the class of the participants. Does any of you fellows own this old record? If it has long since been surpassed by stereo, and if Bernstein or Munchinger also surpass the other Schwann listings in stereo, I will know that I should update my collection. But listening to the old Decca after reading your review, I wondered.

At times you fellows (and very properly) regret the deletion of some fine mono recordings; therefore it is reasonable to say that not all new stereo recordings should be considered better than some old mono. Can anybody give me a critical evaluation of the mono Decca? Have been a subscriber for seventeen years. Am now elderly—and if I already have a fine record in mint condition, I want to listen rather than take the time to exchange. On the other hand, you know the instinct of a music lover and collector—if he feels strongly that

he can improve his collection, hell and highwater will not stop him from swapping.

E. B. Thornton  
Murrels Inlet, S. C.

*Shirley Fleming replies: "I regret having neglected the Markevitch version of the Creation. But I was 'not familiar with it, and being already somewhat overwhelmed at the prospect of dealing, ideally, with eight existing versions of the work, I must confess to not having gone in search of other, earlier ones. Mr. Thornton catches me between bases, and unfortunately I can't be of help to him. Any volunteers?"*

### Audio Dialectics

The business of sound reproduction is often a *caveat emptor* affair with all sorts of gimmicks to confuse the uninformed: references to "state of the art," nebulous if not deceptive engineering statistics, incessant playing upon the loosely applied term "professional" when describing equipment.

Honestly, here are some of the points usually overlooked:

(1) What you can't hear you can't appreciate. *Aficionados* should take audiometer tests. If your hearing cuts off at 10 kHz, what is the point of paying to reproduce sounds only your dog can hear?

(2) One ought to consider the law of diminishing returns. You stop at the point where a further expenditure, regardless of prestige and statistics, is actually unrewarding. Participation in hi-fi is an intensely personal affair. Different people under varying psychological and physical conditions derive varying degrees of satisfaction from exactly the same program material.

(3) Forward movement in the industry, partly as a by-product of space-age technology, is impressive—and very expensive. Then the phenomena of competitive industrial processes come into play, so that what is prohibitively costly today becomes a commonplace tomorrow. It therefore pays to be patient. If you can't afford to be in the vanguard, you can at least usually enjoy the very best of yesterday.

Kenneth S. Weave  
Elmira, New York

*The Audio-Video Editor replies: (1) The argument for deliberately limited frequency response is an old turkey periodically trotted out by those who can't, or won't, make equipment that responds cleanly over the audio band of 20 to 20,000 Hz. In listening tests adults who reported losing tones over 15,000 Hz could hear the difference in music reproduced with cut-off filters at 15,000 Hz. Moreover, it is an engineering fact-of-life that designing equipment to cut off anywhere below about 20,000 Hz inevitably distorts the response below that frequency. A manufacturer must build equipment to respond beyond normal*

*hearing just to make certain that it will perform satisfactorily within the normal hearing range.*

(2) *We do admit to the law of diminishing returns, and have explained its application many times, particularly as regards the cost of speaker systems vis-à-vis their performance. Often the difference between a \$200 and a \$400 model will be a bit more bass at the very bottom, or a little more air at the very top. Is this, in the \$400 model, "twice as good" performance as in the \$200 model? Mr. Weaver's own statement gives the answer here: "Participation in hi-fi is an intensely personal affair."*

(3) *We agree that one can enjoy "the very best of yesterday." This does not rule out the fact that equipment, as a whole, constantly gets better. As for how expensive the advances in audio really are, we wonder. Recent government statistics indicate that while the cost of living was rising in the past ten years, the cost of hi-fi equipment dropped. We agree that not everyone can afford to, or needs to, be "in the vanguard." Still, without a vanguard what direction would everyone else take?*

### Miss Ames Misspoke

May I make one minor carp? I appreciated Morgan Ames's fine review of the Ethel Waters album, Columbia CL 2792 [August 1968, p. 108] It's too bad that none of the current crop of "wailers" has anything like her artistry. However, Miss Ames listed *Supper-time* as being included in the album, while my copy doesn't have that magnificent number on it. Do other people's? If so, I feel cheated.

But this is only a carp. The record is great and the review of it was honest and right. Thank you.

Joe Billings  
Los Angeles, Calif.

*Apparently our reviewer was engaged in some wishful thinking. Supper-time does not appear on the Columbia album.*

### Second Thoughts

I would like to suggest that you establish a kind of "Second Thoughts" department in your excellent magazine.

My particular love is opera and, in that connection, I have followed Conrad L. Osborne for years. He is, in my opinion, the finest writer on this subject to be found in any publication familiar to me. Even when our views are diametrically opposed, I find his opinions to be fair and cogent.

Recently, however, in your February issue, Peter G. Davis reviewed Henze's opera *Der junge Lord* in glowing terms—as did most other critics. I seriously question whether Mr. Osborne would have written such a favorable review. Though I take special issue with a number of points raised in Mr. Davis' review,

Continued on page 26



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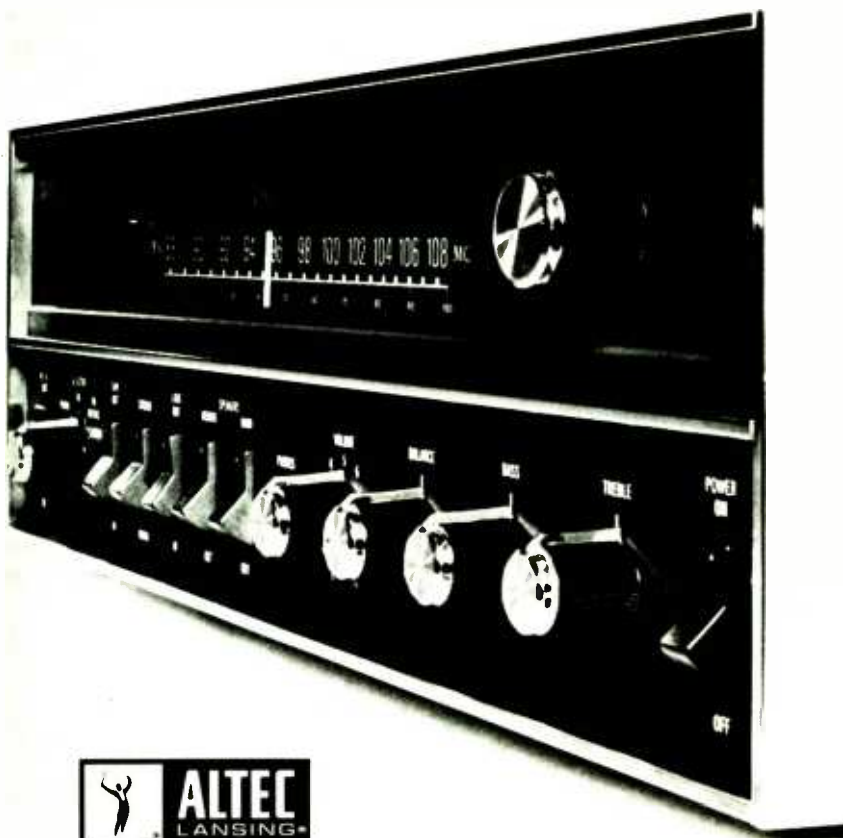
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## LETTERS

Continued from page 24

I am actually rather disturbed with most critics' views on *Der junge Lord* and a number of other contemporary works recently recorded (see Mr. Osborne's devastatingly accurate reviews of *Bomarzo* and *Oedipus der Tyrann* by Orff). I'm beginning to wonder if it isn't The Emperor's New Clothes all over again. At the end of Side 4 of the Henze opera, my wife remarked, "Determined to avoid a melody, isn't he?" Which pretty well sums it up for me.

Wilfred Healey  
Los Angeles, Calif.

### Furtwängler in Japan

In your June 1968 issue Masaji Yoshikawa's letter about Furtwängler discs on the Toshiba label in Japan states that this company circulates "no less than eight volumes and thirty-four records" devoted to Furtwängler, and that among them is Beethoven's Eighth Symphony (which hitherto has never known to exist in domestic catalogues or in Europe). I can authoritatively confirm that your correspondent's claims are basically misinformed.

Toshiba tells me that the Eighth Symphony is not contained on their label. Furthermore, most of the items, which are sold only in Japan on the Toshiba label, are already listed in domestic or European catalogues. Not only that, the total number of Furtwängler discs on Toshiba amounts to fifty-nine records, many of which are duplications, i.e., the same recording appears several times (Mahler's *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*, for instance, has four different catalogue numbers, although only one recording was made to my knowledge).

I think this correction is in place, as a number of Furtwängler fans like myself are misled by this kind of information.

Dr. Hans Illing  
Los Angeles, Calif.

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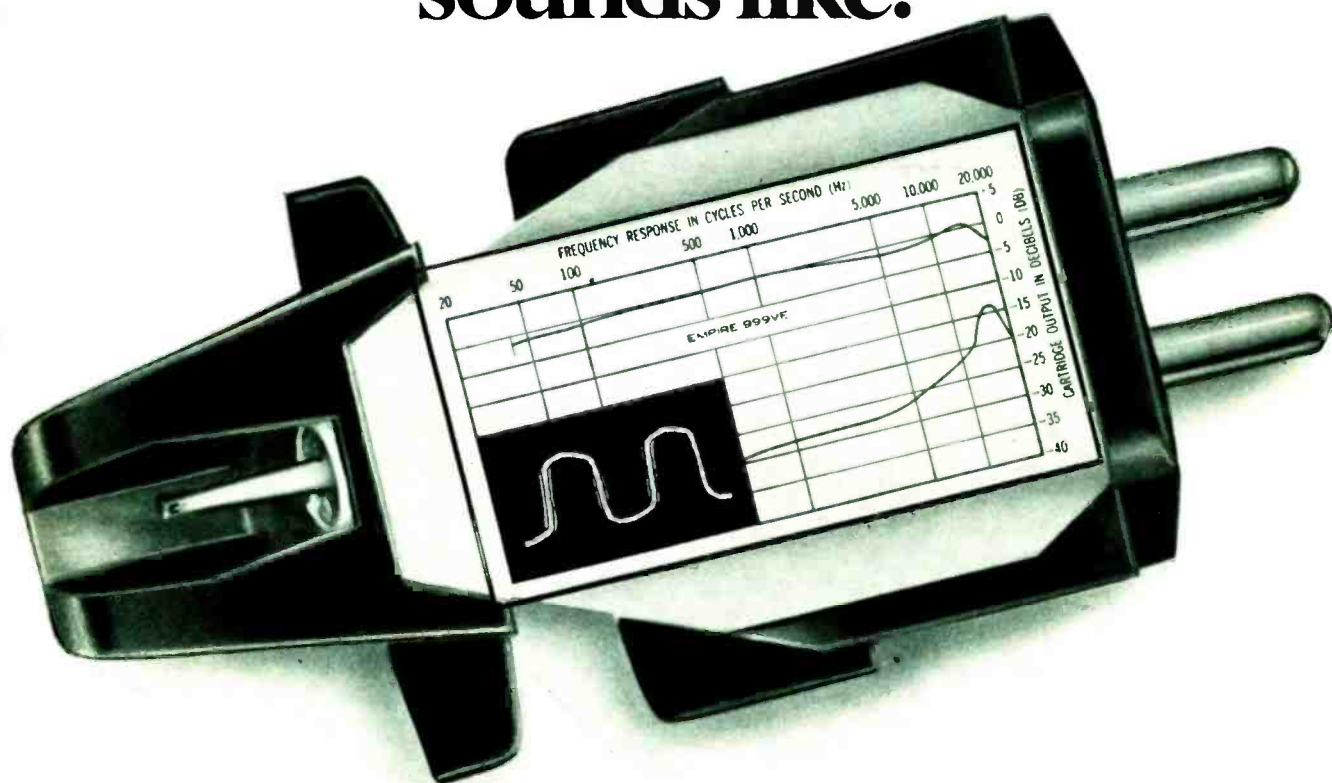
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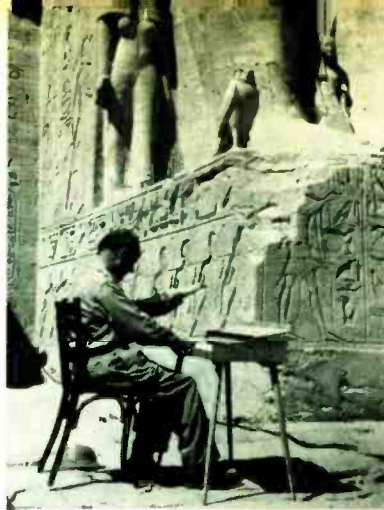
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## MUSIC MAKERS

BY ROLAND GELATT



*Daniel Barenboim*



*Bruce Hungerford*



*Claude Frank*

### In Progress—Three New Cycles of the Beethoven Piano Sonatas

**I**N HIS WILDEST fantasies, Beethoven probably never dreamed that one pianist would master his thirty-two sonatas and perform them at one fell swoop in a series of concerts. But since Artur Schnabel set the style some forty years ago, complete Beethoven has become a commonplace. There already exist five integral recordings—by Arrau, Backhaus, Brendel, Kempff, and Schnabel. Now, with the forthcoming bicentenary of the composer's birth serving as catalyst, work is in progress on three more complete recordings of the sonatas. The new runners in the Beethoven sweepstakes are Daniel Barenboim (Angel), Claude Frank (RCA Red Seal), and Bruce Hungerford (Vanguard). If some of the names seem unfamiliar, don't be surprised. They're not all in the big time. But by 1970 . . . who knows?

**DANIEL BARENBOIM** is both the youngest and most celebrated of the three, the only one who currently rates with gossip columnists. Chalk this up to his engaging mop-haired appearance, his well-publicized marriage with the willowy cellist Jacqueline du Pré, his formidable reserves of energy and talent. Born in Buenos Aires twenty-six years ago, Barenboim became an Israeli citizen in 1952 and now calls London home. His teachers include Edwin Fischer, Igor Markevitch, and Nadia Boulanger, but the strongest influence in the formation of his musical

personality was that of Wilhelm Furtwängler. For Barenboim, "Furtwängler's greatness lay in the way he shaped a piece of music from beginning to end. He didn't concentrate on every note. He molded the grand line. Furtwängler taught me that music is more than a collection of beautiful phrases." Because of this solicitude for the over-all musical picture, Barenboim likes to record in very long takes. The second movement of Opus 111, for example, was taped without a break. "The structure, the inner logic, of the music demands no less," Barenboim insists.

Since the age of seven he has been touring the world indefatigably, and he has played the entire cycle of Beethoven sonatas in Tel Aviv, Buenos Aires, and London. Barenboim's credentials as a Beethoven specialist are thus impressive. Nevertheless, people have questioned whether so young an artist could possibly have developed sufficient maturity for so demanding an assignment. Barenboim recognizes the problem but does not seem unduly concerned. "I hate it," he says, "when people talk to me about a 'definitive recording.' There is no such thing. Every performance is different. There's a tendency now for the Schnabel or Furtwängler recordings of Beethoven to be taken as their last word on the music. They're not. A year, even a month, later they would have performed the same pieces differently. If you look at it in this

way, it doesn't matter if someone starts recording the complete Beethoven sonatas at twenty-five instead of waiting—like Schnabel—until he is fifty. I've played all these sonatas for more than ten years. Perhaps I'll be playing them better in another ten years—and better than that in twenty. But if you keep postponing a recording until the perfect moment comes, you'll never make it."

**CLAUDE FRANK**, born in Germany in 1925, has the closest ties to Schnabel of the three new Beethoven men. The association goes back to the 1930s when he was taken by fond parents to play for Schnabel at the pianist's retreat on Lake Como. "Schnabel was encouraging," Frank recalls, "but considered me too young to study directly under him." Some years later, after various vicissitudes escaping from the Nazis, Claude and his family arrived in New York. "I found out where Schnabel lived, knocked on his door, and said 'Here I am!' He still thought me a little young but took me on as a student anyway." For the next ten years, until Schnabel's death in 1951, Frank remained a devoted disciple. There were of course sundry interruptions—for example, a two-year tour of duty in the U.S. Army from 1944 to 1946—but the Schnabel influence never abated.

At times that influence could be over-

*Continued on page 34*



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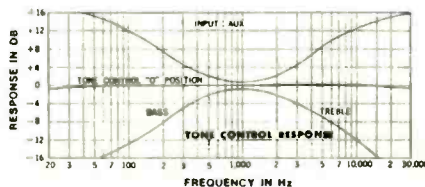
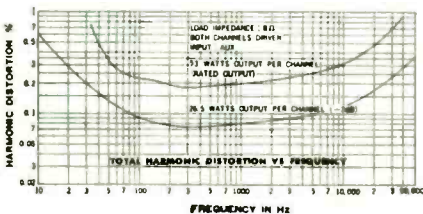
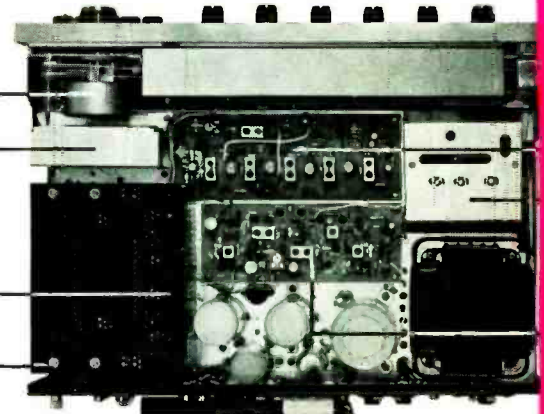


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MUSIC MAKERS

Continued from page 30

powering. According to Frank, "one always ran a great danger of slavishly imitating him. While I was working with Schnabel on a particular piece, I made it a rule never to play it in public. Otherwise my interpretation would have ended up sounding like second-hand Schnabel. Even today I won't listen to the Schnabel recording of a piece I'm currently performing. What made him so extraordinary? I'd say it was his ability to combine textual fidelity with a romantic, almost improvisational, approach to interpretation. He was a purist, but never dry or pedantic." For RCA, which originally published the Schnabel recordings on microgroove, Claude Frank represents the outstanding living embodiment of a famous tradition.

BRUCE HUNGERFORD is a forty-two-year-old Australian, shy in manner and utterly without superficial glamour, who suddenly seems to have emerged from nowhere as a major interpreter of the German piano classics. He has been around all the time, of course, but we haven't been paying attention.

Hungerford was a slow starter. "I didn't even begin piano lessons until the age of twelve," he confesses, "and at first I only mucked about. The turning point came when I was taken to a recital by Benno Moiseiwitsch. Will you believe it, that was the first time I had ever heard the piano properly played? I was fourteen. A few months later, Rubinstein came to Australia. After that, I desperately wanted to become a pianist." A succession of distinguished teachers interested themselves in him—beginning with the venerable Ignaz Friedman in Australia and continuing with Olga Samaroff in New York. "But the really significant event during those early years was my meeting with Myra Hess. She worked with me whenever she came to New York—not really as a teacher, you understand, just informally—and she introduced me to Carl Friedberg, the last surviving pupil of Brahms, who became my constant mentor until his death in 1955."

Despite the prestigious teachers, Hungerford was known only to a small coterie of admirers in New York, and no manager could be found to take an interest in him. Rather than remain on the sidelines here, he left for Germany, armed with a small foundation grant. "Some friends found me a place to live in a little village near Munich. It was dirt cheap and I could practice night and day." He stayed there for nine years, giving occasional recitals in central Europe, teaching summer courses at Bayreuth, making occasional forays up the Nile Valley to study the art of ancient Egypt, and immersing himself in Beethoven, Schubert, and Brahms. When he finally returned to give a much acclaimed Carnegie Hall recital, Vanguard's Maynard Solomon was in the audience. The next day Hungerford signed a contract to record the complete Beethoven sonatas, and he was no longer sitting on the sidelines.



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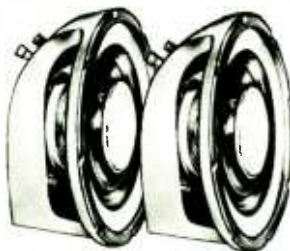


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# NOTES

FROM OUR CORRESPONDENTS

## LONDON

### Opera and Oratorio: New Sets and Recorded Firsts

August was a fine month for opera recording here, with new versions of *Don Giovanni* and *Otello* and a debut taping, at Glyndebourne, of Pier Francesco Cavalli's 1644 opera *L'Ormindo* all under way. For good measure, Handel's operatic oratorio *Theodora* was also recorded.

It is almost exactly thirty years ago that the Glyndebourne company was last recorded in its own house in Sussex, and when I went down this summer for one of Argo's *L'Ormindo* sessions Jani Strasser, head of the music staff, was recalling those prewar sessions. At that time HMV used to send down for its Mozart Opera Society recordings a whole fleet of vans containing cumbersome wax-recording equipment. No question of having a reasonably comfortable control room: the recording manager, his assistants, the engineers, and Strasser were all cooped up in the vans. "We nearly died of the heat," Strasser remembers.

It was bad enough on the present occasion. Michael Bremner of Argo had decided that Glyndebourne's organ room would be a better recording site for this comparatively intimate seventeenth-century comedy than the theater's main auditorium, and as a consequence the Argo staff found itself having to turn an airless cellar into a control room. As any visitor to the opera house will remember, the organ room is a marvelously atmospheric place, perpetually scented with bowls of dried potpourri and graced with a noble chimney piece and tall windows looking out over the lawns down to the lake. Though the relatively small size of the room presented a bit of a problem—while Cavalli hardly needs a modernized orchestra, conductor Raymond Leppard had insisted on a fair body of strings as well as a whole array of continuo instruments—everybody eventually found a place without too much crowding.

Balancing the voices against a rich twanging group of accompanists (which included among other instruments guitar, harp, and no fewer than three lutes) also produced a few headaches, but in the end Bremner felt that with the help of Kenneth Wilkinson, one of Decca/London's most experienced engineers, he was getting clearer results than had been possible on the Glyndebourne stage—clearer too than the great expanse of the Royal Albert

Hall, where (with enormous success) the whole production had been given in a concert version. "I want to get these lutes through," Bremner would say to Wilkinson; or "Let's hear a little organ"; or simply the crisp command: "Harp!" He was puzzled not to hear the chamber organ at one point: "No wonder! The so-and-so didn't bother to play."

As I arrived, the first singing voice I heard was that of Hugues Cuenod, at sixty-six still one of Europe's few really fine tenors. Cuenod admitted that as of now Richard Lewis has more Glyndebourne performances to his credit than he does, but "I shall overtake him next year!" At Glyndebourne, he has long specialized in comic character roles, and his part in *L'Ormindo* is a Cuenod classic. He takes the role of Erice, the old nurse of Princess Sicle, and few singers (or even straight actors) get more fun out of the old "travesti" tradition. The other members of Argo's cast—John Wakefield as Ormindo, Peter-Christoph Runge, Hanneke van Bork, Anne Howells, Jane Berbie, and Jean Allister—are also veterans of the Glyndebourne stage production.



Hugues Cuenod: at Glyndebourne, his comic roles are classics of the repertoire.

**Bonynge's "Don."** For Decca/London's *Don Giovanni* Kenneth Wilkinson, again, was conjuring up beautiful sounds, this time in his more regular haunt of Kingsway Hall. Conductor Richard Bonynge has deliberately chosen what many will regard as an unorthodox approach to the text, trying consciously to get as close as possible to original conditions and performing practice. The orchestra has been

kept small (the English Chamber Orchestra with only eight first violins and six seconds), and Bonynge has added ornaments and appoggiature very freely, most strikingly of all in the *da capo* repeats of Ottavio's two arias (sung by Werner Krenn).

As in Leinsdorf's old RCA set, the text of the new recording is "absolutely complete" in that the Prague and Vienna versions are run together, which gives you such rarities as the Leporello/Zerlina duet. The choice of Zerlina may cause some raised eyebrows, for Bonynge has opted for a mezzo-soprano, Marilyn Horne, citing many examples of mezzos taking the role in the nineteenth century and earlier. Joan Sutherland, of course, is Donna Anna (as she was some years ago in the Angel set with Giulini), and Pilar Lorengar is the Donna Elvira. Gabriel Bacquier plays the Don; like others in the cast (not least Sutherland) he also appeared in the recent Bonynge led performances of this opera in Seattle.

**Barbirolli's "Otello."** Ever since Sir John Barbirolli had such a success with his Rome recording of *Madama Butterfly*, EMI has been anxious to get him to record another complete opera. This time the assignment was even more taxing, Verdi's *Otello*. For various reasons, London—Walthamstow Assembly Rooms, to be precise—was preferred to Rome; and the orchestra—marking a return to the old EMI tradition, hallowed in the days of Walter Legge—was that of the (now New) Philharmonia.

The session I attended was devoted to the Act II quartet, and it was obvious from the first moment just how Barbirolli as an opera conductor draws out a *cantante* style from his players and singers. He may leave most of the work of injecting *espressivo* to the sensibility of the musicians, but he is marvelous at getting the process going. At the end of the first run-through he shook his head vigorously at the cellos. "Enjoy it!" he commanded them firmly, then with mock irritation added an aside for the benefit of the rest of the orchestra: "Miserable fellows!" At once you had a cello sound in the great soaring 12/8 theme twice as rich and loud as it had been.

Satisfied with that, he decided on the first real take, ordered the players gruffly to "Tune. Please!," and left the rostrum momentarily for the characteristic Barbirolli ceremony of taking off his overcoat. The singers, until then seated by the conductor and simply "marking" their parts, proceeded up to the stage:

*Continued on page 40*



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Continued from page 38

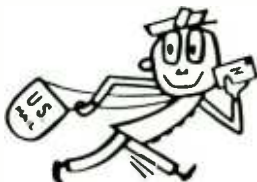
Dietrich Fisher-Dieskau, as eager as a young prizewinner; James McCracken, graying and bearded, resembling a pirate captain; and Gwynneth Jones, looking the complete pre-Raphaelite heroine with her flowing blond hair and gown of jades and mauves. Miss Jones's commitments at Bayreuth and elsewhere have put off the completion date for the new *Otello*; a full two months was expected to elapse before the soprano would be free to get together with Barbirolli and the New Philharmonia again for her most important scene containing the Act IV "Willow Song" and "Ave Maria."

**A Different Handel.** *Theodora* is one of Handel's two oratorios on a Christian theme and, according to contemporary evidence, was his own favorite. Paul Henry Lang contrasts it with *Messiah* as being a much more intimate, less passionate work, though the story of the martyrdom of Theodora and Didymus will probably strike most people as dramatic enough. The conductor for the sessions was Johannes Somary, with Seymour Solomon of Vanguard as recording manager and Robert Auger of Pye (who recently helped with RCA's *Salome*) as engineer. The venue was unusual, Conway Hall, the home of the South Place Ethical Society, where since Victorian times a series of chamber concerts has been presented on Sunday evening for "ethical" people who prefer the uplift of music to sermons. It is not exactly a comfortable hall (seats as hard as traditional pews) and was on the small side for a full choir and orchestra, but Auger managed to put some space around the sound, and the main trials (as at the Glyndebourne *L'Ormino* sessions) came from establishing the control room in the boiler room, where recording staff and equipment had to share space with broken chairs, discarded pews, and a much curlicued ancient Victorian hat rack. Even an eccentric Brontë-like retainer was on the scene, angrily hushing any conversation on the part of visitors.

Maureen Lehane, who sings Irene, was doing one of her big, sustained arias when I arrived, with her husband, the composer Peter Wishart, there to act as an extra guide. Somary had prepared the score himself, but Miss Lehane had had the extra advantage of working with Wishart too on the ornamentation. For practical reasons Handel's text has had to be reduced drastically (from roughly five and a half hours, which the complete oratorio would take, down to two and a half); even this abbreviated score demanded really intensive work for the recording to be completed in twelve sessions. Besides Maureen Lehane, performers include Heather Harper as Theodora, Maureen Forrester as Didymus, Alexander Young, John Lawrenson, Edgar Fleet, the Ambrosian Singers, and the English Chamber Orchestra. EDWARD GREENFIELD

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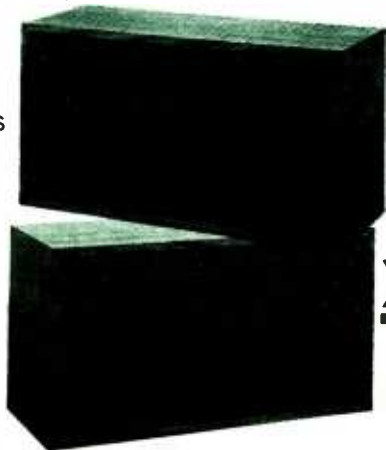
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# TOO HOT TO HANDLE

My ancient tube amplifier has about had it, and I'm about to replace it. However, I'm not planning to get a receiver because only six months ago I bought a new Scott stereo tuner. So, tell me—if you dare—what's a very good buy these days in an integrated amplifier, solid-state, emphasis on high power (at least 30 real watts per channel to drive my Bozak B-310s) and low distortion, rather than frills and gadgets, for under \$250?—Ralph Sartillis, Omaha, Nebr.

On the basis of what we've tested, for your needs the AR amplifier is the answer. It produces 60 "real watts" per channel with practically nonmeasurable distortion over most of the audible band, and lists for \$225. (See HF test report, February 1968.)

I have just purchased a Fisher 50-B compact phonograph and am looking for a dust cover for it. Neither Fisher Customer Service nor Garrard carries or knows of a dust cover that would fit the 50-B changer and control deck, which is approximately 8 by 23 inches. Can you help?—David A. Milne, New York, N.Y.

The DC-10 dust cover, listed by British Industries, may not dovetail exactly with the base of the Fisher 50-B but it will do the job of protecting the Garrard changer that is included in the system. At least two companies specialize in dust covers for various models of record players. Try writing to Audio-Tex, Div. of GC-Textron Electronics, Inc., 400 S. Wyman St., Rockford, Ill. 61101, or to AMD Electronics, 663 Dowd Ave., Elizabeth, N.J. 07201. Finally, if you want to spend a little more for a custom-fitted dust cover, contact any local plastics manufacturer listed in the yellow pages, usually under "covers—protective."

The Heath catalogue quotes you as saying that its color TV is better than those put out by big-name brands. This was May 1967. Is this set still better than sets like the RCA, Zenith, Magnavox, etc., or are they now all about the same?—Sanford Getreu, San Jose, Calif.

On the basis of what we have recently seen (and heard), we'd still rate the Heath as high as any commercial color TV set. What's more, the Heath has the controls plus the built-in generator

to help the owner adjust the set to peak performance—with other sets the owner has to get a service technician to do the job.

I would like a definite, unqualified answer to the following question. You have tested the Fisher 700T, Heath AR-15, Scott 348, and Sherwood S-7800 stereo receivers. Which of these receivers is best?—Guy Welch, Blakely, Ga.

Comparing receivers is difficult because you're rating two distinct performance areas in each instance—that is, tuner and amplifier sections.

For instance, in our tests the Fisher had the highest FM sensitivity (1.6 microvolts), although the difference between it and the next two in this regard was negligible (1.7 for the Scott and 1.8 for the Heath). The Sherwood's sensitivity was slightly less—2.1 uv—but it had the lowest IHF-FM distortion, only 0.26 per cent, and its capture ratio (ability to select the stronger of two conflicting signals) of 2 dB was equal to the Fisher's and a bit better than the 2.3 dB of the Heath or the 3.85 dB of the Scott. If Blakely, Georgia, is a fringe area where you need every bit of sensitivity you can get, then the Fisher may have a slight edge.

From the standpoint of amplifier performance, the Heath had the highest power reserves for low distortion, and one of the most accurate RIAA equalization curves we've ever seen. If your budget cramps, consider that the Sherwood lists for \$418.50, compared to the Fisher and Scott at about \$500 and to the Heath at \$525 (assembled). Those are some of the crucial comparative characteristics. Others—including controls and features—also are given in our test reports. If, after these considerations, you still want a "definite unqualified answer," you are looking not for audio advice but for a father figure. Any of these receivers is a champion performer, though none may be best for everyone. Which is best for you will depend on your needs.

For my reel-to-reel Concord tape recorder I use and prefer 1½-mil acetate tape, but I am at present bewildered as to the lack of specifications on my cassette tapes. Nowhere on the boxes is a statement as to what type of tape is contained in them, and I have noticed that some tapes differ from others

in fidelity. What type of tape is contained in the general, run-of-the-mill cassette?—Burt Wolder, Bronx, N.Y.

As far as we can determine, tape in cassettes has not yet been standardized as to thickness or backing. Generally, you may expect that one of the recent low-noise formulations of oxide will be used. And, of course, in the 90-minute (or longer) cassettes, ½-mil tape is required.

As a classical record collector with good, new equipment (Shure V-15/II at 1¼ grams, AR turntable and amplifier, two KLH-6 speakers), I'm disgusted with poor record quality. Over the past two years during which I've kept careful track, I have had to return almost a third of the records I've bought, and this percentage has remained rather stable. Defects in descending order of frequency are: shattering breakup distortion (on new releases), and bad pressing resulting in skipped grooves; poor-quality surfaces (ticks, pops, scratches throughout a side; I ignore the occasional ones); warpage sufficient to affect playing. What can be done to improve the situation?—Eric P. Godfrey, Providence, R.I.

Perhaps merely publishing your letter will help. Meanwhile, raise your stylus force to just under 2 grams. We don't believe that you can track all of today's heavily modulated records at 1¼ grams with the AR tone arm. In CBS Labs' tests of the Shure V-15/II, they found 1 gram was enough—but this was in the SME arm, with its numerous adjustments, ultrafine balancing, and anti-skating. We have used this pickup in the AR turntable and found it worked beautifully—at 1½ grams. And be sure to keep your stylus clean.

I'm preparing to convert to stereo, but I have a helluva library of mono records that I'm not about to jettison. Will an elliptical stylus, presumably with the 0.9-mil dimension, track these properly without scarifying the grooves at the first playing, or do you recommend buying a second plug-in head with a 1-mil stylus? And since the early LPs could be tracked at 6 grams, can I track these old monophonic successfully at the prevailing 1, 1½, or 2 grams?—Carlton C. Porter, Troy, N.Y. Not only will a modern elliptical stylus trace mono microgroove discs, chances are it will elicit a "fresh sound" from them because it likely will ride the groove at a slightly new portion, previously not traced. But—and it is a big but—much depends on the kind of tone arm you use. For best results, a modern, high-compliance, ultralight-weight cartridge should be used in an arm of fairly recent design, such as those found on the best of the new automatic or manual turntables, or those offered as separate or "professional" arms for installing on a manual table. Most audio experts agree that, at the very least, an arm that carries an elliptical stylus should have some provision for anti-skating.



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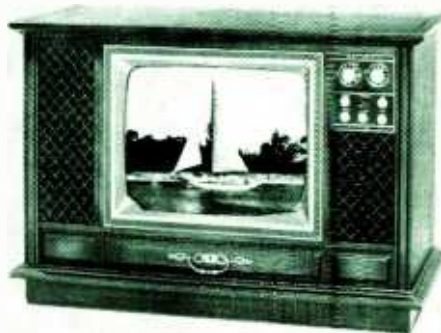
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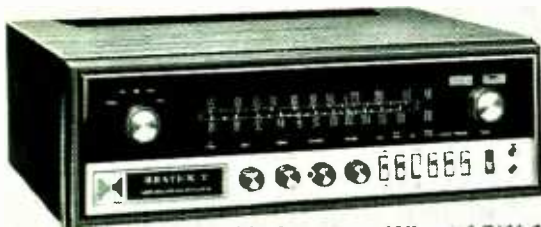
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This high performance Heathkit system features the extended bass response, smooth high frequency response and low distortion that have made acoustic suspension systems a favorite of thousands. The 10" woofer produces rich bass down to 30 Hz, and the two 3½" tweeters deliver clean, natural highs up to 15 kHz. The high frequency level control on the back of the factory assembled cabinet lets you adjust the sound the way you like it and the system requires only 10 watts to drive it, yet handles up to 40 watts of program material. Easy, enjoyable one evening assembly — just wire the 2250 Hz L-C type crossover, mount the speakers and sit back and enjoy the amazing performance. The rich walnut of the assembled cabinet goes with any decor, or order the AS-10U and have the added pleasure of putting the finish of your choice on it. Install either horizontally or vertically. Order two for superb stereo now. 43 lbs.

## HEATHKIT AS-16 Compact 2-Way System

Don't let the small size and low cost fool you — the AS-16 performs with an authenticity comparable to many higher priced, larger systems. The 8" acoustic suspension woofer and two 3½" tweeters have smooth, lifelike response from 45 Hz to 20,000 Hz, without distortion or unnatural emphasis. The high frequency level control lets you balance the highs to suit your taste. Handles from 10 to 25 watts of program material and the compact 10" H x 19" W x 8¼" D walnut veneer cabinet is covered with a clear, tough vinyl to protect against spills and scratches. Goes together in just 2 hours . . . the speakers are already cabinet-mounted — just wire the 1500 Hz crossover network. Buy two of these excellent Heathkit systems now and enjoy remarkable stereo at a reasonable cost. 22 lbs.

CIRCLE 40 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



# Gift For Everyone On Your List

## HEATHKIT AD-27 FM Stereo Compact

The new Heathkit AD-27 produces stereo sound comparable to many very good stereo systems, for the simple reason that it wasn't engineered to meet the usual performance standards of compacts. Heath engineers took their top rated AR-14 solid-state stereo receiver, modified it physically to fit the cabinet, and matched it with the excellent British-crafted BSR McDonald 500A Automatic Turntable. The result is the Heathkit "27" Component Compact. Here it is in detail: The amplifier delivers an honest 15 watts music power per channel — enough to drive any reasonably efficient speaker system . . . 1 dB response from 12 Hz to 20 kHz . . . channel separation is a remarkable 45 dB. Harmonic & IM distortion are both less than 1% at full output. The advanced transformerless output circuitry provides lower phase shift and lower distortion plus protection against transistor damage from shorted output leads. The performance of the FM stereo tuner section is nothing short of outstanding. A flip of the rocker-type power switch and the 31 transistor, 10 diode circuit is ready to go. Tune across the dial with the smooth inertia flywheel tuning . . . the clarity & separation will amaze you and you'll wonder where all those stations were before. Poor separation is eliminated thanks to the adjustable phase control and AFC puts an end to drift. Stereo indicator light, filtered tape outputs and a low noise electronically filtered power supply too. The precision BSR McDonald automatic turntable has features normally found only in very expensive units, like cueing and pause control, variable anti-skate device, adjustable stylus pressure, low mass tubular aluminum tone arm with a famous Shure diamond stylus magnetic cartridge and automatic system power too — the turntable will turn the system on & off. The beautiful walnut cabinet with sliding tambour door will be a welcome addition to any room too. For the finest stereo compact on the market, get your "27" Component Compact now. 41 lbs.



NEW kit AD-27  
\$169<sup>95</sup>

## HEATHKIT AD-17 Low Cost Stereo Compact

This new Heathkit Stereo Compact delivers quality stereo sound at a budget-saving price. By taking the stereo amplifier section of the AD-27 above and combining it with the top performing BSR McDonald 400 Automatic Turntable, Heath engineers were able to put together a stereo package that outperforms anything in its price class by a wide margin. And here's the AD-17 set-up. The 17 transistor, 6 diode amplifier puts out a husky 15 watts music power per channel — sufficient power to drive most speaker systems. Harmonic & IM distortion are both markedly less than other compacts in this range — less than 1% at full output. Channel separation is 45 dB. Front panel dual-tandem controls for Volume, Bass and Treble let you adjust the sound to your liking and the variable Balance control eliminates annoying level differences between right and left channels. A stereo headphone jack is conveniently located near the recessed inputs on the side of the cabinet. A front panel speaker on-off switch lets you turn off the speakers for private headphone listening. Tuner and auxiliary inputs allow you to add the enjoyment of FM stereo and tape recording later if you wish. The high quality BSR McDonald 400 Automatic Turntable features a variable cueing and pause control, adjustable stylus pressure adjust, adjustable anti-skating and many more precision features normally associated with turntables costing much more. Comes equipped with a famous Shure magnetic cartridge too. Easy, enjoyable 12-15 hour assembly is assured through the use of circuit board, wiring harness construction and the easy to understand Heathkit manual. Just wire the circuit board and install the assembled turntable in the handsome walnut finish cabinet . . . you'll have a stereo compact that will look nice and perform great — the Heathkit AD-17. Order yours today. 28 lbs.



NEW kit AD-17  
\$109<sup>95</sup>

## HEATHKIT AS-18 Miniature Speaker System

The new Heathkit AS-18 will remove your suspicions about the performance of miniature speaker systems forever. Physically it's only 8 1/4" H x 15 1/4" W x 6 1/2" D but it will outperform many larger systems that cost much more. Heath engineers used well-known high quality Electro-Voice<sup>®</sup> speakers and good design methods to produce the most surprising little speaker system you've ever heard. The 6" acoustic suspension woofer produces full, rich bass down to an 60 Hz and the 2 1/2" tweeter delivers clear, natural highs up to 20 kHz — excellent performance for most any system. A high frequency balance control lets you adjust the sound to suit you. Handles 25 watts of program material. The speakers mount from the front of the clear vinyl covered cabinet for easier assembly and better sound. The AS-18 makes an ideal performance companion to either of the new Heathkit Component Compacts above, and its perfect for anywhere you need superior performance from a small space. Pick up a pair of these startling little performers for stereo. 16 lbs.



NEW kit AS-18  
\$32<sup>95</sup>



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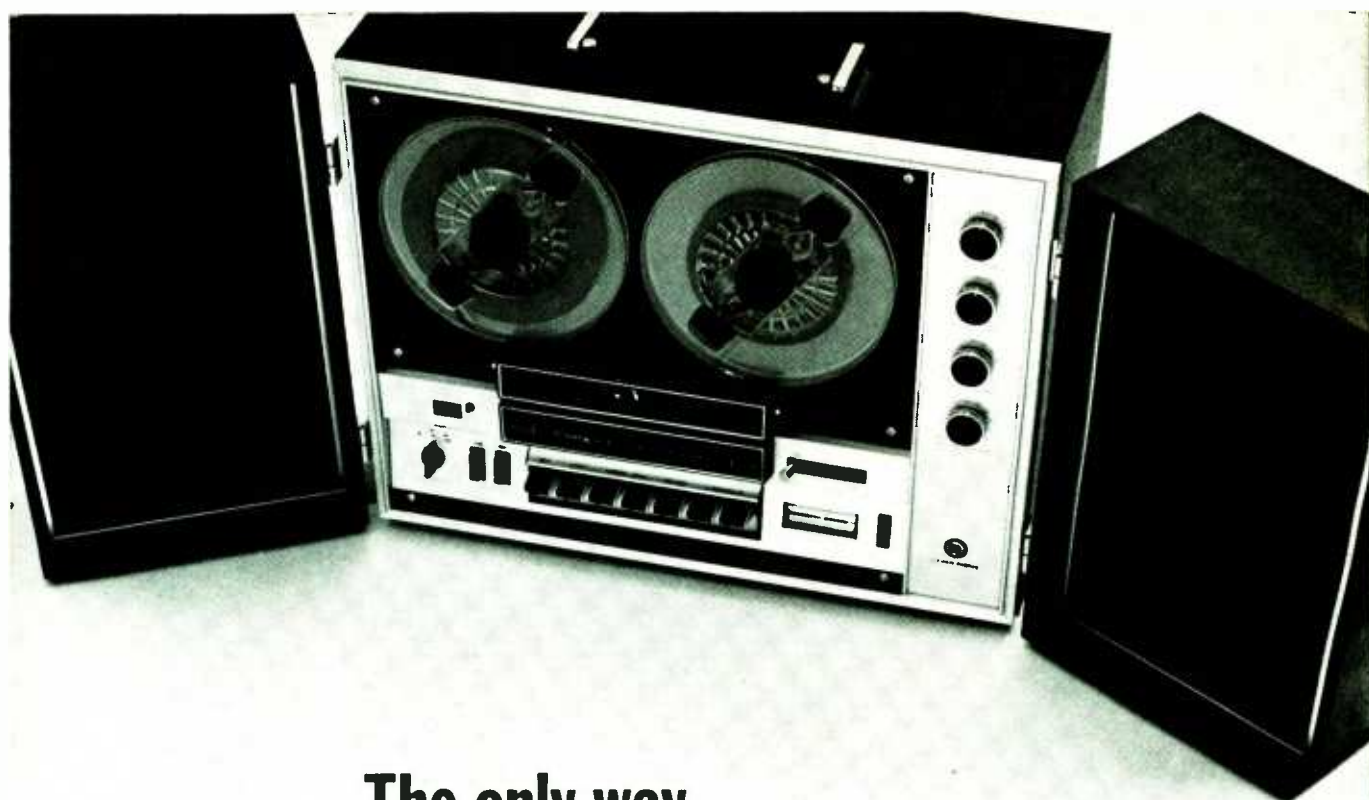
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CL-344

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## The only way to stop it is to turn it off.

The Craig 2402 can be programmed to continuously repeat the forward/reverse cycle. Automatically. Until you turn it off.

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Or, just go forward and stop.

The Craig 2402 Auto Reverse Stereo Tape Recorder is all you'll ever need. It has everything. It does everything. All automatically. Besides a more sophisticated and flexible reversing system, it features built-in sound-on-sound and sound-with-sound, three speeds, detachable hi-compliance speakers and streamlined styling for operational convenience. The Craig 2402 is unequalled performance at just \$349.95\*. The beautiful deck version (model 2405 shown at left) fits into any component stereo system. Just \$289.95\*. Visit your Craig dealer now for a full demonstration.



\*Suggested retail price.

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CRAIG CORPORATION, Products Division, 2302 E. 15th St., Los Angeles, California 90021

CIRCLE 24 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



# Scott's new LR-88 receiver takes the



## out of kit building

Building a kit used to be something you couldn't do with ladies and children present, but Scott's new LR-88 AM/FM stereo receiver kit has changed all that. First, there's the instruction manual. In clear and simple language, it leads you, step-by-step, through every stage of the assembly process. And each stage is illustrated . . . full-size, full-color. Next, there's Scott's ingenious new Kit-Pak®. The parts for each assembly stage are in individual compartments, keyed to the instructions. All wires are color-coded, and pre-cut and pre-stripped to the proper sizes. Difficult or critical sections are pre-wired, pre-aligned, pre-tested, and factory-mounted on printed circuit boards. Is soldering your bugaboo? Scott has provided push-on solderless connectors for the hard-to-get-at spots.

