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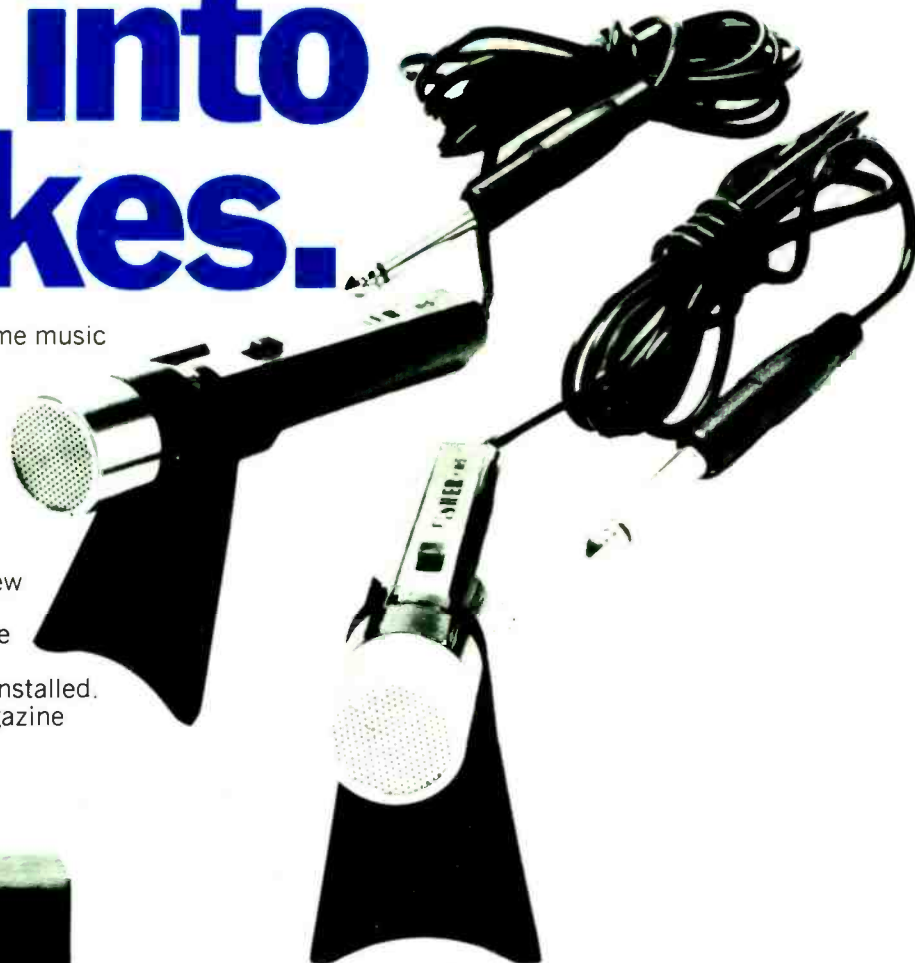
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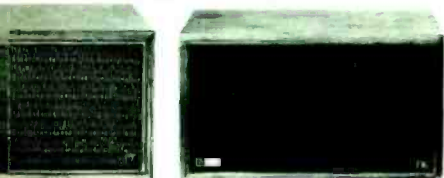
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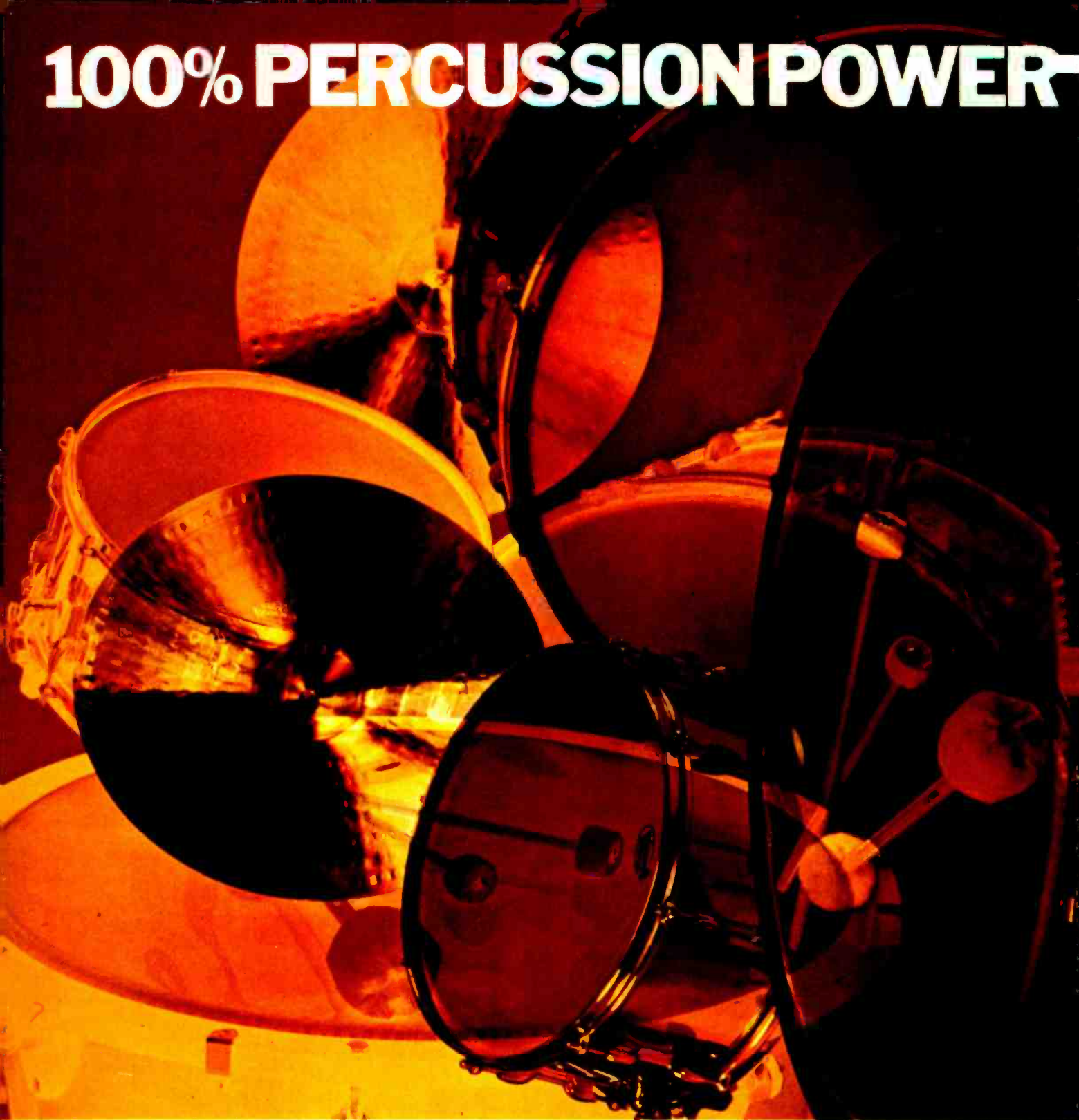
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VOL. 19 NO. 6 JUNE 1969

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My First Celebrity

DEAR READER:

I have a special affection for Serge Koussevitzky, half the subject of a double feature elsewhere in this issue; he was my first real celebrity. We originally crossed paths during the summer of 1947 at the Berkshire Music Center in Tanglewood. I was a callow student there; he was God. I remember my excitement at the prospect of living in the same musical community as "Dr. Serge Koussevitzky," a name that I had so often heard over the radio—to see him work with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, perhaps even to see him eat. He was one of *Them*: the Jack Bennys, the Gabriel Heatters, the President Roosevelts, the Phil Bakers—an Olympian breed.

Then there was my first informal glimpse of this Presence made flesh, walking slowly from the rehearsal shed, wearing white slacks, a vacationer's cap—and a cape! ("We eat like pigs," wrote Leonard Bernstein, his assistant in the conducting department, as a birthday song to him later during the summer. "We dress like apes. But come the Revolution and we'll all wear capes!")

It didn't take long, after playing under him, singing under him, to realize that he was no match for his own assistant either as musician or conductor. It took longer to realize where his greatness did lie.

My typical memory of him brings back a benefit concert at Tanglewood, organized to raise funds for student scholarships. I believe, incidentally, that it was the concert at which RCA demonstrated its new top-of-the-line console phonograph, appropriately dubbed the "Berkshire." Koussevitzky led the BSO in Beethoven's *Egmont* Overture, and at the spot where the woodwinds are uncovered, the phonograph took over. Some five thousand members of the audience would go home swearing they couldn't tell the difference between the orchestra and the machine (and you thought that was a recent gimmick, right?). At any rate, when Koussevitzky came out from the wings, he was met by an unusually noisy audience. He waited vainly for the noise to subside, threw a few ineffectual squints at the crowd, then perpetrated his own always-prepared Storm from the Podium. The audience waited for him to come back. Just when they had given up hope, he returned to the stage.

I later learned, from someone who had been backstage, what had occurred. When Koussevitzky left the podium, Beethoven himself couldn't have made him go back. It proved useless to point out to him any responsibility he might have had to *that* audience, or even to the Festival, which stood to lose a considerable amount of money. It was only when someone reminded him, "But it's for your students," that he left the Green Room.

For me, the incident symbolized the arena of his greatness. Whether as the impetus behind Edition Russe in Russia or as the founder of Tanglewood in America, he saw what could be beneficial to young talents and proceeded to organize institutions to help them. If he was not a great musician, he was something both rarer and dearer—a great man.

Next month, the other half of the double feature will be considered, alongside Mahler, Ives, Nielsen, Liszt, Vivaldi, Sibelius, Berlioz—even Bach—in Bernard Jacobson's "The 'In' Composers," a provocative article that analyzes what makes one composer a temporary fad, another a classic. We will also see why the foremost Chopin performer of his day is unjustly remembered as a mere buffoon in "Vladimir de Pachmann—More Than a Clown." "Are Cassettes Here to Stay?" will explore the current status of this hopeful Cinderella of tape configurations.



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Cover photo by Roy Lindstrom

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Classified Adv. Dept.: James Flatley.

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letters

Berlioz and his Discographer

The Berlioz features in the March issue were most welcome. As a confirmed Berlioz fan, I approached the issue with enthusiasm and thoroughly enjoyed the articles by Pierre Boulez and Colin Davis. My enthusiasm was quickly dampened, however, by Mr. Jacobson's discography.

Now I grant that Mr. Jacobson is entitled to his views; in fact, my respect for Colin Davis is no less than his. I also grant that this is only one critic's opinion. However, the failure to recommend any recordings by the past decade's leading Berlioz interpreter, Charles Munch, makes it obvious that what we are getting here is an extremely personal not to say biased viewpoint rather than objective criticism. Bearing this in mind, I would urge your readers to listen to as many recordings as possible before making a purchase so that they may judge for themselves.

If I may offer my own opinion, I find Mr. Jacobson's entire discography disturbing—not so much for the fine recordings that he ignores, but for some of the inept non-Davis interpretations that he recommends.

Gerald P. Gennaro, Jr.
Jersey City, N.J.

It is with a good deal of shock and disbelief that I write this letter. Bernard Jacobson's curt dismissal of the late Charles Munch and his masterly Berlioz interpretations was, in my opinion, one of the worst pieces of derogatory criticism that I have ever read.

Charles Munch was able to communicate the essence of Berlioz' music most vividly: on many occasions his performances thrilled not only his audiences but his orchestra members as well. For example, I recall reading a statement by a member of the Boston Symphony Orchestra who maintained that when Munch led them in a work by Berlioz, it was as if the "demonic composer himself was conducting."

How, may I ask, can Mr. Jacobson be so harsh with this conductor? How can he thus dismiss the efforts of Munch, who was leading electrifying performances of Berlioz long before anyone had ever heard of Colin Davis? I am not knocking Davis, for his work is of high merit—but hardly *greater* than Munch.

V. Ackermann
Manchester, N.H.

I read with considerable interest and pleasure the articles on Hector Berlioz in your March issue, but I was somewhat startled by Bernard Jacobson's reference in his discography to a "stupid little cut" in the "*Quaerens me*" section

of the Boston Symphony recording of Berlioz' *Grande messe des morts*, since, during the several times I've listened to this recording with a score I've noticed nothing amiss. A little investigation soon confirmed the veracity of Mr. Jacobson's observation and further revealed that he hadn't told the half of it. Not only are fourteen measures excised from the middle of "*Quaerens me*" with the attendant loss of the words "*Culpa rubet vultus meus*," but nine measures are further excised after measure 101 of the "*Offertorium*," eight more after measure 105, eliminating the words "*de ore leonis, ne absorbeas eas Tartarus ne cadent in obscurum*," and four measures of rhythmic timpani chords have been dropped from between the ante-antepenultimate and antepenultimate measures of the final movement.

Interestingly enough, all of these "stupid little cuts" were made by Berlioz himself, the first two when he prepared the second edition of the work. I have not been able to discover his reason for wanting to eliminate those portions of the text. Nevertheless, the Boston Symphony recording does, textually, represent Berlioz' final intentions; the Philadelphia Orchestra recording does not. Further, unless Eugene Ormandy restored the bars missing from the "*Offertorium*," which Mr. Jacobson doesn't mention and which I have no way of checking, his recording is also "textually mutilated." In fact, if one wants to be a real stickler and restore the text of Berlioz' manuscript and first edition, one would have to restore the words "*et iterum venturus est cum gloria judicare vivos et mortuos*" to the opening choral phrase of the "*Taba Mirum*."

Rodney H. Mill
W. Hyattsville, Md.

Clouded Political Scene

I have noted with interest your recent coverage of the Isang Yun incident [August and December 1968]. As a current resident in Korea and music critic for the *Korea Times*, I thought I would take it upon myself to inform your readers that Yun, convicted of espionage activities carried out during his residence in West Germany, was released by the South Korean government on February 26 in Seoul upon the prosecution's decision to suspend his ten-year prison term. He is now probably back in Germany.

This transpired, however, not as a result of the well-meaning petition and letter-writing campaign in the West, but solely because the West German government, aroused by the illegal circumstances surrounding Yun's extradition from Ger-

Continued on page 10

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LETTERS

Continued from page 6

many last year, employed economic and diplomatic pressures to effect his release and that of other less prominent defendants largely ignored in the bleeding-heart Western press.

West Germany provides considerable economic aid to Korea: this was withheld for a period, with threat of cancellation. In January, a high German official, Paul Frank, came from Bonn to discuss the crisis. A secret settlement was reached, the aid resumed, and Yun goes free—a clear sequence of events having nothing to do with boycotts by Western performers scheduled for Korean concerts, or with silly jokes about the case by an apparently senile Stravinsky (*New York Review of Books*, March 14, 1968).

While I have all along been of the opinion that Yun deserved amnesty on the basis of his artistic achievements, the attitude expressed in the Western press suggesting that he was an innocent victim of a police state is incorrect—though understandable, considering the way he and the others were seized in Europe. Actually South Korea has every right to protect her security against the peculiarly vicious and inhuman regime threatening her from the North.

Isang Yun traveled to the capital of the Red zone, Pyongyang, after being recruited as an agent through contacts with North Koreans in East Berlin. His justification was that he made the trip for musical research directed toward a new composition. This is so weak as to be nonsensical: Yun is a serialist with no overt Korean elements in his musical style, whatever critics unfamiliar with Korean music may have imagined. He made the trip simply because he was curious about the north, like so many millions of Koreans divided from friends and family by the tragic fratricidal conflict. It is this natural curiosity and separation that the Reds play upon cynically in trying to recruit dupes to aid their cause. Yun also accepted money from the North Koreans and promised to recruit more agents. This he did not do, or never found the opportunity to do.

These offenses are grave, and he is lucky that his own government overreacted by seizing the suspected agents and hustling them out of a friendly country. Otherwise his chances for lenient treatment would have been indeed slim.

Mr. Yun is lucky in a second sense: all the one-sided publicity in his case has resulted in numerous "sympathy" performances and commissions of his music, far beyond what he would have received without this notoriety. Back in Germany his career will be made through lionization by the "knee-jerk liberals."

As one who assisted Mr. Yun long before he became a political cause, I rejoice at his release. As an artist he deserves a second chance; but as a citizen he has a burden of guilt to expiate. He is neither a saint nor a martyr, as the Western press tried to picture him.

It's the same old story: in today's

Continued on page 12



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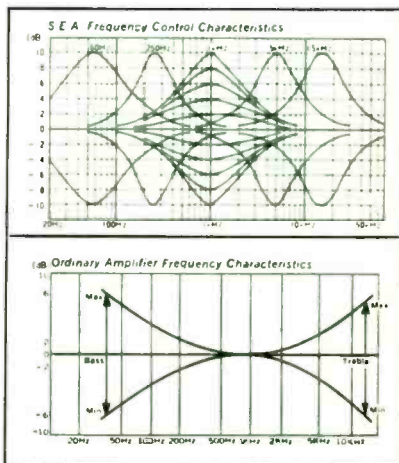
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Glance at the two charts appearing on this page. In looking at the ordinary amplifier frequency characteristics where only bass and treble tone controls are provided, you can see how response in all frequency ranges at the low and high levels is clipped off. Compare this chart with the one showing the SEA frequency response characteristics, and the difference is obvious. No clipping occurs in the SEA system. It offers full control of sound in 60, 250, 1,000, 5,000 and 15,000Hz frequency ranges from -10 to +10db. For the first time ever, you have the power to determine the kind of sound you want to hear.



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LETTERS

Continued from page 10

world facts are readily obtainable, but truth is as elusive as ever. The idealists who tried to help Yun by proclaiming his innocence and blackguarding his government probably harmed rather than helped his cause, for all their good intentions.

*James Wade
Music Critic, Korea Times
Seoul, Korea*

Ormandy and Philadelphia

Mr. William Trotter's letter in the March issue demands a reply. His remarks about Eugene Ormandy are of such surpassing stupidity, albeit couched in literate terms, that they left me stunned and furious.

Unlike Mr. Trotter, I do not hesitate to apply the adjective "great" to Ormandy. He has made the Philadelphia an extension of his personality, and to listen to this orchestra perform works by Bach, Beethoven, Mozart, and other giants of music is to hear unmistakably the sound of genius (to borrow Columbia's overworked but in this case accurate advertising slogan). Even his performances of the overplayed warhorses shine with his deep personal involvement with the music, and he can imbue the commonplace with an exhilarating excitement and freshness.

I was privileged to hear this "indefinable quality of greatness that can galvanize an orchestra with fires of creation" (to quote Mr. Trotter) at a recent guest appearance by Ormandy with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, and I can assure you that it was an unforgettable emotional and spiritual experience. When, I wonder, was the last time Mr. Trotter left Charlotte, N. C., to see Ormandy conduct?

As for his remarks about the conductors of the world's leading symphony orchestras, they are simply ludicrous, although they reveal a great deal about Mr. Trotter. To dismiss a man like William Steinberg as a "total nonentity" bespeaks a certain unmistakable arrogance and smallness of mind.

Eugene Ormandy would enjoy his pre-eminent status among conductors regardless of the historical period in which he lived, and I have no doubt that future generations, listening to Ormandy's vast recorded musical legacy, will recognize his greatness and laugh at the carping of such latter-day Hanslicks as Mr. Trotter.

*Stephen Sarper
Pittsburgh, Penna.*

It seems to me that your critics harbor a prejudice against the Philadelphia Orchestra. Through the many years I have been receiving HIGH FIDELITY I do not recall reading a single favorable review of a Philadelphia Orchestra recording. This is completely contrary to reviews noted in other periodicals and also completely contrary to public opinion, for I understand that the Philadelphia Orches-

Continued on page 14

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HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

The quote comes from the April issue of High Fidelity Magazine. They’re talking about our new HK50 omnidirectional speaker.

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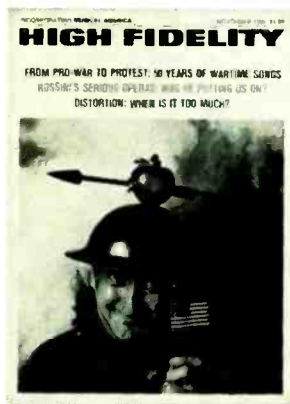


CIRCLE 28 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

tra recordings outsell those of all other American orchestras. If the records are as bad as your critics imply, it is a miracle that any are sold at all. Or, could it be (heaven forbid) that the record-buying public does not pay any attention to your reviews?

B. L. Hawk
Pennsauken, N.J.

Come, come, Mr. Hawk. The Philadelphia Orchestra has not fared all that badly at the hands of our critics. We quote: "What the Philadelphia strings do with this most radiantly string-colored of Ives's symphonies [No. 3] is really marvelous" (Alfred Frankenstein, March 1969). "The rest of the Ormandy performance is also extremely good, and if you're looking for a performance of the [Ives] First alone, this is your best buy" (Wayne Shirley, June 1968). "Of the two new presentations [of Rachmaninoff's Symphony No. 3]. . . Ormandy wins hands down" (Herbert Russcol, May 1968). "Stern's solo performance [of Lalo's *Symphonie espagnole*] is surrounded, supported, complemented, and enhanced by the Philadelphia Orchestra at its best—in performance and recording" (Philip Hart, January 1968). "[Ormandy] clearly loves this music [Rachmaninoff's Symphony No. 1] and leads an exciting performance, excitingly played by his magnificent orchestra" (Harris Goldsmith, October 1967).



Rossini, Anyone?

What happened? Has someone slipped up and forgotten that 1968 was Rossini's centennial? Surprisingly, even though I've scanned each issue of HIGH FIDELITY carefully, not one word has been printed to indicate that the record companies plan to issue recordings of Rossini operas, not even a new Barber.

Practically every major composer is accorded new versions of various works when his centennial comes around, and I have been hoping—and, I daresay, others have too—that 1968/69 would see the issuance of Rossini's *Otello*, *La Donna del lago*, *La Sièg de Corinth*, and possibly even *Armida* and *Tancredi*. And since companies lately have been quite enterprising in recording seldom heard

operas, I believed that a complete *William Tell* would not have been too far-fetched. But not one single word anywhere.

Surely, Rossini cannot be bypassed—his stature as an opera composer is unquestionable—and I trust that the silence is to be broken by a few surprises up the sleeves of the a & r men.

Robert E. Brown
Mount Vernon, Ohio

HIGH FIDELITY, of course, did not forget Rossini. We noted the centenary of his death last November not only with Jan Meyerowitz' article "How Seriously Can We Take Rossini's Serious Operas?" but with an apple on the head of our cover boy that month.

The Scriabin Style

I was pleased to see Scriabin's music mentioned in the March 1969 issue of your magazine after an interval of several years, and to read that there are signs of a Scriabin revival. I have always been a keen admirer and collector of Scriabin's music and would like to make a few remarks concerning Harris Goldsmith's review of Glenn Gould's version of the Sonata No. 3 on the Columbia label.

Apparently Mr. Goldsmith has not had occasion to compare Gould's playing with that of the Russians Vladimir Sofronitsky and Lazar Berman, both of whom are truly great Scriabin players and have made several recordings of this composer's piano music on the MK and Melodiya labels. The fourth movement of the Third Sonata is marked *presto con fuoco* and I doubt if anyone could rightfully call Gould's jogging at this point anywhere near *presto*. In my opinion Scriabin demands much more virtuosity than Gould can muster and I suggest that your reviewer hear Sofronitsky on MK 1562 to appreciate how this Sonata should be played.

As a keen student of Scriabin, I would also like to correct Hilde Somer's remark in the March *Musical America* section that there is no full-length biography of Scriabin in English. Eaglefield-Hull wrote his biography of Scriabin in English in 1923 which was shortly followed by that of A. Swan. The definitive biography by Al'shvang, published by Muzgiz (Moscow, 1945), has also been translated into German. I would recommend the monograph by M. Mikhailov (Leningrad, 1966) as a very good introduction to Scriabin.

I might also add for the benefit of Miss Somer, that the University of Manitoba has the complete original Jorgensen edition of Scriabin's music. A more recent edition was published by Igumnova, in 1947–1953 in Moscow.

B.N. Thadani
Winnipeg, Canada

There is now, of course, Faubion Bower's full-scale biography, a controversial excerpt of which appears on page 55.

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All H. H. Scott professional quality tuners, amplifiers, receivers, compact stereo music systems, and loudspeaker systems are warranted against defects in material and workmanship for two years from the date of sale to the consumer. The unit must be delivered to and picked up from either an authorized Scott warranty service station or the Customer Service Department, H. H. Scott, Inc., 117 Powdermill Road, Maynard, Massachusetts 01754.

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(Advertisement)

JUNE 1969

15

Introducing Scott's new Q100 Quadrant

The first successful
360° full range
speaker system.



At last all-direction sound with wide range response plus full reverberatory effect.

Since the introduction of stereo, there have been many attempts to develop a speaker system that would reproduce the full-frequency sound and 3-dimensional audio effect of an actual live performance. Up until now, all of these attempts have failed in one or more respects. Either the frequency range was limited, or speaker placement was critical, or the listener had to sit in a certain limited area, or the expense involved was beyond the reach of the average audiophile. Now, with Scott's introduction of the Quadrant speaker system, these limitations have been eliminated.

360° of sound

The Quadrant idea is basically simple. The Quadrant speaker has four sides. An 8" woofer (low-frequency speaker) is mounted on side One. Another 8" woofer is mounted on side Three. Four 3" mid-range/tweeters (mid-to-high-frequency speakers) are mounted on all four sides, one to a side. Woofers radiate sound waves in a 180° arc . . . midrange/tweeters, in an arc of 90°. As a result, the Scott Quadrant covers a full circle with a full range of sound.

Stereo follows you everywhere

To use the Quadrant speakers, you place them virtually anywhere in the room (even with one corner against the wall!) and turn on your sound source. Now, walk around the room and listen. No matter where you go, you hear full-range, 3-dimensional stereo. Even the elusive high frequency notes follow you everywhere. Even in a funny-shaped room. Even in a room with so-called "dead spots."

Same principle as live performance

Here's why. A live performance gives you the stereo effect no matter where you sit. This is because you're listening to a 3-dimensional sound source . . . an orchestra, for example. You hear sounds, not only directly from the various elements of the orchestra, but also reflected from the walls of the concert hall. Similarly, the Quadrant speaker system projects sound, not only directly at you (as do conventional speakers), but also in all directions using the reflective qualities of the walls to heighten the "live" stereo effect.

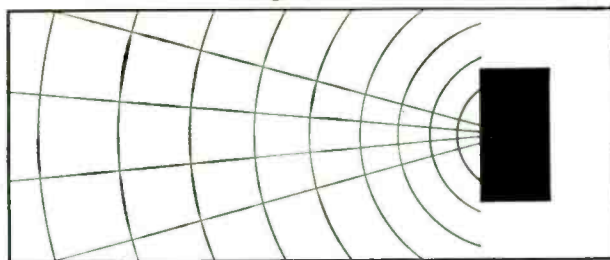
Total stereo realism

The net result of Scott's innovation in the field of speaker development is the Quadrant speaker system . . . a total stereo speaker system, and an incredible state-of-the-art advancement in stereo realism. The Quadrant speaker system is priced at \$149.95, actually much less than many speakers which can't measure up to the Quadrant sound.

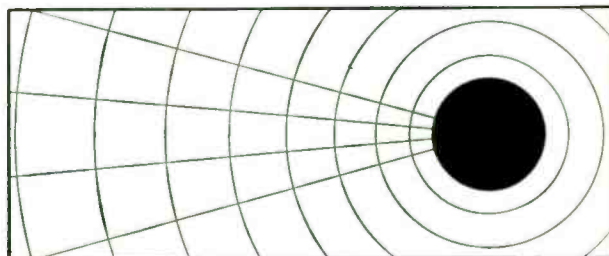
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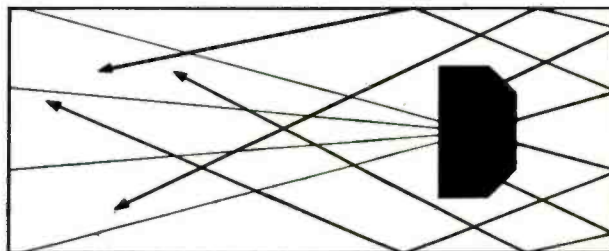
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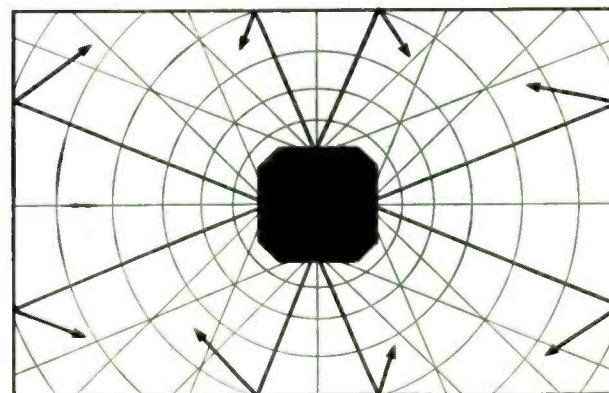
Conventional speakers . . . these tend to be directional. They have good wide-range response only within a relatively narrow triangular listening area. Stereo "presence" is limited because not enough sound reverberates from the sides and rear of listening area.



Omnidirectional speakers . . . most are omnidirectional only in the bass range . . . but notice that the vital high frequency tones, regardless of elaborate baffle systems, are perceptible only in a limited listening area.



Reflective speakers . . . these can give a satisfactory illusion of presence and depth. However, these systems require an equalizer for flat response. This in turn generally requires the use of separate (and expensive) pre-amps and ultra-high-wattage power amps.



Scott's Quadrant speakers represent a no-compromise design. Quadrant speakers can be placed virtually anywhere, give extraordinarily good wide-range response and 3-dimensional stereo realism and presence throughout the room. In addition, no equalizers or special amplifiers are required.

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behind the scenes

Reports from
the International
Recording Centers



LONDON

The Bonynges Star in a Swinging Messiah

Although Handel's *Messiah* has hardly been neglected by the record companies in recent years, Decca/London has nonetheless decided to sponsor another version. During the past two seasons, Richard Bonyngé conducted two performances of the oratorio here at the Royal Festival and Royal Albert Halls with his wife, Joan Sutherland, as soprano soloist. You might fairly sum up Bonyngé's approach as an attempt to surpass Colin Davis in matters of fast speeds, sprung rhythms, and a compact bright choral tone. Davis' recording, made nearly three years ago, brought just such an athletic lightness into the score and for many his performance was a revelation.

Not only are comparisons with Davis' light baroque touch in order, but also, paradoxically enough, with Sir Thomas Beecham's blithe disregard for the letter of the score. Bonyngé has not gone so far as to include anvils and modern brass, drum and fife bands, but he has at least put his academic cap on rakishly. True, his forces are appropriately modest (even Beecham did not use a big choir), and he has been very conscientious with the musical text, using the recent edition published by Rutgers State University. On the other hand, he has not hesitated to include the sort of variants and elaborations that Handel himself sanctioned.

At the choral session I attended in Kingsway Hall, the English Chamber Orchestra and the Ambrosian Singers were working on the "Hallelujah" chorus.

Though the style was brisk and brilliant, like Davis', the chorus was made to sound bigger with a little help naturally from the recording engineers. Suddenly an elaborate trumpet part came ringing through the grand texture. Nothing so unauthentic as an extra descant of course; the trumpeter simply joined the melody of "For the Lord God omnipotent" (normally assigned to oboe and violins) and on the final cadence leaped up from the dominant A to a stunning top D for all the world like a prima donna.

Add a romantic *rallentando* for "The kingdom of this world" (*pianissimo*) and a dramatic *timpani crescendo* leading to the choral repetition (*fortissimo*) and you have quite a distinctive rendering. The Ambrosians were brimming with life and hardly any retakes were needed.

Harpisichords and Bagpipes. When I discussed the reading with Richard Bonyngé, he began by talking about "the Third Act," apologized for forgetting this was not an opera, then at once said disarmingly that too many people forget that *Messiah* is eighteenth century music. Bonyngé has been especially careful in his use of keyboard continuo instruments, alternating two players between four instruments—a chamber organ, two Goble harpsichords, and one lighter-toned Goble harpsichord. In addition to numerous changes in instrumentation, he has sanctioned two cuts on musical grounds—he maintains that both deletions are on the composer's authority—a drastically abridged *Pastoral Symphony* (Bonyngé finds it rather boring at full length) and part of the da capo reprise of "The Trumpet Shall Sound." Otherwise, the

Continued on page 20

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

"The finest loudspeakers I've ever listened to, regardless of size, type or price."

That's how Ronald M. Benrey, electronics editor of *Popular Science*, described a pair of **Rectilinear III** speaker systems in the May 1968 issue of his magazine, in an article on "The Stereo System I Wish I Owned."

Mr. Benrey went on to justify his ranking of the **Rectilinear III**'s:

"They produce beautiful bass tones without boom, accurate midrange tones without a trace of coloration, and crystal-clear treble tones without a hint of harshness. And they do it at any volume, including 'window-rattling' sound levels."

Of course, one expert's opinion may differ considerably from another's. But here's what Julian D. Hirsch wrote in the "Equipment Test Reports" of *Stereo Review*, December 1967:

"The **Rectilinear III** ranks as one of the most natural-sounding speaker systems I have ever used in my home. Over a period of several months, we have had the opportunity to compare it with a number of other speakers. We have found speakers that can outpoint the **Rectilinear III** on any individual characteristics—frequency range, smoothness, distortion, efficiency, dispersion, or transient response. However... none of the speakers combine *all* of these properties in such desirable proportions as the **Rectilinear III**."

Summing up his test report, Mr. Hirsch concluded: "In our opinion, we have never heard better sound reproduction in our home, from any speaker of any size or price."

Of course, both Mr. Benrey and Mr. Hirsch write for the readers of popular, large-circulation magazines. But here's what Larry Zide wrote for the more specialized audience of *The American Record Guide* ("Sound Ideas" column, October 1968):

"The transient response of the speaker is superb... the overall quality is extreme in its fidelity to 'live' music. The bass is solid and firm, the midrange is clear and neutral, and highs are bell-like in their cleanliness."

"It all comes down to this: there are only a handful of speakers that I find

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Of course, all of the opinions above appeared in publications that accept advertising. But here's what *Buyer's Guide* magazine wrote in their August 1968 issue, just in case you're more inclined to trust a consumer review without ads:

"**Rectilinear III**... has had tremendous impact on the hi-fi industry... This speaker's virtue is the fact that it is the first and only full-range dynamic speaker system that possesses sound quality which is directly comparable to electrostatic speakers."

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Rectilinear III



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ADC404 (left)
Top-rated compact bookshelf unit that won impressive independent ratings. Matches the capabilities of most any amplifier. Fundamental resonance extremely low. Suggested resale **\$55.00**

Specifications: Impedance 8 ohms. Frequency Response: 45-20,000 cps \pm 3 db, average listening room. Bass Unit: High compliance 6" linear travel piston cone. Treble Unit: High flux, mylar dome with wide dispersion. Dimensions: Only 11 $\frac{7}{8}$ " H x 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ " W x 8 $\frac{1}{4}$ " D.

ADC210 (center)
We challenged our engineers to create a \$100 speaker that would outperform competitive speakers in this range. To make it more difficult we told them it would also have to sell for \$25 less. The ADC 210 is it. Suggested resale **\$74.50**

Specifications: Impedance 8 ohms. 6 to 60 watt maximum. Frequency response 35 to 18,000 Hz \pm 4 db. High flux long throw 8" woofer and cone tweeter. Removable grille for customizing to any decor. Dimensions: 23 $\frac{1}{4}$ " H x 13" W x 11" D.

ADC303A and 303AX (right)
The 303A is the top-rated winner of the most impressive independent test in large system categories. (The 303AX is an advanced version.) Both are systems of exceptional accuracy, with a lack of distortion and coloration not available at or near this price range. Suggested resale 303A—\$89.95; 303AX **\$99.95**

Specifications: Impedance 8 ohms. Frequency Response: 33-20,000 cps \pm 3 db, in average listening room. Power Requirements: 6 watt min. 60 watt max. Woofer: 8" (303A) or 10" (303AX) high compliance. Tweeter: Hi-flux mylar dome with wide dispersion. Removable grille for customizing to any decor. Dimensions: 22 $\frac{3}{4}$ " H x 13" W x 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ " D.

BEHIND THE SCENES

Continued from page 18

score has been recorded absolutely complete.

Except for Sutherland, the soloists will be different from those who took part in the live performances—Huguette Tourangeau (a young French Canadian contralto), Werner Krenn, and Tom Krause, the last two already established as regular soloists in Decca/London choral recordings. Bonyngé had wanted a fresh-sounding group and it was bad luck that in the midst of the project, Sutherland had to leave for the Swiss Alps to clear her sinuses. She plans to complete her share of the album in a couple of extra sessions later on this year. Even Sutherland's departure could not damp the high spirits in Kingsway Hall. Players and singers alike were charmed by the elaborations they were called upon to perform. During one session, when everyone was standing by for a fresh take, there was an inexplicable delay. Finally, John Mordler, the recording manager, explained: "We have bagpipes from next door." Whereupon the oboes obligingly replied with a very Handelian imitation of Scotland's national instrument. Fun sessions certainly, if that is not being disrespectful to Handel and his musical message.

Originally, a new Sutherland recital record had also been planned, but in her absence Bonyngé conducted the New Philharmonia Orchestra in a frothy collection of French overtures, ranging from Adam's *Giralda* and *La Poupée de Nurembourg* to Auber's *Lestocq* and Thomas' *Mignon*.

Two Americans. André Previn, in his first serious stint as official principal conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra, added a few recording sessions for RCA to his concert activities in and around London. At Walthamstow Assembly Rooms he taped a mixed bag of Richard Strauss items—*Don Juan*, the orchestral suite from *Der Rosenkavalier*, and a little-known waltz, *München*. Back at Kingsway Hall the conductor continued his Vaughan Williams cycle with the biting Fourth Symphony ("If this is modern music, I don't like it," quipped the composer on hearing the first performance in 1935), as well as the Violin Concerto (*Concerto Accademico*) composed ten years earlier. The soloist was the young American Harvard student, violinist James Oliver Buswell IV. Buswell admitted at the sessions that he had never been a Vaughan Williams addict, but "from today—yes."

Previn's thoughtful offer to get the more difficult solo sections out of the way first was declined—evidently the tensions of a recording session were not bothering Buswell in the slightest. The concerto is not in any way a spectacular work, but the soloist still does not have an easy time of it. Some famous players have literally flinched at the very thought of this music. But Buswell took his difficult task in easy stride.