About thirty painless hours after you've started, you've completed one great receiver. The LR-88 is the 100-Watt kit brother to Scott's finest factory-wired beauties. It includes the famous Scott silverplated Field Effect Transistor front end, Integrated Circuit IF strip, all-silicon output circuitry . . . in fact, all the goodies that would cost you over a hundred dollars more if Scott did all the assembling. Performance? Just check the specs below . . . and you'll be amazed at how great a receiver sounds after you've built it yourself. Treat yourself to a weekend of fun and years of enjoyment . . . see the Scott LR-88 at your dealer's today.

**LR-88 Control Features:** Dual Bass and Treble; Loudness; Balance; Volume compensation; Tape monitor; Mono/stereo control; Noise filter; Interstation muting; Dual speaker switches; Stereo microphone inputs; Front panel headphone output; Input selector; Signal strength meter; Zero-center meter; Stereo threshold control; Remote speaker mono/stereo control; Tuning control; Stereo indicator light.

**LR-88 Specifications:** Music Power rating (IHF), 100 Watts @ 4 Ohms; Usable sensitivity, 2.0  $\mu$ V; Harmonic distortion, 0.6%; Frequency response, 15-25,000 Hz  $\pm$  1.5 dB; Cross modulation rejection, 80 dB; Selectivity, 45 dB; Capture ratio, 2.5 dB; Signal/noise ratio, 65 dB; Price, \$334.95.

CIRCLE 100 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

### You'll swear by it



## SCOTT®

Write for complete information on the new Scott components and kits.

H.H. Scott, Inc., Dept. 226-11  
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# NEWS & VIEWS

## NOVEL COURSE TEACHES MUSIC AND AUDIO



*Teacher cues up record; class listens and relates musical selection to text.*

A unique read-and-listen music course, covering everything from basic harmony to stereo tuner distortion, is currently being offered to the nation's schools. Entitled "Enjoy Music More" and designed for eighth grade and higher levels, the project is sponsored by H. H. Scott, Inc. and uses musical material prepared by Columbia Records.

The program, which combines classics and contemporary pops, contains fourteen instruction units on two 12-inch discs. An accompanying "instruction kit" includes a student manual, test book, and answer mask for each student and a teacher's guide. A continuing series of regular repertoire releases is planned as an adjunct to the basic classroom package. The course is the work of Dorothy Bond, a composer and music educator; Gordon Hardy, dean of the Aspen Music School served as a consultant. The manual was prepared by Project Publications, Inc., of New York City, from whom the course may be ordered at \$24.30 per thirty-student set. Additional sets can be ordered in quantities of ten and single sets may eventually be made available for purchase by individuals.

Having "taken the course" ourselves, all we can say is "kudos" to the people responsible. The material combines genuine instruction with entertainment, while generating a feeling of involvement with music and the means for reproducing it. The course moves deftly from a basic know-nothing level to the point at which harmonic textures are analyzed. And the recorded portions comparing the sound of low-fi and hi-fi equipment especially titillated this department.

CIRCLE 145 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

## NEW ACTION ON TWO CONSUMER PROBLEMS

At least two problems aired recently in HF are now under attack by responsible agencies. Wiretapping, blasted in News and Views (May 1968), came in for some comeuppance when Federal agents—invoking for the first time a section of the new omnibus crime-control bill—recently arrested a New York man on a charge of interstate transport of bugging devices.

Also in May, an article in these pages on color TV ["The Hue and the Try"] pointed out the variations in color that afflict video reception. Since then, a special industry committee has been set up to investigate this variability "from station to station, camera to camera, scene to scene, and program to program. . . ." Jointly sponsored by the Electronic Industries Association, the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, the Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers, and the National Association of Broadcasters, the group will "attempt to establish the severity of the variability of color TV reception and identify the possibly contributing causes."

## SOUND EQUIPMENT TO GET SAFETY CHECK

High fidelity equipment and other sound-reproducing wares are among the two hundred product categories included in a safety study by the National Commission on Product Safety, one of President Johnson's consumer

advisory panels. Purpose of the panel is to determine the safety of everyday household items, the responsibility of manufacturers to incorporate safety features into their products, and the efficacy of safety checks made by such existing groups as Underwriters' Laboratories and the American Standards Association.

The Commission has made clear that inclusion of high fidelity component products in its study does not necessarily mean that the Commission has reason to believe they're unsafe.

The group has no legal authority to require manufacturers to improve their safety standards and checks. But it does have the power to publicize its findings, naming specific hazards of specific products.

## TORONTO HI-FI SHOW SLATED FOR THIS MONTH

Southern Ontario audiophiles will be able to see the latest in component high fidelity equipment at the high fidelity show scheduled for November 20 to 23 at the Lord Simcoe Hotel in Toronto. As an added attraction, Canadian recording artists are expected to make an appearance. The show is being held under the auspices of the Canadian Hi-Fi Home Entertainment Show Corporation in co-operation with the Dominion High Fidelity Association.





# The Goosebumper

A very strange and wonderful thing happens when you turn on a Harman-Kardon Five Twenty stereo receiver. If the program material is right and the rest of your system is up-to-snuff, you'll get goosebumps.

No fooling. Goosebumps.

It's kind of like when you're at a concert and the music wells up around you and you get that marvelous shiver of excitement—that feeling that every musician is playing just for you.

The reason our Five Twenty sounds the way it sounds is wideband response. Many manufacturers restrict their amplifiers so that they do not go below 20 Hz or above 20,000 Hz.

We don't.

We build our amplifiers so they go well beyond 20 and 20,000 Hz. The result is a cleanness and openness in our sound that you not only hear, but actually feel. True, it takes a lot more time and money to engineer a product with wideband response. You have to use a highly regulated power supply and every component must be rock-stable. But we think it's worth it.

How else could we have cornered the market on goosebumps?

Hear the Five Twenty soon. Compare it with competitive receivers. We're sure you'll hear and *feel* the difference.

For more information write Harman-Kardon, Inc., 55 Ames Court, Plainview, N.Y. 11803, Box #HF11

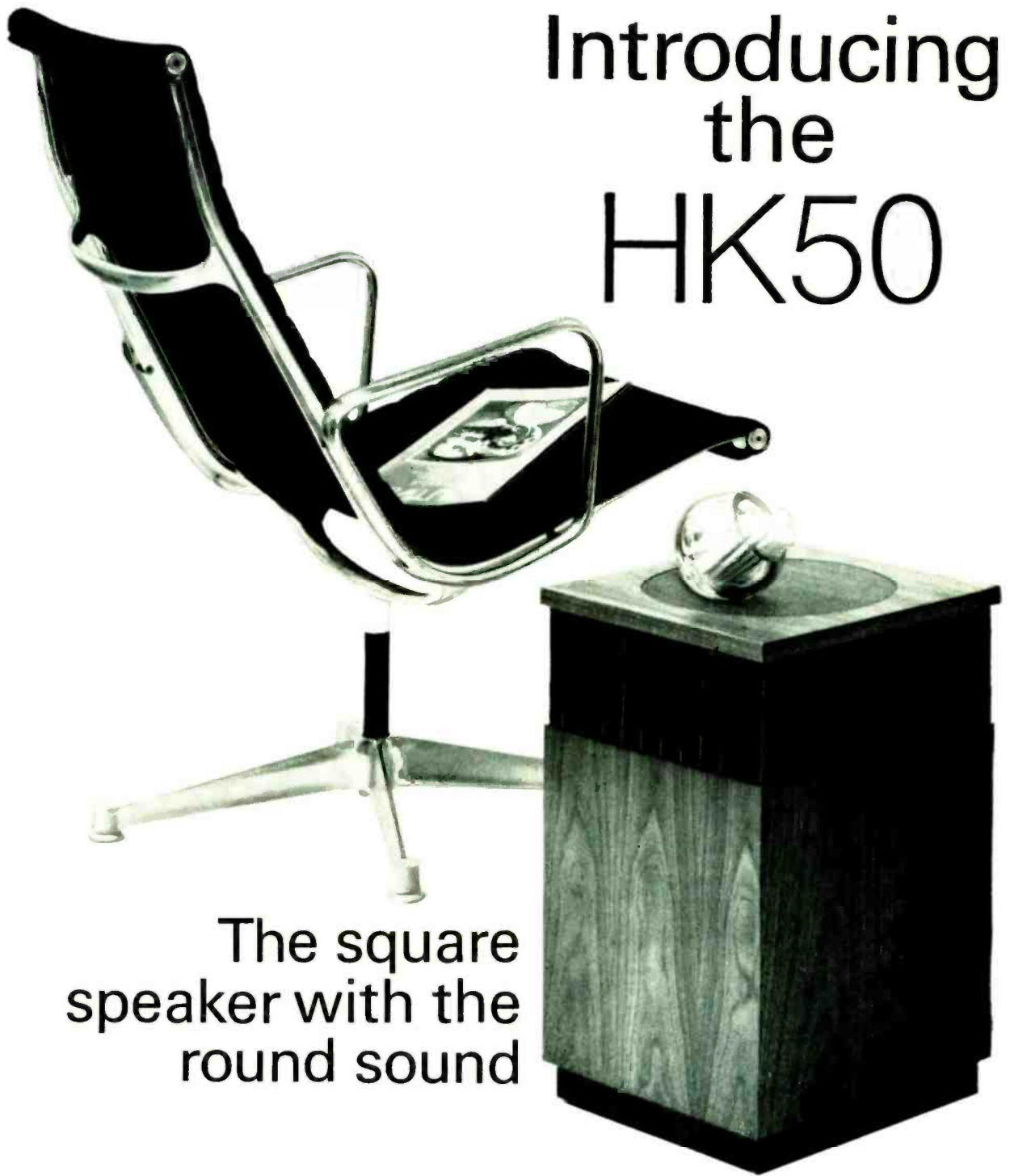
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We want you to hear more music.

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# Introducing the HK50



The square  
speaker with the  
round sound

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HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE



You are looking at the most revolutionary *high performance* omnidirectional speaker ever made. It literally delivers 360° of sound.

Virtually all conventional speaker systems project sound in a direct, forward pattern with rather limited dispersion in all planes. In most instances, 80% of the sound is restricted to a narrow pattern which is beamed directly at the listener. If you are not sitting in exactly the right spot, the major impact of the music is all but lost. This form of directed sound is the opposite of concert hall acoustics where usually 80% of the sound is reflected (from the walls, floor and seats) and only 20% is directed.

The three major benefits of omnidirectional sound are: (1) it dramatically increases stereo depth, (2) it spreads the stereo effect throughout the listening room and (3) it improves the character of the sound itself; bass becomes richer and deeper, the highs smoother and sweeter.

Omnidirectional sound can best be understood in terms of optical analogy. When both speakers face straight ahead, as they do in conventional speaker placement arrangements, each speaker projects a beam of sound that is aimed directly at the listener. The two sounds converge upon the listener like the beams of two headlights. Where the beams

overlap is the stereo area.

Reflected or omnidirectional sound, in contrast, might be compared to an indirectly lighted room which receives its illumination from lamps pointed at the ceiling or the walls. The sources are readily identifiable, but the light is diffused over the entire room with a far greater area of overlap. Just as we distinguish between aimed and scattered light, we might think similarly of aimed and scattered sound.

The most striking aspect of omnidirectional sound and where it differs most from directed sound is in its depth dimension. The feeling of increased depth is chiefly due to the reflection pattern of middle frequency tones, for in this range, reflection no longer follows the mirror pattern. Instead it is like water splashing on a rock, scattering at random. Such general dispersion creates countless sound paths, each varying slightly in transit time between the source and listener. These multiple mid-range paths are the real secret of the astonishing depth of sound achieved by the Harman-Kardon HK50 speakers.

Harman-Kardon's new HK50 speakers have been designed to more faithfully recreate the conditions in the concert hall. Because of their omnidirectional "scatter" design, you can put them behind

chairs or draperies, under a piano, use them as end tables or place them anywhere they look best and still hear the full effect of the music. Hot spots, pinpointed directionality, gritty, ear-shattering highs are eliminated by diffusing the sound over the entire room. The walls of the listening room seem to disappear and you get the feeling that the music extends beyond the room without any sensation of discontinuity.

No matter what speakers you own—be they giants or compacts—you owe it to yourself to hear Harman-Kardon's new HK50 speakers. We think you'll agree that they represent an entirely new and totally refreshing approach to music listening. See and hear a pair soon. They are at your Harman-Kardon dealer now. For more information write Harman-Kardon, Inc., 55 Ames Court, Plainview, N.Y. 11803. Dept. # HF11A



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We want you to hear more music

# EQUIPMENT *in the* NEWS



## HEATH OFFERS COMPACT IN KIT FORM

The first stereo compact in kit form has been announced by Heath. The electronics section is Heath's AR-14 receiver (stereo FM and control amplifier rated for 15 watts music power per channel), which the buyer assembles himself. The record player is a factory-built BSR 500 fitted with a Shure pickup. The walnut cabinet is preassembled and finished, and its louvered sliding lid may be left open or closed while the set is playing. Less speakers, the AD-27 sells for \$169.95.

CIRCLE 150 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



## NEW CLARK HEADPHONES

David Clark Co. of Worcester, Mass., announces the addition of the Clark/300 model to its stereo headset line. Retailing for \$19, the headphones are supplied with coil cord and fitted plug. Rated response is 20 to 17,000 Hz; impedance is 8 ohms.

CIRCLE 148 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



## SPHERICAL SPEAKERS FROM THE ORIENT

A tastefully styled black ball from Japan conceals four free-edge woofers and four horn-type tweeters to form a speaker system with 360 degrees of sound dispersion. The ball, 13½ inches in diameter and weighing 26.4 pounds, is the JVC Nivico 5303 speaker system, a unit rated to handle up to 80 watts of power. The speaker system, consisting of separate hermetically sealed metal enclosures for the speakers, can either be mounted on a pedestal or suspended from the ceiling. Price is \$199.95.

CIRCLE 147 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



## NOISE-REDUCING SONY DECK

From Sony/Superscope comes word of the 666D open-reel tape recorder, incorporating Sony's SNR noise-reduction system and ESP automatic reverse. The circuitry is said to provide noise-free playback of all recorded tapes by automatically reducing the gain of the playback amplifier during quiet passages, when background noise is most predominant, while doubling the dynamic range of the recorded material. The ESP system senses the modulations on the tape, and automatically reverses tape direction within ten seconds after they stop. The \$575 deck uses three motors.

CIRCLE 149 ON READER-SERVICE CARD





KSJR/ KSJV STEREO FM RADIO SAINT JOHN'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGEVILLE, MINNESOTA 56321

DIRECTOR OF  
BROADCASTING

February 12, 1968

Mr. Hermon H. Scott, President  
H. H. Scott, Inc.  
111 Powdermill Road  
Maynard, Massachusetts 01754

Dear Mr. Scott:

We have had some interesting experiences with Scott receivers that I thought might interest you. KSJR-FM is a 150,000 watt stereo station broadcasting from St. John's University. Seventy-five miles to the south we operate a second station, KSJV-FM, which broadcasts throughout Minneapolis and St. Paul. This is a satellite station and as such it receives its programming "off-the-air" from KSJR-FM.

In building KSJV-FM we installed a professional rebroadcast receiver. It soon became apparent that the receiver was improperly aligned and that it had several other technical problems. These problems became so severe that we had to take it out of service and return it to the factory. With no auxiliary receiver available, I suggested to our engineer that we might try using the Scott 344 receiver located as a monitor in my office. He reluctantly agreed and we installed the 344 on Thanksgiving. Since that time it has operated in an unheated metal building in its walnut cabinet in weather as cold as 25 below zero, twenty-four hours a day. We feed our broadcast lines directly from it and we have not had to tune the unit more than once or twice since it was installed.

This past week we conducted a survey of our listeners in Minneapolis and St. Paul and I will list some of their comments:

"The quality of your signal is superb and so are your musical programs"; "The biggest problem at the beginning of your operation was the poor quality signal. With the solution of the technical problems, you have undoubtedly the best radio station going"; "The quality of sound emanating from your station is especially good"; "The sound here in Minneapolis is especially good".

I think comments such as the above are particularly interesting in view of the fact that all of Minneapolis and St. Paul are served by the signal from one Scott receiver.

## A satisfied customer is our best advertisement

(See Scott's whole range of top-performing, long-lasting receivers, in both AM and FM stereo, from 55 to 120 Watts)

# SCOTT®

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Export: Scott International, Maynard, Mass. 01754

CIRCLE 100 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

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NOVEMBER 1968

55

BY THE PERAS DANCE  
OH! HOW I HATE TO GET UP  
IN THE MORNING





1918-1968:

# *From* **OVER THERE** *to* **KILL FOR PEACE** BY GENE LEES

**O**N NOVEMBER 11, 1918, World War I came to its conclusion. It was the war to end all wars, the war to make the world safe for democracy. In the half century since, the United States has been through two major wars and now is involved in a third large military action which, if it is not officially a war, has all the earmarks of a war save one: songs. Songs of enthusiasm for the Vietnam conflict are conspicuous by their scarcity. Excepting Sgt. Barry Sadler's *Ballad of the Green Berets*, the several songs he wrote for an album built around it, and one song by Pat Boone, there have not been any well-known pacans to the war.

The United States has traditionally gone to war singing. The Revolutionary War, the Civil War, the Spanish-American War, each produced its share of songs. Some were good, a lot were saccharine and silly. Would you believe *My Sweetheart Went Down with the Maine*? It had its moment, then went to the special limbo reserved for forgotten songs. The best-known song of that war was, of course, *Break the News to Mother*. Some of the others were sentimental, but most were cheery and optimistic. Whatever their value as art, the hit songs of that vanished time were mostly enthusiastic or at least acquiescent towards America's cause, whatever it might at the moment be. The classic song of World War I was *Over There*, full of bumptious confidence that once the Yanks got on the scene they would settle things forthwith and with minimum fuss.

If *Over There* is the best-remembered, others were close behind it in popularity: *K-K-K-Katy*, *When the Boys Come Home*, *Hinky-Dinky Parlez-Vous*, and *Oh How I Hate to Get Up in the Morning*. The last of these was the only one that came even close to objecting to the destiny of all those drafted men, and it is a good-natured gripe at most. *Over There* was the work of George M. Cohan. Cohan's *Give My*

*Regards to Broadway* was written before the war, but it gained a sort of honorary war song status. Though *It's a Long Way to Tipperary* and *Pack Up Your Troubles in Your Old Kit Bag* were both British, American troops adopted them warmly.

These were the most popular songs of the war. But a perusal of some of the other titles of the period is instructive, serving to emphasize the general public optimism. And some of them are very funny, such as *If He Can Fight Like He Can Love*, *Good Night, Germany*. That was not, incidentally, the longest title of the war. This distinction probably belongs to *Just Like Washington Crossed the Delaware*, *General Pershing Will Cross the Rhine*. Black Jack never did cross it, of course: that honor remained for General George S. Patton's men a quarter century later.

The optimism of the time can be detected in *Keep Your Head Down*, *Fritzzy Boy*; *I'd Like to See the Kaiser with a Lily in his Hand*; and *We'll Knock the Hell Out of Heligoland*. Interservice rivalry was evidently an issue even then: perhaps irked by all the publicity the army was getting, some pro-navy songwriter irritably asserted *The Navy Took Them Over and the Navy Will Bring Them Home*.

Love had its moments in *My Buddy*, *My Belgian Rose*, and the one genuinely beautiful song to come out of the war, *Roses of Picardy*. Among the most syrupy songs, certainly one of the worst, and even more certainly one of the most successful, was *Rose of No Man's Land*, which was sung around player pianos all over America. ("Through the war's great curse stands the Red Cross nurse; she's the Rose of No Man's Land.") In somewhat the same class was *Hello, Central*, *Give Me No Man's Land*. In 1901, during the early days of the telephone, Charles K. Harris wrote—Tin Pan Alley was nothing if not opportunistically topical—the tear jerker *Hello, Central*, *Give Me Heaven*, which is about a little girl trying

to reach her dead mother on the phone. It was a huge hit, and it inspired any number of *Hello, Central* songs. At the very utterance of these words, audiences duly wept. *Hello, Central, Give Me No Man's Land* was built on this model.

Wistfulness was, on the whole, missing from World War I songs. It was a simple-hearted, matter-of-fact, and to a large extent rural America that went off to war, and possibly the most typical title was *Goodby Ma, Goodby Pa, Goodby Mule*. That's how it was. (*How Ya Gonna Keep 'Em Down on the Farm, After They've Seen Patee?* was, incidentally, not a war song; it first appeared in 1919.)

AMERICA'S SONGS GREW much more sophisticated in the period between the two great wars. It was the era of Jerome Kern, George Gershwin, Cole Porter. Even Irving Berlin, who had written one of the most successful patriotic numbers of the first war, had evolved as a composer, using more complex harmonies, subtler melodic lines, and more literate lyrics. It was to be anticipated that World War II's songs would be different from those of the previous war. But the difference is more than one would expect. In some ways it is startling. There is much more melancholy in the songs of the second war. And those meant to whip up a patriotic fervor somehow seem synthetic and contrived compared with the convinced outpourings of Berlin and the others during the preceding war.

The best-known World War II songs of this kind were *Ballad for Americans, Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition, The Ballad of Roger Young, Any Bonds Today, and There's a Star-Spangled Banner Waving Somewhere*. They sounded as if they'd been written at the request of the Office of War Information, and perhaps they were. And one wonders too how popular they actually were—whether, in spite of their considerable exposure on radio, they really were taken to the hearts of the people and sung by them to express the mood of the moment. Far more effective, and better-remembered, were the various official military songs—*The Marine Hymn, Anchors Aweigh, The Army Air Corps song, and The Field Artillery March*, better known as *The Caissons Go Rolling Along*—all actually antedating World War II.

*The Marine Hymn* was first printed in 1918 by the Marine Corps publicity office; later it was copyrighted by the Corps. Its music was taken from Offenbach's *opéra bouffe Geneviève de Brabant*. The origin of its lyric is uncertain. One Marine Corps version holds that it was written in the mid-1800s by an unknown marine. *Anchors Aweigh* was written in 1906, and later adopted by the navy. *The Field Artillery March*—for years attributed to the authorship of John Philip Sousa, because of a band arrangement he made of it in 1918—was later discovered to have been written in 1908 by a field artillery officer, Lt. Edmund L. Gruber, who was then serving in the Philippines. *The Army Air Corps song* dates from 1939; it emerged from a songwriting contest spon-

sored by the Air Corps and was written by Robert Crawford, a voice teacher at Princeton University.

The value the professional military ascribes to music can be seen in the fact that in 1950 the Army tried to drum up another song. It invited all sorts of professional songwriters to the Pentagon, then took them on a three-day tour of military camps to watch the army shooting off its guns and rockets, all in the hope that one of the visitors would be inspired to produce a suitable new song. It is perhaps indicative of the changing attitudes of the professional songwriter to the military and to war that no one came up with anything that the army found sufficiently blood-stirring. In the end the Pentagon went back to the field artillery song, changing its lyric to "and the Army goes marching along," a revision that is something less than inspired.

Despite these songs—all of them seeming to have some sort of quasi-official sponsorship—the majority of the popular songs of World War II, the songs the people truly did like and sing, were sad: the Jerome Kern/Oscar Hammerstein *The Last Time I Saw Paris*, for example; and *I'll Be Seeing You* (which is also about lost Paris, as one discovers on hearing the seldom sung verse); *When the Lights Go On Again All Over the World*, which expressed a war-weariness and hunger for peace that is absent from the songs of the previous war; *Goodbye Sue; I Don't Want to Set the World on Fire; I Left My Heart at the Stage Door Canteen; The White Cliffs of Dover* (which is an American song, not an English song, as is widely presumed); and *A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square* (which is an English song). Much more than in World War I, the most popular songs concerned themselves with the loneliness and disruption of war. Many, of course, made no direct mention of the war, but its hovering presence was implicit in the lyrics, which caught the flavor of the time. People were frightened.

There were, of course, cheerful songs: *Don't Sit Under the Apple Tree, The Beer Barrel Polka, Deep in the Heart of Texas*. They had nothing to do with the war, but everybody sang them: indeed, it seemed that people sang them to forget about the war. Johnny Mercer cleverly exploited the argot of the time in *The G.I. Jive*, and Dietz and Schwarz amusingly described the dilemma of the girls left at home in *They're Either Too Young or Too Old*.

What had changed in America? Why were the songs so different in attitude and content?

The first bright flash of the communications explosion had happened. World War I was, in almost all ways, the watershed between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. For Americans, war in those days was a faraway thing, still tinged with romance. To be sure, news came faster than it had when General Custer's men were exterminated by Sitting Bull's at the Little Big Horn, the story of which took a day or two to reach East Coast newspapers. But it still was not vivid: battles were something people read about in gray and lifeless print.

A few years after the war, however, radio came



to the world, and in World War II people got their news within hours from H. V. Kaltenborn, Gabriel Heatter ("Ah yes, there's good news tonight from England"), and Eric Sevareid. Edward R. Murrow was in London, and in some of his broadcasts you could hear the bombs falling. Listeners knew that they were falling on people, ordinary men and women like themselves, and on children like their own. And the movies were full of it. Though Hollywood covered war's face with make-up—John Payne or John Wayne or someone of that interchangeable ilk saving the world at critical junctures of the conflagration—the newsreels that accompanied the features did not: those were real dead bodies lying there, and real tanks burning in the North Africa desert, and then real and weary G.I.s trudging up the hot dry roads of the Italian peninsula or floating dead in the water of Omaha Beach or getting shot to hell in the boscage country of Normandy. And, aside from newsreels and radio, the traditional media were becoming more realistic. Nobody who saw it can ever forget the *Life* magazine photo of a dead American soldier half-buried in the sand on the beach of some nameless South Pacific atoll, the uniform on his bloated body lightly sprinkled with maggots.

The communications media were, alas, taking all the fun out of war: people even at home were beginning to know what it really was like.

If radio was a critical between-the-wars technological innovation, two more followed hard after the second war, two developments the implications of which no one would immediately grasp: the tape recorder and home television. Television existed in this country in the early 1930s, but few people knew about it, and the broadcasting schedule was so slight as to be worthless. Wire recorders and paper-tape recorders appeared in limited quantity during the war, but the plastic-tape recorder did not come into widespread use until after it.

Korea was America's first televised war. And compared with the intense day-after-day coverage the TV industry has given Vietnam, its reportage was slight. Nor did all homes have TV sets. Today, the home without one, even the hovel without one, is a rarity. Still, the coverage had its impact even then.

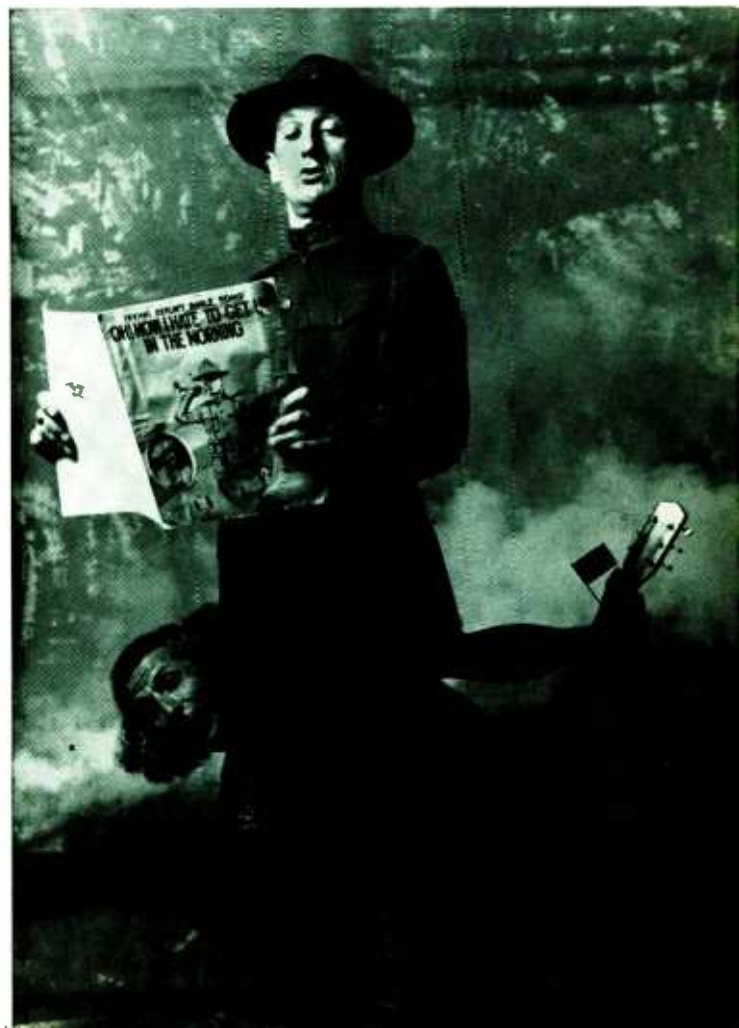
There was another factor. America did not join World War I until almost three years after its beginning, World War II until more than two years after its outbreak. Korea arrived suddenly, and the propaganda machine had no chance to prepare the people for it. America went into it aching, sadly—the people had hoped for a long respite from fighting, and World War II was only five years behind them.

The Korean war produced only one song of any importance, *Dear John Letter*; as its title suggests, it's about a soldier who gets a letter telling him he's lost his woman to someone else. In other words, the war has ruined his life. That song may well have been the turning point, although in 1941 Mugsy Spanier had recorded something called *Stop the War, the Cats Are Killing Themselves*. It was a musician's protest—musicians have curious insight—and in any

case it was not widely known. Somewhat associated with the Korean War was *Old Soldiers Never Die*, the lyrics of which General Douglas MacArthur quoted after President Truman fired him. But it was hardly a musical standard of the war, and it became almost a joke.

**N**OW THERE IS Vietnam. Barry Sadler did his bit to popularize it, and Pat Boone recorded a song called *Wish You Were Here, Buddy*, supposedly a letter from a soldier in Vietnam threatening to do painful things to a draft-card burner the moment he gets home. Though well-written, Boone's song is hardly an example of militaristic exuberance. In its way, it even serves to emphasize the agonizing division of America the war has produced.

For the rest, popular music today presents a panorama of antiwar sentiment, some of it quite bitter, such as the Fugs's *Kill for Peace*. Joan Baez' *Saigon Bride* is about a soldier who marries a Vietnamese girl and begins to feel guilt over killing her people. Bob Dylan's *Masters of War*, a pessimistic and brutal work, projects his (and many other people's) disenchantment with the powers above them. Phil Ochs, Country Joe and the Fish, and Tom Paxton have taken their shots at war, and you can hear young people singing their songs in Central Park be-ins. Pete Seeger caused a scandal when he sang *Waist Deep in the Big Muddy* on the Smothers Brothers television show, using a last line that accused Lyndon Johnson of getting America into that predicament. Network officials bleeped the line out. Significantly,



the Smothers Brothers were furious, and invited Seeger back. He sang the song again—including its last line.

Despite these examples, there have been few, if any, songs that mention the war directly, even to object to it. What today's songs oppose is war in general and the powers-that-be (now known as the Establishment) that dictate national actions—with, so a great many persons claim, a growing and dangerous indifference to the actual wishes of the people. Satirist Tom Lehrer turns out murderously anti-Establishment and antiwar songs like *Who's Next* (about nuclear proliferation); *So Long, Mom (I'm Off to Drop the Bomb)*, which he describes as "a bit of prenostalgia" for World War III; and *Send the Marines*, which deals with America's alleged penchant for using military force instead of diplomacy, and at the slightest provocation. When Lehrer wrote the last-named, his view was not a popular one, but today even respectable Establishment politicians are finding it expedient to express such a sentiment to their constituents. Bob Dylan fires broadsides at society as a whole; Joan Baez turns for a moment from folk singing to record an album of antiwar poems; the rock movement laments a national malaise and expresses an iceberg of discontent with authoritarianism and, above all, with the military.

One of the most perceptive men in the world of popular music is Russell Sanjek, public relations director of Broadcast Music Incorporated.

New York, he points out, was the nerve center of American popular music in World War I. "As a result," he said recently, "all the songs of that period reflected the attitudes of these people, the people in the New York professional music world. We'll never know what was going on underneath. Perhaps there were songs that dissented from these attitudes, but they never had a chance to be heard because they couldn't get past the Establishment. The only way a song could become popular was through vaudeville and the restaurants where they had entertainment, and New York controlled all that."

New York music business people, Sanjek noted, had certain general characteristics. They were largely middle-class and middle-European in origin. Most were either first- or second-generation Americans: Irving Berlin was born in Russia. They all had a hunger to be accepted as loyal and upstanding Americans, and this found its way into the songs.

By World War II, New York had lost some of its grip on the music world. Major radio broadcasts originated in Chicago and Los Angeles, as well as New York. Still, however, antiwar songs—if any—could not get past the Establishment. "I'm certain," Sanjek said, "that there were songs in places like Nashville and Bessemer, Ala., that told the story in a different way, but we were not permitted to hear them."

Today, he pointed out, almost everyone has a tape recorder: it is a little less common than the television set. Anybody with a reasonably professional tape recorder can, theoretically, and often in actual

practice, become a record producer and music publisher. And everyone has a phonograph. If radio will not broadcast a song, it still can become successful: the Mothers of Invention became an important recording act even though most of their material was barred from radio.

Even the music business Establishment—and there still is one—is different from that of World War I. It is almost impossible to find anybody in the music business, even at the level of wealthy executives, who is in favor of the war. And so they do not oppose the making of protest songs. Even if they did, the young people who write most of them wouldn't give a damn: they'd make and distribute their own records.

"The Establishment," Sanjek says, in an interesting phrase, "has been fragmented."

But there is another, even more subtle, aspect of the question. The music business is a whore. It will make and market anything whatsoever that it thinks will sell, as witness its processing of propaganda for drug use. It does very little for purposes of honor, and when it does do something for nonprofit reasons, it is to salve its conscience and improve its public relations image. If it is not producing prowar songs, and if it is producing antiwar and anti-Establishment songs, it's because that's what its public, particularly the young public, wants it to do. Why the public will buy such songs is, or should be, already clear: the communications media have brought the war into the American living room.

"Television ended the war in Vietnam," Sanjek said. "And I think it was because Americans were seeing their own blond crewcut boys burning down houses. And we are, or think we are, a very good people. Communications have brought us face to face with the charge of guilt." Gerry Mulligan, the great jazz musician, and another very thoughtful man, put it another way: "What's happening is that America is losing its illusion of itself."

In other words, this is a much hipper America than the one that loved *Over There*.

The change was brought home to me by an incident I witnessed in Switzerland this past summer. On the Fourth of July, the town of Montreux threw a celebration for American college students who were visiting the town. The community provided fireworks, a local brass band, and scrap wood with which to build a bonfire. The assembled young people were well-dressed and well-groomed, and most, probably, were from the upper middle class.

A full moon threw its path across Lac Lemman. The flames roared higher. All these young people began to sing. At first they sang current rock and semirock hits, bright and energetic songs. Then, as the fire waned, they all sat down and sang in sad and yearning voices *Where Have All the Flowers Gone?* To hear these American youngsters, so far from home, singing on the Fourth of July this antiwar song as their evocation of what they most touchingly remembered of America, was the clearest possible indication that the concept of patriotism has changed since the days of *Over There*.





## How Seriously Can We Take Rossini's Serious Operas?

by Jan Meyerowitz

FOUR DECADES AGO the question would have been at best a matter of private discussion for a specialized group of musicologists. The ordinary opera lover would have answered "not at all"; he had read often enough—even in the writing of admirers—that between the light-hearted master and the Tragic Muse no spiritual affinity existed. In fact, there was a period when the *opera buffa* themselves were not taken "seriously." To the audiences of Wagner's time, Rossini's plots and their musical treatment seemed inhumanly foolish; the deflation of the fairy-tale mood in *Cenerentola*, the puppet plot of *L'Italiana in Algeri* were regarded as artistically inadmissible, even as humor. By the turn of this century, Rossini's operas—with the sole exception of *The Barber of Seville*—had been swept from the stage.

Today, in this centenary year of Rossini's death (November 13, 1868), his comic genius is of course fully recognized. In our age of revivals ("exhumations," as the Germans call them) forgotten *opera buffa* have been rescued from the archives; *La Cenerentola* and *Le Comte Ory*, for example, are completely cleared of dust. And while the *opera seria* have not fared so happily, a

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growing number of voices are prepared not only to consider our question above but to take an unconventional view.

The solidly negative attitude towards Rossini's serious operas was shaken for the first time by the revival of *Mosè in Egitto* (*Moses in Egypt*) at La Scala in 1934. The opera was given in honor of Herr Robert Ley, the Nazi labor leader who later became one of the defendants in the Nuremberg trials. It has never been properly established if this presentation of Pharaoh's discomfiture was staged as a subtle dig by some Italian officials with a mind of their own (there were many of them at that time) or if it was only a freak occurrence—a situation quite in keeping with *Mosè* itself and the problem we are going to discuss, since nobody knew if it was serious, comical, or meaningless. (This eyewitness can report that the faces of the *pezzi grossi* of both nationalities who were sitting in the Royal Box did not reveal any thoughts whatsoever.)

That 1934 production did not bring in its wake a wave of revivals, but a present-day European traveler can at least see one or two of Rossini's *opera seria* staged every year. In the 1960s what once appeared silly makes a different impression, not because we have become more tolerant but because of deeper changes in us. In Rossini's cool reptilian treatment of serious and comic subjects we can see an early appearance of a phenomenon more typical of the twentieth century than of any preceding age: the trend Ortega y Gasset calls the "dehumanization" of the arts and which he considers the essential feature of the latest developments in our culture. Rossini's lack of that "soulfulness" which Romantics of all shades considered the indispensable condition for artistic creation now bestows on the composer an unforeseen sudden actuality. For the Romantic generations, Rossini's renderings of some human situations were evil jokes; for most of us today, the same scenes have a strong impact. We are aware that greatness and depth are not the exclusive privileges of the "soulful" breed of composers (such as Weber and Schumann, who hated Rossini).

**W**HY, THEN, HAS IT taken us so long—is still taking us so long—to re-examine the serious operas of Rossini? Even in an intellectual climate favoring "dehumanized" (and therefore "pure," "absolute," "disinfected") art, the old objections came up again, especially the most common one: that Rossini's serious operas are written in the same style as his comic operas. This criticism is as old as these operas themselves and has hardly ever been challenged. Rossini's own procedures seem to indicate that he thought so too. There is the well-known fact that the overture to *The Barber* had previously opened *Elisabetta*, an opera in which Queen Elizabeth I is portrayed as a tragic heroine renouncing—in lively, energetic coloratura—all earthly love. While 150 years of practice have proven that the overture fits the later comic opera, to the ears of real Rossini experts the piece

betrays its original function as introduction to a serious work; certain little sighs, the allegro theme in minor, the "mighty modulation" at the end are—as Rossini's musical symbols go—relatively tragic modes of expression. (The composer's cavalier approach in using the *Elisabetta* music as the overture, and elsewhere, in his most successful comic opera eventually killed the earlier opera: it makes a weird impression when the familiar rousing crescendo of *The Barber's* overture appears as the finale of *Elisabetta's* Act I—the tragic high spot of the libretto; and few things in the whole history of the theater are more bewildering than to hear the great Virgin Queen singing Rosina's melody "*Io sono docile.*")

Rossini's works contain other famous specimens of his indifference. A few minutes before Desdemona's death in *Otello* the orchestra intones the scurrilous crescendo melody of the Slander Aria from *The Barber*. (A very awkward modification of this passage was made later, supposedly by the Master himself.) The famous overture to *Semiramide* boasts some of those rare passages in the instrumental literature that have a truly inherent humorous quality perceptible to everybody: the woodwind sparkle around the principal theme of the allegro section—which is already quite funny by itself with its twelve repeated notes—and the conclusion of the second theme in which the piccolo seems to panic at being left alone up in the air. But this is the introduction to an opera dealing in murder, earthquake, a royal ghost, proud and evil princes, gloomy priests, tender mother-son relations, etc., but no light element whatsoever. Examples of comic-sounding music in serious situations can be found by the hundreds in Rossini's operas, and all the possible jokes and sarcasms have been made about them during the century and a half since the premiere of Rossini's then madly successful first serious opera, *Tancredi*.

How can this absurd flaw in Rossini's music be explained? Was it lack of conscience, of consciousness, was it cynicism or "olympic indifference," was it an all-too-ready compliance with the fashion of his time (a form of commercialism, of which most German critics accused the composer), or was it real insensitivity? The usual answer is: "All of these things to some degree." But no doctor is satisfied with a multiple diagnosis and neither should we be.

I myself believe firmly that the reason for Rossini's puzzling artistic and personal behavior was *modesty*. The absence of a Beethoven's or Wagner's self-esteem prevented him from making the supreme effort, from doing his best. As he himself admitted to the visiting Hanslick in 1864: "These [operas] are little things that once were fashionable but are passé now." Only once in his life did he work very hard rather than rely on his wondrous creative facility: that was the revision of *Maometto II* as *Le Siège de Corinthe*, for which he was inspired by the special royal encouragement of Charles X. But in general he was satisfied with what came to him effortlessly.

Our affectionate tolerance towards Rossini can change to regret, even anger, at potentialities unful-





The one Rossini serious opera that retained its popularity into the twentieth century, even *William Tell* finally fell from favor. Above, Giovanni Martinelli and Rosa Ponselle in one of the last Met productions.

filled, when we hear some of the mighty music he occasionally produced. Already in *Tancredi* we find poised tunes different from anything he had written before. In *Mosè* the outbreak of the Egyptian Darkness, the lament of the people in the dark, and Pharaoh's regret bring forth majestic passages, masterpieces of precise and pertinent expression that stand comparison with any opera or oratorio by the very greatest masters. The last act of *Otello* rises to great dramatic truth and was praised even by Rossini's greatest enemies. E.T.A. Hoffmann, for example, wondered how a man who could write such music would otherwise compose only "grimacing capers and roulades." At recent performances of the work many people reported being more impressed by Rossini's "Willow Song" and "Prayer" than by the corresponding passages in Verdi's *Otello* (but this means comparing incomparables: Rossini's exquisite canzone and aria with Verdi's nearly veristic sing song fragments for his distraught heroine).

Some of Rossini's serious ideas turned out to be influential inventions and have been usurped and, as it is generally but rashly thought, improved by later masters. The Ghost Scene from *Semiramide* contains some very appropriate horror music, romantic enough to reappear, somewhat streamlined, in Verdi's *Trovatore*. The stretta of the *Otello*/Iago duet reappears to conclude Act III of *Rigoletto*. One of Desdemona's expressive phrases returns as Schumann's *Mondnacht*. The last terzet of *Semiramide* is strewn all over Verdi's *Macbeth*. The idea of the

orchestral epilogue to express "redemption-after-the-catastrophe" that makes the ending of *Mosè* so outstanding reappears to close Wagner's *Ring*. And so on.

STILL, THE FREQUENT OCCURRENCE of great inspiration cannot hide or eclipse the fact that Rossini's spontaneous outpour bypassed his intellectual control. He showed little strength or even cleverness in the organization of his material. The purposeful contrast between bright and somber, joyous and tragic music, that makes *Don Giovanni* the most interesting of all operas, that gives *Fidelio* the character of a gradual descent to and a victorious return from Hell, is not found in Rossini's operas, since the art of characterization is the weakest side of his musical creation. Here and there he tries to suggest contrasts, but so pointlessly that our souls do not co-operate. Hoffmann's remark that Rossini's ideas always appear in the wrong place is, of course, exaggerated. But there is rarely more than a rudiment of right intentions. Rossini may introduce dissonant chords on words like "vendicar" ("avenge") or "distruggerlo" ("destroy him") in the terzet from *Otello* but he does it as if he were paying a toll, after which he continues his lively, vigorous, but neutral C major swing. And the same happens in the all-over frame of a whole opera: an earthquake, a murder, a ghost, a passage through the Red Sea, an execution will impress the master strongly enough to find the right accent for a whole number. But he never shows the superior control needed to create the continuous shifts from light to dark that we admire in Weber's *Freischütz*, even in Offenbach's *Tales of Hoffmann*.

How does this peculiar composer fare when he has to represent the deepest moving force of musical drama, love? All of his librettos are love stories, without exception—only in *William Tell* does it play a secondary role. And all of his operas have love duets, except *Otello* (a shortcoming profusely corrected by Boito and Verdi). Two of the finest and most typical love duets are found in *Mosè*—they bathe in beautifully shifting parallel thirds and sixths and in sweet, caressing coloraturas. The expression of erotism, though, is cool and distant—although we are, quite mysteriously, aware of Rossini's "competence" in this matter. He is at his best in sensitively ironic love scenes such as the trio at the end of *The Barber* and the many charmingly indecent scenes of *Le Comte Ory*. In general, love stands still in Rossini's arias and duets—a remnant of the classical style which Mozart had already overpowered. The Romantic love duet shows love as a dialectical process; the scene between Zerlina and Don Giovanni, short as it is, demonstrates this most strikingly, as much as the most monumental later examples: the fourth act of *Les Huguenots* and the whole of *Tristan*. Rossini's lovers are usually presented in a state of static tenderness, singing mellifluous strains. Then, in a recitative or action passage, something will be said or will happen to excite them and they'll let

loose—but more like dogs or horses romping about in a field (the most impressive example: the stretta “*Cielo, in qual estasi*” from *La Donna del lago*). We are baffled when we read that Rossini was considered the “Rubens of music” in his time. For us who have experienced the full possibilities of Eros-inspired music, Rossini’s sensuality, when it grows stronger than a caress, is rather a very energetic tickle than a passion.

Thus it seems that, on the whole, criticism of Rossini’s serious operas as suffering from a lack of tragic character—of character in general—is justified. But could this shortcoming really prevent these operas from becoming repertory pieces today? Modern aesthetics have greatly disassociated themselves from classic-romantic concepts; and if Rossini’s *opera seria* were capable of functioning on their own terms, they could be the rage again. Legions of music lovers would cherish Rossini’s special form of “absolute music” in which “pure melody” is more important than the elements of “character”—if it really *were* that kind of music. Contemporary critical admirers thought it was and they derived an almost obsessive pleasure from it: among them Hegel and Stendhal, Grillparzer, and Nietzsche—men whose musical sensitivity was certainly deeper than that of most musicians. Even among the Romantics there were many who at least “enjoyed,” though they “did not love,” Rossini. Hegel and Stendhal celebrated Rossini with magnificent prose, Grillparzer wanted to write a philosophical essay “Rossini, or the Frontiers of Music and Poetry”—as a sequel to Lessing’s famous “Laokoon, or the Frontiers of Visual Art and Poetry.” True, these men occasionally worried about their addiction; Hegel felt a bit ashamed when he started preferring Rossini’s Figaro to Mozart’s—but we could have the presumption to explain to them that saturated superintelligences will have a greater need for pure (or, as Nietzsche put it, “animalish”) music than ordinary minds that must worry about their intellectual dignity.