EDWARD GREENFIELD



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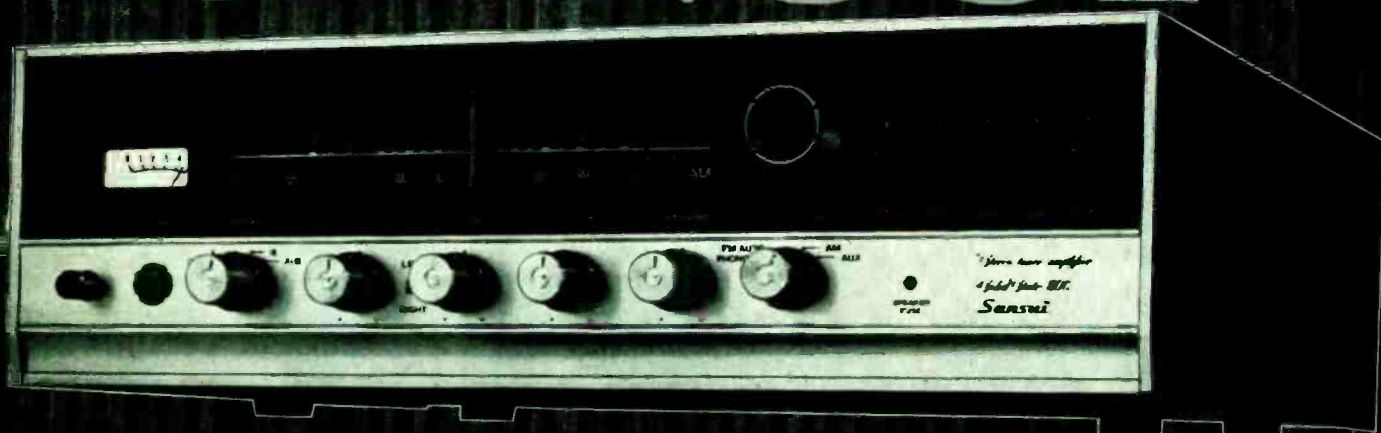
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SANSUI 800



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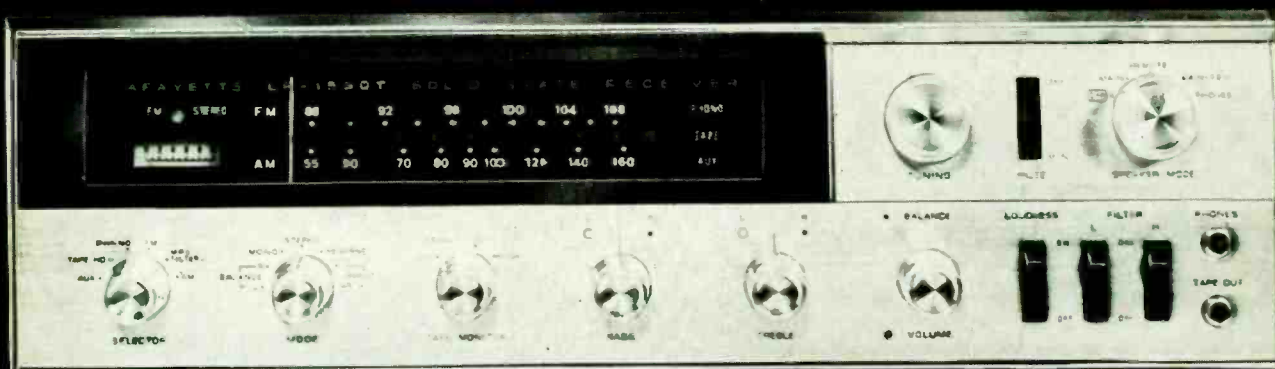
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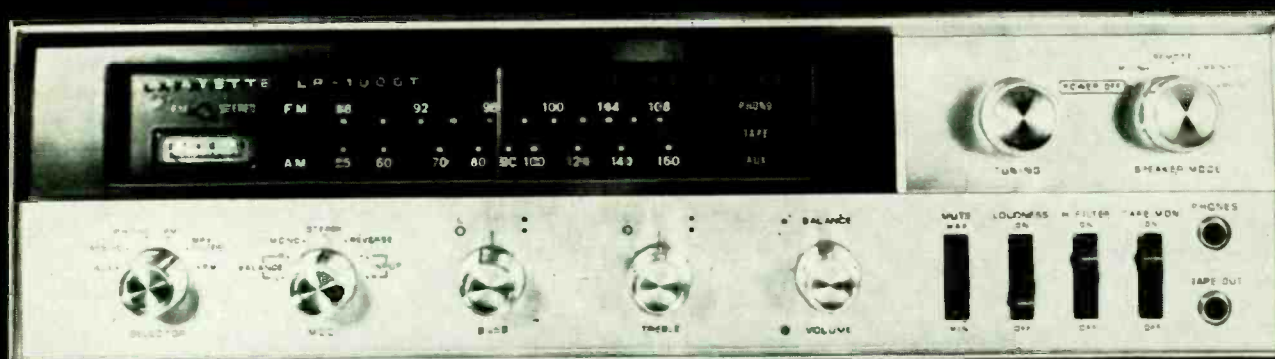
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too hot to handle

Which is the better speaker system—the JBL Paragon or a pair of Bose 901s? I'm assuming that the Paragon would be driven by a matching JBL Energizer and the Bose by an amplifier such as the Crown DC-300.—Patrick J. Hurley, Spokane, Wash.

On the basis of our tests, the JBL Paragon noses out the Bose 901 by a small margin at the low end. We found that the Paragon responded cleanly to 26 Hz; the 901 made it down that low but with slight doubling. In midrange and highs, both systems are exemplary.

Some time ago, I saw an ad for a phono preamp built right into the arm of the record player. It seemed like a good idea at the time since it would eliminate all problems of hum and losses in the lead from pickup to preamp. Who made it and why have I heard no more about it?—Gerald Wild, Ann Arbor, Mich.

It's an RCA product, but not exactly what you think it is. It's an integrated-circuit device that serves largely to match the impedance of the ceramic cartridge RCA uses to the input characteristics of the amplifiers in the line of consoles with which it is sold. In other words, it's not a phono preamp in the usual sense and is designed for use only with a particular ceramic cartridge.

I have been told that the Allied 395 receiver, reviewed in your February 1969 issue, is a Pioneer unit under the Allied name. At first I thought it was the Pioneer SX-1500T, but comparing your review of the 395 with a review of the SX-1500T in another magazine, I find discrepancies in specifications. What's the story?—Robert Palzer, Madison, Wisc.

The two sets are not the same, according to statements by both manufacturers, and confirmed by our own test results. Our report on the Pioneer appears elsewhere in this issue. Note that it costs \$60 more than the Allied receiver, but it offers about ten per cent higher power at half the distortion.

I have a large collection of 78-rpm records that I play regularly. I have been using an Audio Dynamics ADC-1 cartridge equipped with a 78-size conical diamond stylus, mounted in a PE-2020 changer. Recent cartridge developments lead me to think that one of the newer cartridges may improve the reproduction. If you agree, could you

give me your recommendation? Would an elliptical stylus offer an advantage over a conical?—Stanley Wilson, Winter Park, Fla.

If your ADC-1 with a 78 stylus (probably 2.5 or 3.0 mils) is giving you satisfactory reproduction from your discs, we'd advise that you leave well enough alone and only replace the stylus as necessary. Recent improvements in pickups, including the elliptical stylus, relate to microgroove stereo discs and their special requirements and have little or no bearing on the reproduction of 78s. And even if you could buy an appropriately large elliptical, the improvement in distortion would probably be lost in the inherently high distortion of virtually all 78s. It might increase high-frequency response, but at those frequencies you would find little more than surface noise to listen to in your records, except for the very finest late London frrr, DGG, and similar pressings.

I've turned down at least nine Philips discs in the last year because of poor quality. Is it possible that Philips could market European pressings imported specifically for American distribution in the manner that has been very successful for Decca/London? Perhaps then we could actually enjoy maestro Colin Davis' Berlioz cycle.—Alvis C. Sherouse, Tampa, Fla.

This month Mercury Records is scheduled to open a new plant, designed to European Philips' specifications, in which the major products—including Philips' records—will be pressed. We will keep our ears open for the fall releases.

Is there still a hi-fi store in this town where I can A/B cartridges?—K. Karger, Philadelphia, Penna.

Yes. Barnett Bros., for one, has told us that they will set up cartridge comparisons for their customers. There are other stores who will perform this service too, if approached in the right way. But it often takes a bit of doing, since cartridges installed in demo equipment have proved too easily pilferable in the past.

When I played two recent recordings—the Bach B minor Mass on Angel and the second of the celebrated Gabrieli recordings on Columbia—I immediately noticed very annoying distortion not unlike inner groove distortion, occurring predominantly in high-modulation pas-

sages. I later discovered that both discs are of the "compatible stereo" type. Since then, I've found four other compatible discs with the same problem. It seems obvious to me that changes in the record groove to make it compatible are causing first-rate performances to be issued in third-rate sound.—Eric J. Heller, Cambridge, Mass.

According to our information, neither of your records has been made compatible in the sense of restricting bass response or other special cutting techniques. They simply are regular stereo records with the compatible legend printed on the jackets. Even had they been specially processed for compatibility, however, the resulting groove would have been less demanding—not more so. Perhaps your inner-groove distortion is caused by your playback equipment, rather than by the records. Distortion can result from a number of things: the vertical angle of the pickup may be far off its nominal 15-degree value; the stylus may be damaged or incorrectly set; the arm may be incorrectly balanced or subject to drag from lead wires or other obstructions; or minute amounts of dust or dirt may have accumulated on the stylus tip.

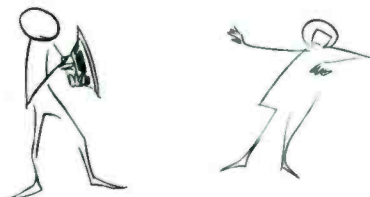
Recently I purchased a tape recorder from a local dealer who advertised: "Satisfaction guaranteed; if not, return the merchandise within ten days." After finding that the tape recorder was not up to expectations, I took it back. I was chagrined to learn that the ten-day guarantee was redeemable only in other merchandise. Not wanting to lose my \$200-plus investment, I took home a house-brand 75-watt stereo amplifier. Alas, the amplifier proved to be unsatisfactory. So, back I went again (and I live 70 miles from the store). The manager seemed sincere in his efforts to please (although he did not offer a refund). This time, he showed me a 100-watt stereo receiver. It was impressive-looking and sounded good in the store. But there were two problems: it cost \$65 more than I had already invested, and it was made by Standard Radio—a name I had never heard of. So I took a raincheck. By now, I have looked through all my back issues of HIGH FIDELITY and can find no test reports for Standard Radio products. That makes me apprehensive. What should I do?—Bernhardt H. Wever, Fallbrook, Calif.

To begin with, one should always read the fine print carefully, particularly for "satisfaction guaranteed" offers. Second, Standard Radio is the U.S. name for a line of Japanese-made equipment just beginning to show up here. Their ads have appeared in some of our recent issues. A Standard Radio receiver is presently under test for us by CBS Labs and the report should appear in one of our future issues. In the meantime, there are probably only three things you can do: hold on to your raincheck until the report appears; make another attempt at a refund; or buy a product that has already been tested and proved meritorious.

APOCALYPSE

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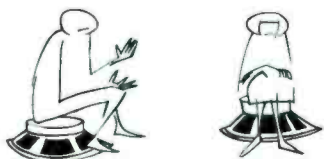
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speaking of records

by George Movshon



Records to Test Your Woofers' "Crunchability"

FOR THE FIRST TIME in years, I have made a change in my home music system, adding a low-frequency center-channel loudspeaker to deliver a mite more deep-bass "crunch." The new woofer is the consequence of a campaign by my son, an eighteen-year-old stripling who denied all my assurances that the pre-existing system* had a musical and natural bass response. But young Movshon, a Mahler fanatic, wanted more. And now the new midchannel stands there, a growling witness to the persistence of youth and the tolerance of maturity. Besides, it sounds good. There is a button that cuts the new speaker out of the circuit instantly—but somehow it doesn't get pressed very often, and the "crunch" is growing on me. Wagner helped.

When the new beast had been delivered, positioned, wired in, and phased to match his older brothers, music was needed to demonstrate a difference and make a point. In other words, I wanted music designed to make the speaker sound good and me feel good. Wagner and Mahler were indicated, as they say in the dispensaries—music of a massive, full-blooded, romantic character.

There on the Wagner shelf stood the four albums of the London *Ring of the Nibelungs*, a test piece massive enough

in every sense. Of the four operas, my own favorite (as an opera and as a recording) is *Götterdämmerung* (London OSA 1604), six LPs starring Nilsson, Watson, Ludwig, Windgassen, Fischer-Dieskau, Frick, and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra with Solti conducting. This album has done a lot of work in my house since it was new in 1965; it is a recorded landmark, a lofty pinnacle among the peaks of stereo opera.

But where to begin—for there are more than four hours of music to choose from. Not the Immolation Scene just yet, with its apocalyptic coda; nor even the *Funeral March* on Side 11; and not, for the moment, the chorus of vassals in Act II. Halfway in on Side 4 comes Hagen's Watch, and then the orchestral interlude leading to Brünnhilde's scene with Waltraute. I settled on this revealing passage to supply my newly modified system's first "listening" music (as distinct from "calibrating" music). Soon the room was filled with menace generated by a body of knowing strings, and on top of them came the "iron-pyrites" voice of Gottlob Frick, an ingot of black metal covered with gleaming flecks. Sonorously, he related how Siegfried had been tricked, how the hero had been sent to fetch back the Ring—for his arch-enemy, the son of the Nibelung.

The soliloquy ended, and the woodwinds intoned the theme of *Woe*, a pair of descending chords soon repeated quietly by trumpet and strings. And then came the sound I had been waiting for: a *WHAM!* of the entire Wagner brass, joined by the deep strings; then a second, deeper chord, plumbing the depths of the orchestra—a sound to set your scalp vibrating and your diaphragm thumping.

Not, please note, because of sheer volume: there are many louder passages in this recording. In fact, Wagner indicated a modest dynamic level of forte for these chords (which you will find twice on page 87 of the Schirmer vocal score, fourth system) and so have they been scrupulously played and recorded. However, the brasses, the cellos, and double basses smack in and flare out below with such unanimity, that you can almost grasp the metal and the wood, and see the vibrating bell of the great tuba.

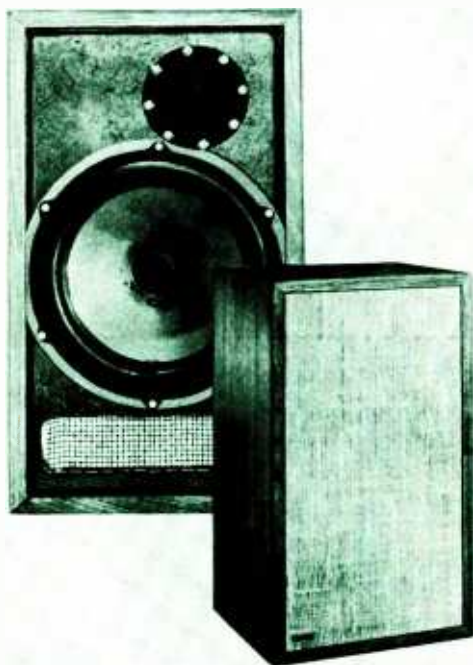
I can hear a number of music lovers asking whether all this is about music or simple sensation. The chords described could only be heard in live performance by a neighboring orchestral musician—not by anyone in an audience. And yet it all feels *sui generis*, it works to impeccable artistic purpose; surely Wagner would have approved. You may disagree, and you may again argue the issues of the Culshaw/Osborne debate so recently rehearsed in these pages: should an opera record be a report or a producer's concept? Both views are valid, but neither seems to me exclusively so. Perhaps Alexander Pope's slightly pompous maxim resolves the matter, "Whate'er is best administered is best." And Mr. Culshaw, with very few exceptions, administers admirably. He serves Wagner, he serves me, and he makes my system sound great.

If you want to consider a persuasive argument for the other point of view on opera recording, then listen to DGG's *Tristan und Isolde*, an actual taping inside the theater built by Wagner himself. Bayreuth's acoustics, an ideal mating of clarity with warmth, are caught most expertly by what seems to be a relatively conservative microphone setup. You will find no close-up vibrato on Karl Böhm's brass section, no rosin rising from the immaculate double basses. If Nilsson and Windgassen lack some of the visceral impact they derive from London's engineers, they gain an elegant perspective and a recorded sound that matches precisely the character of performance for which the house is famous. Your system (and your musical taste) may well find this way of hearing Wagner more congenial; in which case you will want at least a single disc of *Tristan* excerpts (DGG 136433), if not all five in the complete album (DGG 139221/25).

You may even decide that six discs of *Götterdämmerung* are more than you need; then by all means consider London OS 25991, which puts Birgit Nilsson's staggering Immolation Scene and Solti's end-of-the-world coda back-to-back with another bloodcurdling operatic finale, the closing scene from Richard Strauss's *Salome* (yes, the severed-head bit). Here again we have Nilsson, Solti, and the Vienna Philharmonic—and also a piece

Continued on page 32

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE



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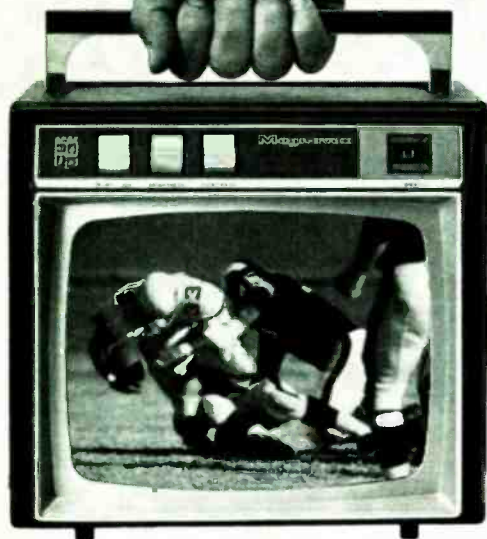
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CIRCLE 41 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

SPEAKING OF RECORDS

Continued from page 28

of recording sorcery to dilate the pupils of one's eyes.

Solti's Wagner, like his Strauss, was taped in Vienna's Sophiensaal, under circumstances entertainingly related in Culshaw's book *Ring Resounding*. But Solti claims that there is another recording environment that yields even more felicitous results. "The most beautiful sound on records," he says, "is the Kingsway Hall fortissimo." The Kingsway, a small church hall not far from the Strand in London, is a maze of steep galleries and risers—all heavily paneled. The K. H. fortissimo is indeed a noble sound, and one to which my new woofer took instant affection. We tried recordings of the Mahler First, Second, and Ninth Symphonies—Solti is recording the entire cycle with the London Symphony—and soon found that the acoustic frame which the hall's timber wraps around the LSO's brilliance was well-nigh ideal. There is a sense of warmth and space through the upper strings and woodwinds, real bite in the cellos and basses, and a palpable bloom upon the horns. These are breathtaking sounds (London CS 6401, CSA 2217, and CSA 2220), and Mahler would have cheered their sonorities without a doubt.

Mahler might also have applauded Deryck Cooke's completion and orchestration of the Tenth Symphony—though it is rare for a man to feel affection for his impersonator. To me this restoration is impressive, not least because of its swinging confidence and Mahlerian orchestral sound. There is nothing controversial about the overwhelming climaxes that Columbia's engineers have captured on M2S 735, a high-voltage performance of Cooke's adventure by Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphians.

The new woofer, I guess, gets to stay.



High Fidelity, June 1969, Vol. 19, No. 6. Published monthly by Billboard Publications, Inc., publisher of Billboard, *Vend.*, *Amusement Business*, *Merchandising Week*, *American Artist*, and *Modern Photography*.

High Fidelity/Musical America Edition published monthly. Member Audit Bureau of Circulations.

Editorial correspondence should be addressed to The Editor, *High Fidelity*, Great Barrington, Mass. 01230. Editorial contributions will be welcomed. Payment for articles accepted will be arranged prior to publication. Unsolicited manuscripts should be accompanied by return postage.

Subscriptions should be addressed to *High Fidelity*, 2160 Patterson St., Cincinnati, O. 45214. Subscription rates: *High Fidelity/Musical America*: In the U.S.A. and its Possessions, 1 year \$12; elsewhere, 1 year \$13. National and other editions published monthly: In the U.S.A. and its Possessions, 1 year \$7; elsewhere, 1 year \$8.

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HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

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This came as no surprise to those who remembered that a 40-cycle sound wave is more than 28 feet long. That's why it takes a double bass or a contrabassoon to sound a note that low. Bass and big dimensions go together.

But the sound of the big XP-18 did surprise a lot of people. They knew it had to be good at \$329.95, but they weren't prepared for a completely new experience.

And then came the obvious request: Couldn't we make the XP-18 concept available in more moderately priced speakers?

We could. And did: in the new Fisher XP-12 and XP-15B.

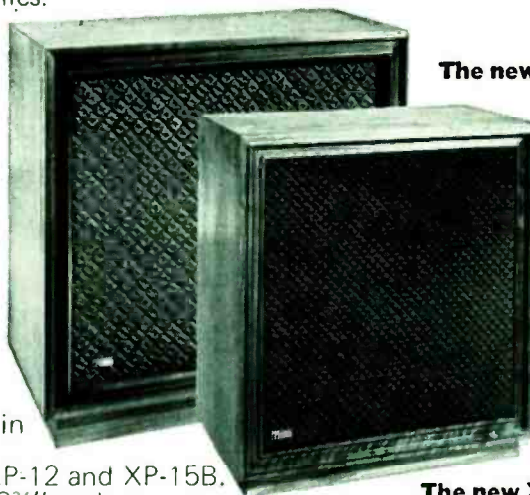
They're a little smaller (24" x 22½" x 13¾" and 27" x 27" x 14¾", respectively), but still twice as big as bookshelf speakers. They're three-way systems instead of four-way, but they have the same type of 8-inch midrange driver with molded rubber surround, plus the exclusive Fisher dome tweeter with a new half-roll suspension and an improved dual dome.

The main difference from the XP-18 is in the woofers: a 12-inch unit with a 6-lb. magnet structure in the XP-12 and a 15-inch driver with a 12-lb. magnet structure in the XP-15B.

The prices justify the slight comedown in woof-inches; the XP-12 is listed at \$199.95 and the XP-15B at \$269.95.

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And Then I (Wish I) Wrote

as told to David Dachs

Most songwriters who have succeeded in the music business have steely egos the size of a Buckminster Fuller geodesic dome. But as students of the diverse melodic and lyrical designs possible within the deceptively simple song form, they are often lavish with praise of other writers' works. Here is a pop confessional by some top creators of hit songs, in which they happily reveal the works they wish they had written.



Jimmy McHugh, composer of *Sunny Side of the Street*, *I'm in the Mood for Love*, *I Can't Give You Anything but Love, Baby*:



Joe Darion, lyricist for *Man of La Mancha*:

I love *Climb Every Mountain*, *You'll Never Walk Alone*, and *I Believe*, but the song, both composition and lyric, I wish I had written is Leonard Bernstein's and Stephen Sondheim's *There's a Place for Us* from *West Side Story*. I think it is one of the most beautiful songs ever written, and there have been many. There is great warmth in the lyric and great strength in the music—and the dramatics in the ending of this wonderful song bring out the expressions of love which those in love try to express.

This work has had a particular impact on my own writing. I am also terribly influenced by Puccini, who in his dramatic love music of *La Bohème*, *Tosca*, and *Butterfly* has exemplified the emotional feelings of love. Yes, I believe *There's a Place for Us* is in the same category.

I remember seeing the show for the first time when it appeared at the Winter Garden, but at that time the music of Bernstein didn't impress me—it seemed a bit modern. As a melodic composer myself, I look for melody, and it wasn't until I heard the Johnny Mathis record that the score took on a different aspect. Later, when I saw the motion picture, I understood it better because of having heard the Mathis recording.

I think every lyricist knows two or three song lyrics that he would give a year of his creative life to have written. Such a lyric for me is *September Song*. Oddly enough, it was written not by a lyricist but by a poet and playwright, Maxwell Anderson. Within its fifteen lines lie a rueful knowledge of life, simplicity of expression, warmth, technical virtuosity. The lyric sings of the mellowing years; yet it touched me deeply when I was very young.

Technically it is very interesting, because it breaks almost every rule of prosody and rhyming.

"Oh, it's a long, long while/from May to December/
but the days grow short/when you reach September./
When the autumn weather/turns the leaves to flame/
one hasn't got time/for the waiting game./
Oh the days dwindle down/to a precious few/
September . . . November . . . /
And these few precious days I'll spend with you/
these precious days I'll spend with you." (© 1938 by De Sylva, Brown & Henderson, Inc.)

Each of the four stanzas has a different rhyme and/or rhythmic scheme. The first stanza links the second and fourth lines with a female rhyme, falling on the penultimate rather than on the ultimate syllable. The second stanza has the same rhyme

scheme but is a male rhyme, and the rhythm is slightly different too. The third stanza, or release, has only the debatable inner rhyme in the third line, and takes only three lines at that. The final stanza is again different from the others, and doesn't even have a rhyme. A mess, you'd say? No, indeed—one of the great song lyrics of our time. Which leads to the ultimate rule in any creative field—that the thing must work, must touch the human heart, must have wisdom, must glow.

Maxwell Anderson . . . I wish I had written your lyric.



Len Chandler, composer-lyricist-singer, whose original compositions can be heard on two Columbia albums, *To Be a Man* and *The Lovin' People*, and whose song *Keep on Keepin' On* was used as the text for a speech by Martin Luther King:

the song that i wish i had written is
 The Multisoul Vibrations of the Cosmos
 the concept of originality is only about
 three hundred years old
 the tradition of blowing riffs on this song
 is about six millenniums old
 it's been written countless times
 recorded as many . . . and just plain sung more
 the lyrics, melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic
 variations
 are as numerous as its names
 some of the recent variants are
I'm an Animal by sylvester stewart, sung by
 sly and the family stone
 nina simone's *Why the King of Love Is Dead* by
 eugene taylor
 billy taylor's *I Wish I Knew How It Feels to Be Free*
 sung by solomon burk
 julius lester's *Staggalee*
Drinking of the Wine sung by bernice regan,
 written by howard hunt
Safari by roland kirk
We're a Winner sung by the temptations
Solar Differentials by sun ra
 Everything by ray charles and otis redding
 Anything by richie haven and aretha franklin
 Twenty-four Hours a Day by wwrl
 the song is inner city public domain
 its english counterpart could be
 Black Is the Color of My True Love's Heart
 you mean hair
 no i really mean . . . soul
 i first heard my grandma hummin' it in the kitchen
 what's the name of it
 i just told you



Stephen Sondheim, lyricist of *West Side Story* and *Gypsy*; composer and lyricist of *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*:

I choose the music and those lyrics by Du Bose Heyward in *Porgy and Bess* and the music of *Carousel*. Why? Because they're the best. The current wave of Negro militance will not diminish the possibility of productions of *Porgy and Bess*. *Porgy and Bess* was, even at the time it came out, a period piece, and will remain so. It is just as appropriate now as it was then.

I do distinguish Heyward's lyrics from Ira Gershwin's. Only *Bess You Is My Woman Now* and *There's a Boat That's Leavin' Soon for New York*, both of which are co-credited to Ira, seem to me worthy of those credited to Heyward.

I saw *Carousel* when Oscar Hammerstein treated me on my fifteenth birthday to the New Haven opening. I was overwhelmed by the music and the lyrics, both of which made me cry a lot. They still do.



Jerry Herman, composer-lyricist of *Hello Dolly*, *Milk and Honey*, and the forthcoming musical version of *Madwoman of Chaillot*:

I most wish I had written *Some People* from *Gypsy*. I love that song because it's a marvelous piece of entertainment. To me that's a prerequisite in the theater. Too many times, writers write to fit a character, and forget the key element of entertainment. They write a long rambling thing, and you can fall asleep. *Some People* has a soaring melody and an ear-catching lyric. Behind all, that song is a perfect character study of Gypsy Rose Lee's mother. It shows her drive and her cunning. And her sense of humor. And it's written in her vocabulary. She and she alone would say: "Some people sit on their butts, Got the dream, yeah, but not the guts." (© 1959 by Williamson and Stratford Music.)

In those lines, the brilliance of the song comes to the surface. I remember sitting in the Broadway Theater, and scarcely three minutes after the curtain is up, Rose sings *Some People*. Well, you know that woman right away. . . . That's a rare feat in the theater. It's the epitome of musical theater writing, for it combines entertainment and delineation of a character to perfection. *Continued on next page*



Johnny Mercer, lyricist for *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*, *Blues in the Night*, *That Old Black Magic*, *One for My Baby*, *On the Atchison, Topeka, and the Santa Fe* (Academy Award 1946), and *Moon River*:

There are so many marvelous lyrics by so many marvelous writers, you begin to feel a little shabby when you start enumerating some of them. All those tart, witty lyrics by Mr. Gilbert . . . the *Let's Do It* and *Easy to Love* lyrics by Cole Porter . . . Irving Berlin's two waltzes *Always* and *Remember* . . . Lorenz Hart's *Girl Friend*, *Funny Valentine*, *Falling in Love with Love* . . . Walter Donaldson's *Little White Lies* and *You're Drivin' Me Crazy* . . . Dorothy Field's masterful songs for any lovers, especially young and poor ones . . . *I Can't Give You Anything But Love, Baby* . . . on and on they go, stunning the mind and capturing the heart. From *Danny Boy* to *Officer Krupke*—how ya gonna keep 'em down on the list?

I find myself singing, listening to, and loving songs that also have a great tune, and it's as big a kick for me to hear them on the radio as it is to meet a beautiful girl, make an eagle, find a twenty-dollar bill, say something really witty, or be the hit of the party. All alone (see?) in my car, I revel in them, cry over them, and laugh out loud at happy times remembered and the turn of an imaginative and clever or beautiful phrase. If I have to pick one, I may as well take a song I've loved ever since I was a boy; another love song for lovers of any strata and any age . . . hum it over . . .

It had to be you
It had to be you (for emphasis)
I wandered around (always looking)
Finally found (at long last!)
The somebody who (the one and only)
Could make me be true (Implying no one else could)
Could make me be blue (without a hurt the heart is hollow)
And even be glad, just to be sad
Thinking of you ('nuf said!)
Some others I've seen (and he's seen a few)
Might never be mean
Might never be cross (ah, love can be cruel)
Or try to be boss (heavenly attraction)
But they wouldn't do (nobody filled the bill yet)
For nobody else gave me a
thrill (gave me *that* thrill)
With all your faults (and you've got some, baby)
I love you still (but who cares!)
It had to be you
Wonderful you (summing it up)
Had to be you (© 1924 by Warner Bros.—7 Arts)

Everybody's been singing it for years, and Julie London has a recent great record out on it. Gus Kahn and Isham Jones must be smiling to hear it. And I agree with them about their great standard. It'll do.



Harry Warren, composer of *I Found a Million-Dollar Baby in a Five-and-Ten-Cent Store, 42nd Street*, *Lullaby of Broadway* (Academy Award 1935), *You'll Never Know* (Academy Award 1943):

I must choose *They Didn't Believe Me* by the late, great Jerome Kern and Mike Rourke as the one song I wish I wrote. I first heard it when I was a kid and when the popular song of the day was an important part of social lives on a Saturday night or a Sunday afternoon, gathering around the piano. Gosh, I thought, if only I could meet Jerome Kern. As far back as then he was my inspiration for my songwriting career.

Like so many tune writers of my time, I also got a job as a rehearsal piano player in a music publishing house during the day, writing songs in most of my spare time. During these years in New York I finally got to know Jerome Kern, and then during the Hollywood years we became warm friends. We worked on the Metro lot together, played golf together, and served on the ASCAP Board of Directors together. Jerry Kern is gone. But his songs will live on.



Paul Francis Webster, lyricist of *I Got It Bad*, and *That Ain't Good*, *Jump for Joy*, *The Shadow of Your Smile* (Academy Award 1965):

The lyric I wish I wrote is *When the World Was Young*. Why? Because it is tender, poignant, and haunting. Because it has, in skillful, dramatic juxtaposition, bravura up-tempo verses and contrasting legato choruses. The lyrics, by my favorite lyricist, Johnny Mercer, are literate and nostalgic, and the tune, by M. Philippe-Gerard, has an irresistible Continental appeal. I have collected recorded versions of the work; the interpretation I prize most is Peggy Lee's.



Sheldon Harnick, lyricist for *Fiddler on the Roof* and the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Fiorello*:

There are many song lyrics which I wish I had written, especially those by W. S. Gilbert, Ira Gershwin, Lorenz Hart, Frank Loesser, and Stephen Sondheim. However, not only one particular song, but the entire score containing it stands out in my memory as having had a marked impact on my subsequent development.

From 1946 to 1950 I was a music student at Northwestern University, majoring in violin. I contributed songs to the annual student revue. Each year I contributed more, to the point where I began vaguely to consider writing rather than playing the violin as a possible career. Then in 1949 Charlotte Rae played me the album for *Finian's Rainbow*. I was deeply impressed and excited. It was as though for the first time I became aware of what the lyrics to a musical could be. The wit, sparkle, color, and playfulness of the words delighted me; but more than that they added up to a show which said something, where the lyrics had meaning and significance beyond their value as entertainment. I thought, "That's what I'd like to be able to do."

Within the score there was one particularly lovely song which I wish I had written—*Look to the Rainbow*. It touched me and has remained one of my favorite songs.

Since I'm not much of a pianist, I don't perform this work at family get-togethers or parties (although I have been known to play it on the violin); but on many occasions, where there have been pianists or small combos, I have requested it. And once I got Yip Harburg's permission to have it put into a musical cigarette box.



Henry Mancini, composer of film scores for *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (and its 1961 Academy Award song, *Moon River*), *Pink Panther*, TV (*Peter Gunn*):

I wish I wrote Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*. I think the slow movement is one of the most beautiful melodies ever written. It strikes me on emotional, sentimental, and musical levels. This work has had a tremendous impact because it was the bridge between the so-called classical and jazz popular fields. I believe it is the only successful "Third Stream" composition to date.

I was thirteen years old when I first heard it back in my home town of Aliquippa, Pennsylvania. I don't recall the exact time or circumstances, but I heard it initially on a recording. At the time I was studying flute and piano. Of all the recordings made of the work, I prefer the original made by Gershwin. I think it is one of the rare examples of a composer being able to give his own composition a definitive performance.



Burton Lane, composer of *Finian's Rainbow* and *On a Clear Day You Can See Forever*:

For personal reasons, I wish I could have written some of the early Gershwin melodies, mainly because I was young when they were written and they had a great influence on me as a writer. *Someone to Watch Over Me* is one of my special favorites. I met George Gershwin when I was about seventeen years old and I was tremendously impressed with the vitality and originality he incorporated into all of his music. Later, in 1941, I wrote a song for the movie *Babes in Arms* with Judy Garland called *How About You?* The lyric by Ralph Freed contains these lines: "I like New York in June. How about you? I like a Gershwin tune. How about you?" (© 1941 by Robbins, Feist and Miller)



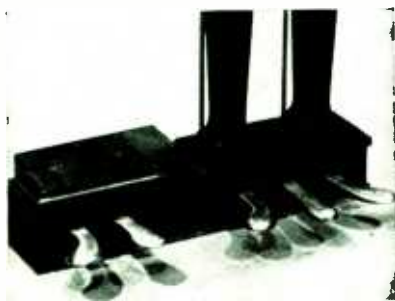
Harry Ruby, composer of *Three Little Words*, *Give Me the Simple Life*, *Who's Sorry Now?*, and many Marx Brothers songs including *Hurray for Captain Spalding*:

I do not say *Take Me Out to the Ball Game* is the greatest song ever written, musically or lyrically, but I do say it is one everyone thinks I should have written—and how I wish I had! Because more than anything else I wanted to make it as a major league baseball player.

It may seem silly and somewhat childish, but every time I hear it, it does something to me. The man who wrote the lyric, Jack Norworth, told me he has no use at all for baseball. Yet over two hundred tries have been made to replace it by so many writers—among them, George M. Cohan—but *Take Me Out to the Ball Game* has remained the classic.

news and views

Under the psychedelic hues of Fillmore East's spotlights, Lorin Hollander (right) plays the Baldwin Electronic Concert Grand piano. The microphone at the far right picks up sound radiated by built-in speakers rather than the sounding board. Electronics are controlled by two extra pedals at left, below.



THE PLUGGED-IN CONCERT GRAND

FIRST IT WAS ELECTRONIC ORGANS, then electronic guitars. Now, thanks to the Baldwin Piano Company, it's concert grands wired for sound. The Baldwin Electronic Concert Grand utilizes an electronic transducer activated by each string, instead of a sounding board, to project the piano's sound. The transducers convert into electricity the tones a pianist produces when he touches a key. The signals then travel to a specially prepared Marantz preamplifier and power amp which in turn power a complement of James B. Lansing speakers in the ECG itself. The result, according to Baldwin, is a tone virtually indistinguishable from that of an ordinary piano.

So why drag in electronics? Pianist Lorin Hollander sees several advantages. Two new pedals, added alongside the three normally found on a concert grand, permit the pianist to raise or lower the volume of the ECG—whether for an entire concert or for a specific passage. Or an operator, working off stage with the preamp controls, could give a hard, metallic sound for, say, a Prokofiev sonata or a lush, lyrical tone for Schubert. Or the pianist himself can preset the tone controls to compensate for acoustic peculiarities of the auditorium.

In fact, Hollander did exactly this when he played the piano at its concert debut at—of all places—Fillmore East, New York's rock mecca. "The auditorium is a former movie theater and is unusually dead. It soaks up bass tones like a sponge," he commented. "An ordinary piano would have been swallowed up. But by increasing the volume electronically, I could get a natural piano tone to all parts of the hall." Similarly, the tone controls enabled Hollander to overcome the bass loss. An advantage of the amplification system is that it raises or lowers the volume of every note on the keyboard equally so that dynamic and tonal relationships remain intact. And serious musicians like Hollander are intrigued by the ECG's possibilities for open-air concerts—like those at the Hollywood Bowl, where most piano

sounds are wafted away before they reach the audience.

As we were leaving, we heard a long-haired member of the audience burble over the Baldwin's potential for rock distortion techniques. Had the Baldwin people been listening, they should not have been shocked. They have been working on the electronic piano idea since 1930, and some of the sounds coming from these experimental models, we are told, have borne little resemblance to natural piano tone. In fact, Baldwin says the ECG's potential for timbre control "should provide a new resource and dimension for the contemporary composer."

CIRCLE 141 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

THE CASSETTE INCHES UP (AT 1 7/8 IPS)

Hardly a month goes by without some harbinger of even better things to come from the cassette. This month brings two goodies across our desk—one a milestone of sorts bearing a promise of immediate benefits, the other a mere suggestion of ultimate possibilities.

The milestone is the entrance of RCA and Columbia into the prerecorded cassette fold (see "The Tape Deck," page 120). Motorola has just hopped aboard the bandwagon too, and will produce the hardware.

News of our long-range harbinger comes from Memorex, a West Coast manufacturer of recording tape, which has signed an agreement with Du Pont to manufacture tape using chromium dioxide in its magnetic coating. Chromium dioxide is the active ingredient in Du Pont's Crolyn tape, a product the cassette people have been

Continued on page 40

CIRCLE 58 ON READER-SERVICE CARD →

How to build a better tape recorder.

ESP Automatic Tape Reverse. A special sensing circuit indicates the absence of any recorded signal at the end of a tape and automatically reverses the tape direction within ten seconds.

Non-Magnetizing Record Head. Head magnetization build-up—the most common cause of tape hiss—has been eliminated by an exclusive Sony circuit, preventing any transient surge of bias current to the record head.

ServoControl Motor. Automatically corrects for speed variations and maintains precise timing accuracy. Vari-speed feature of motor can be adjusted up or down to match musical pitch of tape playback to any piano.

Instant Tape Threading. Retractable pinch rollers permit simple one-hand threading. Other features: Four-track Stereophonic and Monophonic recording and playback. Also records in reverse direction. Three speeds. Two VU meters. Stereo headphone jack. And more.



Noise-Suppressor Switch. Special filter eliminates undesirable hiss that may exist on older prerecorded tapes.

Scrape Flutter Filter. Special precision idler mechanism located between erase and record/playback heads eliminates tape modulation distortion. This feature formerly found only on professional studio equipment.

Sony Model 560D. Priced under \$349.50. **Also available:** The Sony Model 560 Tape System with stereo control center, stereo pre-amplifier and stereo amplifier, microphones, and lid-integrated full-range stereo extension speakers for less than \$449.50. For your free copy of our latest tape recorder catalog, please write to Mr. Phillips, Sony/Superscope, Inc., 8144 Vineland Avenue, Sun Valley, California 91352.

SONY SUPERSCOPE the specialty in stereo

You never heard it so good.

eying rather avidly because of its ability to increase frequency response and decrease noise compared to the standard iron oxide tapes. While Du Pont has been in the habit of brushing aside the audio potential of Crolyn, a Memorex official says his company sees the greatest potential advances with chromium dioxide "in analog recording techniques—including audio." Memorex is presently exploring possible chromium dioxide formulations for various types of tape end use. Cassettes, more than any other product in the audio media, may benefit from the investigation because stereo cassette track-width is on a par with that of 8-track cartridges as the narrowest (and therefore inherently the noisiest) now in consumer use, and the cassette runs at half the speed of cartridges—putting the ceiling on its frequency response one octave lower, all other things being equal.

CIRCLE 142 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

FM SANS COMMERCE OR COMMERCIALS

Few of us have ever heard of SCA. It stands for Subsidiary Communications Authorization, and it refers to the system of multiplexing additional program material on an existing FM broadcast without affecting the broadcast itself or the signal it will produce on a normal mono or stereo FM receiver. The additional program material is usually background music for use in stores, restaurants, and other commercial subscribers.

For the privilege of receiving this special program, the commercial establishment in question must pay some kind of a fee to the broadcaster. At one time, the easiest method involved rental of the necessary decoding equip-



Adapter (either kit or wired) from SCA Services is also available built into AM/FM receiver.

ment—like an SCA adapter—from the broadcaster. But adapters—which sort out multiplexed program material just as your stereo tuner sorts out the multiplexed stereo "difference" signal—have been showing up on the open market for several years.

Operators of SCA have been unhappy about that. If anyone could buy an adapter, what was to keep non-subscribers from pirating the background music service? True, private individuals were conceded to have the right to tune in on the commercial-free music, as long as they did so only for their own private enjoyment. But as long as private individuals could buy SCA adapters, so could commercial establishments. So SCA broadcasters have viewed adapter-marketers with unremitting hostility.

The hostility amounted to a series of skirmishes—rather than open warfare—until recently because the adapters are not easy for the electronically unsophisticated to install in their stereo receivers. In fact, kit

(rather than wired) adapters have been the rule. But now S.C.A. Services Co., Inc. is making a complete AM/FM mono/stereo/SCA receiver (Model MS-1, \$119.95 in the Lafayette Radio Spring Catalogue) in addition to kit and wired adapters. The advertising says quite clearly, "ILLEGAL FOR COMMERCIAL USE OR BENEFIT," but how SCA broadcasters will react remains to be seen.