It will be pointed out that the equation of Rossini-addiction and love for absolute music does not work. When we classify Rossini’s music as “pure art” we make light of some serious blemishes which appear on close examination. True, Rossini’s is not the only musical style that ignores the elements of local color and landscape, that underplays descriptive characterization. Preromantic operas, for instance, do not have those features—neither Mozart’s nor Gluck’s nor Rameau’s—and certainly no earlier works do. They treat secular and religious topics virtually in the same way (which is at least as strange as the failure of Rossini and his Italian predecessors to distinguish between serious and light music). No distinction is drawn among Hellenic, Roman, Biblical, Near- or Far-Eastern, medieval, and South American subjects: they are all treated in the same universal, dignified, objective style. Rameau’s *Les Indes galantes* travels over half of the world, to the most exotic places, without changing musical color. And the differences between serious and light inspirations are in general

not very much sharper than in Rossini’s more carefully worked operas.

Why then do we feel that Rossini’s style does not fit the qualification of a “universal objective” style? Because all too special particular influences of a lower and unfortunately very characteristic kind mar the purity of that style. The galloping C major march that introduces Jehovah’s priests in *Moïse* (the 1827 revision of *Mosè*) and the F major polka that brings the priests of Baal on the stage in *Semiramide* may be very pretty (the latter is beautifully orchestrated) but they are typical of a very particular local color and musical habit—and not very suggestive of ancient Egypt or Babylon. They have a very *wrong* character—an irresponsible, although delicious, *carabinieri-pompieri* vigor which deflates the dignity and the objectivity of the style. We can accept pure music without characteristic distinctions, but Rossini betrays us: much of his music *is* characteristic . . . of the Municipal Band of Pesaro.

**T**ODAY WE ARE wistful enough to endure these charming impurities. Many Verdi operas contain passages of this kind—and they are much cruder. They are numerous in *Nabucco*, they get rarer by and by, but can still be found in *Ballo in maschera* and *Don Carlo*. Of these passages Hanslick said: “They sound as if someone jumps in through the window and slaps you in the face.” They may disturb some listeners, but they don’t prevent Verdi’s operas from functioning. It is the torrent of the drama that draws everything—be it crude or sublime—into its course.

This dramatic suction, this continuous flow of strength is missing in Rossini’s work. His music has immense energy, but nowhere in his serious operas do we feel an inner dramatic forward motion. There is no suspense outside of the single set pieces and no spark jumping from one to the next. It is true that the librettos of the serious operas—without a single exception, in spite of such respectable sources as Shakespeare, Voltaire, Scott, Schiller—are weak routine stuff (the comic librettos are often masterpieces). But even with a good libretto Rossini would have indulged in his tendency, as Hegel said, “to be unfaithful to the text and to fly with his melodies over all the mountains.” Rossini’s serious operas are more epic than dramatic—and epic art needs an even greater richness and variety of characters and characterizations than the drama. Wagner’s works have an epic quality, but beneath the long narrations and discussions the inner volcano remains burning—and when it finally breaks out, we realize that it had been there underground all the time. Rossini’s excitement gives the impression that a faucet has been turned on.

What of the famous alibi-opera, *William Tell*? It is no exception. After sixty years of popularity it began to succumb to its dramatic lameness. The innumerable, mostly pastoral, concertizing set pieces swamp the human events. (We are reminded of Alt-



dorfer's painting "Saint George." Try to find the Saint in the immense forest! When you discover him, he does not strike you as anything important. The famous barbarism of the Paris Opera's playing only the second act was certainly plausible in view of the absence of dramatic cohesion and necessity in the work as a whole.)

Rossini's serious operas trouble us because Rossini is not a serious dramatist. But we feel again, as right as this hard judgment may be, that there must be something that—with a last dialectic step—produces a favorable synthesis. We may overlook all the negative aspects, because we love Rossini—and this the more sensible critics will do. But it is a completely unsensed, irrational element, unique and immensely attractive, that glorifies Rossini's art: a musical inebriation, an ecstasy that is strangely sober and clean and that heightens rather than blurs our mental control. It is a controlled trance, a healthy madness. Although it is more plausible in his comic operas, it is even stronger in his serious works. The characters of the drama, the situations of the plot are only the pretext to let loose Rossini's unique brand of musical energy. The passages in his operas that don't lend themselves to this kind of superexcitement are arid spots—especially the exasperating recitatives (I confess that during performances of *Mosè*, *Semiramide*,

*Otello* I have not once listened to any of them). But when the dry sections are over, without having to warm up, the Master creates again the pleasant delirium, which he also grades very skillfully.

Rossini's serious operas can thus provide an immense enjoyment, even though their effect—in spite of all the dynamism—is eventless as drama. Theatrical creations that do not conform to classical standards are no longer considered illegitimate; absurdity is today no negative criticism. And more important: today what we enjoy, we also take seriously, an equation our austere ancestors did not make! Rossini's serious operas can be festive events. None of them is unworthy of a revival. Rossini has one feature in common with the very great: all of his works have a secure minimum interest—there is no danger in hearing any of them of being completely disappointed. They may lack the equilibrium among all human and artistic features that we admire in Mozart, in most of Verdi, in Wagner, in *Fidelio*, and their enjoyment may require a considerable adjustment of our intellectual behavior. Yet if we can adapt ourselves, these serious operas will delight us no end—although in a somewhat special, even perverse fashion. But then we probably understand them better than Rossini himself and his contemporaries did.

## The Serious Operas on Records

To call the discography of Rossini's *opera seria* "sparse" would be an understatement. Only the following recordings are listed in the current Schwann catalogue.

*Mosè in Egitto*. Caterina Mancini (s); Mario Filippeschi (t); Guiseppe Taddei (b); Nicola Rossi-Lemeni (bs); San Carlo Orchestra of Naples, Tullio Serafin, cond. Philips 3580 (three discs, mono only).

This set, recorded in very good monophonic sound circa 1956, is not without merits—for one thing, it has very few cuts (though they should have been different ones). Unfortunately, Rossi-Lemeni, in the title role, had lost his voice almost entirely at the time the record was made.

*Semiramide*. Joan Sutherland (s); Marilyn Horne (ms); John Serge (t); Joseph Rouleau (bs); Spiro Malas (bs); London Symphony Orchestra, Richard Bonyngé, cond. London 4383 or 1383 (three discs).

The liberties Sutherland takes with this score—such as singing the tenor line in some ensembles—interfere with the most

outstanding feature of Rossini's technique, his "vocal orchestration"; and the liberties London's engineers take—notably with a wind machine, let loose whenever the libretto indicates supernatural events—drown out some very beautiful music. Bonyngé provides capable conducting, however, and in the role of Arsace Miss Horne gives a performance that is both stylish and dynamic.

*Guillaume Tell*. Rosanna Carteri (s); Mario Filippeschi (t); Guiseppe Taddei (b); Plinio Clabassi (bs); Radio Italiana Chorus and Orchestra, Mario Rossi, cond. Everest/Cetra S 420/24 (four discs, rechanneled stereo only).

The new pseudostereo sound bestowed on this old recording results in acoustics almost too painful to listen to. If you can still find the original Cetra edition, you will get a decently recorded, fine performance (even though some of it runs a quarter- to a half-tone high).



Recordings have converted the Japanese from an Oriental to a Western musical nation. By 1924, the country had not yet heard a live performance of Beethoven's Ninth; today, one hundred thousand music students are preparing Japan's future impact on the Western classics.

# GOOD-BY GAGAKU,

JAPAN IS NOW celebrating the centennial of the enthronement of Emperor Meiji (Hirohito's grandfather), the ruler who began the modernization of the country. In 1868, Japan was a feudalistic, agrarian country—without modern transportation, without industry, without trade beyond its own borders. Certainly, Occidental music was as completely unknown an entity as steel shipping and railroads were.

Today, a century later, this nation boasts the world's fastest train, shipyards which build one half of the world's new keels every year, economic and cultural ties with every continent. And Occidental music saturates the land.

A small country the size of California, with a population of one hundred million, Japan is serviced by some 1,140 television stations, most of them operating dual channels and practically all broadcasting color as well as black and white programs eighteen to twenty hours a day. FM radio stations number about 160, AM stations twice that figure, also on the air for an equally long day. According to figures compiled by the Japan Broadcasting Corporation (NHK), as of just a year ago, nearly twenty million Japanese households were equipped with TV sets and a total of 22,224,363 with radios—almost a saturation point, since about eighty per cent of Japan is unpopulated mountain area. Predominating the programs is the music of the West.

Of course radio and television programs alone do not satisfy Japan's music lovers. Record fans are estimated to total about ten million, and for this market Japanese manufacturers last year produced some hundred million discs and about 1,600,000 phonographs.

Expanding even faster than the music-listening population are the numbers who play instruments. In 1967 Japan produced 194,076 pianos, 526,260 organs and harmoniums, 1,778,000 classic guitars, 454,000 electric guitars, 5,447,880 harmonicas, half a million xylophones, 30,000 accordions, 40,000 wind pieces, and some 20,000 violins, violas, cellos, and basses. These statistics become the more remarkable when one remembers that Japan did not manufacture its first piano until 1900. Many of these instruments, of course, are intended for children and young people. Instruction in playing the harmonica, simplified flute, and xylophone has been a part of the regular curriculum in the primary schools since World War II. More than a quarter million children learn basic keyboard playing, singing, and theory through the Yamaha Music Course alone, and 4,300 are studying the violin according to the method devised by the well-known pedagogue Shinichi Suzuki. Practically every one



Composer Toru Takemitsu's career has been one of success against all the auspices. The child of an impoverished and musically illiterate family, living first in Manchuria and then in war-torn Tokyo, he left school after the ninth grade to help support himself and a widowed mother. In 1946, in Yokohama, he found work as a houseboy with a member of the American occupation forces, who allowed him to "play" the piano in his spare hours. Aside from some later, and sporadic, study in music theory with an obscure composer friend, Takemitsu has remained self-taught. His early pieces were either ignored or received frigidly, and it was only after he won a grand prize in an international competition held in Italy in 1958 that his work began to receive respectful attention. His "Requiem for Strings" is now considered a modern classic in Japan; his recent "November Steps" and "Textures" are available on American records. John Cage, a composer whom Takemitsu much admires, is reported to have said of his Japanese colleague, "His gifts are the transformation of nature into art."

*Fred Saito, a Japanese musician-turned-writer (and no kin of the Professor Hideo Saito pictured on the facing page, by the way), is a son-in-law of the former Kappellemeister of the Imperial Court Orchestra.*



BY FRED SAITO

# HELLO MOZART

of the seven hundred colleges and universities has its own orchestra, and wind bands flourish. (The brass band that won last year's high school band competition, which hailed from the westernmost corner of the country, played flawlessly Bach's D minor Toccata and Fugue.) An estimated hundred thousand students are enrolled in 143 music academies and conservatories.

**T**HIS WESTERNIZATION of Japanese musical life is particularly interesting in that it represents a dramatic break with native tradition. The music of the Imperial Court—called Gagaku and Bugaku and rigidly preserved as it came from China in the seventh century—is based on what the West would call dissonances; it lacks counterpoint or dynamics. Moreover, this is a highly exclusive music, generally played only for the Imperial Family and its guests. Again, Kabuki, often called the Japanese opera, bears little relation to Western forms; it is, rather, a stylized kind of musical theater in which the performers deliver recitatives and declamations to the accompaniment of a small chorus and band. And while a limited body of instrumental music was composed for the koto (Japanese harp) and flute, for the great mass of Japanese people “music” meant primarily vocal music.

The first years of Emperor Meiji's modernizing efforts were, naturally, devoted to political and economic reforms, and it was not until 1887 (the year which saw also the invention of the flat disc record) that the German-staffed National Conservatory of Tokyo—Japan's first institution for the teaching of Occidental music—opened its doors. For some years thereafter capable performers were very rare, and records (even after the establishment of a Japanese phonograph company, in 1907) were prohibitively expensive. Masao Oki, composer of the frequently performed *Hiroshima* Symphony and a man in his late sixties, recalls: “Very bleak indeed was the musical environment in my youth. In the early 1900s there were only three pianos in my town, Shizuoka [capital of the province where some ninety per cent of all musical instruments are produced today]—two of them in the schools and the third in the home of a professional musician. Tokyo was already seeing Western grand opera. But in Shizuoka the only live performances we had were those given by Army brass bands once or twice a year. In 1919 I heard Beethoven's Fifth Symphony for the first time—on records; it overwhelmed me.”

There were many others for whom European music was a marvel, just as Western philosophy and industrial technology were. Many students decided consciously to grapple with the subject in the same spirit in which they were approaching Kant, Hegel, Schopenhauer, or Nietzsche. In fact, one present-day critic, Saburo Sonada, says now: “It was un-



Sixty-six-year-old Hideo Saito—a onetime cellist who studied in Leipzig and under Emanuel Feuermann at the Berlin Hochschule and who later served as wartime conductor of the NHK Symphony Orchestra—is generally regarded as the elder statesman of Japanese music education. His Toho Gakuen, founded twenty years ago with a small class of thirty children, has now grown into a national academy offering courses from kindergarten to university level and enrolling some thousand students. For the past several years young people from Toho Gakuen have regularly swept the field in the country's national music contests, a particularly remarkable feat in view of the long unchallenged domination of the National Conservatory of Tokyo and other government-sponsored schools. Professor Saito is reputed to be a stern pedagogue who demands absolute perfectionism. It is true that he has stated, “I do not think one can become a musician without tears”; but he has also been heard to say, “I encourage my students to discover joy. . . .”



Quite possibly the most powerful figure in Japan's musical life, Hiroiyuki Makino is neither performer nor critic. He is, rather, a kind of impresario: Secretary General of RO-ON, the Congress of Workers' Music Councils—which means, in effect, that he directs much of the cultural activity of at least half a million industrial workers organized in 215 local chapters throughout the country. Born in 1909 on the island of Shikoku, Mr. Makino specialized as a university student in Chinese language and literature and later earned his living as a writer of children's stories. He first became involved with RO-ON in 1949, when that organization was founded with the avowed purpose of propagating the music of "progressive" (i.e., Communist) nations; ten years later he attained his present post. A large part of Mr. Makino's job consists in arranging for visits to Japan by artists from the U.S.S.R. and Eastern Europe, though RO-ON also sponsors native (and not necessarily left-wing) musicians. A suave and soft-spoken man, Mr. Makino conspicuously avoids talking in Marxian dialectics, and he is not without a sense of humor; the great problem of RO-ON, he says, is young women: while they account for more than sixty per cent of RO-ON's membership, they persist in the old habit of getting married—and "It is quite difficult to organize housewives."

fortunate that [early in this century] they tried to understand music through verbal deduction. They thought they comprehended Beethoven when they could talk of his 'progressive humanism.'"

Actually, too little Western music was performed to permit the understanding acquired only by close and repeated listening. The problem was not unrecognized, however, and at least a partial solution was reached by the large-scale purchase of records for schools. Recorded concerts for students are indeed very much on the scene in 1968. Tea houses and student snack bars also invested in records (and, incidentally, increased their business); their patrons eat and drink in silence, their interest in food obviously quite secondary to their interest in the music poured from the loudspeaker.

**B**Y THE 1930s Japan was emerging as one of the world's biggest markets for classical records. Quite revealing of the period is a collection of articles originally written between 1934-43 by Kiyotake Seki, a staff member of Japan-Victor. Seki reported among other facts that the Shostakovich Fifth by the Philadelphia and Stokowski sold very fast and that Hans Pfitzner's newest compositions reached Japanese record stores a few months after they were released in Germany. He also described the mushrooming Japanese interest in audio, writing of one performance heard over a friend's formidably elaborate sound system: "It was neither Beethoven nor Bruno Walter . . . it was a creation made by electronics." Seki added: "Phonograph companies have been omnipotent and have instilled in people a dogmatic belief in records as the perfect realization of music." This might be better understood when one realizes that in Japan recorded Western music predated live performances of it—the country was converted to the classics by the phonograph.

For a long time Japanese record listeners looked down on Japanese musicians with contempt—an attitude to be explained partly by the brain-washing Seki refers to and partly by the plain fact that musicians were inexperienced and ill-trained. The nation's first performance of the Beethoven Ninth took place in Tokyo in 1924. Years later, I talked to the man who conducted on that historic occasion. He was not proud at all when he recalled it: "The timpanist was many measures behind, and kept banging away after the movement ended. I gestured to him to stop. Panic-stricken, the poor boy responded with a fortissimo. A greater blow for me was what happened next. The audience broke out in resounding applause for the impromptu cadenza!" (As a footnote to this gentleman's tale I might add that Japanese audiences are always very attentive, very willing to "listen and learn"—which may be why programs of avant-garde and modern works today draw quite large crowds.)

A new generation of musicians is of course now active in Japan, many of them entirely products of the culture-oriented climate that followed the collapse of the nation's hopes for military glory in World War II. Oddly, the driving force of the Japanese musical revolution was a bizarre combination of evangelistic educators and the newly legalized Communist party.

In 1949 Communist composer/conductor Goro Sudo founded RO-ON, the Workers' Music Council, in Osaka for the initial purpose of "propagating music of progressive [i.e., anti-Capitalist] nations among workers." The establishment of RO-ON coincided with the launching of a cultural offensive on the part of the Soviet Union. In an effort to cure the Japanese of their deep-rooted Russophobia, Moscow began sending to Japan hordes of topflight Soviet artists such as Oistrakh, Kogan, Gilels, the Bolshoi, etc. Concerts were handled through RO-ON, which arranged for tickets to be sold very cheaply. (RO-ON functions as a nonprofit group, financing itself by membership fees—the equivalent of 15 cents initiation fee and 70 cents monthly dues.)

Today, RO-ON is Japan's largest music organization, with about half a million members and 214 local chapters, which presents around four



thousand recitals and concerts every year. RO-ON's significance, however, is not merely in its size. For the first time in Japanese history listeners mingle with performers, and amateur musicians with professionals. Tokyo RO-ON's own orchestra and chorus staged the Beethoven Ninth in January 1968 and over the past years has given a number of contemporary works such as Oki's *Hiroshima*. The great success of RO-ON has now brought about the formation of no less than three (non-Communist-influenced) competing groups who claim a combined membership of nearly a million.

As spectacular as the RO-ON movement were postwar developments in the educational field. I have already referred to the extraordinary opportunities for musical experience now afforded great numbers of Japanese children. For the particularly talented child, more specialized instruction became increasingly available. In 1948 Hideo Saito, cellist and wartime conductor of the NHK Symphony Orchestra, opened a class for thirty children "to put into practice my theory that fine musicians must receive systematic and methodical education from childhood." Saito's small class has since expanded into Toho Gakuen, the most distinguished Japanese music academy, offering courses ranging from kindergarten level (held at eight different places for 1,000 select pupils) to advanced university training. Composer Sadao Bekku, who is in charge of Toho's kindergarten classes, defines the difference between the Toho system and that of more widely employed methods by saying: "At Toho children are encouraged to create; in the popular classes for mass instruction they are encouraged to imitate." In a Toho class you will not find a child tackling Kuhlau or Clementi, but you will see a ten-year-old girl playing Mozart's Violin Concerto No. 5 with her own expression—no clever imitation of some recorded performance, as would have typified a prodigy's rendition in prewar days. When Toho's string orchestra of students visited the U.S. in 1964, critics for leading American newspapers used such terms as "miraculous" and "incredible."

**I**N SOME DEGREE, of course, the upgrading of Japanese music standards is part of a general broadening of the musical environment. Before World War II, Japanese had to go abroad to listen to superlative performances. Nowadays the world's topflight virtuosos and orchestras come here in droves each year. Herbert von Karajan has visited Japan four times in the past decade. Italy's top stars have also come four times, on each occasion for a long recital tour (a project made financially feasible by NHK, which collects almost \$20,000,000 every month from TV licenses). Last year almost the whole staff of Bayreuth migrated to Japan and took part in the Osaka Music Festival. Also an unlikely project commercially, this annual extravaganza of twenty recitals and concerts by the world's finest musicians is subsidized by government grants.

Just this last spring we have heard the San Francisco Symphony (April), the Bamberg Symphony (May), and both the Soviet State Orchestra and the Suisse Romande (June). While some Japanese orchestras suffered from the foreign competition during these months, in the long run such visits are to the benefit of musicians and audiences alike. Japan is also beginning to send its leading artists abroad, and a growing number of young musicians place high in international competitions. Toho alone has placed twenty-five students and graduates in international competitions in recent years. Among them are violinist Masuko Ushioda, who toured the U.S. in 1968 after placing second in the third Tchaikovsky Contest, and Seiji Ozawa, recently appointed conductor of the San Francisco Symphony.

Will Japan emerge as a nation of musical importance, notwithstanding its long delayed introduction to Occidental music?

Professor Hideo Saito replies: "I think Japan will. True, the Japanese do not have the tradition of Occidental music—but they do have a strong and long tradition of dedication to artistic perfection."



Violinist Toshiya Eto is one former child prodigy who belies the cliché that wunderkinder often fail to grow into full artistic maturity. After winning out against many advanced students in a national competition at the age of twelve, he then enrolled in the National Conservatory and later became a pupil of Efrem Zimbalist at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia. Today he is not only one of Japan's most in-demand concert artists but is also a highly respected teacher and the conductor of a very successful music education program on TV.



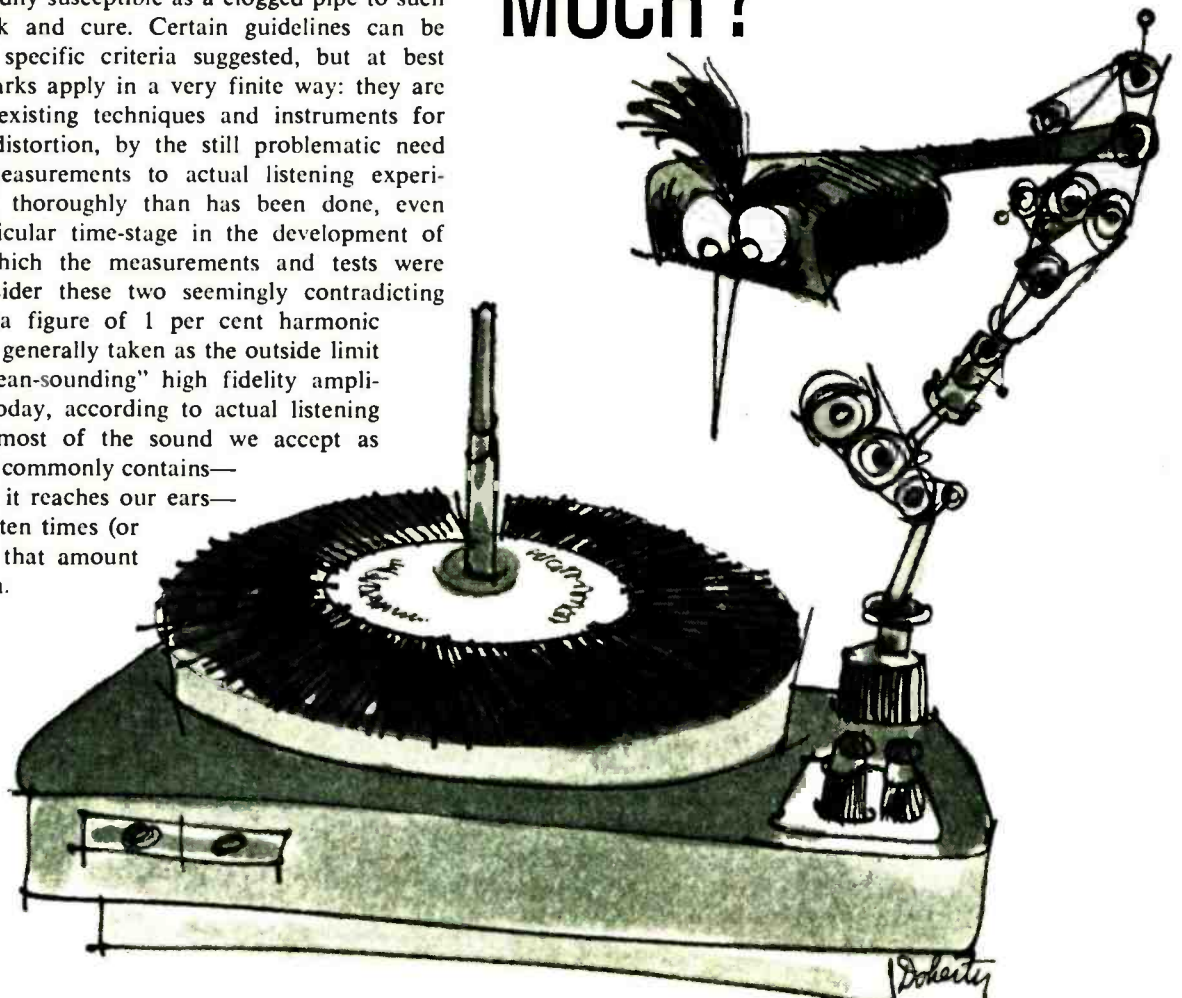
The first Japanese musician to become an international celebrity, Seiji Ozawa—conductor of the Toronto Symphony, conductor-elect of the San Francisco Symphony—has not yet acquired in his native country the esteem to which he is entitled. In a sense, the case of Ozawa symbolizes a national malaise—Japan's deep-rooted feeling of inferiority as regards its own mastery of Occidental music. Ozawa, however, is only thirty-three; his stature as a native son will no doubt grow along with Japan's increasing security in its membership in the Western cultural community.

# ***DISTORTION***

**A**NYONE WHO'S SMOKED A PIPE knows that eventually it gets clogged. He also knows that you can clean the pipe and get it to draw freely again merely by inserting a pipe cleaner through the shank and up through the bowl. You don't actually have to try out the pipe to verify this; you can assume with reasonable certainty that the emergence of the tool into the bowl means that the pipe will function well.

As you can tell how much clog has accumulated in the pipe shank by the relative cleanness of the tool poking into the bowl, so you can tell how much distortion has accumulated in your audio system by the relative cleanness of the sound coming from your speakers. But the problem of distortion in audio is not as readily susceptible as a clogged pipe to such direct attack and cure. Certain guidelines can be drawn and specific criteria suggested, but at best these hallmarks apply in a very finite way: they are limited by existing techniques and instruments for measuring distortion, by the still problematic need to relate measurements to actual listening experiences more thoroughly than has been done, even by the particular time-stage in the development of audio at which the measurements and tests were made. Consider these two seemingly contradicting facts: one, a figure of 1 per cent harmonic distortion is generally taken as the outside limit for any "clean-sounding" high fidelity amplifier made today, according to actual listening tests; two, most of the sound we accept as high fidelity commonly contains—by the time it reaches our ears—as much as ten times (or even more) that amount of distortion.

## **HOW MUCH IS TOO MUCH?**





We are thus faced with a mystery, and indeed attempts to solve it have occupied audio experts intensely since the days of the hand-cranked cylinder phonograph. By definition, all forms of distortion are bad and must be constantly reduced. In practice, many forms have been reduced nearly to the vanishing point. The persistence of some, however, has produced two schools of thought—one holding that these forms of distortion are not worth bothering about, the other claiming that their elimination will usher in an even more wonderful era of reproduced sound than we now enjoy.

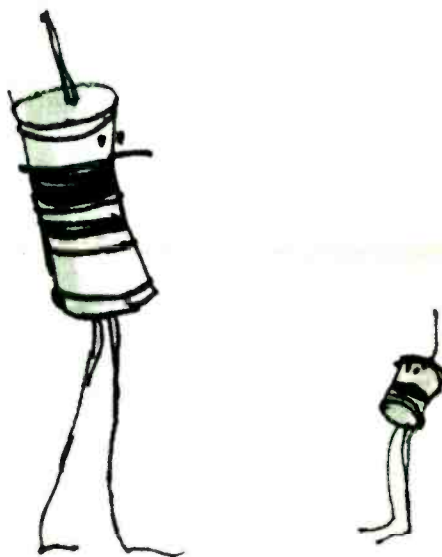
What we know, and do not know, intermingle perilously close in this mystery. Following standard detective practice, let's reconstruct the chain of events. On its journey from the air of the recording studio to the air of your living room, recorded music navigates a complex series of transformations (acoustic, electrical, magnetic, and mechanical). No need to detail it all; the electrical aspects alone may include fifty or more stages of amplification.

At every step along the way in both the recording and the playback processes, the signal coming out of some device or stage is never precisely the same as that going in. Some slippage, or distortion, inevitably intrudes. How much intrusion is tolerable depends on the listener's own standards. The 1 per cent figure mentioned earlier is a reasonable standard for amplifiers, based on reputable tests and the realistic capabilities of the audio industry. We can be more demanding of amplifiers by quoting other tests in which listeners vowed they could hear the difference between 1 per cent and 0.5 per cent (or less) distortion and by citing the actual test results of today's best amplifiers, which run no higher than 0.5 per cent. But even so, an element of mystery clouds this bit of intelligence. Item 1: the specific distortion tests referred to were conducted with program material and speaker systems whose own respective amounts of distortion were higher than either the 1 per cent or the 0.5 per cent "preference levels." (Was the reduced distortion in the amplifier really able to reduce audibly the inherent and higher distortion in the program material? Was the reduced amplifier distortion in fact perceptible through the inherent and higher distortion in the speaker?) Item 2: the form of distortion considered in these tests was "pure harmonic." Intermodulation, phase, transient, frequency, and a few other types weren't tested. (Were their effects being masked or even canceled, and if so, how—by the harmonic distortion or by combinations of themselves? Or, are those other forms important at all?) The plot thickens.

And it thickens some more as we resume the journey of the signal. Taking a new disc or tape

recording as our distortion-free program source (it really isn't—even the best discs and tapes have some distortion—but we can discount it for purposes of our investigation), what's the first thing that happens? Consider the disc-to-pickup transfer, and keep in mind the terms "tracking" (the ability of the pickup to remain centered in the record groove as it follows it spiraling to the center) and "tracing" (the ability of the pickup—once in the groove—to respond to the modulations, or wiggles, along the walls of that groove). A pickup can conceivably track a record without necessarily tracing it accurately. But it surely can't trace it well, if at all, without being able to track it in the first place. Thus, while good tracking is essential to good tracing, it is no guarantee of it.

**F**OR A LONG TIME, this simple fact—which today seems self-evident—was either ignored or not clearly seen. Ingenious design efforts for mono pickup arms had reduced lateral tracking error (the difference in angular degrees between the arc made by a pivoting arm and the actual radius across a record originally followed by a cutting head) to negligible amounts, and apparently everyone felt that little more needed to be done. But stereo—with its requirement for a pickup capable both of tracing two dissimilar sets of wiggles simultaneously and of responding up-and-down as well as from side-to-side (i.e., having vertical as well as lateral compliance)—finally made it clear to the experts and equipment designers that a pickup that tracked well did not necessarily trace well. A new form of distortion was heard and measured,



“tracing distortion”; recent analysis shows that it may come to 20 per cent or more in playback. It is most apparent when the pickup approaches the inner portion of the disc, where the spirals get smaller and the pickup’s velocity decreases. You may hear it as a vague sort of shatter above the sound, not unlike mild static. Loud musical passages and high frequencies—exactly the kind of signal often found in the inner grooves, at the end of a composition—aggravate the tendency to tracing distortion. Because such signals force the stylus to work harder, the pickup can run afoul of yet another obstacle: under extremely demanding conditions those signals can kick the pickup right up and out of the groove—which becomes not only mistracing, but mistracking as well.

The established rules about offset arms and sufficient tracking force weren’t enough to solve these new problems. Several new approaches were suggested and tried. One was the elliptical stylus, whose shape (approximately that of a microscopic screwdriver) conforms more closely to the shape of the original record cutter than does that of a conical stylus. Actually, it has been amply demonstrated (though not conclusively proved and not universally accepted) that in tracing a record groove a conical-shaped stylus does follow a slightly different path from that followed by the cutter (or by an elliptical tip) and, to this extent, it can be a source of distortion. An alternate solution was the introduction of the ultrasmall conical stylus—one that is only 0.4-mil or 0.5-mil instead of the 0.7-mil originally offered for stereo records. Both the elliptical and the ultrasmall conical share at least one advantage: each presents a relatively tiny portion of itself to contact the walls of the groove, and so—assuming the lower stylus force or tracking pressure that should be used with such minimal physical contact—tracing distortion will be reduced and record life extended.

Another attack on both tracing and tracking distortion, often found together with either of the above techniques alone, has been the trend to standardize the vertical angle of the pickup stylus at 15 degrees. Again, the discrepancies between the angle made by the record cutter and the widely divergent angles found in commercial pickups went largely ignored for many years—until it was shown that those differences could produce high distortion. Why did it go unnoticed for so long? Perhaps because it is what engineers call a “soft” distortion (see accompanying box). Another possible answer is that vertical-angle distortion had been masked by tracing distortion: reducing the one lowered the threshold of audible sensitivity to the other. This latter theory is particularly attractive since it serves as a plausible explanation for many things in audio—all of which add up to the notion that the better you make one part of the whole, the more urgent it becomes to make everything else better too.

Indeed, we already are hearing of further distortion probings in pickup design. The whole thing becomes a sort of seven-veil dance: tracking, tracing,

stylus, and vertical angle problems have been largely solved only to reveal additional problems of generator distortion, frequency discrimination, and motion distortion. Generator distortion is the slippage in the transformation of the mechanical motion of the stylus into an electrical signal. It may run from 1 per cent to 6 per cent in pickups that sound superb to us—again we have a soft distortion or some masking effect.

Frequency discrimination, such as weakness or disproportionate strength in one or more general areas of response, used to be endemic in even the best pickups. We’ve made tremendous progress on this front in the last seven or eight years. The best pickups today are smooth from the bottom of the bass to at least 10 kHz and often higher. At the very top, though, there is room for improvement. Every pickup has a resonance, a tendency to overvibrate, created by the mass of the stylus and the flexibility of the record material (at very high frequencies the groove wall acts like springy rubber). Somewhere in the highs, this resonance puts a peak in the signal (which can be controlled in various ways) and also a peak in the mechanical impedance (harder to control, and destructive to the record).

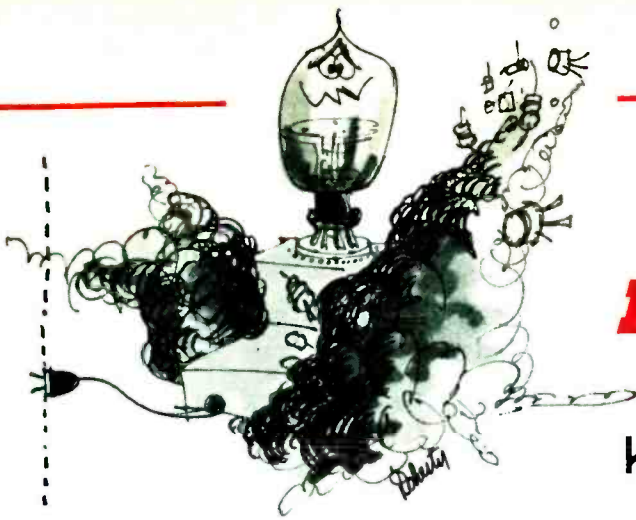
Today some pickups use the high-frequency peak to bolster the high-end response; others control it for flat response. The difference is very hard to hear if the peak is not too high, but a general lift of several dB, above 8 or 10 kHz, may make the tone too sharp. Ideally, the peak should occur well above the audible range, say at 25 kHz or an even higher frequency, in which event record wear would be greatly reduced and the highs would sound very smooth. As other forms of distortion are reduced, particularly tracing distortion and coloration in loudspeakers, supersmooth highs in pickups will become more important to us.

“**M**OTION DISTORTION” gets us a step beyond the pickup to the turntable. Flutter—a rapid variation in musical pitch caused by cyclic unevenness of turntable rotation—seems to have a more definite threshold than the previous forms of distortion for *experienced listeners*, who have been known to detect flutter as low as 0.01 per cent when tested on steady tone signals. However, the ear is much less sensitive to flutter in music. Flutter is likely to show up most prominently in slow piano and slow oboe passages, but even here, experienced listeners don’t detect it until it reaches about 0.08 per cent, and at a flutter rate of about four times a second. On most instruments, on all fast music, on voice, it takes two or three times as much flutter to lower the fidelity audibly. All things considered, a flutter of no more than 0.1 per cent is a good mark for a high fidelity turntable. Many of today’s better models beat that mark.

Moving on, we can now focus on the amplifier’s role. The whole harmonic distortion story hangs, in a sense, on the amplifier, because it is far easier to







## ***DISTORTION***

### Do we always know what we hear?

Three intriguing, but still unproven, explanations have been advanced as to why we don't hear certain forms of high distortion while we do hear others at comparably low levels. One theory holds that there are two kinds of distortion: "soft" and "hard." The former occurs, goes the theory, when a device distorts *gradually*, as when being slowly overloaded. When it occurs abruptly, we get hard distortion, always more objectionable. The high distortion we've been tolerating for years (such as tracing distortion of a pickup) is actually a soft distortion and thus relatively inaudible. Sudden mistracking, or the peaking of a loudspeaker, is hard distortion and quite audible.

Another possible explanation involves a masking effect, in which one tone "covers" the others. The masked tones become inaudible if the masking tone is lower in frequency and stronger in amplitude. If the frequencies are close, or in harmonic relationships, the masking tone has to be only a little stronger than the masked tones—or can even be equal, in some cases—to do its camouflaging. As the masked tones get farther off (higher) in frequency, the masking tone requires greater strength to obliterate them. A consequence of the tone-masking theory is the notion that one form of distortion may mask another form. This seeming paradox has been advanced to explain why, for years, we accepted (even acclaimed) disc-playback systems that more recently have been

shown to suffer from 10 per cent or greater harmonic distortion.

Finally, there's the "learning factor" theory which holds that we like what we hear until we hear something better. An amplifier's 2 per cent distortion remains inaudible until we are exposed to one with half that distortion. This theory, its proponents feel, is germane to the whole high fidelity upsurge, for the more we train our hearing, the more demanding it becomes. It would also explain the astonishing success of the live-versus-recorded demonstrations that go all the way back to Edison's original tinfoil phonograph, circa 1880. In 1926, for example, the Brunswick Panatrope, one of the very first all-electric phonographs, was played alongside a symphony orchestra on vaudeville stages all over the United States. Many in the audience swore that they couldn't hear any difference when the orchestra stopped and the distinctly low-fi Panatrope took up. We can guess that to hear strong bass in those days, even if only 150 to 200 Hz, was an astounding experience for people used to the thin, tinny, nonbass of acoustic phonographs they had been hearing up to then.

The learning factor has been strongly in evidence in recent experiments, done mainly in England, on preferences in reproduced music among small groups of listeners. Audio engineers and high fidelity cognoscenti spotted distortion at comparatively low levels; listeners without an audio background were totally unaware of it.

measure, and to control, distortion in amplifiers than in other parts of the reproducing chain. No other part of the playback system comes anywhere near the below-0.5 per cent harmonic distortion that top-grade amplifiers now can maintain even at high output levels.

The question that immediately comes up, however, is: if the total harmonic distortion from a pickup is at least several per cent, does it make any difference that an amplifier has 1 per cent or 0.5 per cent or even 0.2 per cent? To answer this, we must again consider the phenomenon of soft distortion. Some early transistor amplifiers had very abrupt overload characteristics. Distortion was heard in them down to small fractions of 1 per cent. On the other hand, amplifiers with gradual overload get away with more distortion, which could explain why

many units with somewhat higher distortion at low (normal listening) power output levels still sound eminently clean. In any case, the limit, for experienced listeners, remains around 1 per cent. Some professionals today accept 0.5 per cent total harmonic distortion as a rule-of-thumb upper limit for "no audible distortion" in an amplifier, with a smooth overload characteristic. Below that figure, generally speaking, all amplifiers can be called essentially distortionless.

We say "rule-of-thumb," because, as we've suggested, there is a great deal of unfinished business in the determination of how much distortion is too much. We can't emphasize too strongly that a vast research effort is needed to illuminate these uncertainties. In any event, on the basis of years of listening tests, it is apparent that an amplifier with

lower distortion for a given power level, or one with higher power for the same distortion, does provide improved sound.

It also is widely accepted that under virtually any conditions of program source or speakers, most listeners can detect a difference of 3:1 (and many listeners, a difference of 2:1) in an amplifier's distortion. So how much distortion is too much in an amplifier? Any amount, we'd say, that exceeds what you are able to buy in another amplifier that has the power output, features, and so on you require. Pending further new evidence, we're willing to close the case on at least this much of our mystery.

**B**UT WE'RE MYSTIFIED once again when we approach loudspeakers. To begin with, the frequency-response curve of even a good speaker looks like a cross-section of the Andes. Generally, the lower or fewer the peaks, the more "natural" or "uncolored" the speaker will sound. True, there are enough exceptions to disprove this rule. Nonetheless, any speaker designer will allow that a paramount design aim is to reduce the peaks, to strive for "smooth sound."

Still, we must contend with harmonic distortion. Even in superb speakers it runs at least a few per cent at high signal levels in the middles and highs. In the low bass, 5 per cent is considered *very* low for speaker distortion. The consensus, however, is that we're not hearing it. We can speculate that, when speakers are made with smoother response and much lower distortion, we will begin to hear, and object to, this several per cent of harmonic distortion in a speaker—regardless of how much or how little distortion comes from the program source and the amplifier.

Magnetic tape, fortunately for the whole recording industry, is probably the outstanding example of a soft-distortion system. The tape itself overloads *very* gradually, up to a pretty high level. Tape at its best thus sounds extremely clean. To all intents and purposes, it *is* clean—until its distortion increases to several per cent. If we accept 1 per cent as a top limit for an amplifier's distortion, we can tolerate perhaps 2 to 3 per cent in a tape recorder.

That doesn't mean that tape can't be overloaded into distressful distortion. One situation in which such overloading too often occurs is on 3¾-ips tapes that have strongly accentuated highs, part of the attempt to make them sound as "hi-fi" as good 7½-ips tapes. With the high notes whooped way up above the middles, and the middles pretty strong to get a good margin over noise, it's easy to produce serious overload distortion on the slower-moving tape.

The other type of distortion most prominent in tape systems is flutter. It can be quite similar to turntable flutter, because of various unevennesses in the drive system. As in a turntable, rather expensive design is required to eliminate it.

Tape has, in addition, a flutter all its own: "scrape flutter." The tape sticks to the head for a small fraction of a second, jumps ahead, sticks, jumps ahead, and so on. This jerky progress causes a fast flutter that comes out as a rough noise in the high frequencies. Ironically, scrape flutter becomes a problem only in top-grade equipment, because it is masked on the cheaper machines by other noises and distortions.

Even when it would seem that it ought to be audible, however, scrape flutter varies considerably in its seriousness as a pollutant of fidelity and may cause no audible effects. As far as we know, it hasn't been systematically measured. The amount of scrape flutter from machine to machine, and even on the same machine from one occasion to another, varies considerably—depending on the kind of tape used, smoothness of the heads, and the tension on the tape. Probably the reduction of other distortions as time goes on will make a given amount of scrape flutter more evident, but improvements in the way tape machines handle the tape will reduce it.

Our final source of distortion in home systems is stereo FM, which offers its own variety. A tuner must pass the whole bandwidth of the signal, without cutting the "edges" too much, to avoid phase distortion that gets the various components of the multiplex signal out of step. Any such phase distortion comes out as harmonic distortion in the output of the tuner. That's one reason why a stereo FM tuner needs wide-band response—and why conversion to stereo of older mono narrow-band sets was generally less than satisfactory.

In the best stereo FM tuners and receivers, this problem has been brought pretty well under control: harmonic distortion in the elite class of tuner may be 1 per cent or even less. But a slight relaxation in the design requirements of the IF amplifiers, making a narrow peak in the tuner response, can send distortion soaring. Misalignment of a tuner also increases its distortion, reducing its sensitivity too. As in amplifiers, the lower the distortion the better; in general, the increase of distortion, when switching from mono to stereo, should not exceed a 2:1 ratio if it is not to become audible.

Again, it is true that few listeners were conscious of the relatively high distortion in many of the early stereo tuners. Our explanation is that they simply hadn't heard low-distortion tuners. Today we have such sets, and experienced listeners have become aware of the increased clarity now possible.

The distortion mystery, then, has been dispelled at least in part. Though many uncertainties remain, this means only that sound reproduction still has a long road to travel. There is every reason to believe that when such still persistent forms as pickup distortion and speaker distortion have been really conquered, we will enjoy sound that is far more natural and exciting than the best we have today. Unless, of course, we thereby unmask some new forms.



# A Marantz stereo component isn't built for the mass market.

(That's what's so good about it.)

Marantz isn't the name that most people think of first when they think of components. It's understandable. The price of Marantz equipment is simply beyond them.

On the other hand, price is the very reason a Marantz component can be as good as it is. (Nobody can give you something for nothing.)

Quite frankly, our philosophy is to let our engineers design a piece of equipment as best as they know how. Not as cheaply. (There are enough other manufacturers doing that already.)

We believe that the four superb stereo components illustrated here are the finest

performing stereo components available anywhere in the world. The Marantz SLT-12U Straight-Line Tracking Turntable (\$295). The Marantz 7T Solid-State Stereo Preamplifier Console (\$325). The Marantz 15 Solid-State Stereo Power Amplifier (\$395). And the Marantz 10B Stereo FM Tuner (\$750).

As soon as you examine these components, we know you will appreciate what goes into making a Marantz. That's why your local franchised Marantz dealer will be pleased to furnish you with complete details together with a demonstration. Then let your ears make up your mind.



**marantz**  
Designed to be number one in performance... not sales.

# If you enjoy listening to records, you should know why the 15° vertical tracking angle is important to you.

Simply stated, audio engineers and experts agree that for minimum distortion your turntable tonearm should always track at a 15° vertical stylus tracking angle.

Just like the recording cutter that cut the records. Just like the fine quality manual transcription turntables.

Just like your records were intended to be played. The reason for this is quite simple if you visualize the recording cutting stylus making the record groove, cutting the undulations that will be converted into sound, with the recording cutter set at the 15° vertical angle — the recording industry's now accepted standard. Obviously, the upper part of any single undulation is slightly advanced over the lower part; an imaginary axis through any single vibration would be tilted 15 degrees from the vertical.

Therefore, if a playback stylus moves through the groove at any angle other than 15 degrees, the upper part of the stylus shank will come into contact with a different undulation than the lower part of the shank, producing distortion.

Until now, only with manual transcription turntables, was it possible to obtain 15° vertical tracking - one reason manuals were preferred by high fidelity

experts. Automatic turntables, with a varying number of records on the platter, had to make a compromise in the stylus tracking angle. Either the tonearm tracked the first record perfectly, or the last record, or it was fixed for some "average" record in between.

Now, the new ELPA PE-2020 permits 15° vertical tracking on all records. It has an exclusive, patented control in the cartridge mount. You can convert the changer into a manual, single-play turntable (with automatic arm return and shut-off), or set it for automatic multiple play . . . and always be assured that you are tracking at the correct angle for minimum distortion.

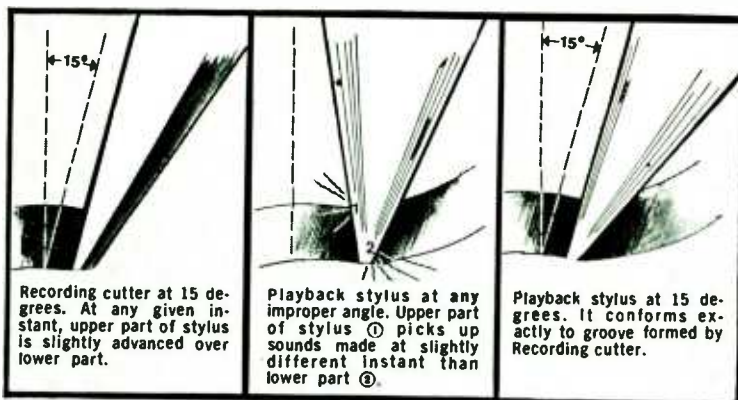
If the automatic turntable you are considering doesn't have this feature, it cannot possibly track records perfectly. And this is **only one** exclusive feature of the new ELPA PE-2020. Be sure to see all the exclusive and refined features of this advanced turntable. They make the ELPA PE-2020 the world's finest and most precise automatic turntable in the world.

Give yourself a break. Buy the precision turntable the experts are turning to.

For literature, and name of nearest dealer, write:

ELPA MARKETING INDUSTRIES, INC.

New Hyde Park, N. Y. 11040



If you own or intend to use  
a cartridge\* with a 15° vertical  
tracking angle, then the  
**ELPA PE-2020**  
is the only automatic  
turntable designed for you!



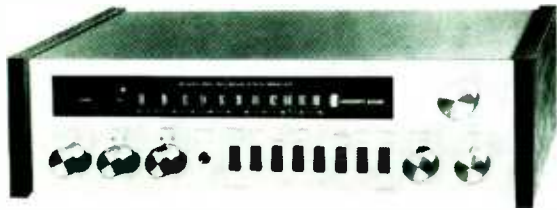
\* Ortofon, Stanton, Shure, Pickering and other fine 15° Cartridges

CIRCLE 32 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



# EQUIPMENT REPORTS

THE CONSUMER'S GUIDE TO NEW AND IMPORTANT HIGH FIDELITY EQUIPMENT

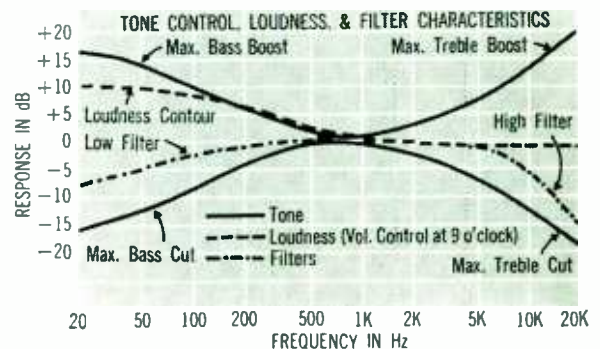
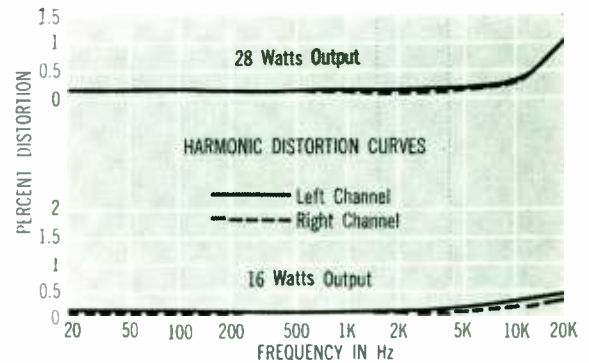
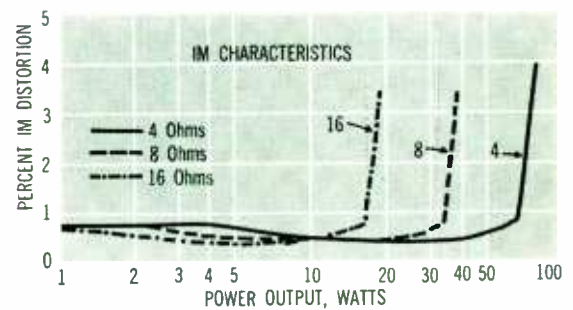
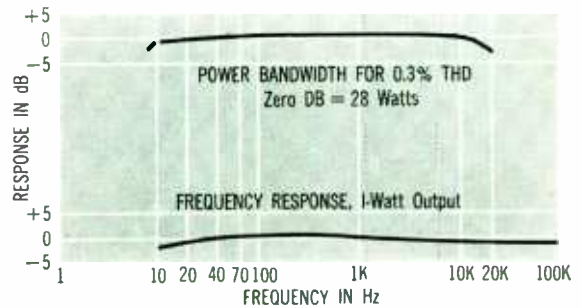


## UNIVERSITY PRO-120 RECEIVER

**THE EQUIPMENT:** University PRO-120, a stereo FM receiver. Supplied in metal case with walnut wood side panels. Dimensions: 16 $\frac{3}{8}$  by 4 $\frac{1}{2}$  by 12 inches. Price: \$379.50. Manufacturer: University Sound, Box 26105, Oklahoma City, Okla. 73126.

**COMMENT:** This firm, for years known as a leading speaker manufacturer, recently entered consumer electronics with its own solid-state stereo FM receiver. The PRO-120 combines a very good tuner with a clean, medium-powered control amplifier. Styling is neat and functional. The upper half of the front panel is given over to the FM tuning dial with logging scale, center-of-channel tuning indicator, and stereo FM indicator. The tuning knob is at the right. The bottom half contains five control knobs, eight rocker switches, and a stereo headphone jack. The knobs handle input signal (tape head, phono, FM, auxiliary); treble; bass; channel balance; and gain (volume). The treble and bass controls operate on both channels simultaneously. The rockers select main or remote speakers (the headphone jack is live in either of these positions); an interstation muting switch; filters for multiplex (stereo FM); high frequencies (scratch), and low frequencies (rumble); tape monitor; loudness contour; and stereo or mono mode.

At the rear are connections for running two pairs of stereo speakers, although the switching allows only one pair to be heard at once. However, the instruction manual for the PRO-120 contains information on running more than one pair of speakers from one set of output taps, so if you watch your impedances you can use this set to pipe stereo into two different rooms at the same time. A hookup for a derived "center channel" (mono A plus B) also is described, while for the optimum center-fill arrangement, there's a mono signal output jack for driving an external amplifier. The rear also has tape in and tape out jacks, and input jacks for the other sources selected by the front panel control. Twin-lead antenna terminals (for local and distant reception), a chassis grounding post, a convenience AC outlet, and the power cord complete the picture here. The set is well-constructed and carefully wired;



## 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.

# University PRO-120 Receiver

## Lab Test Data

### Performance characteristic

### Measurement

#### Tuner Section

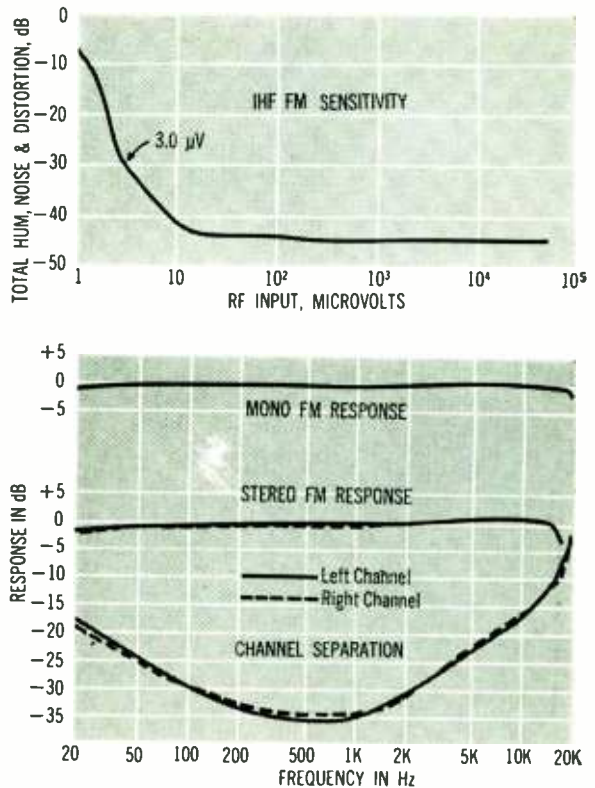
IHF sensitivity	3.0 $\mu$ V at 98 MHz; 3.5 $\mu$ V at 90 MHz; 4.1 $\mu$ V at 106 MHz
Frequency response, mono	$\pm$ 0.5 dB, 20 Hz to 19 kHz
THD, mono	0.74% at 400 Hz; 0.86% at 40 Hz; 0.76% at 1 kHz
IM distortion	0.27%
Capture ratio	4 dB
S/N ratio	69 dB
Frequency response stereo, l ch	$\pm$ 1.5 dB, 20 Hz to 16 kHz
r ch	+1.5, -2 dB, 20 Hz to 16.5 kHz
THD, stereo, l ch	1.1% at 400 Hz; 1.2% at 40 Hz; 1.0% at 1 kHz
r ch	1.2% at 400 Hz; 1.1% at 40 Hz; 1.0% at 1 kHz
Channel separation, either channel	better than 30 dB at mid-frequencies; better than 18 dB, 20 Hz to 10 kHz
19-kHz pilot suppression	-38.5 dB
38-kHz subcarrier suppression	-56 dB

#### Amplifier Section

Power output (at 1 kHz into 8-ohm load)	
l ch at clipping	34.0 watts at 0.35% THD
l ch for 0.3% THD	32.4 watts
r ch at clipping	30.0 watts at 0.26% THD
r ch for 0.3% THD	30.8 watts
both chs simultaneously	
l ch at clipping	27.4 watts at 0.20% THD
r ch at clipping	24.9 watts at 0.17% THD
Power bandwidth for constant 0.3% THD	below 10 Hz to 20 kHz
Harmonic distortion	
28 watts output	l ch: below 1.2%, 20 Hz to 20 kHz r ch: same
14 watts output	l ch: below 0.45%, 20 Hz to 20 kHz r ch: below 0.35%, 20 Hz to 20 kHz
IM distortion	
4-ohm load	under 0.8% to 63 watts
8-ohm load	under 0.8% to 34 watts
16-ohm load	under 0.8% to 17 watts
Frequency response, 1-watt level	+0.5, -1 dB, 13 Hz to 100 kHz
RIAA equalization	$\pm$ 1 dB, 20 Hz to 20 kHz
NAB equalization	+1, -2 dB, 20 Hz to 20 kHz
Damping factor	40
Input characteristics (re: 28 watts output)	Sensitivity S/N ratio
Phono	3.6 mV 63 dB
Tape head	1.2 mV 56 dB
Tape mon	385.0 mV 82 dB
Aux	390.0 mV 81 dB



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



field-effect transistors, integrated circuitry, and circuit-breakers (instead of fuses) are used.

Although the numerical FM sensitivity (3 microvolts) is not among the highest values measured these days, the PRO-120 is a very sensitive set that should give above-average reception in virtually any locale. In our cable FM test, it logged forty-four stations, of which thirty-one were considered suitable for critical listening or off-the-air taping. The sound was clean and wide-range; and on stereo the separation was ample. The smooth tuning knob, accurate dial calibration, and responsive meter make tuning quite easy. The stereo indicator (which responds as long as the mode switch is in stereo position) occasionally lights up on interstation noise, but you can ignore this and simply tune on.

The amplifier portion of the PRO-120 puts out enough clean power to drive any speaker system (or combinations, following the recommended impedance guide). Distortion at normal listening levels is very low, and the power bandwidth (for a mere 0.3 per cent THD) spans the entire audio band. Frequency response is unusually linear and wide-band; equalization for both discs and direct play from tape heads is excellent. Damping factor is high; sensitivity and signal-to-noise figures all are very good. The tone controls and loudness contour have ample audible effect to suit different tastes and room conditions.

The PRO-120 may be placed as is on a shelf or table top. Alternately, it may be custom-installed in a panel cut-out.

CIRCLE 141 ON READER-SERVICE CARD





**ELAC STS 344-17  
STEREO CARTRIDGE**

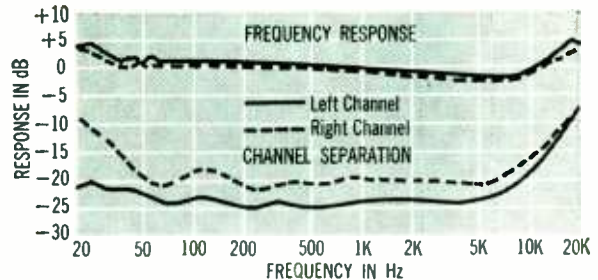
**THE EQUIPMENT:** Elac STS 344-17, a stereo cartridge. Manufactured by Elac of West Germany; distributed by Benjamin Electronic Sound Corp., Farmingdale, N. Y. 11735. Price: \$39.59.

**COMMENT:** The 344-17 is one of a new series of magnetic pickups from Elac, built to conform to the 15-degree vertical angle and with generally refined performance characteristics over older models. This specific model, supplied with a conical stylus, is offered by the manufacturer as a good multipurpose cartridge—suited for playing both stereo and mono discs, and usable in a wide range of tone arms, including those on better quality automatics. Its recommended tracking force is 1 to 2 grams. The stylus is easily replaced by the owner.

In CBS Labs tests, the minimum stylus force needed to track bands 6 and 7 of test record STR 120, and the glide tones on STR 100, was 1.2 grams, which is somewhat more than that required by the best (and costliest) of today's pickups, but also lower than what many other pickups require. The tracking force used in response and other tests was 1.5 grams which, of course, is right in the middle of the range recommended by Elac. Output voltage from left and right channels was 3.8 millivolts and 3.6 millivolts respectively, values that are well balanced and comfortably within the sensitivity range of magnetic phono inputs found on today's amplifiers and receivers. Left channel response from



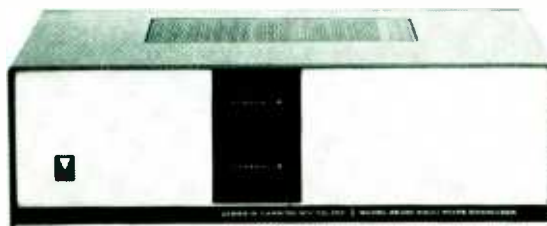
*Response to 1-kHz square wave.*



20 Hz to 20,000 Hz ran within plus 5, minus 2 dB; the right channel showed plus 4.5, minus 2.5 dB. Over the greatest part of the audio band, both channels were very closely matched. The shape of the curves resembles that of many other magnetics, with a slight rise at the very low end and a characteristic peak at the very top. Channel separation was adequate, although not the greatest we've seen. Harmonic distortion was average; IM distortion lower than average in both lateral and vertical angles. Compliance was measured as 12.5 ( $\times 10^{-6}$  cm/dyne) laterally; 7.5 vertically. The pickup's vertical angle of 18 degrees was very close to the nominal 15-degree standard, and the stylus showed a nicely rounded tip, tapering to 0.4 mil (what the Lab calls "good geometry"). The 1-kHz square-wave response had one small cycle of ringing which was well damped; the shape of the wave was very good.

All told, this is a better-than-average pickup at a slightly higher-than-average price.

**CIRCLE 142 ON READER-SERVICE CARD**



**J. B. LANSING  
SE400S BASIC AMPLIFIER**

**THE EQUIPMENT:** JBL SE400S, a stereo basic or power amplifier. Dimensions: 15¼ by 4⅞ by 7¾ inches. Price: \$285. Manufacturer: James B. Lansing Sound, Inc., 3249 Casitas Ave., Los Angeles, Calif. 90039.

**COMMENT:** Enter another superb, top-performer in the separate amplifier class. The present SE400S—a high-powered basic that has virtually nonmeasurable distortion and very wide-range response—actually is the lineal descendant of the "energizer" offered by JBL some years ago as part of its own speaker systems.

The idea then was to supply a driving amplifier whose output characteristics (mainly a matter of damping and

deliberate slight changes from flat response) were tailored to elicit the best response from specific JBL speaker systems. More, the amplifier, or energizer, could be physically (as well as electrically) integrated with the speaker system by being installed in the rear of one enclosure. Thus, for stereo, that speaker system would be driven by one channel of the amplifier, while the other speaker—connected externally—would be powered from the amplifier's second channel (see HF test report, May 1965).

This option still is available, but in addition JBL is offering the amplifier on its own as a flat-gain unit for driving any speaker systems (the difference in the way it functions is determined by what circuit boards are

## J. B. Lansing SE400S Amplifier

### Lab Test Data

#### Performance characteristic

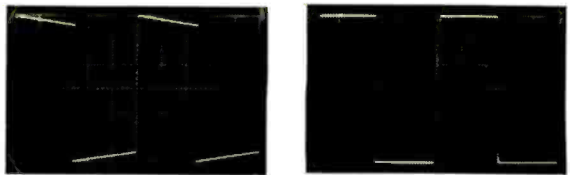
#### Measurement

Power output (at 1 kHz into 8-ohm load)		
l ch at clipping	59.4 watts at 0.04% THD	
l ch for 0.15% THD	61.6 watts	
r ch at clipping	59.4 watts at 0.052% THD	
r ch for 0.15% THD	61.6 watts	
both chs simultaneously		
l ch at clipping	52.5 watts at 0.044% THD	
r ch at clipping	52.5 watts at 0.054% THD	
Power bandwidth for constant 0.15% THD	below 10 Hz to 45 kHz	
Harmonic distortion		
40 watts output	l ch: under 0.10%, 20 Hz to 20 kHz	r ch: under 0.09%, 20 Hz to 20 kHz
20 watts output	l ch: under 0.054%, 20 Hz to 20 kHz	r ch: under 0.053%, 20 Hz to 20 kHz
IM distortion		
4-ohm load	under 0.12% to 100 watts	
8-ohm load	under 0.23% to 70.9 watts	
16-ohm load	under 0.45% to 43.5 watts	
Frequency response, 1-watt level	+0, -0.5 dB, 10 Hz to 100 kHz	
Damping factor	38	
Input characteristics	Sensitivity 1.4 V	S/N ratio 91.5 dB

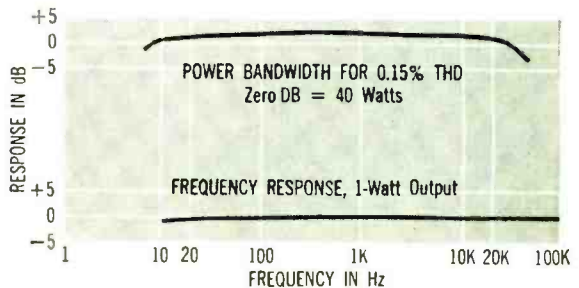
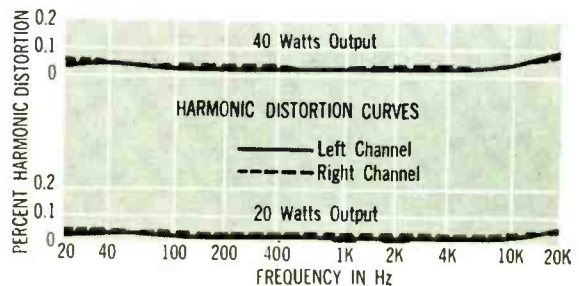
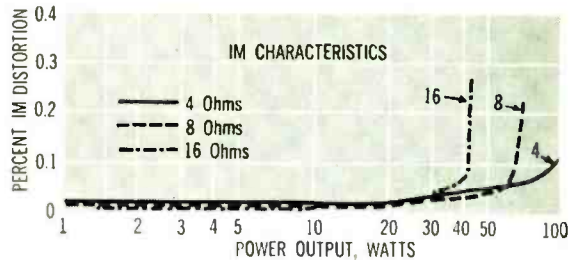
inserted, and how, into the amplifier's final stages). The model we tested was wired for normally flat response, the same as any conventional amplifier. It proved to be one of the best amplifiers we've yet encountered. In fact, its distortion was so low that to show it graphically (see accompanying charts) we had to expand our normal graph-scales so that vertical divisions usually representing 1 per cent distortion now represented 0.1 per cent. On most commercial-grade test gear, such low values of distortion would be indistinguishable from the residual distortion of the test instruments, and the SE400S would then be characterized as "having nonmeasurable distortion." And indeed, for all practical purposes, that is so.

For a high-powered amplifier, the SE400S is surprisingly compact and neatly styled. One normally hides a basic amp, but JBL design virtually demands showing off this product. One of its long sides looks like an exercise in abstract art, with the JBL emblem in one corner, and the output circuit boards showing through a tinted transparent cover in the center. The other long side is the business panel: left and right channel inputs each with a level control, stereo speaker binding posts, fuse holder, and AC line cord.

The accompanying test data from CBS Labs simply shows that the SE400S does everything, and more, that JBL claims it does. This amplifier furnishes better than 50 watts per channel at a fraction of a per cent distortion. Its IM is extremely low and linear at any output impedance, with nothing of the rise at low output levels often seen in solid-state gear. Signal-to-noise ratio is exceptionally good at 91.5 dB; the SE400S must be ranked as one of the quietest, as well as one of the lowest-distorting, amplifiers around. Frequency response is practically a straight line out to 100 kHz and



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



beyond. Low-frequency square-wave response shows very slight tilt and flat tops, indicating rock-solid, clean bass; high-frequency square-wave response is virtually a replica of the input test signal, indicating well-aided highs and clean transients.

It is impossible to describe the sound of this amplifier; as far as we could judge, what you hear with the SE400S in your system is determined by the program sources before it and the speakers it is driving. At that, we suspect it may let you hear a little more of what's actually on records than lesser performing amplifiers. The SE400S is intended for use in systems having a separate preamp-control, although since it has its own level controls it could conceivably be driven directly from any high-level signal source such as a tuner or a tape playback preamp.

CIRCLE 143 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

### REPORTS IN PROGRESS

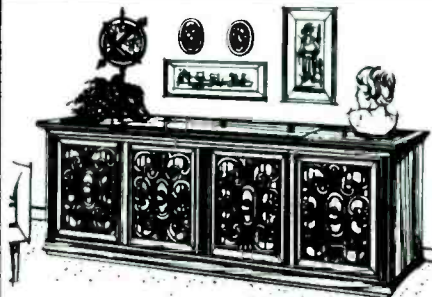
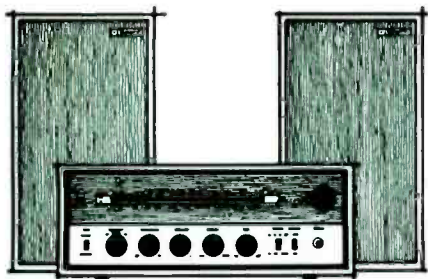
Harman-Kardon HK-520 Receiver  
Acoustic Research AR-5 Speaker



# The Gift of Beautiful Music

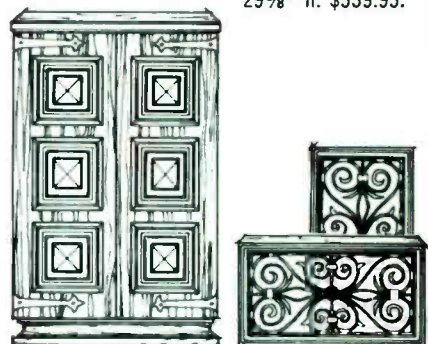
## SCOTT®

**THE SCOTTIE AM/FM STEREO SYSTEM** — Now you can give some lucky person a complete Scott stereo system . . . at a really giftable price! The Scottie operates off house current or a 12-Volt battery for use anywhere . . . and it's compact enough to fit on a night table. Great Scott sound in a tiny package. Only \$199.95.

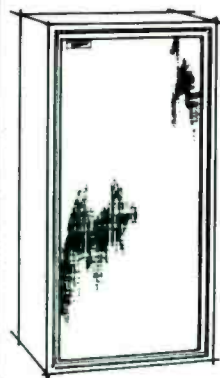
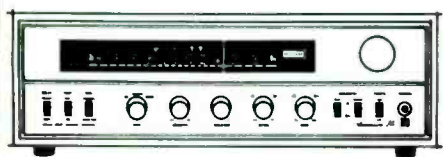


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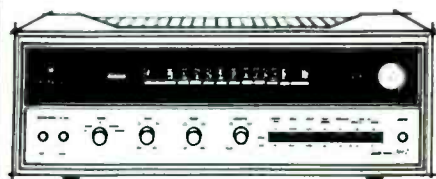


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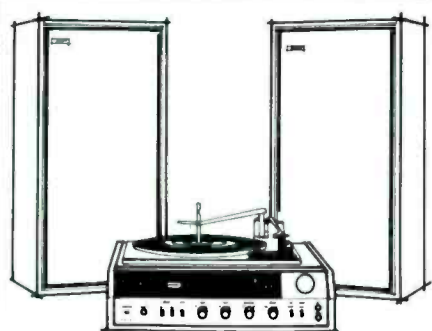
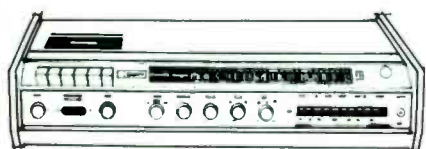


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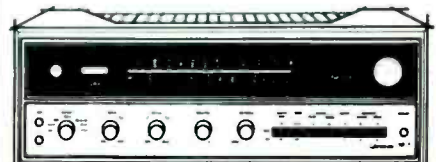


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sion displayed "eccentricities." I must say, however, that their very excesses bespoke an involvement with the music, an intense commitment to exploring its content in depth, that apparently eludes the straightforward Gilels.

The present integral set of the Concertos, then, offers the perfected versions of a *pianist's* Beethoven. To begin with, Gilels' outlook is primarily virtuoso-oriented. Being a superlative keyboard lapidary, he has a thoroughly understandable tendency to look at note patterns, pedal markings, phrase indications, and all technical challenges with a view to making them "work" in purely pianistic terms. And consciously or unconsciously, Gilels' precepts as to what constitutes good pianism are heavily influenced by romantic habits.

His approach to Beethoven thus tends to be either muscular and hard-driving (as in the *Emperor*) or graceful, slender, and trimmed-down (as in the earlier works). In the first three concertos, you will find little of the virile defiance and rude ungainliness so inherent in the music. Instead, one encounters a dainty refinement not unlike the old Dresden-china approach to Mozart. For one thing, Gilels' dryish, *clavécin*-type sonority lacks the requisite weight that, say, Fleisher brought out with such telling effect in the C major Concerto. Then too, the very characteristic slur marks and pedals indications of this sometimes uncouth composer pose problems of ambivalence for the impeccably polished Gilels.

#### First Concerto

Accordingly, he opts for the shortest (and most graceful) of the three Beethoven cadenzas available for the first movement of Concerto No. 1, he trims down the plunging octave-glissando in that same movement to the proportions of neat scalework, and he ignores the awkward but typically Beethovenian slur-indications in the Rondo's principal theme.

It will be implicit in the remarks above that for me the rougher, tougher interpretations of this Concerto by Fleisher (Epic), Serkin and Gould (Columbia) are much to be preferred. Even on its own facile, delicately introspective terms, Gilels/Szell is surpassed by Serkin/Ormandy (Columbia), Arrau/Haitink (Philips), Kempff/Leitner (DGG), and Solomon/Menges (Seraphim). Schnabel/Sargent (on Angel COLH) best combines the opposing qualities of vigor and refinement, though the sound of that recording is, of course, outdated.

#### Second Concerto

In the B flat Concerto, Gilels dilutes Beethoven's long pedal markings over his quasi-cadenza near the end of the slow movement. Fleisher and Schnabel are both boldly uncompromising here, and the effect they achieve is telling. I also feel that Gilels' tempos are rather sluggish in the outer movements of this work and that his rondo, in particular, lacks humor. Szell's orchestral work is awesome in its detail, but here, as in the First Concerto, he sounded happier, and certainly more spirited, with Fleisher. I must also point out that Gilels' playing of the standard Beethoven cadenza

in the first movement is surprisingly ragged. This section should certainly have been remade.

#### Third Concerto

In the Third Concerto, we find more equivocation from Gilels: like Richter (DGG), he takes an indecently slow tempo for the F minor section in the first-movement cadenza (once again, the standard Beethoven). The result is a very, very clear articulation of the right-hand triplet figurations and a very, very dull re-creation of the requisite Beethoven thrust and drama. And in the Larghetto, Gilels achieves rhythmic "steadiness" at the expense of truly expressive phrasing. He hardly pays any heed at all to the canonical implications of the first bridge passage following the orchestra's first statement.

Nonetheless, the Gilels/Szell Third Concerto is a performance I can easily recommend. Though less sophisticated and arresting from an interpretative standpoint than either Fleisher/Szell or Schnabel/Dobrowen (Angel COLH), it is better played and better recorded than either. Its serious competitors (aside from Fleisher and Schnabel, whose conceptions—imperfect playing or no—satisfy me the most) are: 1) Rubinstein/Leinsdorf for RCA (aristocratic, solid phrasing, deft coloring and a surprisingly fast, though not ineffective, tempo for the slow movement); 2) Kraus/Rivoli for Monitor (very personal and intense, even astringent); 3) Annie Fischer/Fricsay for Heliodor (orthodox in the best of ways); 4) Richter/Sanderling for DGG (a bit cool for my taste, but meticulously performed and somewhat similar to Gilels/Szell); 5) the two Arrau versions (with Galliera for Angel and with Haitink for Philips), which share a low-keyed, somber, thoroughly introspective approach.

#### Fourth Concerto

In the Fourth Concerto, Gilels might be said to attempt a combination of the best of Serkin with the best of Giesecking. He brings to his reading a trace of the former's biting athleticism and more than a trace of the latter's colorism and pianistic refinement. (Gilels, incidentally, also opts for the curious alternate Beethoven cadenza in the first movement played by Giesecking, Brendel, and Moravec.) I liked the spacious, unhurried tempos (which allow a lot of instrumental detail to tell). I did *not* like the sudden, unheralded exhibitionism in that series of left-hand *sforzandos* early in the first movement: *sforzandos* though they may be, such machine-tooled *martelato* piano-punching is heard to better advantage in the Khachaturian Toccata. In this concerto I am also concerned about another Gilels mannerism, which marred the Concerto No. 1 too: there, Gilels' habits of biting short the final chord in a solo passage hurt the rondo theme; in the solo entrance heralding the Fourth's first-movement development, the same abruptness literally sets my teeth on edge. On the whole, this is a good performance, but my favorites among those available are: 1) Fleisher/Szell (most similar to the long-discontinued Schna-

bel/Sargent); 2) Serkin/Toscanini for RCA Victor (an invigorating romp); 3) Giesecking/Karajan for Columbia or Rubinstein/Leinsdorf (both elegant and abstract, almost cubist); finally, 4) the arrestingly subjective, now poetic, now dramatic reading of Moravec/Turnovsky (Connoisseur Society).

#### Fifth Concerto

Szell's contribution to No. 5 furnishes the same type of weighty momentum that made his earlier reading with Fleisher so effective. Also an interesting variant heard in that set, in which the first note of the Rondo is played *arco* rather than *pizzicato*, is repeated here. It rather alters the perspective of that passage, and is authentic to the original MS. The Fleisher version, though, is to be preferred unless you are disturbed by that pianist's abrupt structural punctuations and almost violent expanding and contracting of phrases. Gilels' robust, sinewy, but more conventional work here is just a bit bleak and percussive in texture, and those in quest of a purely pianistic approach will probably better appreciate the more finely nuanced Rubinstein/Leinsdorf and Katz/Barbirolli (Everyman). If you like an *Emperor* in the old-fashioned grand manner, with all its rhetorical stops pulled, Kempff/Leitner is your best bet. Admirers of the slender, understated Fischer/Furtwängler interpretation will find a near paradigm of that celebrated edition in Vox's Brendel/Mehta account. This autumn, Seraphim will be reissuing the fine-grained Giesecking/Galliera approach, in stereo only. Giesecking fanciers who still want mono had better obtain the Odyssey reissue of his older Karajan-led performance before it is withdrawn in favor of an electronic stereo counterpart.

As for the fillers in the Gilels set, I found the C minor Variations rounding out the disc containing the Second Concerto very impressive—Gilels offers a superlative show of incisive, rigid rhythm and bronzen, incisive tone. He does well too by the charming *Variations on a Russian Theme* (with Concerto No. 1), realizing the irregularities of Beethoven's bar lines with humor and spontaneity. Concerto No. 4 is preceded by the *Ruins of Athens* variations played in rousing, unsubtle fashion.

The sound of any test acetates (engineered by the Cleveland Orchestra's regular Columbia crew, according to Mr. Gelatt's report) is rich and clear, but rather too diffuse in the stringed bass department. A reduction of lows helped matters somewhat.

**BEETHOVEN:** *Concertos for Piano and Orchestra; No. 1, in C, Op. 15; No. 2, in B flat, Op. 19; No. 3, in C minor, Op. 37; No. 4, in G, Op. 58; No. 5, in E flat, Op. 73 ("Emperor"); Variations: 32, in C minor, Grove 191; on Marcia alla turca, No. 4 from The Ruins of Athens, Op. 113; on a Russian Folk Theme.*

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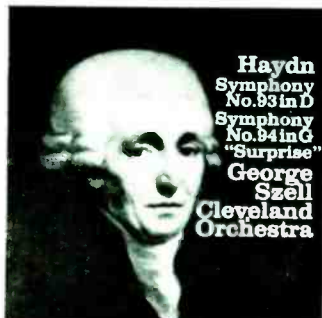
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## THE REAPPEARANCE OF A LATE ROMANTIC: HANS PFITZNER'S CANTATA, THE GERMAN SOUL

by Peter G. Davis

WITH DGG'S WELCOME RELEASE of *Von deutscher Seele*, American record collectors now have their first opportunity to investigate a major work of Hans Pfitzner (1869-1949)—one of Germany's loneliest and in some ways most pathetic creative figures. Although his musical speech shared many stylistic similarities with that of Strauss, Mahler, early Schoenberg, and lesser post-Wagnerian composers, Pfitzner has always been a shadowy member of the late Romantic generation. He lacked Strauss's cosmopolitan extroversion, Mahler's daemonic intensity, and Schoenberg's magnetic missionary qualities. His idolatry of art, his abhorrence of conventionalism, his mystical concepts of the nature of musical inspiration, his self-conscious Germanism and equally self-conscious notions of his own position as a German Artist . . . all conspired to drive Pfitzner into an aesthetic corner. There he remained to the end of his days, a solitary and embittered figure, with neither sufficient intellectual flexibility nor sufficient creative vitality to proselytize his ideals and music. "A man with a mission, but with little or no power of leadership," English musicologist Edward J. Dent wrote perceptively in 1923. Even to his coterie of followers (itself a rather ineffectual group), Pfitzner was little more than a symbolical figure, doomed for scant recognition beyond German-speaking boundaries.

All of this did not prevent Pfitzner from writing some extraordinarily beautiful music. *Palestrina*, composed in 1917 to his own libretto, is his best-known work. Into this opera the composer poured everything he believed, identifying himself with the Roman contrapuntist as the appointed guardian of tradition, who purportedly "saved music" from the papal ban of Pius IV. Here we have the mystical, lonely creative world of Palestrina, writing the *Missa Papae Marcelli* under sublime angelic guidance, contrasted with the sterile, cynical, philistinistic bickerings of the Church's Council of Trent. Despite its great length and pages of less

than notable invention, the opera's profound sincerity and intensity of expression cannot fail to make a deep impression. Dent, in fact, confessed that he was drawn back to this "intolerably boring work" four times in the course of a single visit to Berlin. To my mind, the opera is a fascinating statement of an artistic stance which, although it may ultimately strike one as curious and unsympathetic, nevertheless commands respect both for its fervent commitment and passages of deeply moving lyrical inspiration.

*Von deutscher Seele* was written in 1920-21. Pfitzner chose his texts at random from the poems of Joseph Eichendorff—not the most penetrating of German poets, but one whose mysterious world of nature and Teutonic lore was exactly suited to the composer's temperament. The title is Pfitzner's own because "I found no better nor more comprehensive expression of what these poems tell us of the reflective, jovial, profound, tender, mighty, and heroic qualities of the German soul." Divided somewhat arbitrarily into three sections entitled "Man and Nature," "Life and Song," and simply "Songs," the cantata proceeds, in Pfitzner's words, "as an unbroken chain of colorful magic pictures," freely alternating solo, choral, and orchestral sections. To be sure, the work has a tendency to ramble, occasionally to the point of incoherency, and the true nature of the "*deutsche Seele*" will probably always remain a mystery to non-Germans; but the cantata exercises a strong appeal both through its beauty of expression and its poetical unity—one is often reminded of the more discursive but equally compelling works of Schumann, a composer Pfitzner adored.

"Man and Nature" opens with a lovely hushed invocation of nature and its mystical mutability. The main body of the movement investigates the phenomena of death, changing seasons, times of day, violent storms, fathomless oceans—all ineffably bound to the course of human existence. The music throughout this sec-

tion mirrors Eichendorff's luminescent verses perfectly—the orchestral passages dealing with evening, for example, create a bewitching effect through Pfitzner's unusual yet imaginative and delicate application of instrumental and harmonic color. "Life and Song" dwells (rather unhappily) on the German soul's seemingly infinite capacity for self-pity, but fortunately Part Three recaptures the first section's fresh lyrical mood. One of the songs here, "The Old Garden," is among Pfitzner's finest inspirations—the broad soprano cantilena and exquisitely devised accompaniment for divided strings, two harps, and guitar are redolent with gorgeous sunset-drenched musical imagery.

DGG's recording evidently originated at a live performance, to judge from an occasional discreet cough. Keilberth and his Bavarian forces allow the score to unfold in a most natural, unaffected fashion—one could hardly wish for a more sympathetic reading. Agnes Giebel sings the sumptuously written soprano music with a lovely floating tone: and even though Fritz Wunderlich has less grateful opportunities, it's a pleasure to have another recorded example of the late artist's superb tenor. Both Hertha Töpfer, and Otto Wiener offer dependable work, and the engineering produces a suitably mellow, autumnal acoustic.

All in all, *Von deutscher Seele* should prove to be a happy discovery for a phonographic generation that currently finds Mahler very much to its taste. Perhaps DGG could now be encouraged to consider a complete *Palestrina* to mark Pfitzner's 1969 centenary.

PFITZNER: *Von deutscher Seele*, Op. 28

Agnes Giebel, soprano; Hertha Töpfer, mezzo; Fritz Wunderlich, tenor; Otto Wiener, bass; Anton Nowakowski, organ; Chorus and Orchestra of the Bavarian Radio, Joseph Keilberth, cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 139157/58, \$11.58 (two discs).



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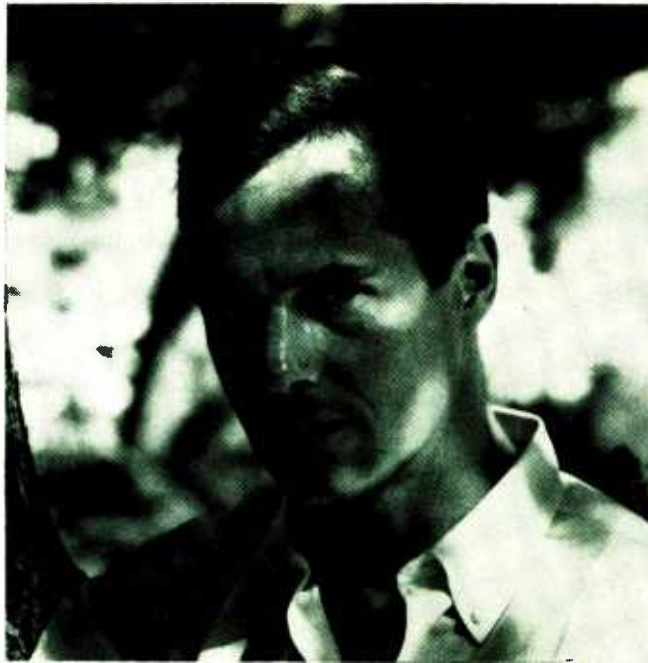
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## COMPOSER, CRITIC, AND RACONTEUR—NED ROREM MARKS A MILESTONE

by Alfred Frankenstein

ON DECEMBER 12, at a concert in Town Hall, Ned Rorem will celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the start of his career as a composer. As part of that commemoration Braziller is publishing Rorem's fourth book, *Music and People*. In addition, Desto is issuing a record containing three of Rorem's instrumental works and Odyssey is reissuing a collection of his songs originally released by Columbia.

The book consists of a dozen articles and reviews reprinted from various publications and interspersed with "interludes" from the composer's diary. Early in the book he makes a statement that is a major clue to Rorem as composer—and it is as composer that he really counts. The statement in question occurs in the course of an article about the Beatles, whom Rorem admires no end. He admits, to be sure, that Paul McCartney's tunes are commonplace, his harmony stereotyped, his rhythms rudimentary; however, "It is not in innovation that Paul McCartney's originality lies, but in superiority."

Originality without innovation is an extremely interesting concept. In cold blood one is tempted to dismiss it as a contradiction in terms, especially when the author makes no effort whatsoever to define or describe the superiority he ascribes to McCartney; but Rorem's own collection of songs is an object lesson in what he means. There are thirty-two of them on the disc, ranging in date from 1946 to 1957 and sung, with the com-

poser at the piano, by five different singers: Gianna d'Angelo, Phyllis Curtin, Regina Sarfaty, Charles Bressler, and Donald Gramm. Though anyone who has won every aspect of the battle that interpretative artistry can win, the songs themselves add up to a highly distinguished achievement without perceptible innovation in musical texture.

Rorem has a fine instinct for the song that lies potentially in the poem as one reads it. The texts of those on the Odyssey record are taken from everywhere—the Bible, Dryden, Jonson, Herrick, and such modern poets as Theodore Roethke, Paul Goodman, and Gertrude Stein. Rorem does not hesitate to set the most hackneyed texts of Browning and Stevenson, or to make a fresh setting of *The Silver Swan*, on which Orlando Gibbons composed perhaps the most famous of all Elizabethan madrigals. The only exceptional poem in the lot—and it is very exceptional indeed—is Elizabeth Bishop's *Visits to St. Elizabeth's*, a Mother-Goose-madhouse satire on the matter of the U. S. government's incarceration of Ezra Pound.

Whatever the poem, Rorem's musical line fits it to perfection. He has a Frenchman's sense of declamation, and it is not surprising that there are essays in his book in praise of Francis Poulenc and Poulenc's singing collaborator, Pierre Bernac. For me there is more variety and interest in Rorem's own songs than in Poulenc's, and he has a greater ability

than Poulenc to create the third, and essential, thing a really fine song must represent. The poem is one thing; the musical setting is another; the third thing is their imaginative fusion. This third thing is not readily analyzed, but one is conscious of it at once when it is manifested. Rorem's work on this record is one of its richest manifestations of recent years.

The instrumental works on the Desto disc are a rather odd assortment. Both *Ideas for Easy Orchestra* and *Water Music* are actually teaching pieces, and the latter was in fact written for the performing group heard here, Robert Hughes' Youth Chamber Orchestra. According to Rorem's notes, Hughes wanted a concerto grosso, to feature a phenomenal clarinetist and a phenomenal violinist in his orchestra and to provide less demanding parts for the rest of the ensemble. Rorem's piece, composed in 1966, took the form of a theme and nine variations; there is something bubbly about one or two of the variations; hence the title. The clarinet player, Larry London, is fabulous and the violinist, Thomas Halpin, is most remarkable, but the work, for my taste, is rather thin and obvious. *The Ideas for Easy Orchestra*, on the other hand, are not. Written in 1961 for student orchestras, they are wonderfully tuneful, bright, and entertaining. There are eight of them in the score, but regrettably only four have been recorded.

On the overside of the Desto disc is the most mature instrumental work of





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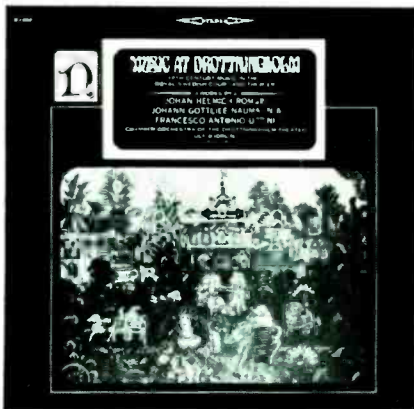
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Roem's it has so far been my pleasure to hear—an eighteen-minute Trio for Flute, Cello, and Piano, dating from 1960. Here Roem lets himself go a little and commits an innovation or two. The first movement, in the composer's own words, is "a concerto for the flutist upstaging the other two players," while the third movement is essentially a vocalise for the cellist; both movements are based on the same six-note phrase. The second movement is a very harsh and stony affair, with thematic links to a finale full of fireworks. The work has profile, impact, a style of its own and it is here given a superb performance.