CIRCLE 143 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

DYNAGROOVE AND ADC, CHAPTER 2

As you may remember from our last installment, ADC has introduced a stereo pickup system provided with three interchangeable styli: two ellipticals and a spherical. The purpose of the spherical, ADC says, is to play Dynagroove recordings, which are, in sense, predistorted to counteract the distortion normally produced in playback by a spherical stylus.

Well, here's what Warren Rex Isom, chief engineer of the RCA Record Division, has to say on the subject: "The RCA Dynagroove system uses a correlator that corrects for the difference between the shape of the cutter used when the original lacquer is cut and the shape of the pickup stylus used when the pressed record is played. . . . The correlator is and will continue to be optimized for the standard spherical stylus. . . ."

"For Dynagroove records, there is little practical difference between the shape of the ellipse and that of the sphere. The elliptical stylus is much more nearly the shape of the sphere than it is the shape of the cutter; therefore, it produces better sound from a Dynagroove record than it does from other records. There is a better fit between it and the groove of the Dynagroove record. Subjective listening tests by discriminating people well-versed and experienced in the art confirm this.

"There is no reason to use a spherical stylus for Dynagroove records if an elliptical stylus is available. The elliptical stylus, particularly in a high compliance professional cartridge, does not give less than optimum results, the Audio Dynamics Corporation notwithstanding."

Peter E. Pritchard, president of ADC, maintains that the multiple-stylus concept is valid, however. "Our advertising department would have been delighted if we could have prepared a table showing which stylus to use with which record brands," he told us. "But it doesn't work that way. We have found that there is more variation between records produced by a single company than there is from one company to another. . . . And there are variations between one Dynagroove record and another. Admittedly, some will not profit from a spherical playback stylus; but others will."

He went on to say that ADC has found variations even between pressings of the same recording. For all this, Pritchard suggests that optimum playback—regardless of label—can be achieved only by trying several styli and choosing the one that results in the least distortion.

CIRCLE 145 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

SPEAKING OF WEIGHTY MATTERS

The many attempts on the part of console manufacturers to inject the glitter of componentry into their advertising must be reckoned as a high compliment to what we would call true high fidelity. But one Sylvania console catalogue gets a bit off the track in crowing over the brand-name changers in its "stereos." Sylvania says, "Stylus pressure is adjustable from 1 to 6 ounces." Now, lots of us make the mistake of referring to tracking force as "stylus pressure." But *ounces*? That would translate to a range of something like 30 to 170 grams!

Where be hi-fi now?



STANTON 681EE CALIBRATION STANDARD

"The tracking was excellent and distinctly better in this respect than any other cartridge we have tested....The frequency response of the Stanton 681EE was the flattest of the cartridges tested, within ± 1 dB over most of the audio range."

From the laboratory tests of eleven cartridges, conducted by Julian D. Hirsch and Gladden B. Houck, as reported in *HiFi/Stereo Review*, July, 1968.

To anyone not familiar with the Stanton 681, this might seem to be an extraordinary statement. But to anyone else, such as professional engineers, these results simply confirm what they already know.

Your own 681 will perform exactly the same as the one tested by Hirsch-Houck. That is a guarantee. Every 681 is tested and measured against the laboratory standard for frequency response, channel separation, output, etc. The results are written by hand on the specifications enclosed with every 681.

You don't have to be a professional to hear the difference a Stanton 681 will make in your system, especially with the "Longhair" brush that provides the clean grooves so essential for flawless tracking and clear reproduction.

The 681EE, with elliptical stylus, is \$60.00. The 681T, at \$75.00, includes both an elliptical stylus (for your records) and an interchangeable conical stylus (for anyone else's records). For free literature, write to Stanton Magnetics, Inc., Plainview, L.I., N.Y.



CIRCLE 61 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

equipment in the news

Power player

Ampex has added a model to its Micro line of cassette player/recorders. The Micro 86, according to Ampex, is the most powerful cassette stereo system on the market in terms of power amplifier output to the monitor speakers. Since that power rating is still modest by component high fidelity standards, Ampex says the unit also may be used as a deck to feed a high-quality system for maximum sonic effect. The Micro 86, including a pair of Model 516 speakers and a Model 501 stereo microphone, sells for \$199.

CIRCLE 146 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



New line of compacts



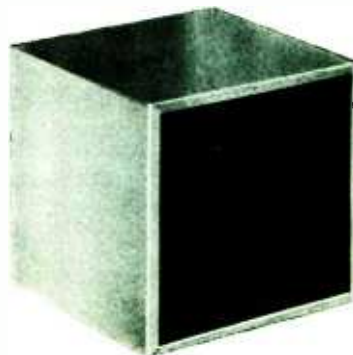
The new Scott Custom Compact line of stereo systems comprises a total of eleven models at prices ranging from \$269.95 to \$529.95. The least expensive is the 2505 series, all of which include a stereo FM tuner section and a record changer: 2505-16 with S-16 speakers; 2505-14 with S-14V speakers; 2505-17 with S-17 speakers; and 2505-10 with S-10 speakers. The S-16 uses two 6-inch drivers, the S-14V a 6-inch and a 3-inch, the S-17 an 8-inch and a 3-inch, and the S-10 a 10-inch and a dual-cone 5-inch. The 2503 series, with the same speaker options, offers an FET FM/AM tuner section. The top of the line is the 2503 series, equipped with a Dual 1009F turntable. It offers three speaker options: S-17, S-10, or S-15 with 10-inch woofers, 4½-inch midrange drivers, and 3-inch tweeters.

CIRCLE 147 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Decorator hi-fi: the color cubes

Fairfax Industries has added color to speaker enclosures in a way that can only be guessed at from our black-and-white photograph. The Color Cubes are 12 inches in each dimension, and each face carries a different color in a satin plastic finish that can be cleaned with a damp cloth, according to Fairfax. Colors include black, white, vermillion, maize, olive, and blue in the samples we've seen. To change the color emphasis of a speaker, simply turn it over so that different sides are showing. C-150 Color Cubes have an 8-inch driver rated at 8 ohms; their list price is \$59.50.

CIRCLE 148 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



Cassetter to shoot from the hip

Concord has announced a compact portable cassette recorder designed for shoulder-strap use. All controls are at the top, as the F-101 hangs at your side, to simplify "sonic snapshots" or on-the-go dictation. The built-in automatic level control is provided with a sensitivity control to adjust dynamic range in the record mode to different types of material. An optional pedal control can be used for transcribing dictation or other spoken recordings. A dynamic remote-control mike, one cassette, an earphone, and the carrying case with shoulder strap are included in the under-\$125 price.

CIRCLE 149 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

8-track in homebody

Craig Corp. Products Division has added a home-style 8-track cartridge player to its line. The Model 3204 has a walnut-finish wood cabinet for the deck and electronics, including an amplifier section that Craig pegs at 6 peak watts per channel. The speakers are mini-bookshelf size, not much larger than this page and 4½ inches deep. The price including speakers is \$119.95.

CIRCLE 150 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



BOSE on the reproduction of BASS

If you have heard the BOSE 901 Direct/Reflecting™ speaker system, or if you have read the unprecedented series of rave reviews, you already know that the 901 is the longest step forward in speaker design in perhaps two decades. Since the superiority of the 901 (covered by patent rights issued and pending) derives from an interrelated group of advances, each depending on the others for its full potential, we hope you will be interested in a fuller explanation than is possible in a single issue. This discussion is one of a series on the technical basis of the performance of the BOSE 901.

In other issues of this series we have explained how a multiplicity of same-size, full-range, acoustically coupled speakers "eliminate(s) the sound coloration caused by resonances of speaker systems using only a small number of speakers and by irregularities in the radiated energy spectrum of systems employing crossover networks." But how does the use of 4 inch, full-range speakers allow such spectacular bass performance? It has

always been assumed that large woofers in large enclosures are required to deliver full bass response. The answer to this question lies in the fact that bass performance is purely a matter of how much air you can move and how well you can control its movement. In the 901, this depends on four interrelated features.

- A) *The 'Array Effect'*, by which a group of proximate small speakers, moving in phase, acts like one large speaker with the area of the group.
- B) *The Special Design of the Drivers Used in the 901.* These are special long-excursion, high compliance speakers with large magnets, which can move large amounts of air.
- C) *Use of the Well-Controlled Frequency Region Below Fundamental Resonance.* In conventional speaker design the fundamental resonance is pushed as low as possible and the region below this is discarded

for music reproduction. Contrary to convention, the fundamental resonance of the 901 is designed upward to about 200 Hz. The reasons for this departure are:

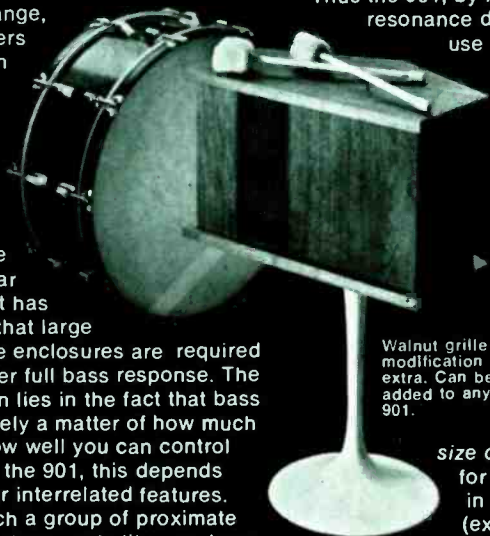
- 1) Below 200 Hz, phase irregularities are much more audible than above 200 Hz.
- 2) Any speaker exhibits strong phase irregularities in the region of and above its fundamental resonance.
- 3) Below fundamental resonance, these irregularities are absent. Both amplitude and phase characteristics are very smooth functions of frequency and are electronically equalizable. Thus the 901, by having its fundamental

resonance designed at 200 Hz, allows us to make use of this region of smooth response to reproduce bass instruments with unprecedented accuracy of timbre.

D) *Active Equalization.* Since phase and amplitude are very smooth below fundamental resonance, it is possible through active equalization to control the amplifier signal to maintain flat radiated power down to lower frequencies than even the largest conventional speakers can produce. Ask your franchised BOSE dealer for an A-B comparison test with the best conventional speaker systems, regardless of their

size or price. Listen especially for the deep accurate bass of the 901 in contrast to the artificial bass (excessive response between 80 Hz and 200 Hz) which is often mistaken in conventional speakers for good low frequency response, but whose thumping and droning cause listener fatigue.

*From 'ON THE DESIGN, MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION OF LOUDSPEAKERS', Dr. A. G. Bose, a paper presented at the 1968 convention of the Audio Engineering Society. Copies of the complete paper are available from the Bose Corp. for fifty cents.



Walnut grille modification extra. Can be added to any 901.

You can hear the difference now.

THE **BOSE** CORP.®

East Natick Industrial Park, Natick, Massachusetts 01760

**Anyone who
wants the best,
and is worried about
spending an extra \$20,
ought to have
his ears examined.**



Look at what you're getting for the extra \$20.00.

The Papst hysteresis motor for reduced noise and rumble, unvarying speed accuracy. An exclusive feature of the Miracord 50H.

The cartridge insert with slotted lead screw for precise stylus overhang adjustment. Without this Miracord exclusive, your whole investment in a record-playing instrument could go down the drain. Because if the stylus overhang is incorrect, the finest cartridge will not track accurately.

The exclusive Miracord pushbuttons—the gentlest touch is all that's needed to put the 50H into automatic play (stacks of 10 or single records). Or you can start the turntable and play single records manually by simply lifting the arm and placing it on the record.

In addition to these exclusive features, the Miracord 50H offers a metal cam (not plastic) for greater reliability; piston-damped cueing; effective anti-skate; a dynamically balanced arm that tracks to 1/2 gram.

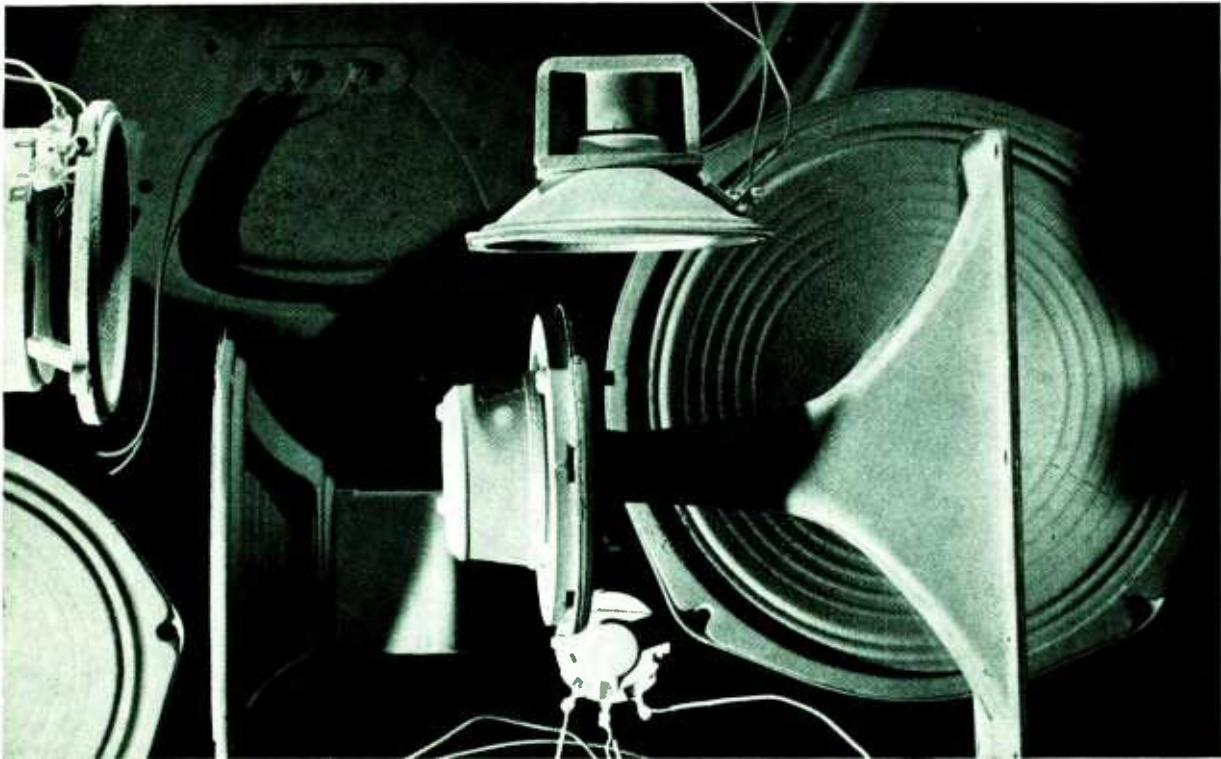
Finally, consider what the leading experts are saying about the Miracord 50H. That \$20 bill looks pretty tiny now, doesn't it? Miracord 50H less cartridge arm and base, \$159.50. The Miracord 620 (\$99.50) and the Miracord 630 (\$119.50) follow in the great tradition of the 50H. See what we mean at your hi-fi dealer.

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CIRCLE 7 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

BY NORMAN EISENBERG



SPEAKERS

FACTS AND FICTION

MANY OF THE STATEMENTS AND QUERIES received at HIGH FIDELITY indicate that there's a thriving body of public misinformation and half-truths regarding loudspeakers. To distill much of it and attempt to substitute facts for fancy, we have listed the following statements and commented on them. As you might expect, not all old wives' tales are utterly without some truth, and a few of them turn out to be wholly true.

Low-efficiency speaker systems that need "25 watts of power" can be adequately driven by a receiver that offers "70 watts of music power."

Probably not, unless you're willing to settle for relatively thin bass, low volume levels, and generally less than the full performance capability of those speaker systems. Here's why: the power requirement

for the speaker is stated as the RMS value of continuous power for one channel of the stereo system. The receiver's power is stated as music power for both of its channels. So, first you must divide the latter figure by two to get the actual music power per channel. You then must further reduce the resultant "35 watts" to a more realistic figure, depending on the receiver's design, the amount of distortion that was present in order for it to produce "35 watts," the load into which it worked for "35 watts," and the fact that the music power measurement is made while one channel of the set is disabled (with both channels used at once as in normal stereo, the power output usually is less). For all this a "70-watt" music-power amplifier or receiver probably cannot be counted on to deliver 25 RMS watts per channel at really low distortion when both channels are used

SPEAKERS

FACTS AND FICTION

simultaneously. For best results then, look for a higher powered unit.

It makes sense to use a top-quality amplifier to drive a relatively modest speaker system, but it is wrong to use a really great speaker with an inferior amplifier.

Both parts of this statement are mostly true, but must be qualified. As long as the modest speaker system's power-handling capability is not exceeded by the power output of the amplifier, it is safe to use the first combination. In fact, we have found that speakers sound better when driven by better amplifiers (i.e., amplifiers with lower distortion, wider range response, higher damping factors, more linear square-wave characteristics, better signal-to-noise ratios). Of course, you eventually reach the point of no improvement, depending on the speaker's design limits—but generally there's some headroom before those limits are reached.

As for the second half of the statement, a better speaker often will improve the sound of an inferior amplifier; this is easily demonstrated by piping your TV set's sound through your hi-fi speakers. But such a hookup also will reveal distortions and inadequacies of that amplifier which a less faithful speaker might mask. What's more, a really poor amplifier—for example, one that has a nasty bass peak, or a tendency to oscillate, or is loaded with violent transients—can, under extreme conditions, even damage a fine speaker.

Horn tweeters are great for reproducing brass instruments, but if you go for string music, select cone tweeters.

No speaker is designed to sound like any musical instrument. All are intended to reproduce signals which themselves are replicas of all musical sounds. Loading a horn to a tweeter is not a way of making that tweeter imitate a horn or any other brass instrument, but a means of coupling the sound to the room. Cone tweeters represent an alternate solution designed to take care of this problem. Any speaker, regardless of type, that tends to favor one family of instruments over another is—to that extent—an inaccurate reproducer.

Horn-loaded speakers are best for bass.

Horn loading is one way—but not necessarily the best for use in a home—of reinforcing bass response in a speaker system. It is an efficient method, acous-

tically, but it requires large dimensions for very deep bass. For this reason, horn loading traditionally has been preferred for very large rooms and auditoriums. Deep bass can be produced by other types of systems, though they will often require greater power from an amplifier for a given size room.

There is no point in using more than one speaker system to listen to a mono amplifier playing mono program material.

While mono sound needs only one reproducing channel, and while adding a second speaker system will not create stereo out of a mono signal, the added speaker does enhance mono playback. It "opens up" the sound, it tends to overcome room acoustic problems that can overwhelm the finest mono speaker system, and it often intensifies the bass power of a system (by providing more air movement than a single system) and treble clarity (by spreading the sound more uniformly through the room).

Directionality—the tendency of a speaker to beam the sound instead of projecting it in the form of a spray or wide spread—is desirable for perception of stereo since it helps to localize the source of sounds.

The fallacy in this belief stems from the notion that all there is to stereo is an awareness of some instruments being on the left and others on the right. Actually, such a simple formulation describes two mono sounds rather than stereophonic sound. In true stereo, as in live sound, you can sense predominant sound source origination, but you also hear that sound "in the round"—with portions of it reaching both ears (at slightly different time intervals). Part of the natural ambience or "acoustical space" of the listening environment also reaches your ears together with the music. Furthermore, a speaker that beams is a speaker that distorts, whether on stereo or mono. The distortion is audible as a kind of canned or honky quality; it is actually closely related to phase distortion in which the split-second timing relationships of fundamentals and their harmonic overtones are not reproduced faithfully. Finally, if you set up a stereo system using speakers deliberately designed to beam (actually high fidelity speakers are designed *not* to beam, and one of the criteria of evaluating a speaker is how little it does beam), only one person would hear stereo at a time, and only in that spot in a room at which the two beams inter-

sected. With such speakers, stereo wouldn't have come as far as it has today.

Several small speakers can furnish as much bass as a single large speaker.

The square-inch surface area of the diaphragm(s) employed in any speaker system can create sufficient radiation resistance for bass propagation whether that area is confined to one massive diaphragm or divided among several smaller ones. However, the relative ability of the diaphragms to vibrate linearly (their "excursions") must be taken into account. It is inherently easier to get a large diaphragm to vibrate in a manner best suited for powerful bass tones, which is why woofers are traditionally large. On the other hand, a smaller diaphragm can be made to vibrate just as effectively, if with somewhat less efficiency—which simply means you need more of them, or more amplifier power to drive them, or both. All this, of course, assumes high-quality speakers of both sizes. You cannot achieve excellent response (bass or otherwise) by using several small low-quality speakers in place of one high-quality speaker. An array of cheap little speakers can indeed move as much air as one larger speaker, but hardly as linearly.