To get back to the book that is a part of this anniversary event . . . early in his career Roem served as copyist to Virgil Thomson and one suspects that he was strongly influenced by Thomson not only in matters of musical idiom but also in his Francophilia; hence the personal reminiscences of Poulenc and Cocteau which one finds in *Music and People*, the essay recalling Ezra Pound as musical theorist and Pound's association with George Antheil in the great old days in Paris which Roem never knew, the obsessive return to the puzzling personality of Pierre Boulez, and so on. Roem has good things to say about two good friends of mine, Peter Yates and Lukas Foss, and so I like his book; but the best thing in it is the long seventh interlude, a detailed, high-spirited, and hair-raising account of what it's like to compose and present an opera in America, in this case Roem's *Miss Julie*.

Some of the essays—the reviews of George Marek's book on Strauss, B. H. Haggin's book on Toscanini, and Gilbert Chase's anthology of writings by American composers—seem a bit routine; one imagines that they would not have been written if book review editors hadn't assigned Roem these particular volumes. There is a good deal of personal soul-searching, and the collection ends with one of those whither-are-we-drifting pieces which composer-critics particularly like to write.

ROEM: *Songs* (32)

Gianna d'Angelo, soprano; Phyllis Curtin, soprano; Regina Sarfaty, mezzo; Charles Bressler, tenor; Donald Gramm, bass; Ned Roem, piano. ODYSSEY 32 16 0274, \$2.49.

ROEM: *Water Music; Ideas for Easy Orchestra; Trio for Flute, Cello, and Piano*

Jayne Rosenfeld, flute, Charles Forbes, cello, Glenn Johnson, piano (in the Trio); Youth Chamber Orchestra (Oakland, Calif.), Robert Hughes, cond. (in *Water Music and Ideas for Easy Orchestra*), DESTO DC 6462, \$5.98.

MUSIC AND PEOPLE, by Ned Roem. 224 pages. Braziller, \$5.95.

## CLASSICAL

BACH: *Eighteen Chorale Preludes*, S. 651-668 ("Great" or "Leipzig")

Anton Heiller, organ. CARDINAL VCS 10039/40, \$3.50 each (two discs).

Following close on the heels of its recent release of Anton Heiller's excellent performances of the *Orgelbüchlein*, Cardinal now offers the same organist's interpretations of the Eighteen Leipzig Chorale Preludes, presenting, as it were, the two poles of Bach's contributions to the German chorale prelude. In the forty-five miniature masterpieces of the *Orgelbüchlein* the gamut of Christian thought and emotion is expressed in the most concise and economical means possible; in the Eighteen Chorales, the chorale serves as inspiration for broad, elaborately worked out, almost symphonic chorale fantasias in which Bach employs every structural and polyphonic device at his disposal. For the most part, these works were written between 1708 and 1717 while the composer was in Weimar, but during his very last years Bach substantially revised and extended many of his earlier works and collected the present set of eighteen chorales for publication.

In looking over my notes on Heiller's performances of each chorale prelude, I find one phrase constantly recurring: "comfortable, forward-moving flow." In general, he chooses tempos somewhat on the fast side, and the "forward motion" is always in evidence. However, it is a very relaxed and easy flow, with never a sense of strain. In Heiller's playing the pieces seem to offer not the slightest technical difficulty.

Heiller's interpretation and execution of ornaments and appoggiaturas is an individual one, and for the most part is more than satisfactory. Many of the trills are fast and not measured, and those that are measured are very flexible while remaining within the beat. (One quirk I can't explain is the organist's habit of reading almost all trill terminations as thirty-second notes, even when Bach clearly writes out two sixteenth notes, as he does in the majority of cases.)

In many, if not all, of these fantasias a proper interpretation depends upon a proper understanding and interpretation of the chorale text upon which it is based. Here Heiller's choices of registration and style or mood for each piece seem to come directly from those texts, and he quite effectively transmits the individual character of each.

The otherwise intelligent jacket notes fail to give any information about the organ used here. I'm quite certain, however, that it is the same instrument heard on Heiller's *Orgelbüchlein* recording. (On that set, by the way, not only is the organ identified, but a complete stop list is included as well as the individual registrations for each of the forty-five chorales.) This beautifully balanced instrument, located in Netsal, Switzerland, was built by Metzler and Sons in 1964, and consists of forty-five to fifty ranks distributed over three manuals and pedal. The tracker action and baroque-style voicing are particularly successful here. One of the outstanding features of all the Metzler instruments I've heard is the silvery low pressure and extremely articulate flutes. Also exceptional is a huge and assertive sixteen-foot reed in the pedal, which, because of the extreme transparency of the whole instrument, never covers or muddies even the most complex passagework above it but which at the same time gives real weight to the full organ. The recording is bright and alive-sounding, and the record surfaces are exceptionally quiet. C.F.G.

BARBER: *Dover Beach*—See Schoeck: *Notturmo*.

BEETHOVEN: *Concertos for Piano and Orchestra* (5); *Variations: No. 32, in C minor, Op. 111*; *On Marcia alla turca, No. 4 from The Ruins of Athens, Op. 113*; *On a Russian Folk Theme*

Emil Gilels, piano; Cleveland Orchestra, George Szell, cond.

For a feature review of this recording, see page 83.

BEETHOVEN: *Sonata for Piano, No. 32, in C minor, Op. 111; Bagatelles, Op. 126*

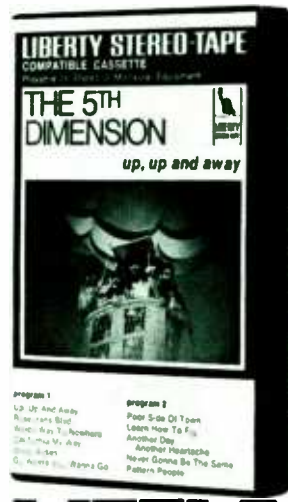
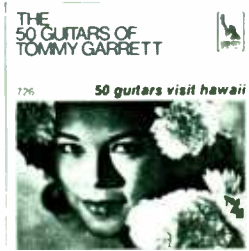
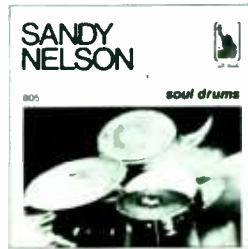
Jacob Lateiner, piano. RCA RED SEAL LSC 3016, \$5.79.

Jacob Lateiner, who in the dim past once made for Columbia a recording of Beethoven's last Sonata, returns to it for his first solo record on the RCA label. His interpretation is bound to evoke strong sentiments, both pro and con. For one thing, it is unusually well played from the standpoints of accuracy and digital control. Then too, the dramatic elements of the music are certainly not neglected in a theatrical approach which verges from the very deliberate (first-movement introduction) to the very precipitate (much of the balance of this stormy movement), punctuated by liberal stresses and rhythmic "adjustments" sprinkled all along the way. You might

Since relatively few companies are now manufacturing monophonic discs, all records henceforth reviewed in "The New Releases" are stereo-only versions unless otherwise indicated.



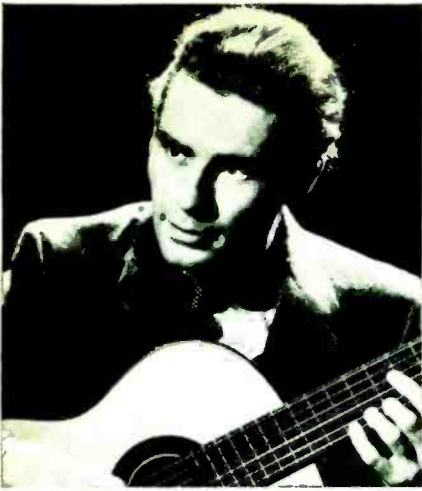
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Julian Bream leads a pleasant discourse based on musical niceties by Boccherini.

say that this Cuban-born, Vengerova-trained virtuoso translates the Juilliard String Quartet approach into solo-piano terms. As with that celebrated foursome, you get much the same precision, intellectuality, and trim thrust here, with the same prevailing monochromaticism of timbre and the same lack of cumulative plasticity. The performance all holds my interest, but it moves me to any real extent only in the latter stages of the great slow movement—which starts out rather slackly but becomes “transfixed” somewhere at midpoint.

Similarly the *Bagatelles*, which are presented with taste, delicacy, and even intermittent fire, but also with prevailing bleak, lightweight, and percussive tone. Schnabel’s relatively humble way with this sublime music remains, by far, the most natural and deeply satisfying I have ever heard. Demus, though, offers a splendid alternative in terms of modern sound in a Westminster edition of the *Bagatelles*. H.G.

**BEETHOVEN: *Symphony No. 9, in D Minor, Op. 125 (“Choral”)***

Gré Brouwenstijn, soprano; Kerstin Meyer, contralto; Nicolai Gedda, tenor; Frederick Guthrie, bass; St. Hedwig’s Cathedral Choir; Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, André Cluytens, cond. SERAPHIM S 60079, \$2.49 (stereo only).

The late Belgian conductor André Cluytens recorded all nine of the Beethoven symphonies with the Berlin Philharmonic, including two versions of No. 6. Only his earlier edition of that Symphony and his Seventh had been issued in this country, however, until the present appearance of the Ninth on a single-disc Seraphim release.

Cluytens’ reading does not make much of an immediate impact. The first movement is one of those *echt-deutsch*, heavy-treading performances in which the indeterminate grasp over basic tempo is further weakened by amorphous, over-resonant recorded sound. Again, the cavernous acoustic plays havoc with the rhythmic figurations of the scherzo, which further suffers from the traditional

Central Europe practice of curtailing all repeats. The Adagio, however, is given a remarkably rich-toned, romantically expressive reading, while the sturdily paced finale benefits from some really excellent solo and choral work.

My over-all impression of this performance is of Weingartner brought up to date. For the modest price asked, the value is attractive, particularly as the really distinguished budget-priced Ninth, that of Toscanini, can be obtained only in the complete eight-disc album. If you are willing to get a standard-price disc, you might investigate the Ninths of Ormandy and Schmidt-Isserstedt. H.G.

**BOCCHERINI: *Quintet for Guitar and Strings, in E minor; Introduction and Fandango for Guitar and Harpsichord (arr. Bream)***  
**†Haydn: *Quartet for Guitar and Strings, in E, Op. 2, No. 2***

Julian Bream, guitar; George Malcolm, harpsichord; Cremona String Quartet. RCA RED SEAL LSC 3027, \$5.79.

The subtitle of this disc is “Julian Bream and His Friends,” and the implication of pleasant interchange is thoroughly appropriate. The Boccherini Quintet was written originally for piano and strings, according to the informative liner notes, and the composer himself made the transcription for guitar. RCA fudges a little on the recorded balance and places the guitar well forward—which is perhaps just as well, because the work has little melodic distinction and it is the rhythmic pungence of the guitar that makes it all worthwhile. The dark-horse winner here is the Introduction and Fandango with harpsichord, arranged by Bream from a string quintet original. Bream may have missed his calling as a fado guitarist: the music mounts inexorably to a rhythmic and dynamic peak, flashing with color and sounding as if at least three guitarists were playing. The harpsichord contributes ingeniously. The Haydn work is a string quartet arranged anonymously (perhaps by the composer) for lute and strings. It has a lovely Adagio; it also proves how much is achieved by performers of this caliber—the simplest phrases are given so much shape, color, and zest that no matter how elemental the music, it never grows tiresome. Let’s have more of Bream and friends. S.F.

**BRAHMS: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1, in D minor, Op. 15***

Rudolf Serkin, piano; Cleveland Orchestra, George Szell, cond. COLUMBIA MS 7143, \$5.79.

Here is the fourth recorded Brahms D minor involving Serkin, the fifth entailing maestro Szell, and their second together. While this is hardly offbeat repertoire performed by fresh, new artists, each new Serkin performance of the score does shed sufficient new light on the

music to justify itself. For example, I played the 1961 Serkin/Ormandy disc of the concerto and found myself in a different world. There, the recording emphasizes a close-up, bigger-than-life piano—impressively monumental but occasionally blotting out the entire orchestra as it would never do in the concert room. Moreover, Ormandy’s essentially generalized, monochromatic approach tends to elicit from Serkin a commensurate simplicity of nuance and headlong impetus. Despite its obvious lack of subtlety, I am fascinated by the grim austerity of the Serkin/Ormandy performance: every note and accent in the piano part is imperiously in place. An even greater tartness was the hallmark of the 1947 Serkin/Reiner reading, made in Pittsburgh’s wretchedly dry Syria Mosque.

In the two Szell-led performances, Serkin is much more of a chamber music player and the recorded sound much less prominently fixed on the piano, which at times even gets submerged behind other instruments. While there is, of course, nervous edge in Serkin’s playing, with Szell in charge the pianist tempers that quality with a sensitive vein of introspection not apparent in his two other accounts. On the newest edition Serkin’s work is truly magnificent in the Adagio (which takes nearly two minutes longer than on the Ormandy version). He molds the phrases with an exceptional warmth and a color I have heard from him only in actual concert, yet he brings an attractive ascetic rigor to the big climax near the end. His playing here is nearly as poetic as the Curzon, nearly as romantic as the Rubinstein, but with a power that makes me prefer it to either. In the *maestoso* first movement, though, the now deleted 1952 Serkin/Szell performance had a bit more dash and technical fire, particularly in the double-octave cascade leading into the development section. On the newest version, this sounds a mite labored, as does some of the *marcato* left-hand passagework in the third movement (Fleisher takes the honors in this respect). In the main, if Serkin sounds wiser on this latest version of what is a young man’s concerto, he also (inevitably) sounds a bit older. Still and all, he and Szell give a stunning reading.

Columbia’s sound takes some getting used to: it is very close, very defined, minimal in instrumental blend. Listened to in a room that adds no reverberation of its own, the effect is a mite claustrophobic, something like that heard from a third-row seat in the orchestra. Climaxes do not quite fuse. I myself had the opportunity of hearing the disc also in a resonant, wood-paneled room and found that the sound filled out resplendently.

It is impossible to select one recorded version of this Brahms concerto as “best” when the contenders include Curzon/Szell (the best recorded of all, and a near-perfect blend of power and lyricism), Fleisher/Szell (terrific structural power and youthful commitment), Malcuzyński/Wislocki (the best bargain edition), Rubinstein/Leinsdorf (wonderfully ripe and sunny), Arrau/Giulini (similar to Rubinstein/Leinsdorf), and the present





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disc. A word of praise is also due young Bruno-Leonardo Gelber, who plays the solo part handsomely on an imported Odeon disc. His version, though, is not as readily available as the others, and the orchestral work, musicianly and idiomatic as it is, lacks the ultimate polish. H.G.

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

Daniel Barenboim, piano; New Philharmonia Orchestra, Sir John Barbirolli, cond. ANGEL S 36526, \$5.79.

The basic style of the present rendition might be summed up as "Ferdinand-the-Bull-in-a-China-shop." For one thing, there is nary a phrase that doesn't slacken to pay homage to some imagined roadside posy. My musical sensibilities, however, react with itchy nose and watery

eyes to this manner of interpretative "sniffing." The "make-it-up-as-you-go-along" approach *can* pay handsome dividends, but only when guided by musical taste and a basic structural goal. I can detect little discipline on the part of either the soloist or the conductor in the present case, only a prevailing crudity, a predominance of strenuous dynamics, and a rhythmic incisiveness suggestive of a quicksand bog. A third-movement cello solo stated with flabby "orchestral-player" vibrato and woolly recorded sound complete the credentials of this unfortunate enterprise.

Should you happen to have a taste for the kind of pretentiousness subscribed to by Barenboim and Barbirolli here, you will find their approach largely paralleled by the Arrau/Giulini, albeit with far, far greater artistry and sensitivity, and also at roughly half the price. The Serkin/Szell and Fleisher/Szell remain my favorites for this work. H.G.

**BRAHMS: Sextet for Strings, in B flat, Op. 18**

Amadeus Quartet and assisting artists. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 139353, \$5.79.

The Amadeus, in the teeth of some of the best players in the business, has come along and given the Brahms B flat Sextet a performance of such big-heartedness and such persuasiveness that it comes close to carrying the field. (The New York String Sextet might have been a contender, but it, alas, is long since deleted.) I confess that I am not familiar with the Berlin Philharmonic Octet version, but among the Stern/Casals, the Menuhin, and the Vienna Konzerthaus—with a little niggling this way and that—the Amadeus most consistently exploits the joys of this youthful score (it was only Brahms's second venture into chamber music). The niggling concerns mostly those great, awkward, four-part accom-

## For the First Time, Mahler's First in Five Movements

"What, *another* Mahler First?" This is, it's true, the thirteenth version in the current catalogues, and the idea of New Haven, Conn., competing with Vienna, Prague, London, New York, and the other great orchestral centers is at first sight a shade quixotic.

But Odyssey's new release has one very special thing going for it. This is the first time the Symphony has been recorded in its original five-movement form, with an Andante allegretto under the cryptic title "*Blumine*" separating the first movement from the scherzo. The 1893 manuscript of *Blumine*, offered for auction by Sotheby's of London in 1959, was bought by Mrs. James M. Osborn of New Haven, and it was her local patriotism that resulted in the New Haven Symphony's being offered the rights to the first contemporary performance. An exception was made for a single separate performance of the movement under Benjamin Britten at the 1967 Aldeburgh Festival in Suffolk, England. But apart from that, the modern premiere, complete with the rest of the Symphony, was given in New Haven on April 9, 1968, under Frank Brieff's direction. Mrs. Osborn also agreed with the New Haven Symphony that no performances by other orchestras be permitted until after September 15 of this year, or, within a 50-mile radius of New York City, until after April 1, 1969.

The complicated "in-out" history of the *Blumine* movement is related in Jack Diether's liner notes. Here I will say only that there is strong evidence that the movement's eventual deletion from published versions was dictated by Mahler's publisher against the composer's own wishes. The music itself is perhaps less individual than that of the other four movements, but it is attractive in a wistful way, and, as Diether points out, there are two good internal reasons for including it: it obviates the somewhat awkward "bump" between the first movement's vigorous coda and the beginning of the scherzo; and it restores meaning to flashback passages in the finale that have hitherto had nothing to flash back to.

Without ever coming within challenging distance of Horenstein's classic version on Vox or of the

beautiful new performance by Kubelik recently issued on Deutsche Grammophon, Brieff directs a strong, sensitive interpretation and draws surprisingly polished playing from his orchestra.

The most impressive movement is, I feel, the last, in which the conductor's fidelity to Mahler's detailed markings is especially notable. Tempos throughout the work are eminently sensible, but sometimes, particularly in the first movement, their establishment is undermined by a slight sense of insecurity. This happens early on in the principal section (*immer sehr gemächlich*) of the first movement; and even before that, in the seventh measure of the introduction, the descending-fourths theme displays a curious rhythmic quirk (appearing to start faster than it continues) which dogs its reappearances throughout the Symphony.

The funeral march movement suffers, like certain passages elsewhere, from a lack of really quiet playing. The strings too seem weak in comparison with the other sections of the orchestra, but this latter fault may be partly due to the characteristics of the hall in which the recording was made. In other respects the recording is well balanced, and the sound is clean and crisp. There is one odd editing slip: a measure has been excised four bars before figure 33 in the finale. (Columbia has since corrected this error although about 2,000 copies reached dealers' shelves before they could be recalled. The faulty matrix number has the prefix AA before the record number.)

The scherzo repeat is observed, but that in the first movement is omitted, presumably because even without it the three movements accommodated on Side 1 total over twenty-nine minutes.

In sum, Brieff's enterprise cannot be described as a world-beating success. But this is a more than respectable release, and for the moment it offers, at bargain price, the only way of hearing Mahler's First Symphony in the form in which the composer originally conceived it. B.J.

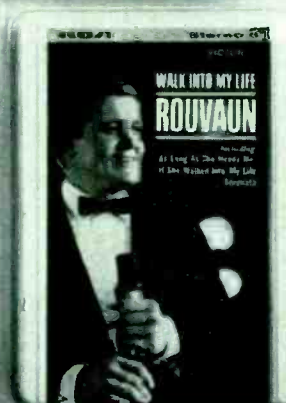
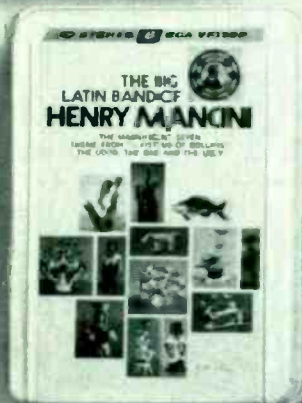
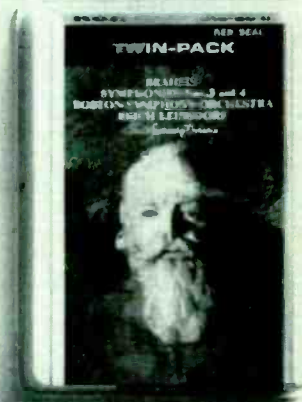
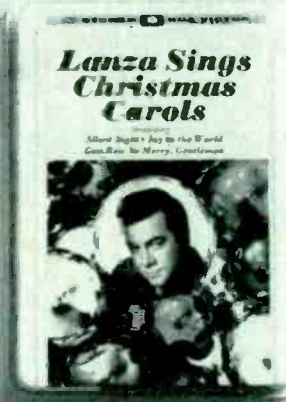
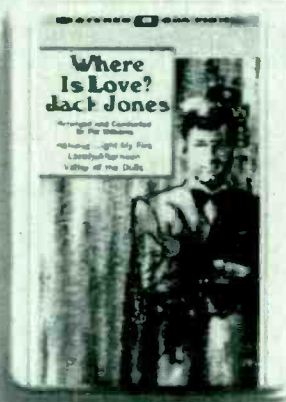
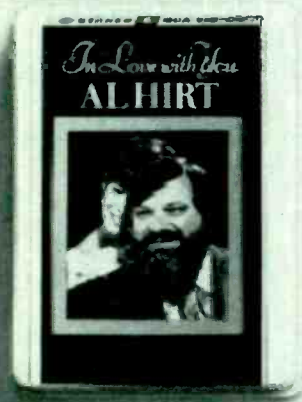
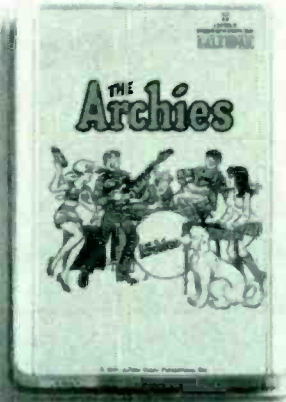
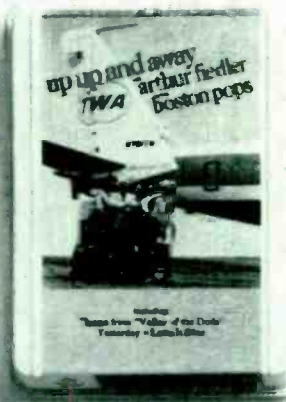
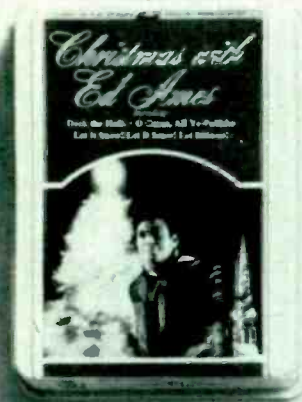
**Mahler: Symphony No. 1, in D**

New Haven Symphony Orchestra, Frank Brieff, cond. ODYSSEY 32 16 0286, \$2.49.





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paniment chords in the second movement, which are written fumpishly and laboriously and ought to sound that way, unapologetically. The Amadeus is inclined to be a little polite about them, and in general makes an effort to smooth out some of the roughness of this movement (but the Vienna is impossible in that respect; by comparison the Amadeus is sheer rock and muscle). Casals & Co. give a peculiar zip to the scherzo that nobody else quite knows the secret of, present company not excepted. But in the finale the Amadeus is wonderfully robust and singing, more so than the competition. In sum, it would take a lot to beat this one. S.F.

**BUSONI: *Concertante and Orchestral Works***

*Konzertstück for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 31a; Divertimento for Flute and Orchestra, Op. 52; Rondo arlecchinesco for Orchestra, Op. 46; Concertino for Clarinet and Small Orchestra, Op. 48.*

Frank Glazer, piano (in Op. 31a); Hermann Klemeyer, flute (in Op. 52); Walter Triebkorn, clarinet (in Op. 48); Berlin Symphony Orchestra, C. A. Bunte, cond. CANDIDE CE 31003, \$3.50.

Things are looking up for Ferruccio Busoni. A year or so late for his 1966

centennial, but welcome nevertheless, his mammoth, mind-blowing Piano Concerto was recently released in John Ogdon's superb performance; and now Candide offers an excellent collection of less ambitious but no less rewarding concertante and orchestral pieces.

The best-known title here is that of *Rondo arlecchinesco*, composed at the beginning of World War I. It was at this period that Busoni was working on his one-act comic opera *Arlecchino*, and indeed a preoccupation with the characters of the old *commedia dell' arte* is prominent in his output. The Rondo, purely orchestral except for a few la-las from a tenor, is full of Busoni's rich intellectual interest, and of the teeming musical inventiveness that falls only marginally short of inspiration.

The other three works are all for solo instruments with orchestra. The *Konzertstück*, for piano, written in 1890, shares with the Piano Concerto of 1904 a certain grandly Beethovenish air, deriving from the slightly impersonal yet pregnant formalities of the Triple Concerto. The pieces for flute and for clarinet are later (1920 and 1919), more modest in demeanor, and a good deal wittier. The flute *Divertimento*, in particular, opens in most engaging fashion: there is a short orchestral introduction, at the end of which several instruments in turn play a little repeated-note cadence figure: the flute takes it up last of all and then proceeds unobtrusively with new material—much as if the last member of a group trotting across the stage had detached himself from the others and, without warning, established himself as the star of the show.

The level of performance throughout the record is high, and the sound quality is admirably clear and colorful if a shade on the shrill side. The only regrettable feature of this attractive issue is the liner notes, which contrive to say next to nothing about the music, preoccupied as their writer is with suburban astonishment at the perfectly ordinary ways of genius. B.J.

**CAGE: *Concerto for Prepared Piano and Orchestra*—See Foss: *Baroque Variations*.**

**DOWLAND: *Lachrimae***

Eugen Müller-Dombois, lute; Viola da Gamba Quintet of the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis. RCA VICTROLA VICS 1338, \$2.50.

John Dowland's characteristically but not unrelievedly dolorous *Lachrimae* or *Seven Tears*, figured in *Seven Passionate Pavans, with divers other Pavans, Galliards, and Almands*, in the Oiseau Lyre mono recording by Thurston Dart and the Philomusica of London, has been since college days one of my greatest treasures. The new Victrola version thus had much in the way of accumulated sentimental value to combat.

It succeeded. In one or two respects, such as the clearer dynamic differentia-

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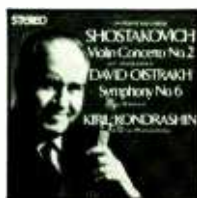
Melodiya/Angel recordings offer a unique cultural link between two great nations. And they have made available here World Premiere recordings of important new Soviet scores: Prokofiev's *Ivan the Terrible*, a cantata based on his Eisenstein film music... Kabalevsky's postwar *Requiem* and *Cello Concerto No. 2*, both conducted by the composer... music of the 35-year-old Rodion Shchedrin, including his *Mischievous Melodies*, music from the opera *Not Love Alone* and his splendid new *Carmen Ballet* fancifully based on Bizet, for strings and percussion... Shostakovich's opera *Katerina Ismailova*, his cantata to words of Yevtushenko *The Execution of Stepan Razin*, music from the early ballet *The Bolt* (conducted by son Maksim) and

the new *Violin Concerto No. 2* played by the artist to whom it is dedicated, David Oistrakh.

Less new, but equally interesting, are recordings of Russian opera, the first Soviet stereo cycle of Tchaikovsky symphonies (by Yevgeny Svetlanov and the U.S.S.R. Symphony Orchestra, who tour America early next year) and ear-opening recordings of other music by Borodin and Berlioz, Prokofiev and Pergolesi, Shostakovich and Stravinsky.



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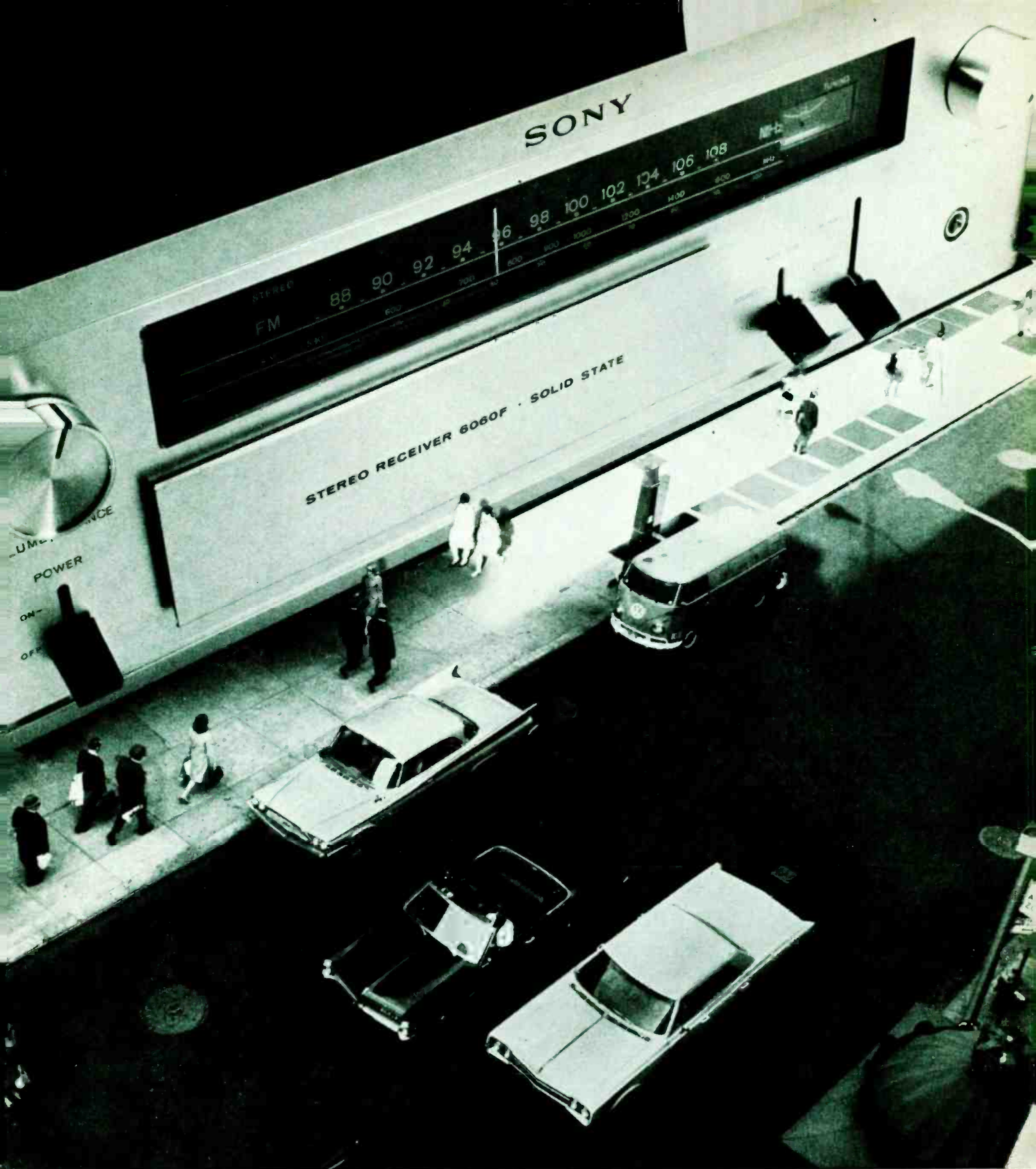


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tion between first times and repeats, the Dart performance retains an edge. But on the whole this Basel performance is much the more stylish. Quite apart from the consideration of a fine modern stereo recording, its greatest advantage is in sheer sound. With a smaller ensemble and using less vibrato, the Schola Cantorum group produces a less polished, less sophisticated sound than the London players, who, with violins as well as viols, sound oversmooth and rather more nineteenth-century by comparison.

One substantial difference concerns the order of pieces. The new version keeps the seven *Lachrimae* pavans together on the first side, with the other three pavans, nine galliards, and two

almunds in three groups on Side 2; Dart, by contrast, rearranged the whole set, distributing the *Lachrimae* pavans among the other pieces. I find they make a more powerful, concentrated effect played together, but others may prefer the greater variety of Dart's scheme. B.J.

**DVORAK: *Symphony No. 6, in D, Op. 60; Slavonic Dances: No. 2; No. 8***

Boston Symphony Orchestra, Erich Leinsdorf, cond. RCA RED SEAL LSC 3017, \$5.79.

For all the beauty to be heard in the

comprehensive series of nine Dvořák symphonies, now renumbered, I find that only in the last three does he consistently convert personal mannerism into truly individual symphonic style. This Sixth Symphony (formerly designated No. 1), like the Opus 76 that precedes it chronologically, sounds more like a masterful compendium of Dvořák's symphonic ideas than an integral symphonic statement.

Nevertheless, this score contains the qualities that make the composer's music increasingly endearing the better we know it. Even in his minor key mood, Dvořák is seldom gloomy or morose, while the D major work at hand is in every respect robust and songfully joyous.

One might, however, be hard put at times to recognize these qualities in Leinsdorf's plodding performance of the two outer movements. In part his problem may rise from a too literal reading of Dvořák's *Allegro non tanto* indication for the first movement. Istvan Kertesz, in his recent London record, ignores this *non tanto* as far as he can without imperiling articulation of the music, and achieves a far more joyous exultation, more fitting with Dvořák's conception. But Leinsdorf's failure goes beyond merely miscalculating the tempo: the orchestra sound throughout this performance has an opaque lack of inner luster, without sheen in the strings or glow in the winds, that is all too much a part of a basically dull conception of the work. P.H.

**FOSS: *Baroque Variations***

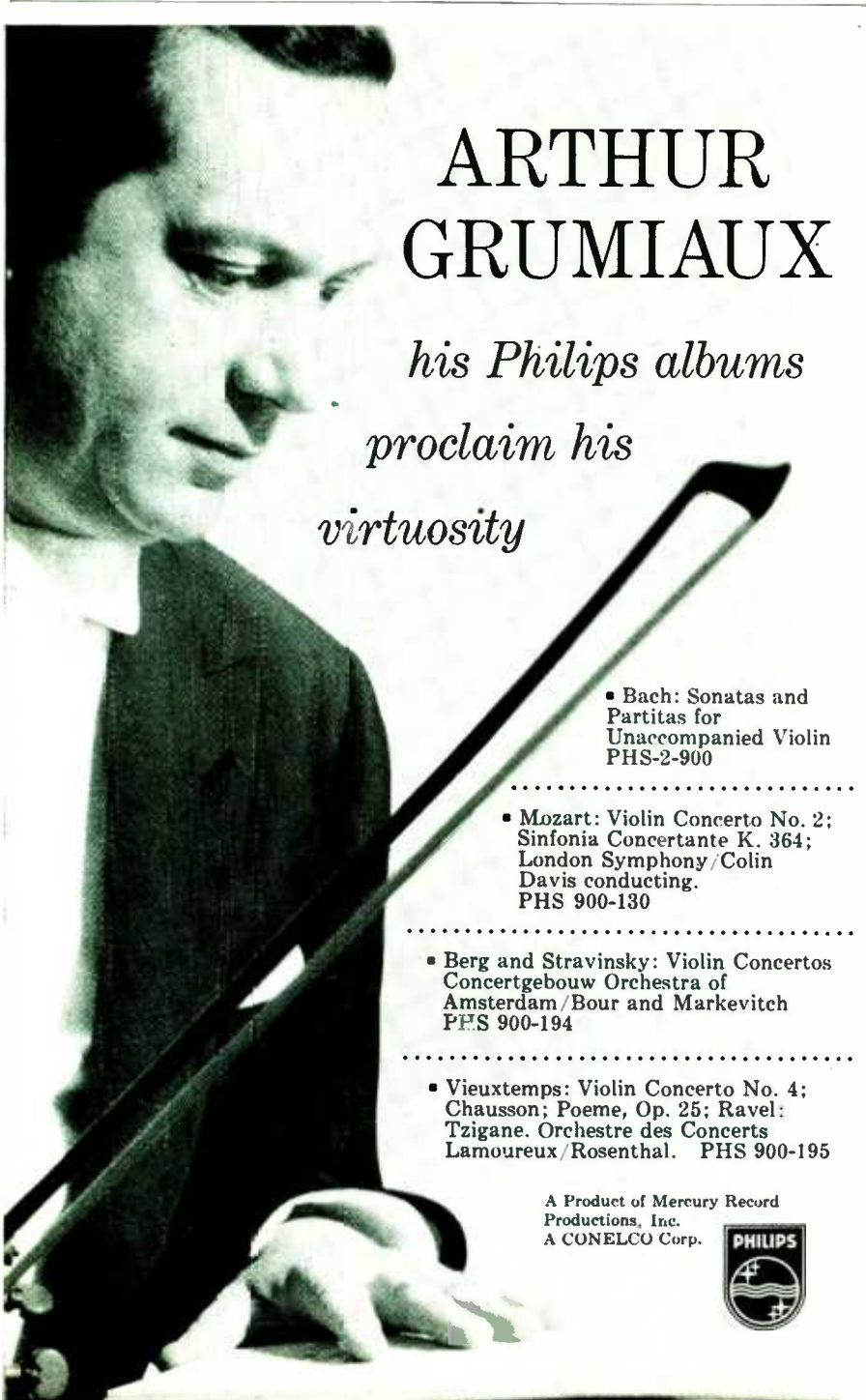
[Cage: *Concerto for Prepared Piano and Orchestra*

Yuji Takahashi, piano; Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, Lukas Foss, cond. Nonesuch H 71202, \$2.50.

Perhaps it is a measure of his success that Lukas Foss has been so much abused in the press of late. Hardly does the occasion of a new work go by without some irate critic suggesting that Mr. Foss further the cause of music by quitting composition or, equally inane if less presumptuous, that he stand in the corner in expiation of his guilt. It seems to me, at least, that bad art does not enrage; it bores. Foss's music rarely bores.

The furor raised over the *Baroque Variations* seems rather a teapot tempest once the composer's aims are understood. What at first appears a desecration of the old masters emerges as an attempt by Foss to explore our perception of their music. By taking what is familiar and artfully distorting it, he constantly plays tug-of-war with our ears. The effect, though often disconcerting, is highly stimulating. By having the orchestra play inaudibly, he is also exploring the ceremony of music making itself. (Naturally, this aspect of his purposes can't be conveyed in the recording.)

Some people will be shocked to learn that Foss intends the work as a homage to the composers whose work he destroys. To these listeners it is best to quote the composer's words: "I have added to that



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# CHINESE JUNK

THIS WOULD APPEAR to be the first recording of the modern music of Communist China to be released in this country. The Lord alone knows through what back door it arrived here. The jacket notes are very cagey: not only do they fail to tell us where the recording was made, or when, but even more remarkably, they do not mention the names of the composers. We are told only that the composers "labored and brought forth music acceptable to the party." A footnote adds that in Communist China "very often a given piece will be the fruit of a collaboration between two, sometimes as many as four composers," but the notes do not say that these particular pieces were so written.

After hearing them, one is tempted to suggest that they were probably not written by anybody,

but thrown together by some haphazard process quite foreign to composition as that word is commonly understood. Both works appear to be mishmashes of Chinese popular tunes. The lively ones in the piano concerto are altogether charming; in the violin concerto, everything is handled in so oily and overblown a style that nothing really tells.

The recordings magnify the solo instrument enormously, which is not so bad in *Youth* because Liu Shih-Kun plays a fine lot of piano. On the other hand, the orchestra in *Youth* is so poorly recorded that one cannot even guess as to its instrumentation. The instrumentation in the violin concerto is more readily identifiable. In both pieces it is clear that the heroic efforts of Chairman Mao to impose standards of uniformity in Chinese life do not apply to pitch and phrasing in the work of symphony orchestras. A.F.

(Editor's note: According to the Chinese-American violinist Ma Sihon and his wife, who is a pianist, the violin concerto on this record was composed by two musicians

named Ho and Chen and was published in China in 1960. They also state that the piano concerto was written by "six to eight composers." The slow movement of the violin concerto, they tell us, contains Chinese folk material; the folksy-sounding themes elsewhere are all original composition in folk style. The piano concerto is said to employ native Chinese instruments in its orchestra. Mr. and Mrs. Ma add that Liu Shih-Kun, the pianist featured in the concerto, won second prize in the Tchaikovsky Competition in 1958—the year in which the young Van Cliburn took the first award. According to the Mas, Liu was recently arrested by Chairman Mao's Red Guards, who broke his wrists.)

Anon.: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra* ("Youth"); *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra* ("The Butterfly Lovers")

Liu Shih-Kun, piano (in the Piano Concerto); Shen Yung, violin (in the Violin Concerto); Chinese Conservatory Orchestra, Fan Cheng-Wu, cond. EVEREST 3212, \$4.98 (rechanneled stereo only).

which was meant to fill one's entire attention without any unsolicited gift, but take this gift on its own terms and take it as an apology for having used and spoiled. It is an homage though it destroys. Only through this particular act of love-violence can I arrive at this particular truth."

The *Baroque Variations* is Foss's latest work, and one of his most successful. It is bright, colorful, reasonably tonal (E major) and, above all, well made. The first movement (there are three) is based on a Handel Largo with "holes" of silence punched into it. Foss takes the original Handel and counterpoints it against itself in different keys and tempos. The resulting texture is dense, but delicate and delicious. The second movement is a rather Ivesian vignette on a Scarlatti sonata. The piece is played by an off-stage harpsichord and ornamented and obscured by the orchestra. The effect is tender and somewhat sad. As for the third movement, *Phorion* (stolen goods), it can only be described as a freak-out phantasy of a Bach violin Prelude. It is an exhilarating piece and provides a necessary contrast to the other two movements. Anyone not knocked out by its "kitchen-sink" ending should have his glands checked.

The performance is magnificent. Comparing the present recording of *Phorion* with Bernstein's on Columbia, I find Foss's reading far livelier and more interesting. I would guess that Bernstein is grimly determined to make "avant-garde" music of this basically accessible piece—and that his players hate it.

I wish I could work up a little more enthusiasm for Cage's concerto, a work

so insubstantial it seems almost not to be there. Roland Gelatt's remark, in these pages, ". . . a silly and boring piece" ("Music Makers," June 1968), can stand as my own. True, some of the sounds are beautiful, but there are far more profitable ways of spending twenty-two minutes.

The sound of the Nonesuch recording is simply gorgeous. The Dolby system used is a must in this repertoire, with its silences, scarcely audible sounds, and sudden *forte* attacks; any surface noise or pre-echo would mitigate these effects. A triumph for the engineers. And there are superb notes by Bernard Jacobson. R.W.S.

HAYDN: *Quartet for Guitar and Strings, in E, Op. 2, No. 2*—See Boccherini: *Quintet for Guitar and Strings, in E minor*.

HAYDN: *Symphonies: No. 93, in D; No. 96, in D* ("Miracle")

Boston Symphony Orchestra, Erich Leinsdorf, cond. RCA RED SEAL LSC 3030, \$5.79.

The smiling, relaxed Leinsdorf on the album photo of this disc also appears in the genial, even at times wistful, performances here. I particularly like the treatment of No. 93, which is rhythmically trim, tonally fastidious, and not at all pugnacious. In fact, the compact refinement of the BSO's orchestral work and Leinsdorf's swiftly moving tempo for the slow movement (a precursor of

Beethoven's *Pastoral*, if ever there was one) bring to mind RCA's memorable older version (long discontinued) by the NBC Symphony under Guido Cantelli. A bit more weighting of an inner viola voice in the first-movement development, more scintillation in that movement's pacing, a bit more give and humorous pointing of the second movement's bassoon joke, and a slightly more vigorous impulse in the martial Menuetto movement and the analogy would have been complete. As it is, Leinsdorf's effort is certainly far preferable to either of the available competing editions: the stodgy Victorianism and fussy nuances of Beecham, or the overly deliberate, crudely played Scherchen.

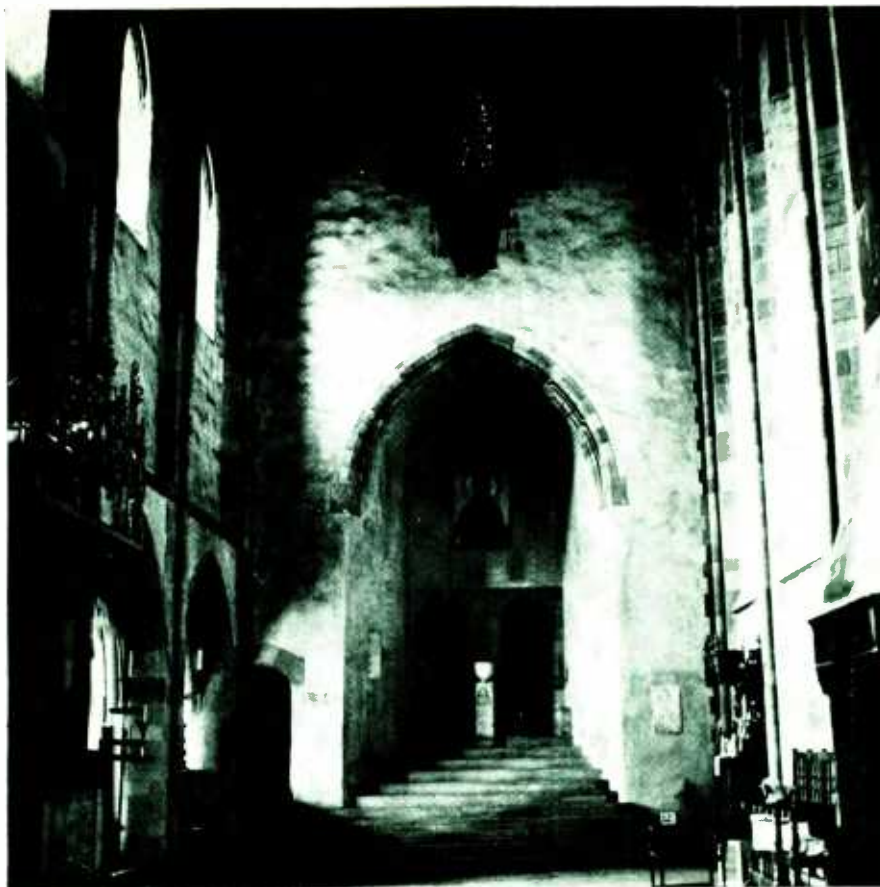
I am not quite so happy with the *Miracle*, though it too is an intelligent, finely executed rendition. Here, Leinsdorf seems so intent on rectifying the often-encountered string heavy balances that he errs a bit in the other direction: supporting wind and brass details impinge much in the fashion of a smartly tailored coat turned lining-side out. I also found the Boston Symphony's tonal fabric a trifle bloodless in this work.