Aside from their inability to separate the sound sources adequately for optimum stereo spread, there really is nothing deficient in the performance of the speaker systems found in most big console sets.

Although this statement may have somewhat more truth now than it had, say, five or six years ago, it is still mostly false. The speakers generally found in consoles are no competition for the separate speaker systems offered by the components industry. As a class, their low-frequency response sounds to our ears boomy and indistinct—with a strong emphasis on midbass and little or no genuine deep bass—and their highs sound peaky and flashy rather than smooth and well dispersed. The exceptions are those consoles made by manufacturers of high fidelity components themselves, such as the Scott model we tested (HF, August 1968).

A center-channel speaker system always helps the sonic presentation of a stereo system.

We agree, although some experts don't (see the round-table discussion beginning on page 49). We favor the center channel (it really isn't a center

"channel" by the way; it's a center sound source derived from a mix of the left and right channels) for the following reasons: it permits you to install the left and right speaker systems for maximum stereo spread without creating a sonic gap; it generally enhances the panorama of sound and helps create the illusion of a proscenium which, interestingly enough, proves just as effective for small ensembles such as jazz combos and chamber groups as it does for symphony orchestras and operatic companies; it overcomes room acoustic problems by the brute-force technique of simply loading more sound into the listening area. The center-sound-source technique is especially recommended for systems using corner or catercorner speakers (themselves so located for maximum bass response), where the reasons stated above apply even more forcibly.

For big sound you need a big speaker system.

First of all, it is not the physical dimensions of the enclosure, but the quality, size, and array of the enclosed speakers—related to the size and design of the box—that determines "bigness." That misconception out of the way, note that for a broad sound front the dispersion characteristic of the high-frequency reproduction is most critical and this is a matter of individual tweeter design rather than of over-all system size. And broadly dispersing, even omnidirectional, tweeters have been designed in fairly compact speaker systems. On the other hand, most bookshelf systems tend to low efficiency—that is, they need relatively more amplifier power to project a given amount of sound into a room. Without ample, clean power, they tend to sound restricted or "small." In contrast, large-enclosure systems as a rule can project more sound with less amplifier power and thus tend to sound "big." However, any size speaker system—if properly designed and properly *powered*—can project "big sound."

High efficiency, in itself, is better than low efficiency—all other things being equal.

Well, yes—except that "all other things" never are equal. You cannot take a given speaker system and neatly change its efficiency from high to low; thus when you talk about comparing speakers of markedly different efficiencies to determine whether efficiency in itself is a virtue, you actually have little or no basis for a valid discussion. What might be

compared, in this context, is the high-efficiency speaker driven by a relatively low-powered amplifier vs. a low-efficiency speaker driven by a high-powered amplifier. And all that this would demonstrate is simply that in a given room either system approach can render an equivalent amount of sound. How good that sound is, or how it pleases you, has little to do with the relative efficiencies of the speakers but rather with such characteristics as their relative linearity, freedom from distortion, dynamic range, frequency response, and so on.

The grille cloth over speaker cabinets serves more than a decorative function—it actually acts as an acoustical filter.

While no grille cloth is absolutely transparent to sound, it is usually designed to be as transparent as possible. Then its filtering action would be negligible. In some systems, though, the grille cloth actually is chosen for its ability to filter and smooth the response. (If you're planning to redecorate your speaker enclosures, check with the speaker manufacturer to find out whether you should choose acoustically transparent cloth or a fabric that has a specific filtering characteristic.)

Speaker impedance is of no concern when using a solid-state amplifier (or receiver) because these units have only one set of output connections.

A transistorized amplifier dispenses with the traditional separate taps marked 4, 8, and 16 ohms; this does not mean, however, that its performance will be the same for any of these speaker impedances. As a consequence of its internal circuit design, a solid-state amplifier's output is optimized to one impedance (usually 4 or 8 ohms), and its effective power ratings will thus be somewhat less for the other two. To put it another way, distortion curves will begin to rise significantly at somewhat lower power levels if you do not use the speaker impedance to which the amplifier is best suited. (We test all amplifiers for an 8-ohm load, since the large majority of hi-fi speakers are rated at that impedance. But some speakers, and many solid-state receivers, are rated by their manufacturers at 4 ohms. If you expect to drive the amplifier section close to its

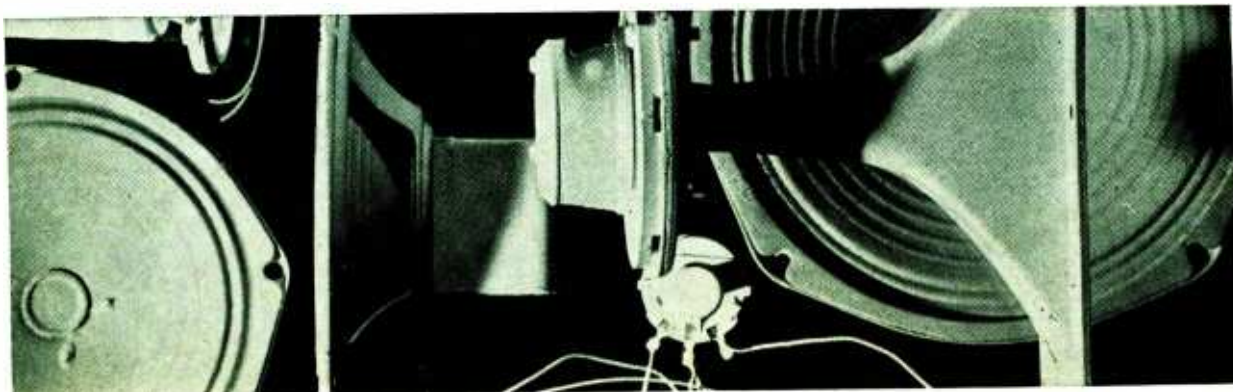
rated power, you'd do well to examine full specifications closely to make sure you really will be getting the power you expect for the speakers you plan to use.) Speaker impedance is also important if you intend to run more than one speaker system per channel with receivers or amplifiers that do not provide separate output taps for such hookups.

If the two speakers of your stereo system must be located so that they face areas in the room that are quite different acoustically, any imbalance in sound can be corrected with the system's tone controls.

Few system owners seem to realize how much they can profit from treble and bass controls, which usually are left untouched at the sacrosanct flat position. If your room is lopsided acoustically, you should certainly experiment with the controls. Asymmetrical effects may sound natural to you because all sounds generated in the room suffer from the imbalance. You may, for instance, be living with dead-sounding violins simply because there are a lot of soft, sound-absorbent materials on the left side of your room. If so, try turning up the treble control on the left channel—assuming, of course, that the controls on the two channels of your equipment can be varied independently. Most ill effects can thus be tempered, but a severe resonance—such as a rattling at 110 Hz of wall panels on the right side of the room whenever the cellos hit their low A—may be beyond the curative powers of your tone controls.

A speaker should be chosen with respect to the response characteristic of one's phono pickup.

Pickups and loudspeakers are among the least linear audio components. If both speaker and pickup are weak (or particularly responsive) at the same frequency, the result can be unpleasant. Conversely, complementary response curves in speaker and pickup may allow each to overcome the shortcomings of the other. For example, if speaker response falls off at the high end, it may sound better with a pickup that has a strong high-end response. If both roll off in that area, the sound will tend to be dull; if both peak, the sound may be strident or harsh. Much the same can be said about response in the low end of the audio spectrum.





R. C. Howard



J. R. Kelly



C. V. Campos

A Symposium

Do radical speaker designs offer anything superior to the simple paper cone in a box? Three experts speak their minds.

SPEAKERS

PRESENT AND FUTURE

THE SCENE: A hotel room in Washington, D. C., during this year's High Fidelity Show. In one corner a tape recorder turns, making the notes from which this condensation was prepared. The dramatis personae: C. Victor Campos, manager of customer service, KLH Research and Development Corp.; Dr. Robert Howard, chief engineer, James B. Lansing Sound, Inc.; Jon R. Kelly, group product manager, Electro-Voice, Inc.; and HIGH FIDELITY.

HIGH FIDELITY: Gentlemen, what in your opinion are some of the more important steps that have been

taken in loudspeaker design and manufacture in the last decade?

KELLY: What we call acoustic suspension was one of the most important because it enabled the industry to offer a good bass reproducer in a size that permitted two systems, for stereo, in a living room. Earlier systems of that size had been deficient in the low end. Equally important, I think, are the steps that have been taken to better distribute the sound in a room. Tweeters, for example, are less beamy than they used to be. A lot of attention is being paid to spatial effects, and I think they will receive more attention in the future.

HOWARD: I don't think acoustic suspension really exists as an independent principle. Enclosures always have increased the spring constant acting on the cone, and what we call acoustic suspension systems are not the first to make use of the fact. What is new in these systems is not the relationship between the speaker and the enclosure, but the linearity and length of stroke in the speaker, and the construction of the surround. There has been a tremendous improvement in this area in the last few years. There are other advantages, too. Look at the way in which linearity is being achieved by various kinds of damping material, on the cone, for example. And then there's the use of acoustical lenses to diffuse sound.

KELLY: Lenses, whatever their merits may be, are not a particularly recent development, of course.

CAMPOS: And let's not forget the recent refinements in the testing of loudspeaker systems. We now use pink noise and the third-octave band-pass technique in test signals, calibrated environments to check speaker performance in what might be considered an ideal room, and tone bursts to determine cone break-up modes and their effect on the over-all performance. Altogether, I think we've made some substantial advances.

KELLY: Despite the advances, testing of loudspeakers remains a problem for all of us. In the final analysis, a listening test is the only sure way.

HF: Of the loudspeaker systems introduced recently, all seem to be variations on an existing theme—a cone loudspeaker, or a group of cone loudspeakers, in a box. Are we locked into that format for all time?

CAMPOS: For all time is a long time. Theoretically, it's possible to make a perfect loudspeaker: the pulsating sphere. We just don't have the techniques or the materials to do it right now.

KELLY: The cone loudspeaker is used almost universally today because it's still the best compromise between what you can get out of it and what it costs to make.

CAMPOS: All loudspeakers are compromises. So the choice becomes partly a question of what the listener is looking for—or, if you will, what kind of distortion he tolerates best. One man might complain of shrieky treble, although the loudspeaker he's listening to may have excellent midrange and bass, and he might reject it for that reason.

KELLY: Every engineer who designs a loudspeaker

will go about it a little bit differently, even though the problems may be the same. But I think more designers are headed in the same direction today than they once were.

HF: And all of us hear slightly differently, don't we, gentlemen?

KELLY: Certainly. But if there were such a thing as a perfect loudspeaker, I think almost everybody would have to like it, at least if realism is to be our goal. That would eliminate personal preference.

CAMPOS: There *are* people who prefer a loudspeaker that purposely colors the sound. The difference, the distortion, is termed many things: presence, solid this, glowing that . . .

HF: Some extremely popular loudspeakers are by no definition flat.

HOWARD: A speaker system you can listen to comfortably over a period of time is one free of large peaks and dips. Whether it falls off at one end or the other is nowhere as significant for long-term pleasure as is the evenness of its frequency response curve. You can't detect variations of a dB or so, but many systems show peaks or drop-outs of 5 and 10 dB, which definitely can be detected in music. That, I think, is the difference between a fine speaker and a passable one.

CAMPOS: It's interesting that given two sounds in an A/B test the human ear tends to prefer the one that is slightly brighter . . .

KELLY: Or slightly louder.

CAMPOS: Yes, or slightly louder, even if the one that it rejects is a true sound. If you compare live musicians to a recording, and the speaker is brighter than the natural sound, the ear will tend to prefer the speaker.

KELLY: Incidentally, I'm not even sure that there can be a single perfect loudspeaker. One that would be fine for reproducing the Philadelphia Orchestra might sound poor with a Mario Lanza record or a string quartet.

CAMPOS: You can make a loudspeaker so good—with such an extended range—that it will make almost anything you play sound terrible. You begin to hear all of the extraneous material on top of the music.

HOWARD: I don't know what you mean by a speaker that's too good. Wide-range response in a speaker won't hurt anything unless you feed in something you don't want to hear.

CAMPOS: At one time, we made a tweeter whose power response was flat up to 22,000 Hz. But we couldn't use it. It would have required a filter to make its sound listenable with the noisy program material available.

HOWARD: I don't see why there should be trouble with such a speaker. No recorded sound goes up to 22,000 Hz, but if the speaker goes that high you won't have any trouble with resonances that occur in the high end.

KELLY: There is no reason to build a tweeter flat to 22,000 Hz. Certainly it isn't necessary in order to prevent high-end resonances—proper selection of

diaphragm materials for a speaker will do the trick.
HF: If we had the perfect record and the perfect tape—if we somehow eliminated tape hiss—would we then desire a perfectly flat speaker?

CAMPOS: Well, yes. If perfection were possible, the better the speaker, the better it would sound in any environment. But we're very far from perfection because, even in making original master tapes, there are all kinds of variables.

KELLY: And there still is the problem of the listening room.

CAMPOS: Yes, theoretically, the perfect loudspeaker would have to be built for one room, much the way an organ is voiced for a particular church. If the owner moved, he'd have to take the room with him.

HF: You gentlemen probably remember a loudspeaker not too long ago that was shaped like a lamp with an electrostatic tweeter in the shade. The Ionovac goes back a little further than that. Also, electrostatics have been around for a while, and there have been other things, like the flame speaker. None of these really seems to have caught the imagination of the buying public. And none seems to have led to refinements of any sort. Are these all blind alleys of a sort?

KELLY: That question takes us back to performance vs. cost. Another important factor is the complexity of the equipment. The Ionovac speaker worked beautifully when it did work. But keeping it working was sometimes a bit of a problem.

CAMPOS: Cone loudspeakers made by hi-fi manufacturers have a fantastic record of reliability. Most of the loudspeakers that come back do so because they have been subjected to abuse or misuse, like playing test records without knowing what they can do to the speakers. Within the framework of cost and performance, however, the cone loudspeaker is way ahead of any other.

HF: What about those new ones, the plastic panels and the transducer shaped like a half grapefruit you attach to the wall to make it come alive with sound?

KELLY: Now we're in the area of gadgets—they're cute, and they can be fun; but they're not high fidelity. Loudspeaker design is a subject hobbyists tend to think they understand. Many people, working in their basements or in their garages, invent what they think are new, revolutionary, radical loudspeakers. A speaker is easier to work with than a tuner, a cartridge, or an amplifier. It's also easier to sell a few of these speakers to people who, in turn, think *they* understand how it works. And, incidentally, any new product that involves a mysterious little black box or a new principle almost always is suspect from the beginning. It usually makes the total system more complex and less reliable than it has to be.

HF: Speaking of total systems, what about multi-amplification—using an electronic crossover to split the audio spectrum into several frequency bands and feeding them through their own amplifiers into separate drivers?

CAMPOS: I don't see any justification for using four or six amplifiers in a stereo system. It quadruples

the cost of the system and to no material advantage.
KELLY: There are some benefits to multi-amplification, but for most people they don't merit the expense and the trouble.

HF: "We've been told that with some systems this approach should be avoided.

KELLY: Yes, with some makes of tweeters and mid-range drivers there is the risk of damage through direct connection to the amplifier.

CAMPOS: And in the design of a two-way speaker system, for example, the crossover network is part of the system. If someone disconnects the crossover to use the speakers in a bi-amplifier system, his new system cannot be as good as the factory-built version in terms of linearity, frequency response, crossover frequency, optimal damping, and so on—unless he has extensive testing facilities. And a three-way system makes the problem even more complex.

HOWARD: If you start from scratch in designing a system, you get the most flexibility with an electronic crossover. You can tailor anything to anything: you can have any coupling, any damping factor, and any frequency curve you need to compensate for any given factor. There's no doubt that you can beat conventional crossovers and speakers working this way. But as far as I know, no one has done it, obviously because of the cost of doing it right.

HF: Some pre-engineered systems have been announced. But, suppose a customer came to you and said, "I want you to recommend a set of drivers and a cabinet of your own design that you think will work optimally with a tri-amplification or bi-amplification system." Using that approach, do you think multiple amplifiers make sense?

KELLY: Yes—if we had the engineering time to work with him. The result could be a really fine speaker system.

CAMPOS: That would make it a custom-engineering job. But even if the approach were possible, the customer would end up with such a fantastic range of adjustments in his system that he'd have trouble setting it so that it would perform properly. Even a good system can sound poor when it's poorly adjusted.

HF: You mention control over damping factor as an advantage to the engineered amplifier/speaker system. What can be said about the problems that arise when speaker and amplifier are not matched in this respect?

CAMPOS: It's not necessarily good to use the highest damping factor you can get.

KELLY: No, you want *optimum* damping factor.

CAMPOS: Right. If the optimum damping factor for a given speaker is 5, and you use an amplifier with a damping factor of 100, it may sound clean—but that is because it's rolling off the bass. The amplifier is putting an electronic hand on the speaker cone, so it can't move at low frequencies. Our solution is to design the crossover so that it limits the effective damping factor acting on the speaker to about 8.

HF: And yet many people observed—or thought they observed—a marked improvement in the per-

formance of early acoustic suspension systems when they were driven by solid-state amplifiers with high damping factors, rather than tubed electronics that tended to have low damping factors.

CAMPOS: The problem in checking amplifiers and speakers together is that the performance of an amplifier will vary, depending on which speaker you hang on it. The differences were much smaller with tubed amplifiers than they are with transistor amplifiers because the tubed circuits had an output transformer in the feedback loop. There is no transformer in a transistor amplifier, so in many cases the speaker voice coil becomes part of the feedback loop and affects the feedback.

KELLY: That's one reason there can be advantages to those designs that integrate the power amplifier and loudspeaker into a single system. Also, you can tailor the response curve of the amplifier, as well as its damping factor, to the requirements of the speaker system—where that is necessary. Keeping the leads short between amplifier and speaker is a help, too.

HOWARD: The leads are not much of a problem. People worry about the resistance of the leads, but the main impedance is the loudspeaker voice coil. The fact that you change the damping factor of the amplifier considerably doesn't mean that you change the damping action of the system very much. So, while it's good to have short leads, I can't see that it's really a matter for very serious consideration. Our Energizers are built with the thought that, given a particular speaker and enclosure system, you can

do slightly better if you tailor output impedance and frequency response of the amplifier to that speaker.

KELLY: But keeping lead resistance to a minimum still is worthwhile and reduces the possibility of poor connections. One disadvantage of integrated systems, however, is the reduced versatility range of choice—for both consumer and dealer.

CAMPOS: And there's another serious disadvantage to integrated amplifier-loudspeaker combinations: should the amplifier be built to tax the speaker to the utmost to fill very large rooms? Isn't it a little unfair to ask the fellow with a 15- by 20-foot living room to pay for 100 watts in each speaker? But if the power of the amplifier is reduced, the man with a large room may no longer be able to fill it.

HF: What do you think of adding center fill or possibly surround speakers to enhance the stereo presentation, or to solve problems of room acoustics, or of sonic dispersion?

HOWARD: They should definitely be used, particularly in wide rooms. The trouble is the adjustment of multi-speaker systems for optimum performance.

CAMPOS: Yes, and not only the initial adjustment; it has been our experience that a multispeaker system has to be readjusted for different recordings.

KELLY: My first inclination is to say, if someone wants to buy another set of loudspeakers, more power to him. But he's on his own. He's likely to have more troubles than benefits.

CAMPOS: There are bound to be phasing problems. And these experiments with surround speakers work against the basic premise of stereophony, which is that all recordings are made to be reproduced on two speakers facing out toward the listener.

HF: In experiments with extra speakers—center speakers, left and right surround speakers, rear speakers—those who heard the results found them very exciting. We don't know, of course, whether a multiple-speaker system would continue to sound good if an owner had to live with it over a long period of time.

CAMPOS: You have to live with it. I lived with a surround system for a year. After a while its initial impact wore off and it began to sound very unnatural.

KELLY: A better approach would be to engineer the spatial effect into the individual loudspeakers in the first place. You're right that multiple-speaker systems aren't stereo as we define the term.

HOWARD: What difference does that make if you can reproduce sound so that it will be closer to the real thing? The subject of two speakers vs. three was studied in great depth by the Bell System. The best situation, of course, turned out to be the one where three separate channels were used. People could distinguish not only left and right, but also depth. Unfortunately, we don't have three individual channels available in our program material. But even with two channels, three loudspeakers—left, right, and left-plus-right in the center—proved considerably better than just two loudspeakers, one per channel. Klipsch, too, has recommended a center

Publicity Photo of the Month

Clairtone Sound Corp., Ltd.



"... And this model produces 3 watts flower power."

speaker in recent years. I suspect it is a better investment than electronic crossovers.

HF: Are you talking about three *equivalent* speakers?

HOWARD: Yes, although apparently you don't need quite as much bass and middle in the center channel, which, I believe, should be down 3 dB from the side channels, according to Bell.

HF: To change the subject, what is the life expectancy of the average bookshelf speaker?

KELLY: Virtually unlimited, barring abuse.

CAMPOS: Even considering the gradual rate at which speaker design advances, it probably would be superseded before it ceased to function.

HF: Does this vary from one type of system to another—from acoustic suspension to bass reflex, for example?

CAMPOS: No. But in some cities the smog is so bad it can attack certain kinds of adhesives, fixers, and other things used in making loudspeakers—break them down and change them chemically.

KELLY: Also some of the early attempts to make polyurethane cones or surrounds ran into real trouble. I've seen some imported speakers only a half-dozen years old whose surrounds looked as though they had been eaten away.

HOWARD: A hi-fi loudspeaker, unless there's a manufacturing defect in it, is essentially immortal, but its fidelity will change somewhat with time if it accumulates moisture and, possibly, even dirt. I would suspect that the cone of an old felt-type loudspeaker weighs more than it did when it was made. And the surround has some tendency to harden. We're working on new materials for surrounds, cements and so on that would be more resistant to ions and other deleterious elements in the atmosphere.

KELLY: Another important consideration is that we're producing larger quantities of loudspeakers. As the industry has expanded, it's become possible to employ specialists in materials and in manufacturing techniques.

HOWARD: We're going to end up with more power-handling capacity in high fidelity loudspeakers, too, because of what has been happening in musical instrument speakers. The people who use those things seem to be deaf. They use fantastic power amplifiers—I saw a *kilowatt* amplifier advertised the other day. No person with normal hearing could stand it. That kind of power has caused a lot of field failures—literally destroyed the loudspeakers: cones have torn, surrounds have split, voice coils have pulled apart. But we're catching up with them. I'm sure the work on instrument loudspeakers will be reflected in the high fidelity field.

CAMPOS: The single most outstanding improvement right now is in loudspeaker uniformity. You can take random speakers, two or three years apart in manufacture, and they will sound very much alike.

HF: One other big development in recent years has been the reduction in the size of the enclosure.

CAMPOS: The size of the enclosure is dictated by the woofer. There is an optimal size beyond which

you lose in both directions, bigger and smaller. Both AR and KLH have found that the optimal size woofer for home use would be a 12-inch cone. That's what determines both the system's size and its efficiency.

HF: But AR, KLH, E-V, and half a dozen other companies have come out with smaller speakers that sound surprisingly good for their size.

CAMPOS: Yes, but at the expense of half an octave at the bottom. What the designer wants is a certain stiffness in the enclosed volume of air to control the resonance of one particular woofer. If you vary the size of the woofer, the size of the enclosure has to vary.

HOWARD: The size of the system has more to do with power rating than with frequency, though. This isn't what we've been taught, I know, but it can be demonstrated. Let's say we have a 6-cubic-foot enclosure with a 15-inch loudspeaker and a 1½-cubic-foot enclosure with an 8-inch speaker and a passive radiator. If you feed them both with an oscillator at about 40 Hz, keeping the levels low, they'll sound very much alike. But at higher levels you can't use the little system.

KELLY: The size of the system is related to the desired acoustic output at the lowest desired frequency—not to power rating.

HF: Are the largest woofers a disadvantage in the home—in terms of cone breakup, for instance, or in uniformity of suspension and paper?

KELLY: Not the way we use our 30-inch driver, with a very low crossover frequency. The only problem is trying to build big-woofer systems small enough to fit comfortably into the home.

HF: What do you foresee in the immediate future? Will speakers get smaller? Will they get bigger? Will they get cheaper?

CAMPOS: I don't think we will see any drastic changes in either size or principle. Perhaps we'll have reductions in cost.

HOWARD: I think we'll see better control of frequency response. In other words, when you rate a speaker for 20 to 20,000 Hz, or whatever the numbers may be, you will mean that it's flat within 1 dB over most of that range. And it won't have peaks or valleys that run more than 3 dB. Also, I think we'll achieve better resistance to both atmosphere and abuse, and achieve better sound dispersion.

KELLY: We started out by saying that the cone loudspeaker still represents the best compromise between what it does and what it costs. If something is going to replace the cone as a way of reproducing sound, I think it's something we don't know about yet—not just one of the current alternate systems with improvements.

HF: And we must keep in mind that first impressions usually are wrong in listening to sound, because what sounds *different* also may sound *better* for a little while. But, over the long haul, a smooth response makes music sound as it ought to sound. Thank you, gentlemen.

A 60-YEAR-OLD CONTROVERSY FLARES UP AGAIN

By Diana Cavallo

Miss Cavallo, now in residence at the American Academy in Rome with her husband, composer Henry Weinberg, is currently writing a book about conductor Serge Koussevitzky, to be published in 1970 by Harcourt Brace & World, Inc.



Koussevitzky in the early 1900s, a man of "influence."

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN Alexander Scriabin and Serge Koussevitzky went through many stages and transformations before becoming mired in a strange mixture of painful financial and social misunderstandings that led to total rupture. From a high point of mutual need and understanding, an equality and balance which had initiated their friendship—each a successful figure in his own right, each admiring the other's talents—their feelings and attitudes began to undergo subtle and then drastic changes.

Scriabin was already a distinguished composer when Koussevitzky met him in Lausanne, Switzerland in 1908. The death of Belaieff, his first benefactor, had left the composer without a publisher for some time, for immediately after Belaieff died in 1904, the new directors of the publishing house had declined Scriabin's recently more venturesome compositions. Thus his honorarium was reduced by half—a situation which led to mutual dissatisfaction and put an end to the association. Furthermore, what had replaced the Belaieff support—the patronage of Margarita Morozova who supplied Scriabin with 2,400 rubles annually—had recently collapsed, due, apparently, to the increasing demands by the composer for greater recognition and adulation, all in addition to the appearance of an outright check. Scriabin

Opposing biographies of the two antagonists have re-ignited the Koussevitzky-Scriabin Scandale

By Faubion Bowers

Mr. Bowers, a one-time pupil of Alexander Siloti—one of the featured players in the conflict—has just had his biography of Alexander Scriabin published by Kondasha International. The following excerpt is adapted from the book.

IN EARLY 1911, upon Scriabin's return to Russia from a German concert tour, a gargantuan rupture burst wide the friendship of Koussevitzky and Scriabin. There was a check for a thousand rubles in Koussevitzky's quarterly payment to cover the entire 1910 Volga tour. The performances in which the two men had appeared in public so happily were paid on a surprising, niggardly basis—one hundred rubles a concert.

"A scandal," screamed Scriabin over the telephone, passing the flash point of anger. "I received more when I was a student at the Conservatory." Koussevitzky lost his temper.

"You are worth no more!"

Friends on both sides fanned the flames of enmity by their opinions, intrusions, and mere listening presence. The consensus wanted Koussevitzky to have his comeuppance. Joseph Koussevitzky, doctor and pathologist, wrote in an unpublished memoir that Scriabin offended his uncle all along by refusing to treat him as an artist. He consistently relegated him to the background, and Koussevitzky was, after all, a virtuoso, a conductor, and a man who "owned an orchestra all his own and a music publishing firm." He felt that he was in a position to talk "eye to eye . . . he was boss of the outfit . . . he invited



Scriabin in 1912, the year after the rupture.

Cavallo/Koussevitzky

also had not yet resolved the major obstacle in his personal life at that time, for his return to Russia was impeded by his wife's refusal to grant him a divorce. He was thus unable to marry Tatiana Schloezer and reside, as he preferred, in Moscow. The liaison between Tatiana and Scriabin had already created legal and moral problems during the composer's American tour. Eventually, these unresolved problems coalesced, and in 1908 Scriabin found himself at a low point in his professional and personal fortunes and nearly destitute.

Koussevitzky became aware of the dismal situation only after he visited Scriabin in Switzerland. He was astonished to find the five-room apartment almost totally bare of furnishings—a small table, a piano, and a single chair that had to be dragged from room to room whenever necessary. Scriabin and Koussevitzky had to sit on a window sill as they talked. In every corner, on piano, and floor, were hundreds of copies of Scriabin's Fifth Piano Sonata, which he, for lack of a publisher, had had privately printed, only to discover that they could not be adequately distributed or sold in this way. He had no idea what could be done with his scores.

In dramatic contrast to this, Koussevitzky outlined details of a project that had recently absorbed his attention and which he felt might resolve the composer's dilemma: the creation of a new music venture devoted to the cause of modern Russian music and composers—what was later to be called Edition Russe de Musique. As he envisioned it, it would consist of a publishing house specifically set up to subsidize composers by giving them grants for works in progress, with publication, distribution, and sales of the resulting works through the company's own stores in St. Petersburg and Moscow. It would also pay increased attention to foreign sales. In its publishing contracts with composers there would be no profit beyond costs to the publisher, and all royalties thereafter would accrue to the composer. In addition, these ventures would be complemented by an orchestral and chamber series to disseminate the new works and thus help create a public for this music. Scriabin was overwhelmingly enthusiastic, particularly when Koussevitzky offered him 5,000 rubles a year subsidy (approximately \$2,500), a considerable sum in those days. Koussevitzky also asked Scriabin to serve—along with Rachmaninoff and a few other prominent musicians—as a director of the new enterprise. They would act as an artistic jury to select composers to be subsidized and scores to be published.

This initial period of high hopes developed into a profitable and positive collaboration in every respect. Scriabin prospered financially and professionally; his new, more controversial works appeared under the Edition Russe (or Russischer Verlag) imprint. He was lionized by Russian audiences, performers, and above all by Koussevitzky, who conducted Scriabin's music continually.

As a member of Koussevitzky's special jury, Scriabin championed the bolder and more experimental music; this made him a valuable member, often a voice of opposition against Medtner, Tancieff, and Rachmaninoff, all of whom were more conservative. In the most famous of these disputes, Scriabin argued in favor of publishing Stravinsky's *Petrouchka*, the first composition under consideration, and of subsidizing the work of the young Prokofiev, heatedly rejected by a majority of the members. In both instances Koussevitzky agreed with Scriabin. Edition Russe published *Petrouchka*, and eventually a whole catalogue of Stravinsky works.

In the case of Prokofiev, the situation became so difficult among the directors that Koussevitzky acquired the Guntheil publishing house as a subsidiary, partly to avoid similar confrontations. He organized the new firm without a jury so that he could be free to deal with such cases as the Prokofiev affair.

In his personal life, Scriabin finally resolved the conflict with his wife: a divorce was granted and he married Tatiana. Re-entry into Russian social life was, however, difficult at best, and in this Koussevitzky was able to serve as mediator and shield during those early days. Scriabin and his new wife were often house guests of Koussevitzky, who made it a point to introduce the couple to all his friends, thereby strengthening the ties between the two households. Koussevitzky, in spite of his success in his new-chosen field as a conductor, was waging social battles of his own, fighting subtle hostilities that greeted his return to the Russian scene. Although he was warmly heralded as a great virtuoso of the double bass, many resented his "intrusion" into the field of conducting, feeling his musical position was won through the wealth and influence he had attained by his marriage, rather than on the basis of long preparation and a rise through the usual conservatory channels. Koussevitzky was also subjected to much social prejudice; he himself had remarried and was, in addition, of Jewish origin, although a convert to the Russian Orthodox Church. Thus his championing of Scriabin on these extramusical fronts was a challenge and a strongly held position of principle.

The cracks in the Scriabin-Koussevitzky relationship began in a dissatisfaction with what the years had done. Scriabin in the meantime had embraced the religious mysticism of Mme. Blavatsky. He increasingly saw himself as a messianic figure, more demanding in the idolatry he had begun to expect of others. The consequent pressures of this attitude forced a change on the two musicians' respective roles, quite outside a composer-conductor or composer-publisher relationship. This new inequality was perhaps the most disturbing influence in their personal relations and, in time, small incidents became magnified and distorted, which soured their friendship.

In 1911, the situation became critical. All the in-



The smile didn't last long: Scriabin on the steamboat First during the historic 1910 Volga tour with Koussevitzky that precipitated the crisis in their relationship.

performers to participate in his concerts on his terms and he paid them on his terms . . ."

Scriabin considered Koussevitzky an employer, leader of the orchestra, but servant of the soloist and a slave of the composer's music.

"I would not perish without *you*," Scriabin cried, "but certainly you would perish without *me* to build your reputation on!" Since this confirmed what he knew was true, Koussevitzky raged all the louder. Scriabin's conceited tone of voice was the breaking straw. Koussevitzky hung up the receiver, sat down, and sent Scriabin a bill for all monies advanced him.

Arthur Lourié simplified Koussevitzky's side of the story on the basis that the conductor had been unable to go all the way toward becoming "a Scriabin fanatic—and this was indispensable to the maintenance of a close contact with the composer." But Scriabin's version as quoted by his biographer Leonid Sabaneeff differs, and rings more true to on-the-spot fact.

I said to him when he asked for so much money back, "Who are you? and now compare it with who *I* am." . . . And do you know what he said? He said, "I've done a lot for you." *He* . . . done a lot? I said that he and all his ilk ought to rejoice at the chance to work with creative

artists like me and not carry on so disgracefully. Ludwig of Bavaria would have endured anything from Wagner. That rankled him. He answered, "Ludwig was only a king, and I am an *artist*." Those were *my* words he spoke . . . my very words that I had said to him long ago when I told him that the calling of an artist was higher than a king. And he threw my own words back at *me!* All to serve his own purpose.

Of course, Scriabin considered money from Koussevitzky a creative subsidy, a gift against labor, no more to be repaid (were it ever possible for an artist to repay) than the Morozova fund or Belaieff's stipend. He wrote Koussevitzky that he had released himself from any obligation he might feel toward him and in view of the hard personal relationship now arisen, Koussevitzky was free of any commitment to him. One hotheaded draft of a letter never sent has been found. It chokes with fury. He has scratched out, erased, crossed with lines and Xs, abbreviated, but the gist reads: ". . . no answer to letters . . . writing clarification . . . as of 1 April consider myself free . . . if not agreeable to you, my address . . ." Scriabin assumed that Koussevitzky's silence erased the matter.

Scriabin, still whimpering from the impecunious, Belaieff-less years, would not have been so courageous had there not been the possibility of rapprochement with the wealthy pianist/conductor Alexander Siloti. The Scriabin-Koussevitzky scandal traveled as fast as telegraph wires could carry it, and the news fed Russia's musical trenchermen for a year and more. When Scriabin finally telegraphed his release—the wish was greater than the fact—on 11 May, 1911, FREE ACT QUICKLY GREETINGS, Siloti quick as an arrow to its target proposed a Scriabin Cycle: 1,000 rubles to play *Prometheus* on 5 November; 1,200 rubles for a pair of solo recitals, 31 October and 7 November. With still more enthusiasm at the prospect of capturing a prize, and with uncanny subtlety, he transmitted a message from his cousin Rachmaninoff, who had just been appointed permanent conductor of the Moscow Philharmonic. Rachmaninoff would pay 700 rubles for a Moscow concert slated for 10 December, where Scriabin would play his own Concerto and Rachmaninoff would conduct Scriabin's First Symphony.

Scriabin accepted everything. To Rachmaninoff he wrote: "My only regret is that it is the Concerto and not *Prometheus* which reunites us . . ." When Siloti invited the Scriabins to stay with them in Petersburg, Scriabin took a snide swipe at Koussevitzky and his hospitality. "How pleasant for an artist to be the guest of an artist. I hope closer acquaintance with me will not disillusion you too much. I will also gladly give you the manuscript of any orchestral pieces I might write this summer before sending them to be published, but naturally I cannot vouchsafe the sort of compositions they will be. . . ." To a friend he writes that Siloti "has the

Cavallo/Koussevitzky

ipient misunderstandings and dissatisfactions converged to produce several incidents that damaged the relationship. Terms of the publishing contract, which had formerly been considered in Scriabin's best interests, were found to be wanting and paltry, but exchanges along these lines were usually indirect and took the form of complaints to other persons, resulting in frequent distortion of what actually took place and what was said. Also, according to Nicholas Slonimsky, an expert on Russian music of this period, Scriabin was surprised to find that in return for the money he was receiving from Edition Russe he had obligations for compositions, which he was fulfilling less and less during his period of increasing involvement in mysticism. The arrangement was a far cry from the patronage of Mme. Morozova. This confusion arose because, as Slonimsky points out, there was no written contract. Unfortunately, much of what later happened was also based on verbal exchange, which accounts both for the troublesome problem of interpretation and the fact that much original and primary source material is unavailable. As for Koussevitzky, all his personal property, including scores, books, and correspondence, but with the exception of his double bass, remained in Russia when he left Moscow in 1920, and the details of their whereabouts is officially unknown.

Another matter that added to the tension at that time was the reverberations from the highly successful concert tour along the Volga in 1910. Koussevitzky had rented a steamer and at his own expense transported an entire symphony orchestra to play in towns and villages in parts of Russia where most of the public had never heard symphonic music—or even an orchestra. On this tour, Koussevitzky conducted several works by Scriabin, who appeared on the program as piano soloist, playing his own music. Sometime later, the story was circulated that Scriabin had been paid only 100 rubles for each of the eleven performances. Other members of the concert tour reported that the sum was, in fact, ten times that. Obviously 1,000 rubles was easily translated into 100 in the climate of word-of-mouth partisanship that enveloped the two principals. Even so unfriendly a biographer of Koussevitzky as Moses Smith admits that this issue was considerably distorted, and that 1,000 rubles per appearance seemed the more likely sum.

It is difficult to know for certain if an actual exchange did occur in which Koussevitzky insulted Scriabin, telling him he "was only worth 100 rubles anyway." This would be totally inconsistent with Koussevitzky's reverent attitude toward talented composers, Scriabin in particular. Whether he really had been provoked, and reacted, can never be ascertained. Those closest to Koussevitzky claim the incident never took place. Outbursts of temper on Koussevitzky's part might easily have been triggered during rehearsal situations or by a specific provocation, but this was not common to his temperament

and not likely to be directed at those whom he respected and admired.

But an actual incident preceding the final break in this last year of friendship was even more farfetched and trivial than those generally reported. On the occasion of the world premiere of *Prometheus* in 1911 the Koussevitzkys planned a huge reception in Scriabin's honor. In making preparations for the affair, Natalie Koussevitzky asked if the Scriabins might cancel their own private party in favor of a larger and more general reception, plans for which were already under way, since many invited guests would be caught between two conflicting arrangements. The presence of Scriabin himself was absolutely essential to the reception they were planning.

The Scriabins refused and, as it subsequently turned out, were offended and even insulted at this suggestion, interpreting the change in plans as arrogance on the part of the Koussevitzkys and a lack of respect for Scriabin, whose evening this was to be. The extent of the Scriabin reaction became clear when both husband and wife virtually ceased to speak to the Koussevitzkys, and Scriabin withdrew a composition already projected for Edition Russe. It is quite likely that the reported arguments about money and publication arose at this point, particularly those that related to Edition Russe.

As a consequence of this disagreement, Scriabin offered his work to the Belaieff publishing house, which had shown a renewed interest in his music. But whatever terms were discussed were not agreed upon. Scriabin then presented the composition to Jurgensen, a Moscow publisher, whose generous offer resulted in a contract and a permanent split with Edition Russe. Partisans on each side made matters worse by giving conflicting versions and interpretations of these events. Despite the rupture, Koussevitzky continued to perform Scriabin's music, and the Scriabin Second Symphony was a high point of the 1914 Volga concerts.

Not until Scriabin was dying was the prospect of reconciliation even remotely possible, but unfortunately it never came to pass. Koussevitzky was told later that Scriabin had specifically asked to see him in those last days, wishing to end their quarrel. Those around Scriabin however never relayed this message or acted upon his request, and when in the spring of 1915 Scriabin died of blood poisoning no reunion had ever taken place. Koussevitzky was deeply shocked by Scriabin's death and even more dismayed to learn his family would not be provided for. He sponsored and organized a series of benefits with Rachmaninoff, Orlov, and Borovsky as soloists and with himself as conductor; the proceeds went to Mme. Scriabin. Koussevitzky even included a double bass recital of his own to raise additional funds.

Thirty-five years later in the spring of 1950, only a year before Koussevitzky's own death, the episode had a dramatic epilogue. A strange posthumous reconciliation took place on Koussevitzky's first trip to

Bowers/Scriabin

soul of an artist! . . . In advance I can even taste the sweet repose of being in the company of dear and cultured people."