Leinsdorf, by the way, deserves credit for his textual astuteness. He is the first conductor on records I know of who allots the second movement theme of No. 93 to the first-stand string players only when it initially appears. (Haydn's indication "Soli" somehow got expunged from most published editions.) While I am less positive about all the extant variants of No. 96, the conductor appears to be utilizing authenticated trumpet and drum parts for that work too.

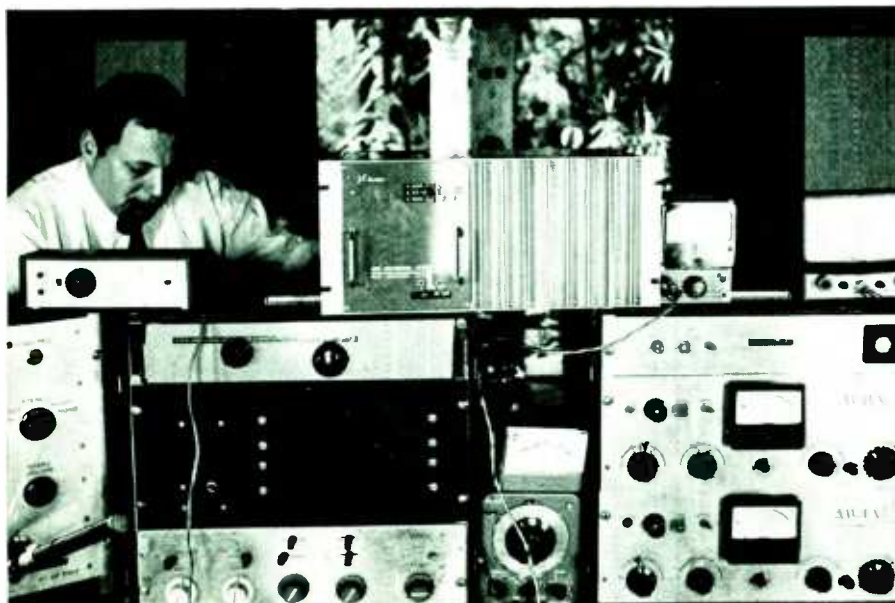
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Leinsdorf's apparently reduced forces nicely. A fine record. H.G.

**HINDEMITH:** *Sonatas for Viola and Piano: Op. 11, No. 4, in F; Sonata (1939)*

Walter Trampler, viola; Ronald Turini, piano. RCA RED SEAL LSC 3012, \$5.79.

Uncompromising terrain, these sonatas, for which both violist and pianist must be formidably equipped, courageous, and inexhaustible. I am inclined to say that the listener ought to have a few of the same qualities, for these works pose rather knotty formal problems, are relentlessly

serious, and throw not a single note away. The F major, whose three movements are played nonstop, was written in 1922 when the composer was twenty-seven. Despite some French hints in the use of whole tone passages in the opening *Fantasia* (and in the spelling of the term) the prevailing spirit is of a big-boned, Brahmsian melodic sweep offset by moments of real delicacy. Trampler drives ahead with tremendous vigor without ever slighting the lighter passages; Ronald Turini, who has full share in the proceedings, ably matches him, and turns off some beautifully accomplished solo measures in the second and third movements.

The 1939 Sonata is a less romantic and generally craggier affair. The first

movement is angular and aggressive, the second displays a touch of ragtime (set, at moments, in a peculiarly fine-textured manner) and winds up with a ferociously driving climax. The third movement (*Phantasia*, this time) gives the viola some low and gutty commentary during a rather mysterious dialogue with the piano; the finale begins in a quixotic spirit and grows to almost turgid proportions.

This recording brings Trampler within sight of the end of what is presumably the complete Hindemith viola catalogue. These works deserve a musician of stature, and that's what they are getting. S.F.

**KIRCHNER:** *Toccata for Strings, Solo Winds, and Percussion*—See Shostakovich: *Hamlet, Op. 32a: Suite from the Incidental Music.*

**MENDELSSOHN:** *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in E minor, Op. 64*  
†Tchaikovsky: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in D, Op. 35*

Maureen Smith, violin (in the Mendelssohn); Hyman Bress, violin (in the Tchaikovsky); London Philharmonic Orchestra, Sir Adrian Boult, cond. CROSSROADS 22 16 0224, \$2.49 (stereo only).

An oddly schizophrenic record, this! Maureen Smith, in the Mendelssohn, is all urbanity and gentleness. She displays a soft, round tone, employs a great deal of lavish, pastel-like color, and favors romantic, long-breathed phrasing. It would seem to be the last thing in the world for her to want to force bravura or push the metronome up a few notches. For all that, her technique is reliable if notably antivirtuosic.

Hyman Bress, on the other hand, reminds me of Ivry Gitlis, that Israeli firebrand of early I.P. days. (Whatever became of him?) There is plenty of technique here and scads of natural temperament. But Bress frequently assaults the eardrums with harsh, overfocused tone, careless intonation, and all sorts of eye-popping neo-Heifetz textual revisions. Still and all, Bress's performance, for all its uncouthness, is far from being a total loss: for one thing, his finale is unexpunged and its spanking pace really takes off excitingly. When you hear this score presented under such rollicking auspices, you begin to see what old Hanslick meant when he found in it "wild Russian curses . . . and . . . the stink of bad brandy."

Boult does his work excellently, and the recording job is satisfactory. H.G.

**PENDERECKI:** *Capriccio for Violin and Orchestra; De Natura Sonoris*  
†Xenakis: *Akrata; Pitheoprakta*

Paul Zukofsky, violin (in Capriccio); Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, Lukas Foss, cond. NONLSUCH H 71201, \$2.50.

Although both these composers have at-

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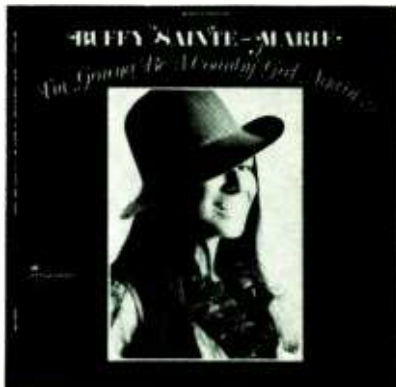


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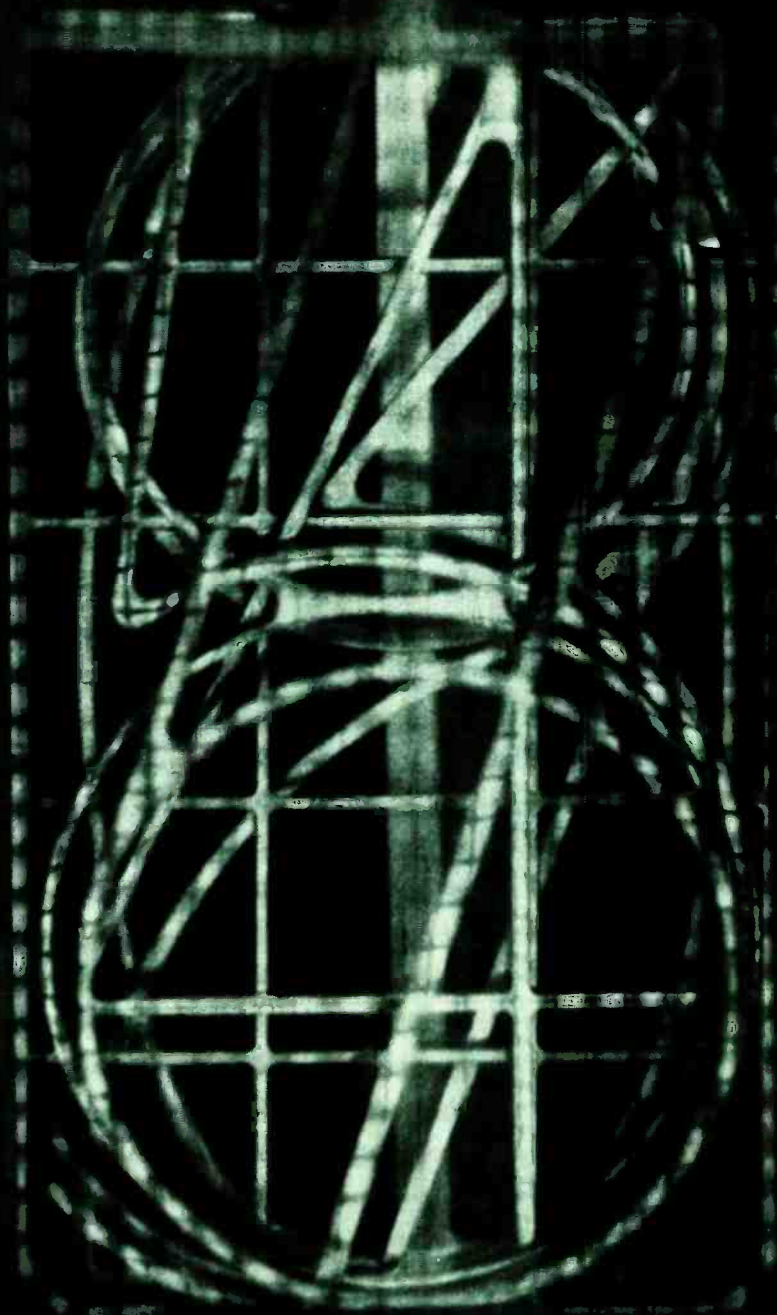


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tracted wide attention in the last couple of years as the most "newsworthy" members of the current European avant-garde, they write very different kinds of music. There are, certainly, some superficial similarities, notably in the treatment of the string instruments—tappings and knockings, sweeping glissandi, and wide-band "cluster" chords. Yannis Xenakis deserves the credit for priority in using these devices, although Krzysztof Penderecki's music first attracted widespread attention to them in this country; however, the respective compositional procedures are widely divergent.

The substance of Penderecki's music is the more conventional of the two; his often spectacular vocabulary of orchestral

color is basically organized in a relatively primitive syntax of brief sections juxtaposed for short-range effects of contrast and continuity. The present works have the virtue (not always evident in this composer) of unpretentiousness, and should have a reasonable future as show-pieces—particularly the 1967 Capriccio, which makes striking display of the virtuosity of Paul Zukofsky. At twenty-five, Zukofsky can play rings around many fiddlers twice his age, in a repertory that few of them would even dare to touch. *De Natura Sonoris*, from 1966, has some interesting "pseudo-electronic" sounds.

Xenakis, rather than imitating the sounds that science has made available to musicians, seeks to make use of the

"principles of scientific order" as a basis for composition. The philosophical-scientific validity of his procedures is beyond my competence to determine, but the comments of some mathematically learned friends do not inspire confidence. *Pithoprakta*, a work from 1956, was previously recorded on Vanguard VCS 10030; its frenetically busy clouds of notes—scored for forty-six strings (played both conventionally and in the more novel ways mentioned above), plus two trombones, xylophone, and wood block—present a kind of sound object whose novelty is undeniable but whose musical logic escapes me completely. Its aesthetic appeal is on a level with a fair-to-middling sunset—and who wants to look at the same sunset more than once?

*Akrata* is both more recent (a Koussevitzky Foundation commission, it was composed in 1964-65) and less interesting (does this mean, I wonder, that the "theory of groups of transformations" is less interesting than the "laws of large numbers" from which *Pithoprakta* purportedly derives?). For an ensemble of winds and brass, this piece consists of a series of longer and shorter blocks built from overlapping pitches, sometimes sustained, sometimes repeated staccato; the effect is remarkably monotonous.

The performances seem quite good (I have not been able to obtain scores of the Penderecki works), and the recording is nothing short of sensational in clarity and dynamic range (it is, not surprisingly, a Dolby job). Connoisseurs of *Pithoprakta* will find this reading a bit faster and more "hard-edged" than the Vanguard version. D.H.

PFITZNER: *Von deutscher Seele*, Op. 28

Soloists; Chorus and Orchestra of the Bavarian Radio, Joseph Keilberth, cond.

For a feature review of this recording, see page 86.

PROKOFIEV: *The Stone Flower*, Op. 118 (excerpts)

Bolshoi Theater Orchestra, Gennady Rozhdestvensky, cond. MILODIYA/ANGEL SR 40066, \$5.79.

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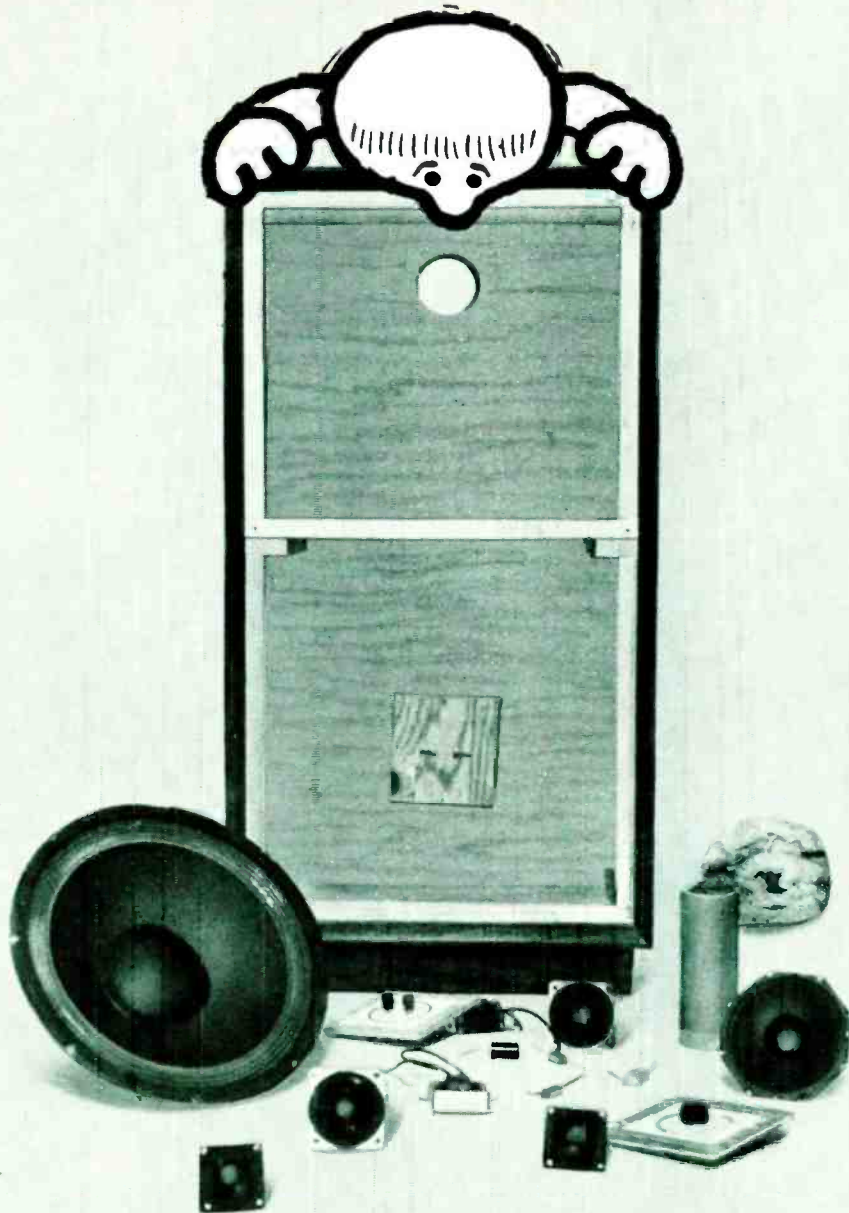
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sections. As one who has not seen the ballet, I must judge these selections purely as music. In this respect they seem to me to represent the score well, though I found the genre pieces on Side 2 more interesting musically than the more contrived sections dealing with the magical element.

According to the liner notes, this recording is the first actually taped in the Bolshoi Theater: this may account for the warm tone and generally atmospheric ambience of the acoustics heard here. The orchestra playing, however, is not of a quality comparable to that of the Moscow Radio Symphony Orchestra, which Rozhdestvensky has been conducting in the Prokofiev symphonies. P.H.

**PROKOFIEV: Symphonies: No. 1, in D, Op. 25; No. 7, in C sharp minor, Op. 131**

Moscow Radio Symphony Orchestra, Gennady Rozhdestvensky, cond. MELODIYA/ANGEL SR 40061, \$5.79.

**PROKOFIEV: Symphonies: No. 2, in D minor, Op. 40; No. 7, in C sharp minor, Op. 131**

U.S.S.R. State Philharmonic Orchestra, U.S.S.R. State Radio Symphony Orchestra, Gennady Rozhdestvensky, cond. EVEREST 3214, \$4.98.

As readers of these pages know, Gennady

Rozhdestvensky appears currently embarked on a project to record all the Prokofiev symphonies. The Melodiya/Angel disc listed above is a part of that undertaking. The Everest record, on the other hand, represents the conductor's Prokofiev efforts of some years back, its Second Symphony being, I believe, a reissue of a performance previously released on the MK and Bruno labels and its Seventh Symphony a recording of probably the same vintage; though labeled "stereo," both the Everest performances sound to me like electronic rechannelings of mono originals.

Whereas performances of the *Classical* Symphony by Koussevitzky, Toscanini, and even Ormandy emphasized its satiric aspect, Rozhdestvensky's performance on the Melodiya/Angel disc approaches it as part of the mainstream of Prokofiev's artistic development, relating it to the early piano pieces and especially to the Third Piano Concerto. Though many listeners brought up on the *Classical* Symphony simply as a lighthearted romp through the late eighteenth century may find Rozhdestvensky's reading rather staid and heavy-handed, it has the great merit of placing the work in the total context of Prokofiev's *oeuvre* and on that ground is certainly worth respect.

The "classicism" of the Symphony No. 2, harkening back in its sonata form/variation two-movement structure to the last piano sonata of Beethoven, is of a quite different order from that of the symphony designated as the *Classical*. With the possible exception of the Third, the Prokofiev Second is the most "difficult" of his seven symphonies. The first movement pursues its course with an almost relentless energy and emphasis, with dense counterpoint and uncompromising dissonance, relieved only occasionally by a relaxation of rhythm or softening of dynamics. The slow movement, cast in the form of theme and variations, is extraordinary in its discipline and musical imagination. Moving from reasonably strict adherence to the theme, its treatment of the theme becomes increasingly fantastic and free before recalling the turmoil of the first movement. The work's tranquil close is no more likely to bring an audience cheering to its feet than its first movement will inspire relaxed affection.

In his autobiography, Prokofiev explicitly states that he composed the Symphony No. 2 in an effort to establish himself as a serious and mature composer in the Paris of the early 1920s. Its first performance, under Koussevitzky, in 1925 was a failure and, together with the Third Symphony, it is the least known of Prokofiev's major works (with Everest's release, it is only now receiving, its first general distribution on records in this country). Prokofiev had apparently planned to revise it as he had his Fourth Symphony and Cello Concerto, but died before the intention could be put into effect. For a full appreciation of the Symphony as it stands, we will have to await another recording. A performance by Charles Bruck on an old Pathé record suffers from an unidiomatic pallor of orchestral color and a lack

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of incisiveness, while this Rozhdestvensky version not only suffers from poor sound but from the conductor's inadequacies at the time this recording was made. A new version from him in his Melodiya/Angel series would undoubtedly show great improvement. There is also, by the way, report of a Prokofiev Second coming from Leinsdorf and the BSO.

The Seventh Symphony is a curious work, starting with a seriousness and lyric intensity indicated by a key signature of C sharp minor and disintegrating almost to triviality in a light-textured finale. As published, it has two utterly different conclusions, reflecting the generally schizoid approach of the entire work. The main theme of this finale is quite at variance with all that precedes it: sardonic, lighthearted music that is almost an extension of the *Classical* Symphony. This contrasts with a rather banal theme in lyric-epic style, but the two ideas are never quite resolved, though Prokofiev tries to pull everything together with a reference to themes from the first movement. In one version of the score, the entire work closes on this note; this version is used by Rozhdestvensky in both performances considered here. Ormandy, in his early recording of the Symphony of some years ago, selected the alternate close—a brief return to the sardonic Allegro theme. (Ormandy, incidentally, is said recently to have rerecorded the Seventh Symphony.)

Between his two recordings of the Seventh, Rozhdestvensky has grown immeasurably in his musical insight into this score. The new version on Melodiya/Angel is not only recorded with more detail and authentic orchestral color than on the Everest release, but it almost resolves the paradoxes and conflicts of this score in a musically convincing way. In this later version, Rozhdestvensky may just begin to convince the listener that the work is not, as Olin Downes once said, merely "bourgeois music."

On the Melodiya/Angel record the characteristic color of Prokofiev's late orchestral texture—his use of piano, harp, celeste, and percussion, for instance—comes through very well, indeed, as it does not in Everest's offering. P.H.

**ROREM: Songs (32)**

Various singers; Ned Rorem, piano.

**ROREM: Water Music; Ideas for Easy Orchestra; Trio for Flute, Cello, and Piano**

Various performers.

For a feature review of these recordings, see page 88.

**SCHOECK: Notturmo**  
†Barber: *Dover Beach*

Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, baritone; Juilliard String Quartet. COLUMBIA KS 7131, \$6.79.

A great record—two important works,

one recorded for the first time, the other for the first time in many years, in performances that are as close to perfect as artistic endeavors come.

Fischer-Dieskau has championed the music of the late Swiss composer Othmar Schoeck—and with good reason: his music is fascinating. Nearly a decade ago, DGG gave us Fischer-Dieskau's performance of Schoeck's major vocal/orchestral work, *Lebendig begraben* (*Buried Alive*), followed by an LP of individual songs. Now Columbia brings us *Notturmo*, a cycle for voice and string quartet set to poetry by Nicholas Lenau and, at the end, to a prose passage from Gottfried Keller.

*Notturmo* is a somewhat later work than *Lebendig begraben*, and is cast in a more bitter, astringent, "modern" style. It is also exceptionally beautiful and moving, Lenau's poems of a despairing but very alive spirit ("Ich liebe dieses milde Sterben," he says of the autumn woodland—"I love this soft dying") being set to an undulating, lyric voice line backed by a highly imaginative, harsh accompaniment—parched sonorities and harmonies, successions of tight tremolos, rasping sforzandos and glissandos. The cumulative effect is immensely melancholy, immensely poetic. And it would be hard to quibble about the expressive command of Fischer-Dieskau, or the almost savage precision of the Juilliard's playing.

*Dover Beach* is the very best side of Barber—nothing pretentious or posy, but an emotionally direct, brilliantly crafted setting of Matthew Arnold's great poetry. Because it settles for being what it is—stays within its own frame, you might say—it acquires a degree of force and truthfulness that many of Barber's more recent compositions (however well written, and he does write well) do not attain. One would not mistake Fischer-Dieskau for either an American or an Englishman, and without the text I find some of the phrases incomprehensible. But then, the text is provided, and the performance is in all other respects unexceptionable. The sound is splendid, the surfaces of my copy immaculate. C.L.O.

**SCHOENBERG: Pelleas und Melisande, Op. 5**

New Philharmonia Orchestra, Sir John Barbirolli, cond. ANGEL 36509, \$5.79.

Schoenberg's symphonic poem, inspired by the same Maeterlinck play on which Debussy based his almost contemporaneous opera, has been roundly neglected in the concert hall and on records. I can recall only one performance in New York over the past decade and a half, and there have been but two previous recordings—an antediluvian LP of a muddled German radio performance (long since consigned to well-deserved obloquy), and Robert Craft's version in Volume II of the Columbia Schoenberg series. Now we have the first "celebrity" recording, which will conceivably introduce the work to a wider circle than purchasers of the Craft album.

Newcomers to *Pelleas* will do well to

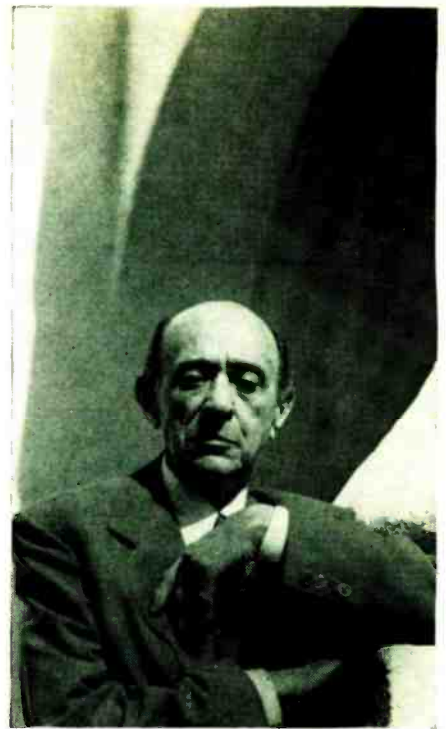


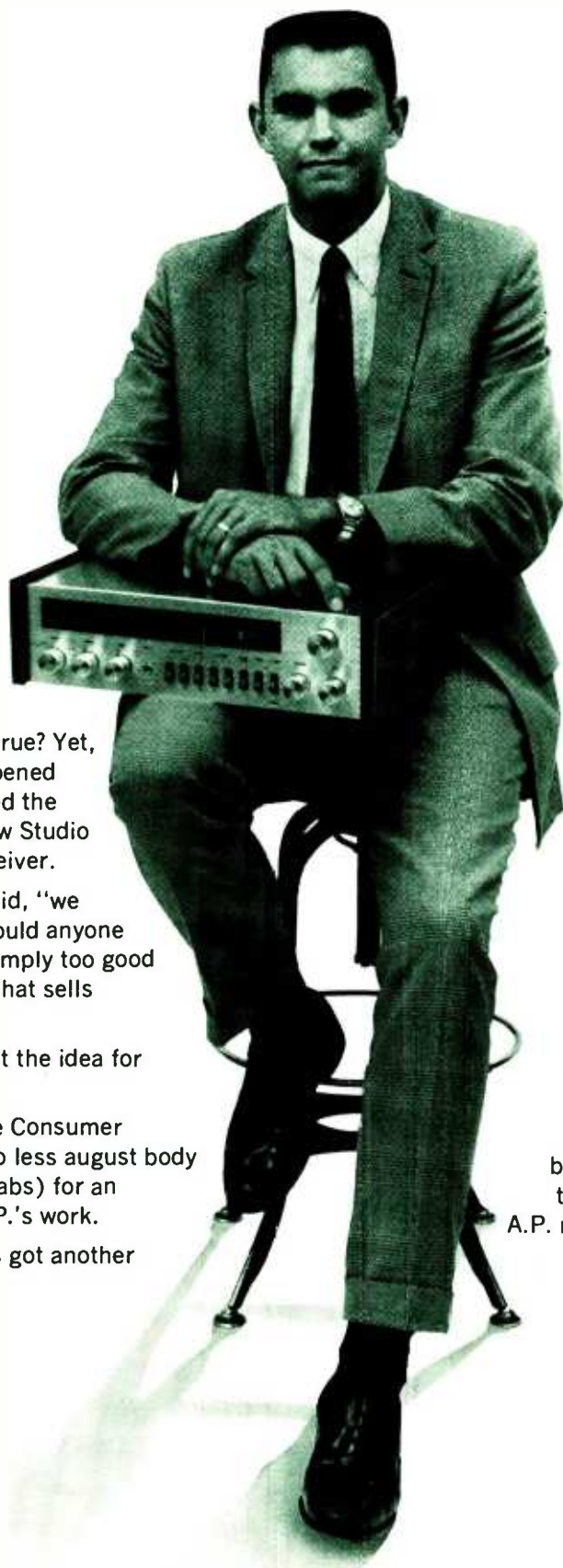
Photo by Florence Homolka  
Arnold Schoenberg—his neglected tone poem receives a "celebrity" recording.

approach it not in a context of comparison with the Debussy opera but rather in relation to the symphonic poems of Richard Strauss, whose tradition it develops in a remarkably progressive way. Schoenberg was not averse to orchestral experimentation (the episode in the subterranean vaults, with its trombone glissandi, is more revolutionary than anything in Strauss), and *Pelleas* abounds in gorgeous orchestral colors (the scene where Melisande plays with the ring, and the tower scene, for example). But the really original, and prophetically Schoenbergian, aspect of this piece is the musical fabric—the skillful interweaving of motives, the vitality and relevance of all the contrapuntal lines, the extraordinary control of the wide-ranging chromatic harmony. Behind the easily grasped four-movements-in-one structure so characteristic of Schoenberg in these years, there is a wealth of subtle detail, a fertility of invention which encourages repeated hearings.

Barbirolli's performance does not make the most of the work's strengths, however. His emphasis on melodic rhetoric rather than on the totality of the texture tends to shortchange the details in favor of the "tunes"—and since the progression of the piece does not rest on the obvious "tunes," a sense of inconsequence pervades stretches of this recording. Although Craft's orchestra sounds undermanned in the string department, there can be no doubt that he projects both the warp and the woof of the musical fabric with greater success than Barbirolli does. The Columbia version also spares us the occasional vocal irruptions of Sir John, as well as his occasional fondness for slacking the tempo and his sometime tolerance of rhythmic inexactitude in the playing. D.H.



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SCHUMANN: *Symphonies: No. 3, in E flat; Op. 97 ("Rhenish"); No. 4, in D minor, Op. 120*

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Georg Solti, cond. LONDON CS 6582, \$5.79.

Announced as the first installment of a Solti integral recording of the Schumann symphonies, this release is a very propitious beginning for the project. At this stage of his career, Solti not only fully commands his technical resources but also shows very appreciable mellowing and deepening of his musical resources. Both performances here are first-rate, with a feeling of lyric relaxation—but not of slackness—which has not always characterized this conductor's work. If they lack

some of the grandeur of line that distinguished Szell's Schumann recordings, they convey warmth missing in the Cleveland maestro's readings. Solti's Fourth Symphony, in particular, is, for me at least, a refreshing renewal of beauty in familiar repertory. Schumann's highly original structural logic in this work for once comes through as natural and spontaneous, thanks to a large extent to Solti's determination to give the melodies time to sing out. In the *Rhenish*, a similarly lyric approach keeps Schumann's more conventionally "grand" style from becoming overtheatrical.

Appropriately enough, the style and sound of the Vienna Philharmonic beautifully match Solti's approach. When the Vienna strings sound as they do at the

beginning of the Schumann Fourth, there is no more appropriate or beautiful sound to be heard on records, and Solti's control of orchestral balance has a great deal to do with this lovely effect. To be sure, the VPO has its imprecise moments: the pizzicato strings and woodwinds in the slow movement of the same symphony, for instance. But the over-all effect is generally superb. Under Solti, the Vienna Philharmonic sounds like one of the great orchestras of our time, which of course it is. If the two symphonies to come are up to this standard, the series will be a very distinguished one. P.H.

SHOSTAKOVICH: *Hamlet, Op. 32a: Suite from the Incidental Music*  
Kirchner: *Toccata for Strings, Solo Winds, and Percussion*

Louisville Orchestra, Jorge Mester, cond. Louisville LS 683, \$8.45.

Leon Kirchner is one of the most unjustifiably neglected of contemporary American composers. His free and dramatic use of a nontonal idiom is strongly individualistic, and he has written what I would consider some of this century's finest piano music, including a sonata (recorded on a now out-of-print Epic disc by Leon Fleisher) and two concertos (the First, with the composer himself as soloist, recorded on a now deleted Columbia album).

The *Toccata for Strings, Solo Winds and Percussion*, written in 1955, does not, unfortunately, represent some of the composer's "best pages," although the style is unmistakably Kirchner and the work has some excellent moments, particularly in the opening measures. Some of the *Toccata's* lack of impact may be due to the disinterested—if well-recorded—interpretation by Jorge Mester and his forces. This particular performance aside, however, the rather dramatic quality of the individual musical elements in the work clashes with the more abstract intentions of the over-all form. A number of rhythmic and melodic motives are introduced and then cut short, with the result that the music never gathers any real momentum. Admirers of Kirchner would do well to wait for the prospective Epic release of the composer's Pulitzer Prize-winning *Third Quartet*, in the meantime picking up Columbia's mono-only set of the *First Quartet* (coupled with an excellent *Quartet* by Irving Fine) before it disappears from the record stores.

If the Kirchner music does not represent the composer's best pages, the Shostakovich score, here curiously paired with the Kirchner, contains some of the Russian composer's worst. This *Hamlet Suite* is not the much more interesting music written for the recent Soviet film of Shakespeare's tragedy and available on an MK release, but a score composed by Shostakovich in 1932 to accompany a vulgar, satirical "adaptation" of the play in which Ophelia, for instance, instead of going mad, gets drunk and falls in the river. No doubt the music, heard in conjunction with

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the "adaptation," would be hysterically funny. But heard alone, it is almost totally lacking in the sardonic barb that characterizes the music of such works as *The Nose* and *The Age of Gold*. Little has been said about Shostakovich's harmonic language; yet, in Shostakovich's best works, an original, if unsystematic, use of dissonance raises the level of the entire musical language. In the *Hamlet* Suite, the dissonances appear as watered-down after-thoughts, and the predictable, four-square harmonies thoroughly emasculate the over-all effect of most of the music. Furthermore, Mester's silk-purse-out-of-sow's-ear rearrangement of the Suite's thirteen episodes seems completely superfluous.

R.S.B.

**SPOHR: *Nonet for Strings and Woodwinds, in F, Op. 31; Double Quartet for Strings, in E minor, Op. 87***

Members of the Vienna Octet. STEREO  
TREASURY STS 15074, \$2.49.

Poor old Spohr! He was continually doing new things and leaving it to others to achieve success with them. He was, as far as I know, the first composer of any note to write double string quartets (Mendelssohn followed), the first to write a string sextet (Brahms followed), the first to write a nonet (no rush to follow, here). Spohr's problem was simply that he was not very interesting as a composer, and, in listening to the

present pair of works it is hard to remind oneself that his life spanned those of both Schumann and Mendelssohn, and actually outlasted Beethoven's by thirty-two years. Though as a performer he was a courageous champion of Beethoven's earlier music, the stresses and strains of German romanticism simply passed him by, and left him happily spinning out professionally competent works which were immensely popular in his own time and have little to say to ours.

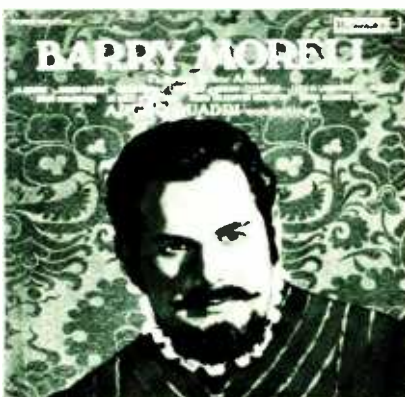
The Vienna Octet has had the wit to give us one of the best of Spohr's pieces—the E minor Double Quartet, one of three in the medium and a favorite of Joachim's. It is easy to check off its virtues: a well-wrought first movement, exhibiting a certain amount of forward propulsion; and a rather strong finale, effectively scored. Between, there is an Andante incredibly repetitious and a Scherzo that leaves no impression at all. The Nonet is quite lively, with a slow movement in which stately solo appearances are made by everybody, and a finale enlivened by Mannheim-like crescendos. Historical interest, as they say. The Vienna ensemble gives of its best. S.F.

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**STOCKHAUSEN: *Prozession for Tamtam, Viola, Electronium, Piano, Microphone, and Potentiometers***

Fred Alings and Rolf Gehlhaar, piano; Johannes Fritsch, viola; Harald Bojë, electronium; Aloys Kontarsky, piano; Karlheinz Stockhausen, potentiometers. CANDIDE CE 31001, \$3.50.

In an earlier review in these pages I commented on the fact that in *Mikrophonie I* Stockhausen seemed to have reached the last stage of a process with which he had been occupied for some time: the exploration of the possibilities of combining live and electronic elements in musical performance. In that piece the microphone itself—in other words, part of the electronic equipment—had become a sort of musical instrument in its own right, provided with a part of its own and performed by a "regular" member of the musical ensemble. The result was a synthesis of the human and the electronic which appeared to deny further evolution. Stockhausen's development since this piece was written would seem to bear out this inference: he has continued to use without alteration the general procedures of *Mikrophonie I* in the application of electronic resources in his music. But as anyone familiar with this composer's work might guess, he has scarcely stood still in other matters. Having reached a "solution" down one corridor of development, he is now hurtling down another.

If Stockhausen's first solution was concerned with the relationship between live and electronic aspects of musical performance, the latest phase in his journey seems to concentrate on the relationship between the creative tendencies of his own musical present and those of his musical past. *Prozession*, composed in the spring of 1967, is thus not so much a "new" piece as a new way of looking at



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(and hearing) several of Stockhausen's old pieces. Thus, the score consists primarily of indications for the performance of segments taken from Stockhausen's earlier compositions, to be played from memory and varied according to indications given in this score. Already in *Mikrophonie II* (1965) one could see the beginnings of this new process. There, taped excerpts from earlier works were heard through "windows" within the piece, "in the distance," as it were. The effect was rather like an indistinct memory which subtly impressed itself upon the musical consciousness of the listener. Here, on the other hand, this process completely dominates the composition; the earlier pieces have become the primary musical substance of the work.

One should not, however, infer from this that *Prozession* is just a simple rearrangement of old material—an easy shortcut for the composition of new pieces out of the fragments of old ones. For Stockhausen is not treating his early music in the "neutral" sense of *Mikrophonie II*, where the tapes presented the old material as "fixed products." Here the earlier fragments are actually performed by the ensemble of this piece. The composer seems to be setting up a sort of "conversation" among the various players in which the language being spoken is "early Stockhausen." The musical events are thus not notated in detail (One never knows, after all, just what turn a conversation will take) but are rather played from memory (one must know the language in order to participate). Although each instrument is associated with a specific group of earlier pieces, the events themselves are largely indeterminate; but the degree of variation to be imposed upon the excerpts, as well as the degree of change which is to exist between one event and the next, is indicated. As Stockhausen says, "an 'aural tradition' is established between my earlier music and this *Prozession*, as well as among the players." The quality of *déjà vu*, so characteristic of *Mikrophonie II*, is still very much present; but whereas there the remembrances appeared as frozen images on tape, here they appear in a constant state of metamorphosis, acting upon one another in such a way that they are constantly being changed by the compositional situation and, conversely, themselves changing this situation.

The whole, as might be expected, has a highly improvisational character; and this, it seems to me, accounts both for the interest of the composition and for certain problems which arise in its performance. On the positive side, inspired improvisation—as we know from some jazz, as well as from music of other cultures—can be both exciting and artistically convincing; and in this performance, in which the players react to one another with an uncanny sense of intercommunication, this is certainly the case. The performers are all part of a small ensemble that works regularly with Stockhausen and with whom he goes on frequent concert tours (they are, in fact, virtually identical to the group on Co-



The operatic lure beckons Leonard Bernstein into uncharted Wagnerian terrain.

lumbia's *Mikrophonie I*). They respond to every nuance, imitating, varying and developing in an over-all process which seems remarkably unified. On the negative side, the piece seems much too long to me (over forty-five minutes!) to sustain this kind of improvisatory structure (but perhaps this is just a manifestation of the so-called cultural gap). Further, one wonders about the practicality of the piece in terms of its performance. The players must not only know this work but a great deal of Stockhausen's other music as well. (The pianist, for example, is expected to know *all* of Stockhausen's piano music; and, significantly, the pianist on this disc is Aloys Kontarsky, who recently recorded it all for Columbia.) Nevertheless, it is an exciting experience to hear this recording (which the composer assures us was made without interruption, cuts, or the slightest change—"a record of a live performance"). It serves as another indication that Stockhausen is a truly fertile creative force in music. R.P.M.

#### STRAVINSKY: *The Rite of Spring*

U.S.S.R. Symphony Orchestra, Yevgeny Svetlanov, cond. MELODIYA/ANGEL SR 40063, \$5.79.

Aside from its incidental socio-cultural interest as the first recording of *Sacre* by a Soviet conductor, this is not a recommendable version of that cornerstone of twentieth-century music. The limp wind attacks at the outset presage a general lack of bite in the playing, a stodginess that is relieved—but not exactly counterbalanced—by the conductor's Rossini-crescendo approach to the climaxes of the two parts. More amusing, if equally irrelevant, is the almost Wagnerian reading of the opening of Part II. Although the liner proclaims "a stereo spectacular from the Soviet Union," the overloading by the timpani in the *Danse Sacrale* is sufficient to disqualify the disc on purely technical grounds. D.H.

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in D, Op. 35*—See Mendelssohn: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in E minor, Op. 64*.

#### WAGNER: "The Ride of the Valkyries"

*Die Walküre: Magic Fire Music; Die Meistersinger: Dance of the Apprentices; Entrance of the Mastersingers; Tannhäuser: Overture; Festmarsch; Tristan und Isolde: Love-Death; Lohengrin: Prelude.*

New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein, cond. COLUMBIA MS 7141, \$5.79.

As Bernstein now passes, in his fifty-first year, into a new phase of his career, he seems to turn to new worlds of repertory to conquer. It may be no mere coincidence that, having triumphed in the opera pit with late Verdi and ripest Richard Strauss, he produced last season with the New York Philharmonic a concert version of the first act of *Die Walküre*. That occasion was hailed by many in its own right, and by others as a counterbalance to Karajan's highly personal presentation at the Met earlier in the season. For me, Bernstein's Wagner, notwithstanding all its orchestral richness and theatrical effectiveness, did not possess the fully integrated concept that Karajan's did. Much of Karajan's concept may have been questioned in itself, no one can deny that it was a concept; I am not sure that Bernstein's concept was as complete and dramatically integral.

This is not to say that Bernstein cannot one day produce a great Wagnerian performance should he want to give it the time and effort; his technical flair and orchestral ear should give him a command of Wagner closer than that of any conductor of his generation. This record of Wagnerian snippets is not, however, the way for Bernstein to start if he wants to become a major interpreter of Wagner.

At this point I would suggest a reading of Tovey's essay *Wagner in the Concert Room*, which cogently designates those excerpts from the composer's work that can stand on their own and those that cannot. Of the former there is only one example on the present—the Overture to *Tannhäuser*, "a mixture of the best and worst things in Wagner's early style." As for those excerpts that Tovey excludes from his canon, he describes them in three categories, like trains: "(a) those which start but do not arrive; (b) those which arrive but do not start; and (c) those which neither start nor arrive." I leave it to the reader to fit each of the other six selections on the Columbia record into the proper category.

Should any listener really want his Wagner thus wrenched from context like bleeding chunks of meat on the butcher's block, he may be assured that they are phrased here with a sensuality comparable to that of Leopold Stokowski in his middle years and that they are played with a lusty sound of the Philharmonic at its rousing brassiest. P.H.

XENAKIS: *Akrata; Pithoprakta*—See Penderecki: *Capriccio for Violin and Orchestra*.





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## RECITALS & MISCELLANY

### RICHARD ELSASSER: "Yankee Organ Music"

Richard Elsasser, organ. NONESUCH H 71200, \$2.50 (stereo only).

The organ heard here, that of the Hammond Museum in Gloucester, Mass.—twenty years abuilding, housed in an 85-foot stone tower, with 10,000 pipes, four manuals, and 144 stops—is obviously one of the most formidable monsters on the North American continent. It is so big and so complex that I wouldn't be surprised if they'd had to set up the microphones for this recording session in Ipswich—at least that's the way it sounds. No matter how you turn up the volume, the music is always in the next township up the line.

Perhaps it isn't important, because there is only one really good piece on the disc—a very short, ethereal prelude by Ives on the tune of *Adeste Fidelis*. The set also includes Ives's amusing but immature variations on *America* (one in waltz time and one in the manner of a bolero); James Hewitt's variations on *Yankee Doodle* and his "grand military sonata" called *The Fourth of July*; John Knowles Paine's variations on *Austria*; and—the one big work of the set—George Whitefield Chadwick's *Theme, Variations, and Fugue*.

One can forgive Hewitt for being vapid and foolish because the American audience of 1800 to which he was appealing had little musical culture; besides, one suspects that the pieces by him on this record were intended for the home harpsichord and not for 10,000 pipes. It is more difficult to forgive Chadwick for being vapid and pretentious because he was a really cultivated musician and had a cultivated following; much as one wants to admire the Boston classicists, they keep letting one down with things like this work. The *Austria* on which Paine erects his straightforward variations turns out to be our old friend, *Deutschland über alles*. This is appropriate, for that was surely the motto of Paine and the nineteenth-century New England school in general. If the early work of Ives seems a bit silly, Paine and Chadwick make clear what he had to protest against. A.F.

### ALEXANDER KIPNIS: *Vocal Recital*

Mozart: *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*; *Wer ein Liebchen hat gefunden*. *Le Nozze di Figaro*: *La vendetta*. *Die Zauberflöte*:

*O Isis und Osiris*; *In diesen heil'gen Hallen*. Rossini: *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*; *La calunnia*. Verdi: *Simon Boccanegra*; *Il lacerato spirito*. Wagner: *Die Meistersinger*; *Das schöne Fest*. Schubert: *Der Erlkönig*. Brahms: *Vier ernste Gesänge*. Wolf: *Alles endet, was entsteht*.

Alexander Kipnis, bass; Gerald Moore and Coenraad V. Bos, piano; Berlin State Opera Chorus and Orchestra, Erich Orthmann and Clemens Schmalstisch, conds. SERAPHIM 60076, \$2.49 (mono only).

A real bass! And, moreover, a real singing bass! What has happened to the species, which only thirty years ago was represented by such singers as Kipnis, List, Mayr, Weber, and Ernster (on the Germanic side), or by De Angelis among the Italians? I mean, of course, the black bass who sings in a *cantante* fashion, and not the somewhat more baritone Italian *basso cantante*, like Pinza, or the now ubiquitous bass-baritone, or the phenomenon like Bohnen, who blithely took in the full bass and baritone ranges.

I dunno, but this record is a reminder that this wonderful kind of chesty rumble is part of the normal human vocal equipment and that many an operatic aria or song is built on the supposition that the singer can let his voice "sit" on the bottom F or E, or even lower. Only the Russians seem to produce this type of singer nowadays—and of course Kipnis himself was in this Slavic tradition.

His native peculiarities have often bothered me somewhat, especially in Lieder, where the barbed, rather guttural sound and the ponderously formed vowels have often seemed to me to stand in the way of the song. But I find myself appreciating his art more each time I hear him, and on this record we are treated to some of his finest work—most, if not all of which dates from the pre-American portion of his career (he was one of the wartime additions to the Met roster). It is all in German except for the *Boccanegra* aria.

Among the aria recordings, the Mozart particularly claims attention, and most especially the delicious voicing of Osmin's first song, as well as those of Sarastro's two arias. Kipnis reminds us that Osmin can be funny and beautifully sung at the same time—the marvelous legato and the lovely mezza-voce "*Tra-la-la-lera's*" make a gorgeous little interlude of the piece. And to hear "*O Isis und Osiris*" roll forth from what sounds like a sort of human diapason is suddenly to understand what this piece of writing is about, in vocal terms.

Kipnis' genuine comic flair is well demonstrated by the Bartolo and Basilio arias, the latter (complete with repeat) one of the finest of all versions. The *Boccanegra* aria, though unidiomatic as an interpretation, is also thoughtful and deeply felt. Pagner's *Ansprache* is commanding, but a bit effortful at the very demanding climax.

The Lieder side is of course dominated by the famous reading of the Brahms cycle. I suggest that if you are coming to it for the first time, you not allow yourself to be put off by the strange pronun-

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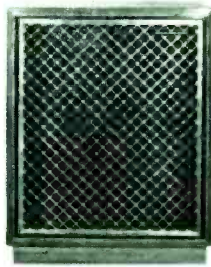
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Her first domestically released LP of antique Spanish material, "Five Centuries of Spanish Song" (RCA Victor LM 2144), is a record I still turn to when in need of a musical restorative—it ranks with a few of her earliest recordings as the best singing she has ever put on disc. Almost equally beautiful, and even more fascinating as a historical close-up of a period, is "Spanish Song of the Renaissance" (Angel 35888). In this new collection, she takes in some material of the same period, but also reaches back into the 1200s.

In all these undertakings she has been partnered by the scholar José María Lapaña, founder of the Ars Musicae and creator of the restorations and realizations used on all these records. He also contributes enormously informative liner notes.

Here we are at one of the wellsprings of our musical culture, the point where Moorish, Sephardic, and Christian influences clashed and mingled, in music as in every other area of life and art. The Bible and Koran challenged each other; the cult of the Virgin Mary all but overshadowed devotion to her son; courtly love and worshipful asceticism battled, yet partook of each other. And so these songs are about events and attitudes that are deep within us, whether we consciously harken to them or not. And the sounds made by this wondrous collection of outdated instruments are fascinating not only as the precursors of every sound yet made in Western music (barely recognizable, yet peculiarly familiar), but for themselves—these sweet janglings, gently nasal buzzings, soothing scrapings, and intimate strummings. When the songs are not despairing (the pains of love, the losses of war) or intensely devotional, they have about them an exhilarating humor. Often the humor is there even when they *are* despairing or devotional—they are at once passionate and tongue-in-cheek. And the collection is topped off by an irresistible *villancico* about a girl who very much wants to be closely inspected by her new husband because her body is "outstanding in all respects"—she's a bit of a nut, but one feels sure she really is beautiful.

Whatever the current limitations of the De los Angeles voice, they are never in evidence here. She bounces and mourns through the program with the same purity of coloration, accuracy of intonation, and uncanny rhythmic precision which have always made her the perfect interpreter of such material. The work of the Ars Musicae seems to me beyond reproach—I am not an oracle on the technique of playing the *vihuela de mano*, the tenor sackbut, and the lyre-viol, but certainly the results are intensely musical.

The accompanying booklet deserves some prize or other. It includes detailed essays on every aspect of the music, program notes on the songs included, texts and translations, an introductory commentary by the singer, and tipped-in color plates that are models of their kind. The recording is a bit echoey for my personal taste, but otherwise admirable. C.L.O.

### Victoria de los Angeles: "Songs of Andalusia in the Middle Ages and Renaissance"

Traditional: *Ah, el novio no quiere dinero; Como la rosa en la güerta; Estavase la mora; Aquel rey de Francia.* Anon.: *Sobre Baca estaba el Rey; Ay! que non hay! Tres moricas m'enanoran; Puse mis amores.* De la Torre: *Damos gracias a ti, Dios. El Sabio: Rosas das Rosas; Maravillosos e piadosos.* Narvaez: *Paseabase el rey moro.* Mudarra: *Dime a do tienes las mientes.* Morales: *Si no's huviera mirado.* Guerrero: *Dexo la venda, el arco y la aljaba.* De Morata: *Aqui me declaro.* Ortega: *Pues que me tienes Miguel.*

Victoria de los Angeles, soprano; Ars Musicae, Enrique Gispert, cond. ANGEL S 36488, \$5.79.

ciation, by the oft-used glide, the occasionally rubbery rhythm, or the two or three cases of equivocal pitch. Listen to the grand line of the thing, and to the striking capability of this heavy voice for slipping into a purling mezza-voce of incomparable plushness—as in the second verse of "O Tod, wie bitter bist du." I think you'll find it a worthwhile swap; the movement of the song is always sustained, with never a hint of barking in the declamatory sections or falsetto-ish cheating in the lyric ones. Moore's accompaniments sound faint, I am afraid.

*Der Erbkönig* is also a justly admired interpretation, especially for the remarkable differentiation among the voices; but perhaps the best thing on the side, as a whole, is the Wolf, so poised and solid and straightforward.

In short, a just reminiscence of a great artist, and a disc that can also be recommended highly on purely musical grounds. C.L.O.

### EUGENE ORMANDY: "Green-sleeves"

Vaughan Williams: *Fantasia on "Green-sleeves."* Grieg: *Two Elegiac Melodies, Op. 34: No. 1: Heart's Wounds; No. 2: Spring.* Schubert: *Serenade.* MacDowell: *To a Wild Rose.* Mascagni: *Cavalleria rusticana: Intermezzo.* Rachmaninoff: *Vocalise, Op. 34, No. 14.* Massenet: *Thaïs: Meditation.* Niles: *I Wonder as I Wander.* Trad.: *Londonderry Air.*

Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond. Columbia MS 7103, \$5.79.

This showcase for the incomparable Philadelphian strings surpasses most of the earlier Ormandy anthologies in calculated mass appeal, yet also rewards admirers of the conductor with some novel examples of his excursions into the light repertory. Only four of the selections included in the album are reissues from previously released discs: the ever popular Vaughan Williams *Fantasia* of 1961, the sumptuously sonorous 1965 string transcriptions of *I Wonder as I Wander* and *Londonderry Air*, and Ormandy's stereo remake of Rachmaninoff's *Vocalise* included as a filler with his Rachmaninoff Third Symphony last May. The other selections not only are new releases but brand-new additions to the Ormandy discography. Some of these pieces may actually have been taped some time ago and simply held for release until now (the *Meditation* from *Thaïs*, for example, features as soloist the violinist Anshel Brusilow, who has not been with the Philadelphians for the last couple of years), but the recordings all do full justice to the truly fabulous Ormandy/Philadelphia "Sound." R.D.D.

### Correction

In last month's feature review of the soundtrack from *2001: A Space Odyssey* on M-G-M, the statement that DGG "has relabeled its Karajan/Johann Strauss album as 'containing the soundtrack of 2001'" is incorrect. DGG's relabeling actually reads "containing *The Blue Danube Waltz* as performed in the soundtrack of 2001." Our apologies.



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# IN BRIEF

**BEETHOVEN:** Quartet for Strings, No. 9, in C, Op. 59, No. 3 ("Rasumovsky").  
**HAYDN:** Quartet for Strings, in B flat, Op. 103. Smetana Quartet, Parliament PLPS 634, \$2.49.

**SHOSTAKOVICH:** The Age of Gold: Suite; The Bolt: Suite. Bolshoi Theatre Orchestra and Zhukovsky Military Air Academy Band, Maksim Shostakovich, cond. Melodiya/Angel 40062, \$5.79.

**STENHAMMAR:** Serenade for Orchestra, in F, Op. 31. Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra, Rafael Kubelik, cond. Heliodor HS 25086, \$2.49.

**TCHAIKOVSKY:** Nutcracker Suite, Op. 72 A; Serenade for Strings, in C, Op. 48. London Festival Orchestra, Stanley Black, cond. London SPC 21022, \$5.79.

**TCHAIKOVSKY:** Sleeping Beauty, Op. 66 (excerpts); Swan Lake, Op. 20 (excerpts). Sinfonia of London, John Hollingsworth, cond. Crossroads 22 26 0018, \$4.98 (two discs).

**TCHAIKOVSKY:** "Waltz of the Flowers: The Great Tchaikovsky Waltzes." Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond. Columbia MS 7133, \$5.79.

**EASTMAN BRASS QUINTET:** "German and English Music of the Late Renaissance." Works by Scheidt, Weelkes, Simmes, Alfonso Ferrabosco II, Holborne, O'Koeber, Gibbons. Eastman Brass Quintet, Candide CE 31004, \$3.50.

**OSCAR GHIGLIA:** "The Guitar in Spain." Works by Albéniz, Granados, Sanz, Mudarra, Milan, Torroba, et al. Oscar Ghiglia, guitar. Angel S 36508, \$5.79.

This recording of the Beethoven is the same one that has been circulating on Supraphon's G.M.M. label. It is not, however, to be confused with an earlier Smetana performance for Westminster. Here the group is a bit tighter and more conventional in its approach, particularly in the slow movement. They play with fine tone and expertise, but I have become impatient with the orthodox approach to the fugal finale. As the New Music, Lenox, Juilliard, and Guarneri versions demonstrate, Beethoven knew well what he was about when he set that ferociously fast metronome mark! The elegant performance of the Haydn, on the other hand, cannot be faulted. The sound, while listenable, is inferior to the G.M.M., and miles below Westminster's. H.G.

This seems to mark the debut on records of the gifted young conductor Maksim Shostakovich, who—to judge by the picture on the jacket—is the spit and image of his father. Too bad they couldn't find anything better for him to record than these two dated, flimsy, and tiresome ballet scores by the old man. A.F.

The Swedish composer Wilhelm Stenhammar (1871-1927) is here revealed as the archetype of the academician—which is to say a genial, shrewd, and technically very accomplished manipulator of clichés, in this case the clichés of nineteenth-century German romanticism. The performance is spirited, the recording so-so. A.F.

With nearly thirty *Nutcracker* Suites to choose from, Black's earnest version warrants consideration only for its gleamingly translucent Phase-4 stereoism—ininitely more satisfactory than the exaggeratedly synthesized and dry engineering given Robert Sharples' *Nutcracker* and *1812 Overture* on a Phase-4 disc some years ago. Black infuses the Serenade with more poetic fervor and the recorded string suavities are balm to one's ears, but I miss the muscular grace and chamber music intimacy of the recent Vlach version for Crossroads. R.D.D.

These must be rummagings from the back files inasmuch as Hollingsworth died in 1963. They proffer a lot, quantitatively, for the money, with some twenty (unidentified) Op. 66 selections and seventeen (confusingly identified) from Op. 20. Interpretatively, the conductor's ballet-stage experience is evident in often slower and more rhythmically explicit than usual readings. But his Sinfonia's brass and percussion sound like those of a theater band, and the excessively spotlighted recording italicizes an over-all sonic coarseness. R.D.D.

The Philadelphians' latest compilation from earlier releases is free from the excessive heterogeneity characteristic of earlier, similar programs. In these six best-known Tchaikovsky masterpieces in  $\frac{3}{4}$  time Ormandy's beat may be heavy-handed; but the orchestral sonorities are never less than magnificently mellifluous, and the only recording here which is a shade less than sumptuous is that of the Waltz from the Serenade for Strings, which dates back to 1961. R.D.D.

Don't let it bother you that most of this music was composed originally for voices or strings. Not only do Joel Israel Cohen's liner notes make out a good case for the composers' own willingness to use any performing medium handy, but the pieces themselves are delectably engaging, they are deftly transcribed, the Eastman players (making their recording debut as an ensemble) perform with superb bravura, and the recording is notable for stereo lucidity, acoustical warmth, and freedom from background noise. Here is one of (if not *the*) finest recordings of its kind. R.D.D.

This is a lively and diverting recital, spanning roughly the four hundred years that separate Luis Milan from Federico Moreno Torroba. In view of so much good work on the part of Oscar Ghiglia, it may be ungrateful to remark that he seems to me to miss the last ounce of delicacy in some of these pieces: the balance of notes within a chord, the attention to inner voices, the pleasure in mere linking passages, the possibility of changing color on a repeated chord—these things occasionally slip past him. He is an extremely talented guitarist, no doubt of it, but the competition these days—*c'est formidable*. S.F.



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# REPEAT PERFORMANCE

## A SELECTIVE GUIDE TO THE MONTH'S REISSUES

**BARBER:** *Knoxville: Summer of 1915, Op. 24; Hermit Songs*. Eleanor Steber, soprano, Dumbarton Oaks Chamber Orchestra, William Strickland, cond. (in *Knoxville*); Leontyne Price, soprano, Samuel Barber, piano (in *Hermit Songs*). Odyssey 32 16 0230, \$2.49 (rechanneled stereo only) [*Knoxville* from Columbia ML 5843, recorded in 1950; *Hermit Songs* from Columbia ML 4988, recorded in 1954].

These two vocal works are among Barber's most attractive compositions. It may be that in *Knoxville* Barber has stretched the text a bit beyond its emotional limits in one or two spots, but the treatment is so adroit and the nostalgic flavor of Agee's lines so well translated that the whole immediate effect is pretty nigh irresistible. The *Hermit Songs* (with texts by anonymous eighth- to thirteenth-century monks and scholars) are written in a leaner style—agreeable miniatures if of no great musical character.

Eleanor Steber's first recording of *Knoxville*, here in its third LP format, needs no further enumeration of its excellences. A very young Leontyne Price sings the *Hermit Songs* with a delightfully fresh musical innocence—a far lighter voice than we are accustomed to hearing nowadays—and Barber's accompaniments are immaculate.

**BEETHOVEN:** *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 5, in E flat, Op. 73 ("Emperor")*. Walter Gieseking, piano; Philharmonic Orchestra, Alceo Galliera, cond. Seraphim S 60069, \$2.49 [from Odeon SMC 91458, recorded in 1955].

Gieseking's third and last recorded performance of this concerto took place only a few years after his second recording of the work with Karajan. That fine version formed one of Odyssey's initial releases (reviewed in these columns in April 1967). The pianist's interpretation here remains substantially the same: refined, patrician, and classically scaled. In the context of Gieseking's playing, I marginally prefer Karajan's satin-smooth accompaniment to Galliera's sinewy, more angular reading—which is very finely played, I hasten to add. Seraphim, of course, offers stereo, but the differences in sonic quality between the two versions are very small: each disc is excellently reproduced.

**BERLIOZ:** *Te Deum, Op. 22*. Alexander Young, tenor; Denis Vaughan, organ; London Philharmonic Choir; Dulwich College Boys Choir; Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Sir Thomas Beecham, cond. Odyssey 32 16 0206, \$2.49 (rechanneled stereo only) [from Columbia ML 4897, recorded in 1953].

Berlioz' *Te Deum* was written twelve years after his *Requiem* and on a similar

grandiose scale. Beecham uses the composer's revised version which reduces the musical apparatus down from nine hundred participants to a manageable 250, and performs the remarkable feat of preserving the work's massive breadth while always maintaining clarity, expressivity, and an atmosphere of devotion. Like the *Requiem*, the *Te Deum* calls for full stereophonic splendor and this rechanneled 1953 recording cannot really cope with Berlioz' huge masses of sound. The excellent performance, however, is well worth hearing for its own musical rewards.

**GERSHWIN:** *Porgy and Bess*. Camilla Williams (s), Inez Matthews (s), June McMechen (s), Helen Dowdy (ms), Avon Long (t), Lawrence Winters (b), Eddie Matthews (b), Warren Coleman (bs), et al.; J. Rosamond Johnson Chorus and Orchestra, Lehman Engel, cond. Odyssey 32 36 0018, \$7.57 (three discs, rechanneled stereo only) [from Columbia OSL 162, 1951]. Columbia's brilliant 1951 recording of *Porgy and Bess* is still the only complete version in the catalogue, an odd state of affairs for such a popular work. The numerous hit tunes turn up frequently enough—but how much more effective they are when heard in the context of a performance as fresh and vital as that contained on these discs. The entire cast achieves a level of committed vocal and dramatic eloquence rarely heard on an operatic recording nowadays, giving a very real and exceptionally vivid picture of Catfish Row and its inhabitants.

The recording's realistic atmosphere is largely due to producer Goddard Lieberson's pioneer effort to translate the opera into purely phonographic terms (John Culshaw doubtlessly picked up a few pointers here—he gives this *Porgy* high marks in his book *Ring Resounding*). Some of the effects—footsteps, slamming doors, and other purely studio sounding noises—smack of oldtime radio melodrama, but it's amazing how the over-all aura of the recording remains totally convincing and immediate.

The original sound tended to be on the shrill, shallow side. Odyssey's pressing is slightly mellower, probably due to the diffusion of frequencies in the stereo rechanneling. There is also an unfortunate attempt at simulated directionality by phasing the channels in and out—the sound quality really suffers from this sort of gimmickry. An up-to-date *Porgy* in true stereo still seems a long way off; but in the meantime, this marvelous performance should please most admirers of Gershwin's rich masterpiece.

**IVES:** *Symphonies* (complete). Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond. (in No. 1); New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein, cond. (in Nos. 2 and 3); American Symphony

Orchestra, Leopold Stokowski, cond. (in No. 4). Columbia D3S 783, \$11.59 (three discs) [from various Columbia originals, 1960-67].

The latest reshuffle in Columbia's Ives catalogue gathers together the four symphonies in one handy package—a boon to those who have put off investigating the composer's symphonic output until now, but no doubt infuriating to Ives fans who snapped up the single discs containing material duplicated (and in one case triplicated) on other Columbia releases. The special low price tag puts this set in direct competition with Cardinal's middle-price edition conducted by Harold Farberman. Despite occasional happy moments in the latter (especially the Third Symphony, which really outclasses Bernstein's reading), the present set takes top honors in over-all orchestral execution, interpretation, and recorded sound—truly a feast for tired ears. Farberman's Fourth Symphony is worth sampling, though, simply because no one performance of this remarkable work can hope to reveal all its complexities.

The jazzed-up booklet accompanying the Columbia recording is long on pop art, free-form verse, and empty space, but pretty deficient on material pertinent to the music.

**MAHLER:** *Symphony No. 5; Kindertotenlieder*. Kathleen Ferrier, contralto; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra (in the *Kindertotenlieder*), New York Philharmonic Orchestra (in the *Symphony*), Bruno Walter, cond. Odyssey 32 26 0016, \$4.99 (two discs, rechanneled stereo only) [the *Symphony* from Columbia SL 171, recorded in 1947; *Kindertotenlieder* from Columbia ML 4980, recorded in 1949].

Bruno Walter's most attractive qualities as a conductor of Mahler (or any other composer for that matter) lay in his gifts for producing warm sounds of disarming beauty and molding melodic lines with a marvelous sense of spontaneity and deeply felt expressivity. I suspect that a good deal of Mahler's current appeal, however, rests with the strong underlying vein of *Angst* which twists through his music—a lode that Walter rarely mined and hence his present disfavor with the Now generation of Mahlerites. One does miss the occasional wild flights of neurotic abandon that course through Bernstein's performance of the Fifth. But the music is large enough to encompass Walter's saner approach, and his statement of the Adagietto and Finale is quite magnificent.

Ferrier's *Kindertotenlieder* is just about the definitive statement from a female throat on this music; may it never leave the catalogue. The sonics are generally

*Continued on page 124*





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excellent for a twenty-year-old recording; they would have been even better had not the high cutting level produced several patches of distortion on Side 3.

✓ **MOZART:** *Symphony No. 39, in E flat, K. 543; Le Nozze di Figaro: Overture; Die Entführung aus dem Serail: Overture; Eine kleine Nachtmusik, K. 525.* Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Wilhelm Furtwängler, cond. Heliodor HS 25079, \$2.49 (rechanneled stereo only) [from various DGG originals 1938-1944].

These four items evidently comprise all of the Mozart recordings Furtwängler made for DGG. Admirers of that conductor will be grateful to Heliodor for gathering them together in one handy budget package. Furtwängler clearly sees the E flat Symphony as a romantic statement, to judge from the performance's weighty lines and the expansive symphonic utterances. The music itself makes this a valid approach and the interpretation carries great conviction, although the Allegretto and the Finale seem a bit too heavy and humorless (the tubby sound does nothing to alleviate this impression).

The overtures give a tantalizing taste of Furtwängler's operatic Mozart, while the Serenade sings and trips as light as a feather—an even more ingratiating reading than the conductor's Electrola recording with the Vienna Philharmonic.

**PONCHIELLI:** *La Gioconda.* Maria Callas (s), Fiorenza Cossotto (ms), Irene Companeez (c), Pier Miranda Ferraro (t), Piero Cappuccilli (b), Ivo Vinco (bs), et al.; Chorus and Orchestra of La Scala, Antonino Votto, cond. Seraphim SIC 6031, \$7.57 (three discs) [from Angel S 3606, 1960].

The contractual difficulties that prevented Callas' complete opera recordings for EMI from recirculating on Seraphim have evidently been surmounted: here is her 1960 recording of *La Gioconda*, and the early *Lucia* with Di Stefano and Gobbi is also shortly to be with us again. As an entity, this *Gioconda* is a spotty affair—without full-throated uninhibited vocalism from six top-flight singers, the opera falls pretty flat. Callas' colleagues for this performance range from the promising Cossotto, still a bit green at this early stage, to Ferraro, whose provincial braying as Enzo is particularly unfortunate. In between we have a mildly sung Barnaba from Cappuccilli, a solid Alvisé in Vinco, and a rather pallid La Cieca by Companeez.

The great lady herself is in typically variable form. *Gioconda's* tragic grandeur comes across splendidly, and the myriad textual colorations, especially when the soprano applies that ominous and murky chest tone, could not be more compellingly projected. As for free-wheeling vocal flights, effortless pianissi-

mos *in alt*, even register transitions—well, better forget about all that.

Callas' first *Gioconda* recording is now on Everest's budget line, and specialists will have a fine time dissecting the two performances. That earlier performance is less subtly conceived, more dependably sung than the 1960 version at hand, and equally exciting in its way. The cast there is no better than in the later version, but at least nobody pussyfoots. Of course, Seraphim has far superior sonics: not the last word in rich spaciousness, but with slight upgrade in quality over the Angel set. Furthermore, the pressings are immaculate.

**PROKOFIEV:** *The Flaming Angel.* Jane Rhodes (s), Jean Giraudeau (t), Xavier Depraz (bs-b), André Vessières (bs), et al.; Chorus of the French Radio; Orchestra of the Paris Opéra, Charles Bruck, cond. Westminster WST 300, \$14.37 (three discs, rechanneled stereo only) [from Westminster XWN 1304, 1958].

As the only recording of Prokofiev's obscure but fascinating study in Gothic witchcraft, this French-language performance recommends itself to interested parties. Jane Rhodes brings plenty of temperament to the obsessed Renata, although her voice is a bit small and soft-grained to milk every last ounce of frenzy in the music, and Xavier Depraz' velvety bass-baritone counters her bravely as the stolid Ruprecht. The Paris Opéra Orchestra does fairly well by the virtuoso orchestral writing, and the fake stereo, with a good deal less bite than the original mono, will do. For all its color and souped-up excitement though, this opera strikes me as something of a red herring.

**SCHOENBERG:** *Verklärte Nacht, Op. 4.* **LOEFFLER:** *A Pagan Poem, Op. 14.* Symphony Orchestra, Leopold Stokowski, cond. Seraphim S 60080, \$2.49 [from Capitol SP 8433, 1959].

✓ *Verklärte Nacht* has long been a specialty with Stokowski and his recording is truly stupendous. The composer's tempo and dynamic directions are quite scrupulously followed (except towards the end where there is some hanky-panky with the mutes to get an even more juicy climax), and the contrapuntal interplay is always wonderfully clear. It's a reading admirable for its rigorous logic as well as for impassioned intensity.

Charles Martin Loeffler's tone poem is something of a curio. Born in France in 1861 and naturalized as an American citizen in Boston at the age of twenty-six, Loeffler evidently remained true to his Gallic heritage throughout his compositional career. The *Pagan Poem* has its perfumed moments, but most of it sounds very much like second-hand D'Indy. The decade-old disc, however, still sounds impressive. PETER G. DAVIS



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## Odds and Ends: Eavesdropping In Purgatory

**I**N THE COURSE of a month, as I make my way through the twisty corridors of the pop music world, I hear a good many interesting and sometimes amusing comments, comments that stick in the mind because they sum up some aspects of music—or even, at times, pin the state of this culture as a whole. The essay of this one has been rather high lately, and I thought I might pass along a few nuggets for your appraisal.

I was talking to Robert Russell Bennett, at seventy-four the dean of American arrangers. He has orchestrated more than 250 Broadway musicals. "I don't think," he said, "that I have a very clear perspective on the musical form, despite the fact that I have made a good living from it. Frankly, I don't like musicals. When for professional reasons I have to attend one, I find I can keep up my interest for just so long, and then I start wishing I were somewhere else—such as at a ball game."

Legend has it that Mr. Bennett, a writer of astonishing fluency and knowledge, can orchestrate a show while watching a ball game on television. "I think it's time I exploded that myth," he said. "It's absolutely untrue—I get too interested in the ball game."

Later in the same conversation he remarked, "Everybody overorchestrates."

And then he said, with utter simplicity, "I wish I were a better musician."

I know a bass player in his mid-thirties who can and does pass for much less. Lately, because work in the music he prefers has been scarce, he has been working a lot of jobs with rock groups, whose members think he's a genius. "I don't like the music," he said. "But there's a lot of us doing it now. We just play the job, take the money, and go home and listen to Charlie Parker records."

A girl singer, who had a near-hit record a year ago: "I can't relate to the kids today." Her age? Twenty-six.

An a & r man at a rock record date, with a patient sigh, after three hours of recording during which the group still had not succeeded in getting itself in tune: "I have to adjust myself to the fact that we're living in the age of the amateur."

Kenny Ascher, a twenty-three-year-old composer doing graduate work at Columbia University: "I've been writing some songs lately with a girl who produces

pretty good lyrics in the modern idiom."

"What's the modern idiom?" I asked.

"Well, y' know—they use the word 'mind' a lot".

A few years ago, vibraharpist Milt Jackson of the Modern Jazz Quartet made an album for Atlantic called "Ballad Artistry," with string arrangements by Quincy Jones. It's a sensitive and lyrical collection. Now rumor has long held that Bags, as Jackson is universally known, wanted to watch a boxing match the day they were to record. So a television set was brought to the studio, set up in front of him and, with sound turned off, Bags played his lovely, warm, tender improvisations while watching some guy beat another guy's brains out. Doubting that even Bags could be that fluent, I decided, after Robert Russell Bennett denied writing while watching television, to see if he really had recorded the album while watching TV. I asked someone who was at the date.

"That's right," I was told. "That's exactly how he made that album."

I was having a drink with the manager of a famous recording group that had just signed a million-dollar deal. "This group," he said, "is the biggest fraud ever perpetrated on the record-buying public."

"Who perpetrated it?"

"Me."

An executive with a major record company, whose factory is so bad that their albums sound as if they're pressed on sandpaper: "I've given orders that our quality merchandise is not to be processed in our own plant. We send it all out now. Only the rock stuff is done there. With that, it doesn't matter."

A key man in the advertising department of the same company: "It sometimes disturbs me that I have so successfully sold to the public the trash that this company produces."

As everyone knows, sales in the record industry have been "soft" lately; and the profit margin has been thin. Too many rock albums require so long to make, they involve so much expenditure in studio time while groups wrestle with such aesthetic profundities as tuning up, that even a big-selling album may lose money, and the profit margin of the industry has been squeezed. Other factors enter into the current unrest within the industry—not

an especially secure business under the best of conditions—but money is the big one. And so heads are rolling, all over the place. Sometimes the responsible person is executed; more often it is the man who just wasn't skilled enough at the politics of survival. Steve Sholes, the vice president of RCA Victor who died a few months ago, once said to me: "In the New York record world, you spend too much time trying to keep the other guy's knife out of your back and not enough time making music."

Anyway, producers Mike Berniker, Howard Roberts, and Charlie Calello are gone from Columbia Records. Loren Becker is gone from Command, and Alan Livingston is out as head of Capitol. Ben Rosner is gone from RCA Victor. As I write this, everybody in the industry is speculating whether Mort Nassiter will live out the week as head of M-G-M/Verve. [As we went to press, we learned of Mr. Nassiter's resignation from M-G-M/Verve. Ed.]

Mind you, nobody is ever fired in the record industry. The trade papers duly announce that a man has "resigned to pursue other business interests," and add that he has "not yet disclosed his future plans." You bet he hasn't. Usually he's sitting there in shock, staring at the wall, wondering what happened.

This is the background against which I sat chatting with a producer I know and like. He was telling me how a colleague had been summarily fired a week or two before.

"Would you believe," the producer said, "that on the day he left, no one went up to shake his hand and say good-by—they were all so scared for their jobs. I don't care; he was, he is, my friend. But because he's my friend, people around here stopped talking to me, as if he had a communicable disease and he might have passed it on to me. People stopped coming into my office."

"Then, a couple of days ago, the president of the company came in to see me, and I didn't get fired. And now people have started smiling and talking to me again."

He paused. "What cowardice there is in this industry. You read about it in novels, but until you watch it in operation, until you're involved in some part of it, you don't really believe people can be that small."

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*The New York Times*, Aug. 20, 1968, Page 1.

"Dublin (AP)—Ronald Duff, a twenty-two-year-old Irish pop musician, was electrocuted in front of a crowd of screaming teen-agers in a Dublin ballroom last night when his electric guitar short-circuited."

*The New York Times*, same edition, Page 25.





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# THE LIGHTER SIDE

reviewed by MORGAN AMES • O. B. BRUMMELL • R. D. DARRELL • GENE LLES • STEVEN LOWE • JOHN S. WILSON

SYMBOL ✨ DENOTES AN EXCEPTIONAL RECORDING

✨ **BIG BROTHER AND THE HOLDING COMPANY:** Cheap Thrills. Rock vocal group with rhythm accompaniment. *I Need a Man to Love; Summertime; Piece of My Heart; Ball and Chain*; three more. Columbia KCS 9700, \$5.79 (stereo only).

Big Brother and the Holding Company appeared in concert this past summer at New York's Fillmore East. After the first number, the audience leaped to its feet, shouted and stamped its wild approval, and remained standing and gyrating to the music for the duration of the concert. When, at a quarter to two, it finally ended, thunderous applause and demands for encores literally shook the house. "What do you want to hear?" came a voice from the stage. More waves of sound from the audience. "Sing anything, Janis!" came roaring from one gigantic voice in the balcony. Several encores later, the voice of lead vocalist Janis Joplin pleaded: "We just ain't got nothin' left, babies!" The concert came to a jubilant close as the entire troupe moved around the stage, champagne glasses dancing merrily in the air.

Spontaneous outbursts of this sort do happen at rock concerts, but they occur rarely enough to make one realize that Big Brother must have something on the ball. And they do indeed. Power. Raw, visceral power.

The source of Big Brother's energy is found in the person of Janis Joplin, a supercharismatic personality in an idiom that is maintained by charisma. Her voice is rough, but sexy, volatile even at a whisper. There is a great deal of blues in her delivery and real facility in her technique. She is undoubtedly the best female vocalist in rock. Mama Cass (of the overrated Mamas and the Papas) is amateurish by comparison, and even Grace Slick of the Jefferson Airplane sounds tame and uptight after Miss Joplin.

Essentially she *is* the group. The instrumentalists' function is to provide a suitable backdrop for a rock superstar. On their own they offer little that is unique. Basically in an acid-rock bag, high on electronics and distortion, they sound like ever so many San Francisco groups. They touch upon the blues but



Photo by Janice Coughlan  
*Janis Joplin: the quintessentially female is the power behind Big Brother.*

don't say anything that hasn't been said before.

But Janis Joplin is incredible. Yes, incredible—the most exciting and openly sexual female singer that rock has produced. She possesses the kind of genuine womanness—uncleansed and intensely real—that Billie Holiday had and that many white vocalists have tried and failed to emulate.

Big Brother cut a disc for Mainstream about a year ago. Very little time or thought went into that venture and the album never really took off. Not so with the new one. The material was recorded live, yet the sound and textures are beautifully clean. The main point about on-the-spot performance tapings, though, is that extra kick of feeling that you're there. Live recordings of rock are tricky affairs, but when they work, they really swing. This one works. S.L.

✨ **JACKIE AND ROY:** Grass. Jackie Cain, vocals; Roy Kral, vocals and piano, rhythm accompaniment; Roy Kral and Artie Schroeck, arr. *Holiday; Winds of Heaven; Open*; eight more. Capitol ST 2936, \$4.79 (stereo only).

Jackie and Roy were among many jazz-oriented acts who looked up a few years

ago and noticed that the audience had disappeared. There followed a transition period, and several grab-bag albums, as the Kral's hung onto old values while poking around for new.

It has been clear for at least a year that the transition (but not the growth) phase is over. Jackie and Roy have settled into new-pop music with more grace than most of their contemporaries. They've retained the best of their basic values—the incredible cleanness of tone and approach. Roy Kral's kaleidoscopic vocal arrangements, the thoughtful choice of material. All has been applied to new-pop with both sincerity and success.

The most striking track in this best-yet album is Lennon-McCartney's *Lady Madonna*, with mix-and-match tempos which snap the head around. After that it's a throw-up between Donovan's *Someone's Singing* (built around a superb cobweb of vocal counterpoint); Lennon-McCartney's *Fixin' a Hole*; or Jackie's austere solo on Paul Simon's *A Most Peculiar Man*.

This is new-pop for adults, people for whom five guitar chords and a lot of intensity just aren't enough. Jackie and Roy are musicians. They are for the audience who likes José Feliciano, Bacharach as a singer, and a growing group of artists who are bringing the happy flair of competence into a field which has been starving for it. M.A.

**LAINIE KAZAN:** *Love Is Lainie*. Lainie Kazan, vocals; orchestra, Pat Williams, Claus Ogerman, or Bob Florence, cond. *A House Is Not a Home; Night Song; An Angel Died*; eight more. M-G-M SE 4496, \$4.79 (stereo only). There is a certain kind of overstated, overenunciated, precious singing that goes over big with self-conscious aesthetes; they think it's art. (Judy Garland has always pulled a large and loyal contingent from that group.) Lainie Kazan is in this bag.

Every singer has influences. Lainie Kazan has slapped hers together indiscriminately. In a few bars of this album, one hears her imitate Carmen MacRae, Lena Horne, Billie Daniels, and Nancy Wilson. And what she imitates is invariably the surface of the other style—the gimmicks, the clicks, the pops, the in-





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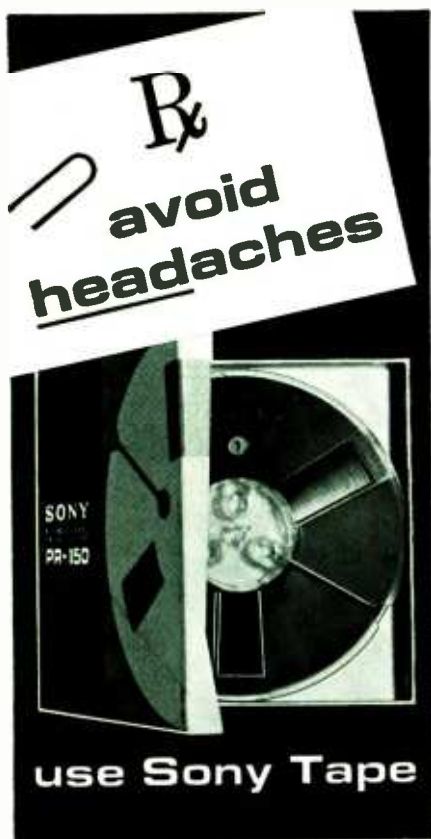
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iels' low guttural sounds, always among the least attractive aspects of his work, and Miss Wilson's habit of torturing vowels for example. Miss Kazan has been miked so closely that all the mechanics of mouthing words are audible: you can hear the tongue come off the roof of the mouth, which is even more nauseating than Barbra Streisand's asthmatic gasps. Who wants to hear the sound of saliva?

All this is a shame, because Miss Kazan is gifted: she has a great voice and a sensitivity to words that could make her a great singer. Taste comes with time: maybe she'll find it.

Rex Reed, who is mad for her, has written the most blicky, yeuchy, drooling, sycophantic set of liner notes you're ever likely to read. They make you wanna frow up. G.L.

**DON SHIRLEY: In Concert.** Don Shirley, piano; Gilberto Munguia, cello; Henry Gonzalez, bass. *I Can't Get Started; I Feel Pretty; Georgia on My Mind*; eight more. Columbia CS 9684, \$4.79 (stereo only).

It is a matter of considerable astonishment to me that there are people who take Don Shirley seriously. Square taste of that profundity is embarrassing. When Alec Templeton used to do this sort of thing—some current pop tune in the style of, say, Rachmaninoff or Debussy—he meant it as a joke. Shirley wants you to consider him an *artist*; the liner notes of this album are weighted with self-important comments about Shirley as an artist, as opposed to entertainer. I don't even consider him that good an entertainer.

The format is piano, cello, and bass, which permits of the fragility that Shirley and apparently his fans (whose applause here sounds enthusiastic) consider "refined." Do you know who this stuff is for? People who haven't the patience to dig into the masters but want to feel they're deep; so they get Don Shirley to do up the Beatles' *Yesterdays* in "classical" style and then they can consider themselves oh-my-goodness-so-cultivated, don't-you-know?

At Chicago's London House a few years ago, I became so distressed by all the missed notes in Shirley's tinkly-winkly arpeggios that I got up and walked out—in the middle of a perfectly good steak, too. His technique is better here; but that's all. G.L.

**THE GRATEFUL DEAD: Anthem of the Sun.** Rock vocal group with rhythm and electronic accompaniment. *That's It for the Other One; New Potato Caboose; Born Cross-Eyed*; two more. Warner Bros./Seven Arts W 1749 or WS 1749, \$4.79.

The first album of the Grateful Dead, issued in mid-1967, was a disappointment to many rock fans who had seen the group "live." The magnetism that characterized their concert engagements could scarcely be discerned from the ill-fated recording. It wasn't a bad record, just not up to snuff. One could hear some

pretty good blues guitar work, but the whole thing was sort of a bringdown.

Since that time the Dead has gotten further away from blues and into a full-fledged (and by now somewhat anachronistic) acid-rock bag. Things have been aggravated by the serious, sometimes fatal) electronic music bug, which has severely bitten them.

Each side of this album is a mish-mash of self-indulgent formlessness. Blues sounds, acid sounds, bell sounds, electronic sounds; they pile over each other with such boring consistency as to drive away all but the most devoted or masochistic of admirers.

There's really no excuse for this kind of junk but there is an explanation. Drugs. The album is essentially background music for pot parties (or methedrine or LSD). Now lots of rock is conceived with marijuana in mind; there are many groovy sounds that are a head's delight. Hell, all of "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band" (the Beatles' magnum opus) can be viewed in this limited way. But that album sounds awfully good straight; you don't *have* to be stoned to dig the Beatles. Pot can enhance the listener's experience; it can make something good sound great, but it can also make something trite sound meaningful. It is within the latter category that this album belongs and I'm sorry that the Dead have fallen victim to the delusion of the complete psychedelic experience. S.L.

**SUPER SESSION.** Mike Bloomfield and Steve Stills, electric guitars; Al Kooper, piano, organ, ondioline, vocals, twelve-string guitar, and electric guitar; various assisting musicians. *Stop; Man's Temptation; Really; Season of the Witch*; five others. Columbia CS 9701, \$4.79 (stereo only).

Rock has finally reached that stage, long since accomplished in jazz, of recording jams. This album, presumably the result of a chance encounter of three erstwhile rock group leaders, sounded good in concept. Mike Bloomfield, Steve Stills, and Al Kooper, refugees from three different rock groups, each considered to be among the better practitioners of the craft, joined for what Columbia has chosen to call a "super session."

Bloomfield, late of the Electric Flag, shares side 1 with Kooper (from Blood, Sweat, and Tears), though Kooper's role is pretty much in the vein of obligato on organ. Side 2 has Kooper doing much the same, only this time Stills (of the now defunct Buffalo Springfield) is in the cat-bird seat. This side is pretty much of a drag. Still's guitar work here is oddly cautious against the background of his legacy in the Springfield: a tedious eleven-minute version of Donovan's beautiful *Season of the Witch* won't win any new friends for improvisation, to say the least.

Bloomfield is by far the more interesting guitarist. Working up around the top of the neck, bending and stretching notes slyly into focus, he comes on as a pretty good blues maker. He's the only one of

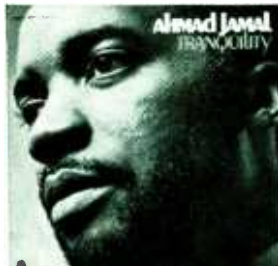


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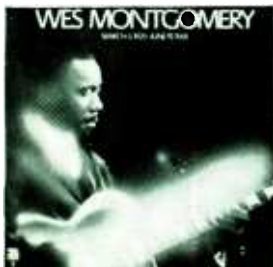
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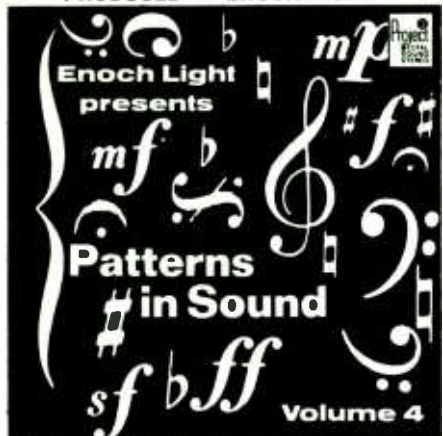
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the three who sounds at all free and technically hip. Throughout all, Kooper's static organ pipings serve to remind us how rare good rock organists are.

What I really can't understand about this disc is why brass parts were added as an afterthought to already complete sessions. The whole purpose and meaning of the freewheeling jam is found in the magic of improvisation, and though only Bloomfield's breaks have any guts, his best efforts are undone by the tacked on horns. What a waste. S.L.

**PERCY FAITH: Angel of the Morning.** Orchestra, chorus, Percy Faith. cond. *Angel of the Morning; Time for Livin'; Tell Her;* eight more. Columbia CS 9706, \$4.79 (stereo only).

Sugar frosting for some current corn flakes. The best tunes are those of Jim Webb (*MacArthur Park*) and Paul Simon (*Scarborough Fair/Canticle*, Mrs. Robinson). G.L.

\* **BURL IVES: The Times They Are A-Changin'.** Burl Ives, vocals; Robert Mersey, arr. and cond. *Maria (If I Could); Folk Singer; Little Green Apples;* eight more. Columbia CS 9675, \$4.79 (stereo only).

You just can't beat an old pro when he heads with conviction into a project. It doesn't matter what he's doing: the excitement is that he believes in it.

Apparently seasoned folk singer Burl Ives is a hearty advocate of today's music, especially folk- and country-rock (what else, since Mr. Ives's own roots are in folk and country music).

With the characteristic taste of a successful veteran, Mr. Ives has chosen the best current material. There's not one track on which he is not convincing, including Jim Webb's *By the Time I Get to Phoenix*, Paul Simon's *Homeward Bound*, and Bob Dylan's *One Too Many Mornings*. No one sings Dylan songs worse than Dylan. After hearing Mr. Ives do Dylan, I'm hard pressed to think of anyone who sings them any better.

In performing an album of songs by writers half his age, Mr. Ives has found a dimension that even the composers missed: the view from the bridge of maturity.

Ride on. M.A.

**NILSSON: Aerial Ballet.** Nilsson, vocals; George Tipton, arr. *Mr. Tinker; Good Old Desk; Together;* ten more. RCA Victor LPM 3956 or LSP 3956, \$4.79.

All too many rock people grow on one the way blisters do, but I like Nilsson better every time I hear him. Can it be that RCA is putting its muscle behind the right talent this time? God knows, Nilsson has been the subject of a relentless promo campaign. Just the other day he stared down at me from a monstrous billboard on Sunset Boulevard.

This second album has a subtle consistency the first one lacked. As before, Nilsson's striking talent is his singing, not his songs. On *Everybody's Talkin'*, the only non-original in the set, Nilsson becomes a tenor version of Fred Neil,

the popular underground singer who wrote it. On *Little Boy Nilsson* is a kid. On *Daddy's Song* he's old-timey. On *Bath* he swings. On *One* he suffers. Often a Beatles vocal flavor crops up. Nilsson's vocal range, intonation, agility, and musical instincts are all excellent. His several styles emerge as close-fitting parts of an over-all package instead of little toothpicks sticking out of an indistinct personality.

The people at RCA are enthusiastic about Nilsson as a songwriter. With an occasional exception, this aspect of his talent is less than spectacular. Anyone could have written these songs. The specialness is in the singing, plus the imaginativeness of the scoring by George Tipton, one of the hottest arrangers around. His chart for *One* sounds like a direct result of George Martin's *Eleanor Rigby*.

Blond, blue-eyed Nilsson is a sunny sort of talent, and I hope he and RCA will hold out till he really breaks through. M.A.

\* **TOOTS THIELEMANS: Toots.** Toots Thielemans, guitar and harmonica; Dick Hyman or Herbie Hancock, piano and organ; Al Casamenti, Gene Bertocini or Bucky Pizzarelli, guitar; Ron Carter, bass; Ronnie Zito, drums. *O Susannah; Secret Love; Whispering;* nine more. Command RS 930, \$5.79.

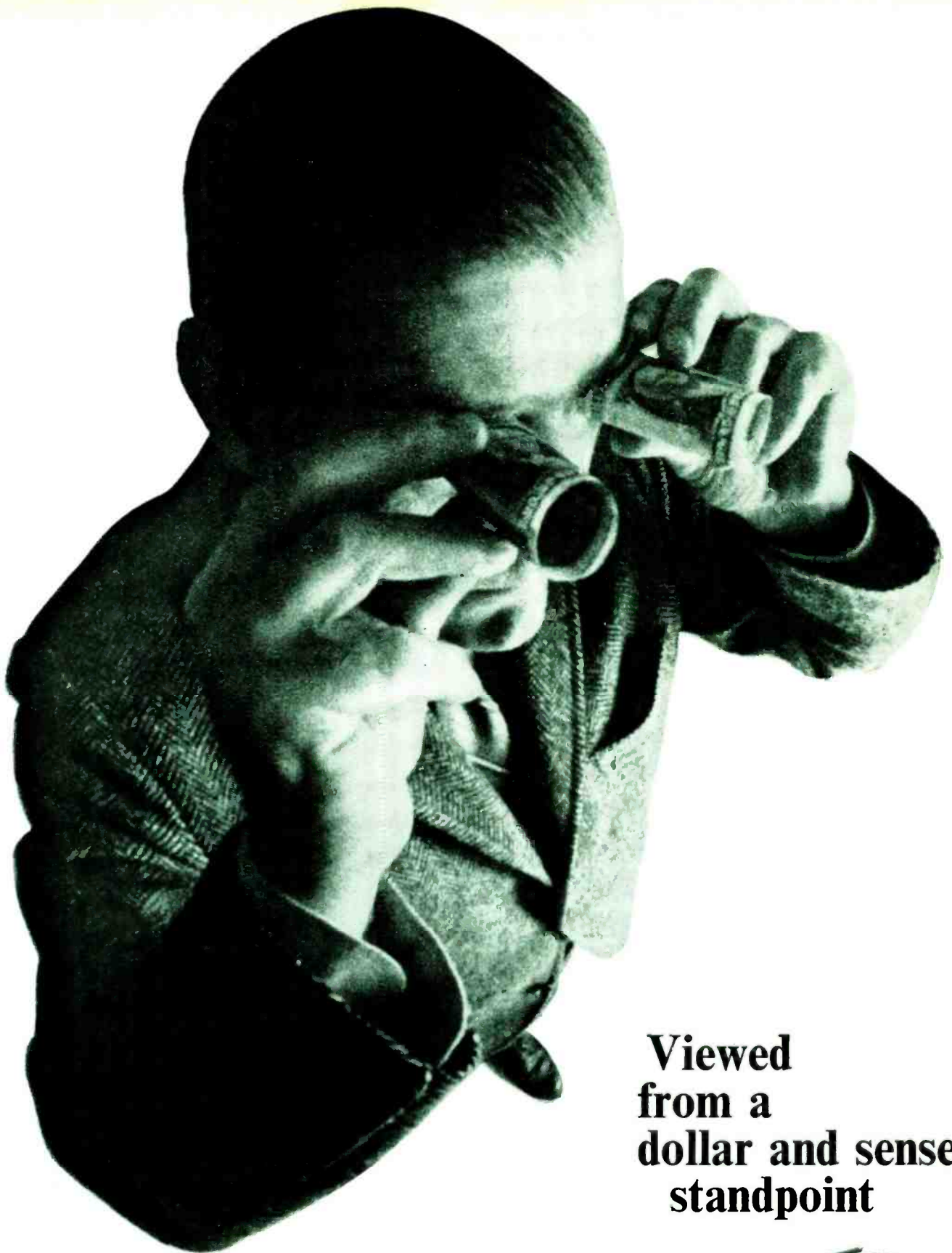
No one knows for sure if Toots Thielemans is a Martian. It's hard to believe he *learned* to do what he does here. Thielemans is master of two instruments: guitar and harmonica. No one even comes near him on harmonica, though Larry Adler is always in there trying. On the cover of this album is a cartoon by Hirschfeld depicting Thielemans with four hands, playing both instruments at once. And that's exactly what he seems to be doing.

Take *Lover Man*, done as a fast waltz. The notes advise that the guitar and harmonica tracks were recorded several days apart. Yet one hears an exact match of instruments on unison octave passages. If such feats were not common to Thielemans, we'd accuse the annotator of lying. *Blues Talk* is hardtime blues, with the guitar track laid down first and the harmonica on top of it, instead of the opposite order usually preferred by Thielemans. *I'm Beginning to See the Light*, my personal favorite, gets a light, right rock treatment with a time-twist on the récurrent title phrase.

Most of the songs are standards. The only current inclusion is Jim Webb's *By the Time I Get to Phoenix* "because," Thielemans says "... the way songs are being written now, once you've played the melody, you're finished because there is no meat upon which to improvise." I'm glad someone finally pointed that fact out. Imagine trying to improvise instrumentally on a nearly chordless and melodyless hit such as *Gentle On My Mind*.

Thielemans is joined by exceptionally fine cohorts, listed above. Lucky you. All this excellence is on Command; the sound is superb. M.A.





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**TONY BENNETT: Yesterday I Heard the Rain.** Tony Bennett, vocals; Torrie Zito, arr. and cond. *Hi Ho; Only the Young; Fool of Fools*; eight more. Columbia CS 9678, \$4.79 (stereo only).

Tony Bennett is one of the rare dependables. Once the listener is hooked, almost any Bennett album will do. His fans respond quite personally to him; people who will never meet him speak of him as Tony. Rightly.

Bennett's new album is warm, intimate, controlled, free, lovely. As if you couldn't guess.

Some months ago Bennett scared the love-buttons off Columbia brass when he considered outside offers at contract-renewal time. Columbia woke up and tried harder. They recorded and released *Yesterday I Heard the Rain*, the quietly successful single around which this album was later built (once Bennett re-signed). With his well-known nose for good material, Bennett found the song after it became a hit in Mexico, and asked Gene Lees to write the English lyric—which he did, superbly. Torrie Zito then wrote the dramatically beautiful arrangement. It must have been an exciting record date; it's the highlight track of the album.

Bennett continues to give us more unknown material than any other major singer. Included here are the charming Blossom Dearie and S. Harris *Sweet Georgie Fame* (you mean you didn't know Blossom writes along with every-

thing else?): Stephen Sondheim and Jule Styne's gentle *Home Is the Place*; plus the Gershwins' understandably obscure *Hi Ho*. Torrie Zito's arrangements are mostly excellent.

Personally, I can do without the one or two brass-heavy jump tunes which show up on Bennett albums. In this case, the racers are *Get Happy* and *There Will Never Be Another You* (on which the final note is a grabber), both of which were sung into the ground years ago. Someone must like such tracks or they wouldn't crop up so regularly.

In all, this is a highly recommended album for the next time the Tony Bennett mood is upon you. M.A.

**TRINI LOPEZ: Trini Country.** Trini Lopez, vocals; orchestra, Don Tweedy, cond. *Crazy Arms; Devil Woman; Flowers on the Wall*; nine more. Reprise RS 6300, \$4.79.

In the end, I suppose, what I look for in a performer, aside from skill and emotion, is a quality of the natural. We're in a time when few performers have it: style in most cases is built on affectation. Trini is one of those people whose work is natural. You don't get the feeling that he's doing things for surface effect. His vowels, for example, are as pure as he can make them; what is different about them, what is unique to him, is unselfconsciously so. He's trying to sing well, that's all, and it comes out as himself.

This is the reason he can work so many streets. Lacking mannerisms, he can fit a wide variety of musical situations, including in this case country and western. The album is astonishingly good. Lopez doesn't get into "country" pronunciations; he just does it his way. But he's got a strong feeling for the songs, and the performances are spirited, happy, and full of exuberant swing.

Best track is a moving performance of John Hartford's *Gentle on My Mind*, with a soaring first-rate arrangement by Don Tweedy. And—will wonders never cease?—we hear a Nashville string section playing in tune and together. G.L.

**DONOVAN: In Concert.** Donovan, vocals and guitar; rhythm accompaniment. *Isle of Islay; Celeste; Guinevere*; eleven more. Epic BN 26386, \$4.79.

The interesting thing about this in-concert album by Britain's Donovan, one of the most successful rock performers in the world, is its musical framework. What's going on here is not rock but jazz—not jazz-rock but harmonically rich, technically fluent, fully unfashionable jazz.

Donovan carries with him on tour two skilled jazz-oriented musicians: flute/sax player Harold McNair and drummer Tony Carr. For this California concert, two local musicians were added: pianist Lorin Newkirk and bassist David Troncoso (who played *non-amplified* stand-up bass, not Fender). All four musicians are

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Like stamped sheet metal and lots of other not-so-solid stuff that gets by but who knows how long? And all kinds of tiny springs and gadgets designed to do one thing or another. (If you didn't know better, you'd swear you were looking at the inside of a toy.)

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first-rate, and all are playing and thinking jazz. *Preachin' Love*, a long track, is built on a complex chord cycle and features a long sax solo from McNair, plus drum breaks by Carr (in a rock concert?). On *Young Girl Blues*, Newkirk plays the sort of blues piano one expects to hear on a double bill with Miles Davis.

Above this fine, surprising background rides Donovan, singing his rock thoughts in his rock way. It should rub but it doesn't. One's impression is that each musician enjoys the other's work. What's more, the audience—young people who aren't supposed to like jazz—love it.

Or maybe they just love Donovan, whose image is certainly one of love. His voice is gentle and sweet, with an oddly staggered vibrato. His sense of rhythm is off-beat, intricate but quite solid. Often Donovan's lyrics are a direct reflection of his odd time-sense (*Pebble and the Man*). His songs are mixed: full of grace on one hand, sloppy structure on the other.

Whether one likes Donovan's songs or not, it's difficult not to respond to his pleasant, pastel mood. This is a good representation of his work. M.A.

**ARETHA FRANKLIN:** *Aretha Now*. Aretha Franklin, vocals and piano; Sweet Inspirations, vocal accompaniment; Tom Dowd and Arif Mardin, arr. *You Send Me: A Change; Hello Sunshine*; seven more. Atlantic SD 8186, \$4.79.

Aretha Franklin is *not* an acquired taste. You either do or you don't. For those who do, it's difficult to understand those who don't.

Miss Franklin represents the top echelon of rhythm and blues, or what is fatiguingly called soul music. She's also just about the only female singer in the country who steadily sells records by the millions (Dionne Warwick is another, but she's a more recent entry, in another bag, and not yet the seller Miss Franklin is).

There aren't many awards left that Miss Franklin hasn't received. In February of this year, Detroit's Mayor Cavanaugh declared an Aretha Franklin Day. The late Dr. Martin Luther King appeared for the occasion to present the singer with an award from the Southern Christian Leadership Council. It was fitting: Dr. King and Miss Franklin shared the same gospel roots.

For those who have watched Miss Franklin's career over the past several years, growth is apparent. Always a powerhouse, Miss Franklin now has attained a degree of consistency and infectiousness that is almost unmatched.

Two of the best tracks in this new set are *See Saw* and Burt Bacharach's *I Say A Little Prayer*, which fares well with gospel overtones. Once more, Miss Franklin is solidly supported by the Sweet Inspirations, the driving band, and her own fine piano playing. M.A.



**JAZZ**

**RED ALLEN.** Henry "Red" Allen. Red Allen, trumpet; J. C. Higginbotham, trombone; Albert Nicholas, clarinet; Teddy Hill, tenor saxophone; Charlie Holmes, alto saxophone; Luis Russell, piano; Will Johnson, guitar; Pops Foster, bass; Paul Barbarin, drums; also King Oliver and his Orchestra; Fletcher Henderson's Orchestra; Red Allen's All-Stars. *It Should Be You; Feeling Drowsy; Stingaree Blues*; twelve more. RCA Victor LPV 556, \$4.79 (mono only).

This record tells us graphically—if sound can be graphic—what happened to Red Allen. Even more, it tells us what happened to jazz between the 1930s and the 1950s. Most of the disc is devoted to young Red Allen, the pretender to the crown of Louis Armstrong, during his first two years in New York, 1929 and 1930. Allen's role as a successor to Armstrong was primarily a record promotional device but it was one which Allen was able to live up to in performance even if the promotion itself did not succeed.

The first ten selections on the disc are rich and rewarding performances by Allen with Luis Russell's orchestra (billed as Allen's orchestra) and a group organized for King Oliver. This was a brilliant set of musicians which, in addition to the surgent Allen, included J. C. Higginbotham when he was making the reputation on which he still lives: the warmly inventive clarinet of Albert Nicholas; Will Johnson, a perceptive guitar soloist in the days when the guitar was usually used only as a rhythm instrument; and an unusually strong rhythm section.

In this exciting company, Allen glows like a guiding light. He reflects Armstrong's influence but adds a depth of his own, a coloration that continued on into his later years. These later years extended from the middle Thirties when he was saddled with routine pop tunes which had to be played in reasonably routine fashion (except for his solos) to his death thirty years later. During these three decades, Allen's tremendous talent was given an outlet primarily because of his willingness to play along enthusiastically with the most limited kind of jazz fancier. Like Armstrong, he was able to cater to the demands of tastes that focused on *The Saints* and still maintain his authority as a jazz trumpeter.

The last three selections on the disc, recorded in 1957, are somewhat indicative of how he did this trick, although



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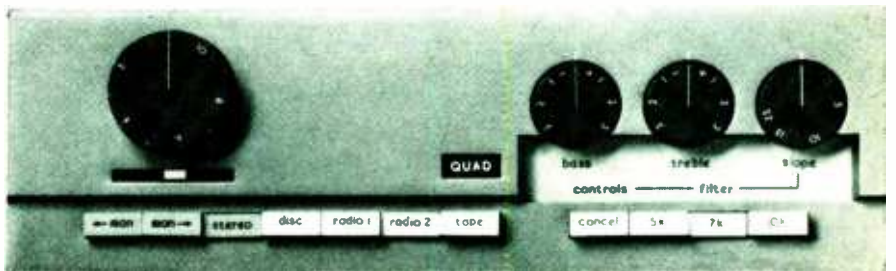
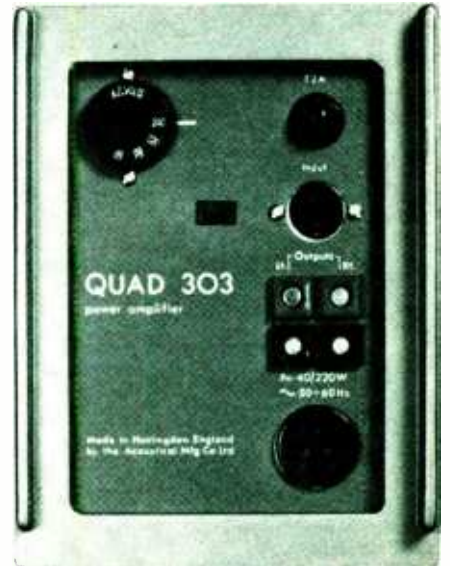
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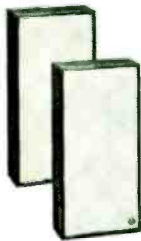
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they do not plumb such depths as *The Saints*. On the other hand, the performances are enlivened by the presence of Coleman Hawkins in very fine fettle. Because Allen spent most of his career in a period when his kind of jazz had to be diluted to survive, his position as one of the major jazz performers was obscured. This valuable and well chosen collection puts both Allen and his career in perspective. J.S.W.

**ARMAND HUG: Plays Jazz.** Armand Hug, piano. *Maple Leaf Rag; Basin Street Blues; Just a Closer Walk with Thee*; ten more. White Cliffs 1005, \$5.00 (Dover Records, Inc., New Orleans, La., 70130).

Until last spring my knowledge of Armand Hug came from a few television appearances originating from New Orleans and a handful of recordings made with local New Orleans groups. I had the impression that, along with clarinetist Raymond Burke, he was one of the very few contemporary New Orleans musicians (aside from the New Orleans traditionalists clustered around Preservation Hall) who had something distinctively individual to say. Hug's piano playing, as I knew it, seemed to reflect a great deal of the joyous bounce of Jess Stacy, yet it still had strong New Orleans roots.

Arriving in New Orleans late one night last May for the New Orleans Jazz Festival, I found that Hug was playing in a bar attached to the Royal Orleans Hotel and dropped in to hear him. It was late, he was playing his last set and it was thoroughly routine, tourist-type playing. I was disappointed but I felt the circumstances excused it. When Hug later appeared at the Festival with an ensemble of New Orleans musicians, I was again disappointed by the triteness and pretentious commercialism of his work even though suggestions of what I heard on records and television peeked through.

On the basis of this experience, I would imagine that this disc is a representative presentation of Hug. His unaccompanied piano solos have an occasional lively quality, shown best in his own *Huggin' the Keys*, a Zez Confrey sort of thing, and a Fats Waller medley. But for the most part his approach, both in the selection of tunes and in his performances, is banal, commercially oriented, and distressingly shallow. J.S.W.

**GEORGE BENSON: Giblet Gravy.**

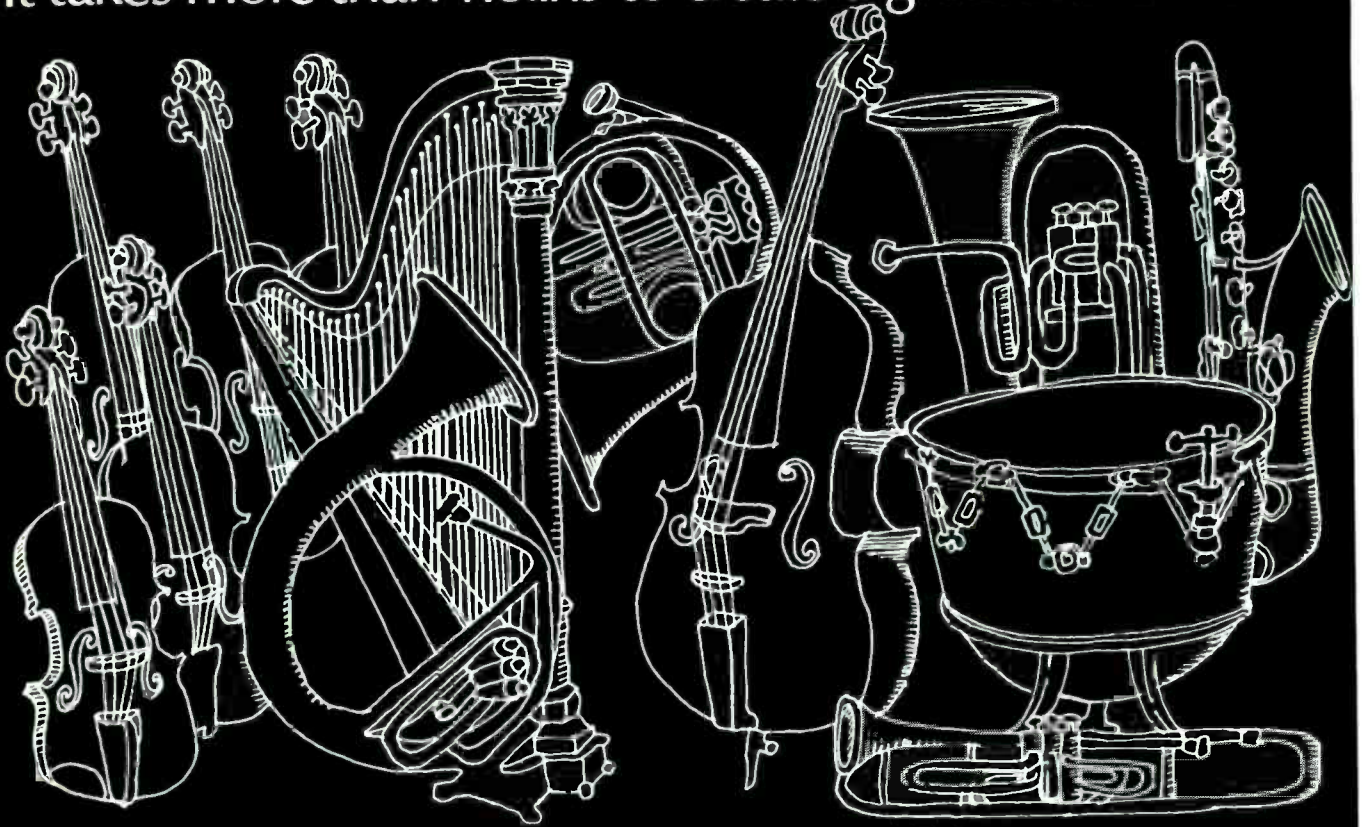
George Benson, guitar; Jimmy Owens, Ernie Royal, and Snookie Young, trumpets; Pepper Adams, baritone saxophone; Alan Raph, bass trombone; Carl Lynch or Eric J. Gale, guitar; Ron Carter or Bob Cranshaw, bass; Herbie Hancock, piano; Johnny Pacheco, conga; Billy Cobham, Jr., drums; Eileen Gilbert, Lois Winter, and Albertine Robinson, vocals; Tom McIntosh, cond. *Along Came Mary; Sunny; What's New*; six more. Verve 6 8749, \$5.79.

To say, as this disc's liner notes do, that this is "George Benson's best album so far" is a bit misleading. Benson is a

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guitarist with a strongly rhythmic attack who loops out long, graceful lines that flow along with a pulsing insistence. When he gets in a good groove, he carries the listener along with casual, compelling lines which he decorates with all sorts of odd little accents and figures.

On his records, however, this happy groove does not turn up very often. Even when it does, the device is so limited that it can wear out its welcome fairly quickly. That has been Benson's difficulty on his earlier records for Columbia and that is his difficulty in this debut disc on Verve. If anything, it is more of a difficulty here because he is being pushed toward a broad pop style which is inevitably inhibiting. Tom McIntosh has written arrangements involving a brass ensemble and voices which are made effective through the simple expedient of keeping the ensemble and the voices out of each other's way most of the time. The instruments do serve a helpful purpose, however, on *Sunny* and *Thunder Walk*, the latter displaying Benson in stop-time solos and as a clever manipulator of bent notes and an open, singing style.

Most of the pieces are gentle and easy-going. Occasionally—as in *Sunny*, *Thunder Walk*, and *Groovin'*—they scatter a few illuminating sparks. But mostly they are merely a pleasant, unobtrusive sound except when the sound hangs on too long—*What's New*, *Giblet Gravy*—when it becomes a bore. Like Benson's Columbia records, this one suggests that he has something individual and exciting to express but so far no one has found the key that will really reveal the full character of his talent. J.S.W.

**PETE JOLLY: Herb Alpert Presents**

**Pete Jolly.** Pete Jolly, piano; John Pisano, guitar; Chuck Berghofer, bass; Earl Palmer, drums; unidentified orchestra, Marty Paich, cond. *Windows of the World; Amy's Theme; Love So Fine*; seven more. A & M 4145, \$4.98.

When a jazz musician turns out an obviously commercial record, there are apt to be wails of distress from the jazz area—and quite often justifiably since the results are frequently diluted jazz and unimaginative in a pop sense. On this disc, Pete Jolly moves strongly into the pop field but he has managed to do it while retaining the strength of his basic jazz approach. He has been given a helpful assist by Marty Paich's arrangements, but in each selection it is Jolly himself who makes the piece come alive, makes it move and swing and sing.

There's a lot of light and airy playing here and there are also some effectively funky things. His best efforts are a dark, compelling bossa nova by Antonio Carlos Jobim (*Dindi*), a catchy although over-long piece (*Lonely Girl*), and, of all things, a marvelously rhythmic version of Leroy Anderson's *Serenata*. J.S.W.

**YUSEF LATEEF: The Blue Yusef Lateef.**

Yusef Lateef, tenor saxophone, flute, pneumatic flute, bamboo flute, shannie, tamboura, Taiwan koto, scratcher, and vocal; Blue Mitchell,

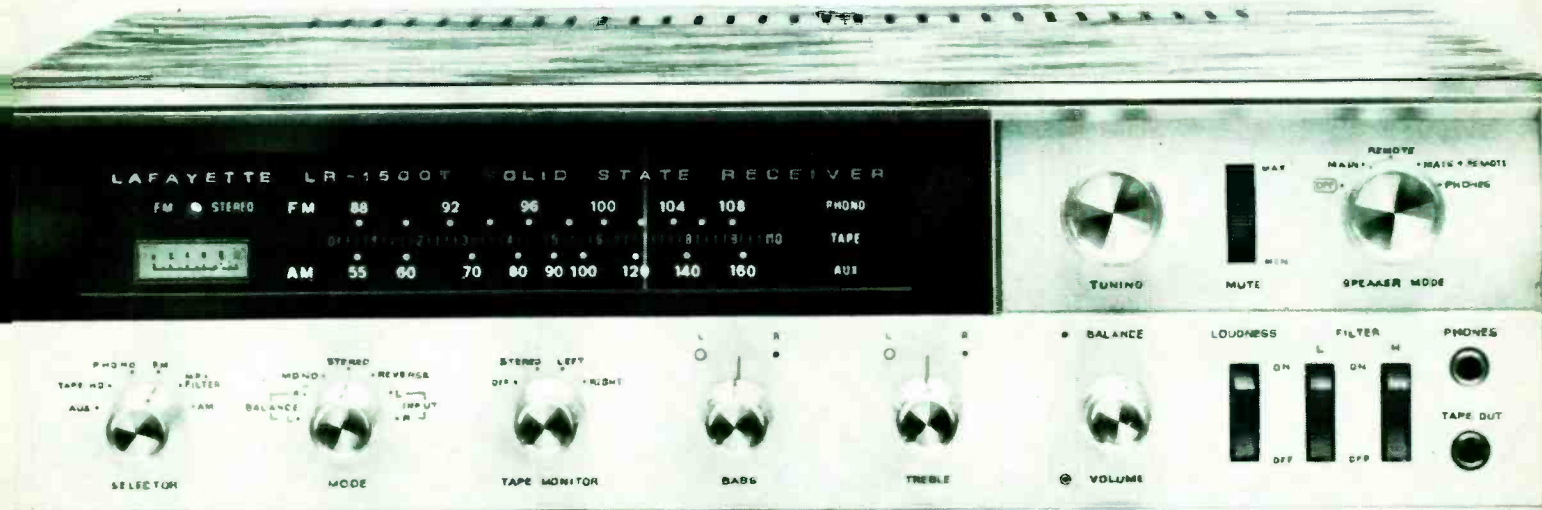


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trumpet; Sonny Red, alto saxophone; Buddy Lucas, harmonica; Hugh Lawson, piano; Kenny Burrell, guitar; Cecil McBee, bass; Bob Cranshaw, Fender bass; Roy Brooks, drum; The Sweet Inspirations, vocals; plus four strings conducted by William Fischer. *Sun Dog; Six Miles Next Door; Back Home*; five more. Atlantic SD 1508, \$5.79.

One of the more puzzling aspects of the currently puzzling jazz scene is the long, continued lack of recognition of Yusef Lateef. Lateef has been combining an engaging, off-beat imagination with a solidly mainstream attack for more than a dozen years. Long before odd noises became a commonplace of the jazz language, Lateef was using them (scratched balloons, 7-Up bottle, earthboard) with wit and with a point, neither of which have been particularly noticeable factors in the latter-day inundation of squawks, shrieks, and eruptive blats.

Although Lateef is not counted among the more notable avant-gardists or pop-jazz performers, he is one of the most diverting jazzmen working in either of these fields. As an avant-gardist, the fact that he has a sense of humor doubtless eliminates him from serious consideration. In pop-jazz, his strong, forthright jazz attack probably stands in his way. This disc shows us both sides of Lateef although it fails to indicate why he should be, commercially, of less consequence than, say, Roland Kirk or Herbie Mann.

The first side is Yusef the magnificent —Lateef playing flute, Taiwan koto, bamboo flute, and tenor saxophone in four original pieces. One of them, *Like It Is*, involves a string quartet with the bamboo flute and Lateef's brilliantly evocative rhythm section. On *Juba, Juba* and *Othelia*, he uses a background vocal group and Buddy Lucas' strongly phrased harmonica over an insistent rocking beat —a beat which, in *Othelia*, is only thinly disguised boogie-woogie. All three are close to the jazz core yet so imaginative is Lateef's approach that they suggest vast new exploratory areas.

This feeling is continued on the second side in *Back Home*, built over two bass ostinatos and involving voices, Lucas' harmonica and a shannie, an instrument played by Lateef that sounds like a sad oboe. But the remainder of the disc—roughly half—is the kind of routine, cliché-ridden stuff that is par for the course for far too many jazzmen but which, coming from Lateef, is a distinct let-down. The one bright spot in these selections is a short guitar solo by Kenny Burrell who sits in on one number.

The disc, as a whole, tells us that Lateef is a unique and distinctive performer in current jazz, but his merits are being diluted and possibly disguised by a somewhat fruitless attempt to reach out to a fairly low common denominator of jazz listener. The balance in this instance is in Lateef's and the listener's favor. But it leaves one wondering why, after all these years, he still bothers with routine material. J.S.W.

## STANLEY TURRENTINE: The Spoiler.

Stanley Turrentine, tenor saxophone; Blue Mitchell, trumpet; Julian Priester, trombone; James Spaulding, alto saxophone and flute; Pepper Adams, baritone saxophone; McCoy Tyner, piano; Bob Cranshaw, bass and Fender bass; Joe Rivera, shakers and tambourine; Mickey Roker, drums. *When the Sun Comes Out; Sunny; You're Gonna Hear from Me*; three more. Blue Note 4256 or 84256, \$5.79.

Even in the blowing sessions which are a tenor saxophonist's usual setting on records, Stanley Turrentine can be depended on to make an impressively resourceful use of a straightforward attack and tone. He is, in this sense, one of the most validly honest saxophonists around. On this disc, he has the luxury of arrangements by Duke Pearson, who writes with the same kind of perceptive simplicity that comes out in Turrentine's playing. It is a wonderfully complementary blending of talents, made even more attractive by a band that responds readily to Pearson's ideas. Pearson has contributed one original (*The Magilla*, a lively, insistent riff), and adapted a rocking Latin piece which Turrentine brought back from Panama (*La Fiesta*); but for the rest he works with standard pop material, developed in provocatively thoughtful ways which stir Turrentine to equally imaginative performances.

There is a sinuously casual quality in Turrentine's playing and a seemingly inexhaustible supply of accents and phrasings with which he can give a piece swinging momentum. With the colorful developments of Pearson's sketches as a basis, Turrentine plays with an enlivening freshness all through this set. One of the real surprises is the theme from *The Oscar*, in which Turrentine's saxophone, James Spaulding's flute, and McCoy Tyner's piano hang breathlessly over a slow, haunting background. J.S.W.



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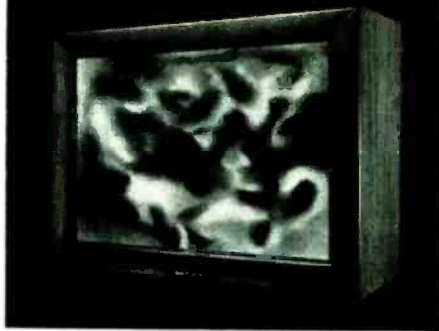
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## THEATRE & FILM

**ROSEMARY'S BABY.** Music from the film. Composed by Christopher Komeda; Komeda and George Tipton, arr.; Dick Hazard, cond. Dot DLP 25875, \$4.79 (stereo only).

Writer-director Roman Polanski and composer Christopher Komeda were teamed previously for the successful Polish film, *Knife in the Water*. Now it's *Rosemary's Baby*, and Polanski's screenplay is page-for-page true to Ira Levin's gruesome and fascinating little novel. Mia Farrow is heart-rending as the victim; John Cassavetes competent as the outsized cad; Ruth Gordon convincing if pushy as the grubby villainess. Polanski's direction captures all the sensual horror of the book, and composer Komeda aids his mood.

However, after one viewing of the film and several listenings to the score, there isn't much to say of the music. Indeed, Komeda's lullabylike main theme (arranged by George Tipton and hummed sweetly by Mia Farrow) is both lovely and powerful in terms of the grim plot surrounding it. But other than that, all we hear is a series of strange but second-hand sound effects, occasional romantic passages, and one raucous commercial track (*Rosemary's Party*) which has nothing to do with anything.

One could say that the film lends itself to several diverse musical styles and flavors. But any composer who decides to go the diversified route with a score had better possess both a firm grip of technique and an overriding musical personality to hold the pieces together. It's a rare combination and Komeda seems to lack it. Still, while the album is rather vaporous on its own, it works well as an adjunct to a beautifully made and highly charged film. M. A.

**FUNNY GIRL.** Music from the film. Barbara Streisand, Omar Sharif, vocals; chorus and orchestra, Walter Scharf, cond. Columbia OS 3220, \$5.79.

Despite the lack of affection many admirers of the legitimate theater hold for the movie industry, the original film-score albums of musicals are as a rule better than the original Broadway cast albums. There are several reasons for this. For one thing, the musicians used in film score work are better, on the whole, than those in Broadway pit bands. For another, the arrangements are usually better. The necessity of reinforcing the melody so theatergoers can hear it causes a lot of voice-and-strings unison, a sound





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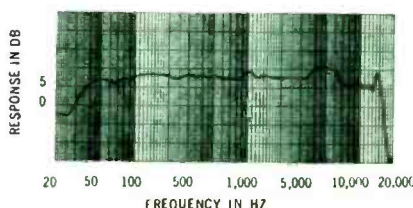
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I find unpleasant whether I encounter it in opera or Rodgers and Hammerstein. Given that the sound levels are going to be balanced properly by electronics, the film arranger can go for subtlety, rather than have to punch the song out hard for the mere sake of getting it heard.

No doubt some purists will think the Broadway album version of *Funny Girl* was "truer" than this one. But this one is better. Even Miss Streisand is better in this version. I am scarcely one of her admirers, but I like her here. Somebody has toned down her stridency, honed her taste. And, of course, her comic flair—which comes across in the album quite well—is one of her biggest talents.

I have never cared for the Jule Stein-Bob Merrill songs in *Funny Girl*. *People* remains a curiously neurotic song, a sort of paean to emotional blood-sucking. The best song in the show is, I think, *Don't Rain on My Parade*. But the show was a smash, and now it's a movie, and whatever one thought of the original score, it sounds warmer and fuller here. G.L.

\* **THE BELIEVERS.** Original cast recording. The Voices, Inc. Brooks Alexander, musical director. RCA Victor LOC 1151 or LSO 1151, \$5.79. One of the most exciting pieces of theater I've seen in years opened not long ago in Greenwich Village's Garrick Theatre. *The Believers*, a sort of choral nonplay, a kind of oratorio in blues-gospel-jazz-pop bearing the subtitle *The Black Experience in Song*, did just what it claimed it would do: communicate the Negro experience through music. Without overt social preaching, a company of exciting singers called the Voices, Inc. communicated the emotional content of that experience—exactly what good art is supposed to do. *The Diary of Anne Frank* has more impact than all the preachments against tyranny put together: good art doesn't lecture, it *shows*.

It is, of course, impossible for any white to know what it is like to be Negro in America. Recently I saw a

cab driver pull away from a tired, middle-aged black woman apparently trying to get home from work. You get glimpses now and then. But I don't know, I really don't know, and neither do you. *The Believers* at least give you some of the feeling.

One of the things that makes the show so effective is the sheer command of the performers: you become aware that they have digested two cultures. There is some excellent legit singing—followed, from the same people, by black-rooted singing that is electrifying. I'm not going to cite individual singers because they are all so good; and each is good in a different way; and yet the choral blends are flawless.

The premise is simple: the show, which is in two parts like a musical comedy, portrays the black experience from the days of slavery to contemporary ghetto life. It doesn't have to do more, since it does this "simple" thing so well. People coming out of the theater seemed profoundly moved. I think I know why: because *The Believers* does not approach them with hostility and hate, audiences can't build up emotional defense materials to fend off the truth of what they are seeing. The creators of *The Believers*—vocal director Brooks Alexander, director Barbara An Teer, and Jo Jackson and Joseph A. Walker, who wrote the book—have rendered their audience (the white part of it) naked, vulnerable, open completely to impression.

It is difficult for me to evaluate the album, beyond saying that it's well recorded. I see the show while listening to the album. But if you can, and if you care, see this show (it's moved to the Cherry Lane Theatre) and then hear the recording.

Sidney Poitier, who wrote the brief but articulate liner notes of the album, says that "there is a new pride as you leave the theater." That's if your black. If you're white, there's a new sensitivity. G.L.



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# THE TAPE DECK

BY R. D. DARRELL

**More Mahler Symphonies.** Last month I had room to hail only one of several new tapings of Mahler Symphonies—the magnificent Sixth by Bernstein for Columbia, a release outstanding for its own interpretative, executant, and engineering excellence. Now I must belatedly greet two more tape transfers from Bernstein's integral set, the First and Ninth; a Third by Rafael Kubelik for DGG; and two more Ninths, by Klemperer for Angel and by Kubelik again for DGG. The Bernstein First (Columbia MQ 964, 53 min., \$7.95) strikes me as far too idiosyncratically mannered, even frantic at times, to displace the generally preferred Solti/London version of 1965 at the top of the tape listings, but otherwise these new Mahler reels all call for reconsideration of one's previous tape choices.

One of the most immediately endearing of the Mahler symphonies, the Third, has been, to me at least, decidedly unsatisfactory, in last May's Leinsdorf-Bostonian version (the first on tape) for RCA Victor. Marjorie Thomas' shaky vocalism in the new Kubelik version with the Bavarian Radio Symphony and Chorus (Deutsche Grammophon/Ampex EX+ DGK 9338, double-play, 93 min., \$11.95) is far inferior to Shirley Verrett's fine singing for Leinsdorf, and the Kubelik taping is further handicapped by a mood-shattering sidebreak in the third movement—right in the middle of the famous far-off posthorn solo. In most other respects, however, the new version has compensating—and for me decisively overriding—merits. Among these are Kubelik's own interpretative grace and eloquence; some extremely fine orchestral playing, especially by the anonymous Bavarian first trombonist and by the performer who plays the posthorn (though the instrument itself sounds to me like the usual trumpet); superbly pure, lucid, stereo recording, notable in particular for a dynamic range that encompasses some truly exquisite *ppp*'s. So, over-all this must be ranked as the preferred Third taping—at least until the acclaimed Bernstein appears.

In the profoundly moving Ninth Symphony, Kubelik, the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, and the engineers (DGG/Ampex EX+ DGK 9346, double-play, 77 min., \$11.95) match the triumphs of their Third whereas Klemperer and the New Philharmonia Orchestra (Angel Y2S 3708, 3¾-ips, double-play, 86 min., \$11.98) are sometimes limp or heavy-handed—although I must quickly add that the warm, smoothly spread stereo recording is first-rate both in itself and its preservation without loss in the slower-speed taping. Yet in the Ninth even Kubelik cannot compete for top honors with Bernstein's tautly controlled yet surprisingly persuasive and

eloquent version with the New York Philharmonic (Columbia M2Q 993, double-play, 80 min., \$11.95). Possibly the 1965 engineering here isn't quite as fine as that of the 1967 Bernstein/Columbia Sixth, and certainly no soft passages reach the ethereal quality of those incredible *ppp*'s of the DGG/Ampex Third. But all things considered, this reel supplants even the celebrated earlier Columbia taping (1963) of Bruno Walter's cherishable Ninth.

**Big-Scale Haydn.** The second towering oratorio achievement of Haydn's old age, here bearing the German title *Die Jahreszeiten* rather than the more familiar *The Seasons*, now appears for the first time on tape—and can be recommended entirely without qualification (Deutsche Grammophon/Ampex EX+ DGG 9256, 2 reels, approx. 43 and 88 min., \$19.95). The performance is notably spirited and skillful, with top honors shared by conductor Karl Böhm and soprano Gundula Janowitz—the former for his firm dramatic grip and gusto, the latter for the artistry with which she handles an exceptionally lovely voice. The other soloists (especially bass Martti Talvela), the Wiener Singverein chorus, and the Vienna Symphony Orchestra all perform well too, producing ear-beguiling tonal qualities abetted by the recording's warm acoustical ambience, extremely pure and smoothly spread stereoism, and silent-surfaced EX+ tape processing. And for properly full measure there are informative annotations, by Helmut Wirth, as well as German and English texts.

**Biggs's Bach, Cont'd.** The six "Schübler" chorales have been sampled in previous reel releases: "*Wachet auf!*," S. 645, over a decade ago by Carl Weinrich under the long extinct Sonotape label; "*Wo soll ich fliehen hin*," S. 646, by Edouard Commette in his still-in-print chorale-prelude collection for Angel. But E. Power Biggs, in Vol. 3 of his "Bach Organ Favorites" (Columbia MQ 990, 39 min., \$7.95), is the first to tape in its entirety this fascinating set of Bach's own transcriptions of pieces originally conceived as cantata movements. The organist plays them with his familiar enthusiasm, as he also does—with even greater bravura—three larger-scaled, relatively early Bach Preludes and Fugues: the rousing S. 549, in C minor, the buoyant S. 539, in D minor, and the ceremonial S. 533, in E minor (subtitled here *Arnstadt, Fiddle*, and *Cathedral* respectively). These high-spirited performances and the magnificently robust recording should have a magnetic appeal. The instrument, as in the earlier volumes in the series, is the Flentrop organ in the

Busch-Reisinger Museum in Cambridge, Massachusetts, which to my taste represents one of, if not *the*, most satisfactory present-day recreations of baroque organ characteristics.

**The Great Rachmaninoff.** The legendary artistry of Rachmaninoff, as a pianist rather than composer, now gets its first representation on tape, with release of a comprehensive collection of both large-scaled and encore-piece solos, recorded over the years 1923-42, and expertly transferred in their original monophony (RCA Victor "Collectors' Series" TR3 5033, 3¾-ips mono, double-play, 82 min., \$10.85). And, for once, tape connoisseurs have an advantage over record collectors in that the last LP reissue (RCA Camden CAL 396) of the two major works here—the memorable Schumann *Carnaval* of 1929 and the Chopin *Funeral March* Sonata of 1930—is no longer available. Also included in the new collection are seven of the seventeen shorter pieces from CAL 486, now also out of print, plus five of the fourteen in the still available RCA Victor LM 2587. The tape transfers of the later recordings (such as the Chopin-Liszt *Maiden's Wish* and Schumann-Tausig *Smuggler* of 1942) are distinguished by fine natural pianotone qualities and a minimum of the original shellac-disc surface noise. And the examples of earlier-era engineering are surprisingly good despite their inevitably greater dryness and noisiness.

**Triple Firsts.** Some sort of a record for a & r adventurousness must be set by Noel Lee's Nonesuch/Ampex EX+ reels of the Ives Piano Sonata No. 1 and Bartók "Music for Piano" (NSE 1169, 40 min., and NSE 1175, 45 min.; 3¾-ips, \$4.95 each). The pianist himself, a young American whose earlier recordings have been confined to France, makes his tape debut here, and all the music also appears in this medium for the first time. I am not much impressed by the—originally French Valois—engineering, the somewhat icy-glassy timbres of Lee's piano, or the overdry acoustical ambiances. But Lee is a serious, highly objective, yet sometimes very poetic pianist, and his remarkably straightforward reading of the Ives sonata is a valuable counterweight to the far more extrovert versions by William Masselos (unfortunately not released on tape). Lee's Bartók recital is topped for me by the exhilarating Suite, Op. 14, of 1916 and *Out of Doors* Suite of 1926, but it also includes the busy, more introspective Three Etudes, Op. 18, of 1918 and the high-spirited Sonata of 1926—all of which are capably enough played if sometimes perhaps overpedaled and sometimes surely lacking in exuberance.



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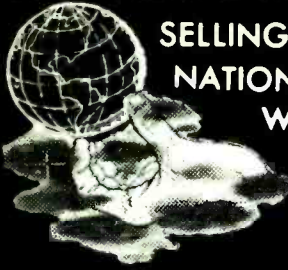
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 The E-V SEVEN is the small speaker for people who don't really want a small speaker. Built in the shadow of one of the biggest speakers of them all (the vast Patrician 800) the E-V SEVEN refuses to sound as small as it is.

But why does an E-V SEVEN grow up when it's turned on? Our engineers point to years of painstaking exploration in the byways of sound. They'll patiently explain the virtues of our low resonance 8" woofer and 3½"

cone tweeter with symmetrical damping (an E-V exclusive). They may even mention—with quiet pride—the unusual treble balance RC network that adjusts E-V SEVEN response more smoothly than any conventional switch or volume control.

But when it comes to describing the sound, our engineers prefer to let the E-V SEVEN speak for itself. And while they'd be the last to suggest that the E-V SEVEN sounds just like speak-

ers many times larger (and costing much more) they treasure the pleased look of surprise most people exhibit when they hear an E-V SEVEN for the first time.

If you have just 19" of shelf space, 10" high and 9" deep... and have \$66.50 to invest in a speaker, by all means listen carefully to the E-V SEVEN. It might well be the biggest thing to happen to your compact high fidelity system!

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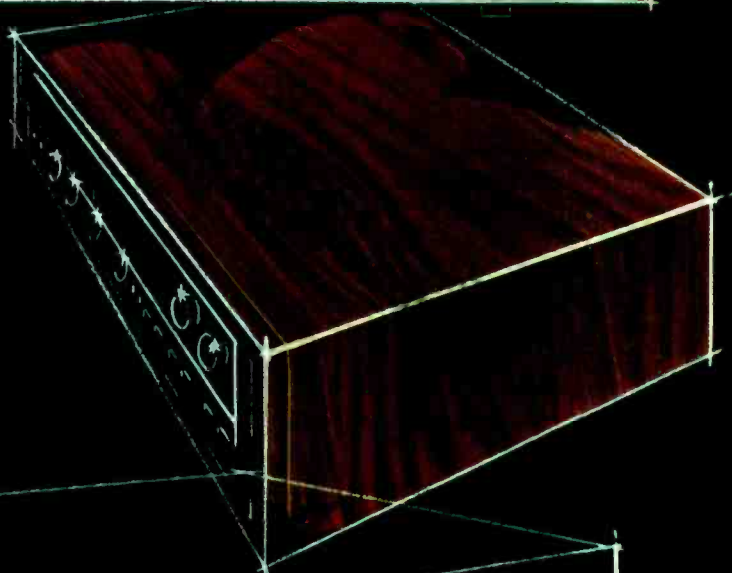
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