Another bee flies to the open honey pot. From the Belaieff firm comes a Liadov letter, Thursday, 13 May:

To us all has come word that you have definitely broken with Koussevitzky. The Board of Trustees has instructed me to write you that they always treasured and still treasure your music. They therefore invite you to publish again with us. Please answer.

I rejoice that you are negotiating with Siloti. He is an excellent person with a deep artistic soul. The better you know him, the more you will love him. I can imagine how revolting and ruffling this whole affair with Koussevitzky has been for you and Tatiana Fyodorovna [Scriabin's mistress]. Money is the lowest thing in the world. And yet, how can we do without it?

Scriabin guardedly answered on the 15th, the day before leaving Moscow for the summer vacation:

The call from my dear old friends touched me deeply. Tell the Board that I am moved by their kindness and say that in principle I would be very glad to return to the firm, but can only do so when my position with the firm of K is definitely clarified. This will be very soon, I hope, because I await the reply to a letter of inquiry.

Fortunately, for the interests of accuracy, one short exchange of letters speaks precisely of the Scriabin-Koussevitzky altercation. Siloti wrote on 1 July, 1911:

A rumor reached me today, spread by Koussevitzky, who is angry that we have joined together, that I will never get a single piece of new music from you because you belong to him under eternal contract. Did you give him such a promise verbally or in writing? And unconditionally? Is your obligation only to give him first rights on purchasing new and future compositions, or does it include *first performance* rights as well? If no official mention has been made of *performances*, then K rejoices before his time. You then have the rights of *FIRST performance*, and afterward you can sell the pieces to him. Sale and performing are two different things! The only inconvenience is for the orchestra playing from manuscript instead of printed pages. Incidentally, the parts for *Prometheus* have not yet appeared in print. I have studied the score closely. God bless it! What an amazing piece it is!

Siloti will write again: "Now that our 'concert' arrangements are settled, now only can I say to you that your *Prometheus* pleases me *TERRIFICALLY!* It is a *colossal* composition, just what I expected from you. *Prometheus* is so full of colors that one's head spins. My dream now is that you will be pleased with my performance! I approach it like all big works. It is clear and simple, but requires a very good and careful performance. Perhaps I will be

able to communicate my enthusiasm to the musicians in the orchestra."

One reply from Koussevitzky to Scriabin—the only Koussevitzky letter on the subject in existence—is dated 10 August, and presents a calmer version of the disputation:

The direct answer to your questions, Alexander Nikolaevich, is the same as in former letters which you could not have received, because you seem to have forgotten our verbal agreement where for a five-year period you are to be published solely by the Russian Music Edition. This clause could not be omitted from our agreement because during this five-year period you received a guarantee of 5,000 rubles per year to enable you to work on compositions to be completed in due course and obviously to be published by the Russian Music Edition.

At the time these general terms were being laid down, they seemed perfectly in order, because we could not set dates as this could only depend on you. The relations now existing between us demand more specific terms. Those conditions are no longer satisfactory. For instance, over the past three years you have written *Prometheus* and two piano pieces [Op. 59], and the honorarium for these, including the 5th Sonata and two other pieces [Op. 52—three pieces] you gave to the Edition, does not exceed 3,000 rubles. This means you have in excess of 13,500 rubles, and must by some means or other begin repaying this balance of payments. The best thing for us would be to work out with N. Struve as intermediary some solution acceptable by both sides when I return to Moscow. I have selected Struve because he was the only person present at our verbal agreement.

Choking through his rage at one of the frustrating letters preceding this cordially couched ultimatum, Scriabin had written Sabaneeff on 1 July, "I received a letter from K so upsetting in its oddness, its baseless claims, that I still have not come back to my senses. I am in a fury!" And now, rich Koussevitzky is adamant toward the poor composer. On 10 September, Scriabin actually sent a packet of cash to Koussevitzky who, refusing to accept the insult and certainly not desirous of letting his golden composer slip through his fingers, sent Struve to return it. At year's end and New Year's beginning, when Scriabin gave Koussevitzky a series of unflawed masterpieces—Sixth and Seventh Sonatas, *Poem-Nocturne*, and two venturesome little pieces, *Masks* and *Strangeness*—all rinsed in the very dye of genius and innovation, Koussevitzky respectfully honored them with a payment of 10,500 rubles. He tendered an account showing that Scriabin now owed him 3,000 rubles' worth of music. Scriabin, however, placing still higher value on the music, considered the account closed and never sent the Russian Music Edition another piece of music.

Scriabin could no longer bring himself even to utter Koussevitzky's name, or patronymic. He called him "he" or "that man" for the rest of his life, if the

A Pastel as Clue



Scriabin and Koussevitzky by Pasternak.

This strange pastel, for many years believed lost, is well known to Scriabin scholars, but only in a black-and-white reproduction. We reproduce it here in color for the first time. Apparently the only extant picture to show Scriabin and Koussevitzky together. HIGH FIDELITY's discovery of the original among Koussevitzky's prized possessions may serve as a clue to the conductor's unchanged attitude toward the composer despite the break in their relationship. The pastel was drawn by Leonid Pasternak (father of Boris), one of Russia's most famous artists, who later made a celebrated portrait of Lenin. The Pasternaks and Scriabins had been friends since the beginning of the century, and in the years 1903-04 lived in adjoining country estates at Obolenskoe.

Pasternak's pastel, depicting the all-Scriabin concert of March 2, 1911, shows Koussevitzky on the podium and the composer at the piano performing *Prometheus (Poem of Fire)*.

Some time during the next few years the pastel disappeared, and there is no indication that Scriabin ever saw it before his death in 1915. In 1922, Koussevitzky, then living in Europe, was told that a Parisian art dealer had in his possession a drawing of Scriabin and the conductor. It was, of course, the Pasternak. Far from eschewing any memories of his once warm relationship with Scriabin, as soon as Koussevitzky was shown the pastel, he bought it. When he emigrated to the United States to become conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, he brought the drawing with him, unaware that it was the object of a scholarly search throughout Russia and Western Europe. In his later years he built the estate Seranak in Lenox, Massachusetts, across from the Berkshire Music Festival grounds at Tanglewood. He brought Pasternak's dual portrait to Lenox, where it is still prominently displayed in the Seranak sitting room.

Cavallo/Koussevitzky

Israel, when an attractive young lady named Betty Knout searched him out in his hotel suite in Tel Aviv and introduced herself as Scriabin's granddaughter. There Koussevitzky learned the tragic family history that had plagued the Scriabins beyond Russia. The Germans had killed Scriabin's daughter, who had been a member of the French Underground. She was half-Jewish on the Schloezer side of the family and had married a Jew as well. Betty Knout, with the tragedy of her own parents behind her, managed to escape to Israel. Now, decades later, in her grandfather's behalf, she sat across from Koussevitzky, exchanging affectionate and nostalgic greetings, evoking memories of long-ago days, as if he were an old family friend. Later that year she was able to spend an afternoon at Seranak, Koussevitzky's home near Tanglewood. She presented Koussevitzky with an old Arab vase of ancient terra cotta, which still sits on the mantle at Seranak. It was a particularly treasured memento during the last year of the conductor's life, enclosing as it did in its physical presence a reconciliation which had never actually taken place three and a half decades before.

Bowers/Scriabin

painful subject arose. In letters to Siloti he secretly used the code letter "N." Koussevitzky, in a fit of disgust, destroyed all correspondence from Scriabin, a remarkable gesture for that self-conscious era when everyone thought everyone else a genius and that the future held high stakes of fame and value for all of them. The Soviet Government inquired in vain of the present Mme. Koussevitzky for Scriabin memorabilia among her late husband's papers and effects. There was nothing, not a single souvenir even, of happy, early times.

Koussevitzky still continued to perform Scriabin. He announced in May 1911 two conjunctive cycles: one, all nine Beethoven symphonies; and two, all five of the Scriabin symphonies. (He also conducted his first Stravinsky at this time.) The reputations of both Scriabin and Koussevitzky grew apace. In 1923 Koussevitzky came to America. On his first appearance with the Boston Symphony Orchestra in October 1924, he climaxed a dazzling program with the *Poem of Ecstasy*. No one listening to that night's incandescent rendition of a favored masterpiece would ever have thought anything had gone wrong.



This touching photo documents the episode's dramatic climax: the 1950 visit of Scriabin's granddaughter, Betty Knout, to Koussevitzky in a Tel Aviv hotel suite.

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IHF Rating—Arrived at in accordance with the published Institute of High Fidelity Standard, which sets forth two methods of power measurement: "continuous power" method (same as RMS method above) and "dynamic or music power" method. Additionally, it specifies that measurements are to be made with all amplifier channels driven. These two methods, as set forth in the publication IHF-A-201, are accepted as the industry standard by quality manufacturers.

The IHF Method is More Musically Inclined

Clearly, the IHF rating of an amplifier or receiver is more meaningful to anyone buying high fidelity equipment. Because it uses conditions that the listener encounters, while still maintaining strict limits where distortion is concerned.

So it makes sense to check the IHF power rating when you're looking for an amplifier or receiver. The specification sheets of our member manufacturers carry this rating. As the common yardstick of the industry, it best reflects the concerns of those who developed the concept and craft of high fidelity.



The organization of the quality sound equipment makers and dealers. *Specifications stated in terms such as "100 watt IHF ± 1 db" are not true ratings.

CIRCLE 31 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

IF YOU REALLY VALUE YOUR RECORDS DON'T UNDERRATE THE GRAM!

(... a commentary on the critical role of tracking forces in evaluating trackability and trackability claims)

TRACKABILITY:

The "secret" of High Trackability is to enable the stylus tip to follow the hyper-complex record groove up to and beyond the theoretical cutting limits of modern recordings—not only at select and discrete frequencies, but across the entire audible spectrum—and at *light tracking forces that are below both the threshold of audible record wear and excessive stylus tip wear.*

The key parameter is "AT LIGHT TRACKING FORCES!"

A general rule covering trackability is: the higher the tracking force, the greater the ability of the stylus to stay in the groove. Unfortunately, at higher forces you are trading trackability for *trouble*. At a glance, the difference between ¼ gram and 1, 1½, or 2 grams may not appear significant. You could not possibly detect the difference by touch. *But your record can! And so can the stylus!*

TRACKING FORCES:

Perhaps it will help your visualization of the forces involved to translate "grams" to actual pounds per square inch of pressure on the record groove. For example, using ¼ gram of force as a reference (with a .2 mil x .7 mil radius elliptical stylus) means that 60,000 lbs. (30 tons) per square inch is the resultant pressure on the groove walls. At one gram, this increases to 66,000 lbs. per square inch, an increase of *three tons* per square inch—and at 1½ grams, the force rises to 75,000 lbs. per square inch, an increase of *7½ tons* per square inch. At two grams, or 83,000 lbs. per square inch, *11½ tons* per square inch have been added over the ¼ gram force. At 2½ grams, or 88,000 lbs. per square inch, a whopping *14 tons* per square inch have been added!

The table below indicates the tracking force in grams and pounds, ranging from ¼ gram to 2½ grams—plus their respective resultant pressures in pounds per square inch.

TRACKING FORCE		GROOVE WALL PRESSURE	
GRAMS	POUNDS	POUNDS PER SQUARE INCH	
		(See Note No. 1)	
¼	.0017	60,000	
1	.0022	66,000	+10% (over ¼ gram)
1½	.0033	75,000	+25% (over ¼ gram)
2	.0044	83,000	+38% (over ¼ gram)
2½	.0055	88,000	+47% (over ¼ gram)

SPECIAL NOTE:

The Shure V-15 Type II "Super-Track" Cartridge is capable of tracking the majority of records at ¼ gram; however state-of-the-art advances in the recording industry have brought about a growing number of records which require 1 gram tracking force in order to fully capture the expanded dynamic range of the recorded material. (¼ gram tracking requires not only a cartridge capable of effectively tracking at ¼ gram, but also a high quality manual arm [such as the Shure-SME]

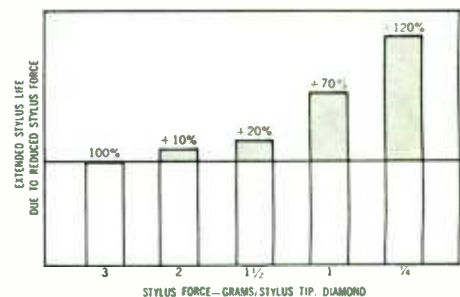
or a high quality automatic turntable arm capable of tracking at ¼ gram.)

TESTS:

Our tests, and the tests of many independent authorities (see Note No. 2), have indicated two main points:

- At tracking forces over 2 or 2½ grams, vinylite record wear is dramatically increased. Much of the "high fidelity" is shaved off of the record groove walls at both high and low ends after a relatively few playings.
- At tracking forces over 1½ grams, stylus wear is increased to a marked degree. When the stylus is worn, the chisel-like edges not only damage the record grooves—but tracing distortion over 3000 Hz by a worn stylus on a brand new record is so gross that many instrumental sounds become a burlesque of themselves. Also, styli replacements are required much more frequently. *The chart below indicates how stylus tip life increased exponentially between 1½ and ¼ grams—and this substantial increase in stylus life significantly extends the life of your records.*

RELATIVE AVERAGE TIP LIFE VS. TRACKING FORCE



No cartridge that we have tested (and we have repeatedly tested random off-the-dealer-shelf samples of all makes and many models of cartridges) can equal the Shure V-15 Type II in fulfilling all of the requirements of a High Trackability cartridge—both *initially* and after *prolonged* testing, especially at *record-and-stylus saving low tracking forces*. In fact, our next-to-best cartridges—the lower cost M91 Series—are comparable to, or superior to, any other cartridge tested in meeting all these trackability requirements, regardless of price.

NOTES:

- From calculations for an elliptical stylus with .2 mil x .7 mil radius contact points, using the Hertzian equation for indentors.
- See HiFi/Stereo Review, October 1968; High Fidelity, November 1968; Shure has conducted over 10,000 hours of wear tests.



SHURE
V-15 TYPE II

SUPER-TRACK HIGH FIDELITY PHONOGRAPH CARTRIDGE

Write: Shure Brothers, Inc., 222 Hartrey Avenue, Evanston, Illinois 60204

CIRCLE 54 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

new equipment reports

THE CONSUMER'S GUIDE
TO HIGH FIDELITY EQUIPMENT



MEDIUM PRICED RECEIVER OFFERS HIGH PERFORMANCE

EQUIPMENT: Pioneer SX-1500T, a stereo FM/AM receiver. Dimensions: 15¾ by 13¾ by 5½ inches. Price: \$360. Manufacturer: Pioneer Electronics USA Corp., 140 Smith St., Farmingdale, N. Y. 11735.

COMMENT: Another contender in the moderately priced receiver class has entered the lists. The Pioneer SX-1500T offers, for its cost, above-average performance and an abundance of features and controls to make it an excellent buy on today's market.

Tuner sensitivity, to begin with, was clocked at a very high 1.4 microvolts across the FM band. As the accompanying graph indicates, the set's quieting action increases steadily as input signal strength rises, and a comfortable level of -50 dB is reached with only 4.5 microvolts signal. Combined with the set's unusually high capture ratio, excellent signal-to-noise ratio, and low distortion, this means superior power for pulling in stations and rendering clean signals from them. In our cable FM test, the set performed as well as some costlier models: it logged no less than fifty stations, of which forty were judged suitable for serious listening or off-the-air taping. Audio response to mono signals was very good, within half a dB across most of the range, and down only 2 dB at 15,000 Hz. It actually improved on stereo, being within 1 dB out to beyond 15 kHz. Channel separation exceeded the 30 dB mark across the largest portion of the band. AM performance sounded better than usual.

Coupled with this tuner section is a control amplifier capable of supplying more than 40 (clean, RMS, real) watts per channel during normal stereo use. The only limitation here, from an ultimate design standpoint, is in the extreme bass which rolls off smoothly to -6 dB at 20 Hz and rises in distortion at maximum power output levels—the kind that the lowest-efficiency speakers might require to fill larger than average

rooms with sound. In any system or installation that demands less than this much power, the SX-1500T should prove ample: note that at 26 watts output, harmonic distortion remains below 0.21 per cent from 20 Hz to 20,000 Hz. IM also is low—especially so for 8-ohm and 16-ohm loads (see graph). Tone controls and filters are satisfactory; the loudness contour is unusual in that it introduces a fair amount of treble boost in addition to the normal bass boost. RIAA and NAB equalizations were very linear except for that same roll-off in the bass noted above. The power bandwidth extended to 67,000 Hz for only 0.5 per cent distortion; square-wave bass response reflected the low-end roll-off; high frequency square-wave response was superb—virtually a replica of the input test signal—and indicates excellent transient characteristics and clean, well-aided highs that do not detract from the sonic realism of program material.

The set is loaded with controls and features. The generously proportioned tuning dial (with FM and AM channel markings plus a logging scale) has a pilot light, stereo FM indicator, and station signal-strength meter which works for both AM and FM. The tuning knob rotates smoothly and silently. A program selector knob chooses AM, mono FM, automatic FM, phono, 7½-ips tape head, 3¾-ips tape head, and auxiliary. In the automatic FM position, the stereo indicator lights up for stereo stations. The lower half of the front panel has a speaker selector knob combined with the power off/on switch; a stereo headphone jack; dual-concentric, friction-coupled bass controls that handle each channel separately or simultaneously as you choose; a similar acting treble control; channel balance knob; volume control knob; six large toggle switches for loudness contour, low filter, high filter, interstation muting, automatic frequency control, and phono 1 or phono 2. The final knob combines mode selection

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.

(stereo/mono left/mono right) with the tape monitor function. The speaker selector lets you choose main, extra, both, or none. The headphone jack is live at all times.

At the rear are all the inputs corresponding to the signal selector knob, including the two sets of magnetic phono input jacks plus a separate stereo pair for ceramic pickups. There's also a pair of jacks to feed signals into a tape recorder, plus a five-pin socket for connecting European recorders without cable modification. The set has its own loopstick AM antenna and the terminals for a long-wire AM antenna and for FM twin-lead. Two AC convenience outlets (one switched) are provided. The speaker output connections (for main and for extra speakers), which permit running up to four separate speaker systems at once (controlled by the front panel knob), are sturdy plug-in barrier strips. A separation control for stereo FM, a power line fuse, and the set's AC cord complete the rear picture.

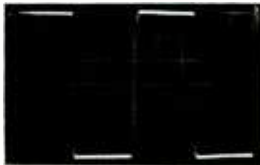
The SX-1500T comes in a walnut-sided case and may be placed on a shelf or table top. Alternately it may be fitted into a custom cut-out. The owner's manual—despite some awkwardness in translation from the Japanese—is clear and complete, containing not only full operating instructions but a comprehensive technical and servicing section.

CIRCLE 157 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Pioneer SX-1500T		Additional Data	
Tuner Section			
Capture ratio	1.5 dB		
S/N ratio	63 dB		
19 kHz suppression	42 dB		
38 kHz suppression	39.5 dB		
IM distortion	1.3%		
THD, mono	0.34% at 400 Hz; 0.54% at 40 Hz; 0.32% at 1 kHz		
THD, stereo, l ch	0.92% at 400 Hz; 1.0% at 40 Hz; 0.40% at 1 kHz		
r ch	0.77% at 400 Hz; 0.40% at 40 Hz; 0.33% at 1 kHz		
Amplifier Section			
Damping factor	36		
Inputs	Sensitivity	S/N ratio	
mag phono	2.5 mV	64 dB	
cer phono	56.0 mV	44 dB	
tape head	0.8 mV	58 dB	
tape monitor	213 mV	85 dB	
auxiliary	215 mV	85 dB	

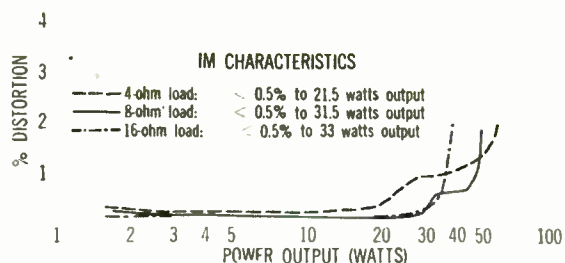


Response to 50-Hz square wave.



Response to 10-kHz square wave.

REPORTS IN PROGRESS
Scott LR-88 Receiver Kit
Dynaco A-25 Speaker System



POWER DATA, Amplifier section

Channels: individually (1 kHz, 8-ohm load)

Left at clipping: 48.5 watts at 0.25% THD

Left for 0.5% THD: 55.0 watts

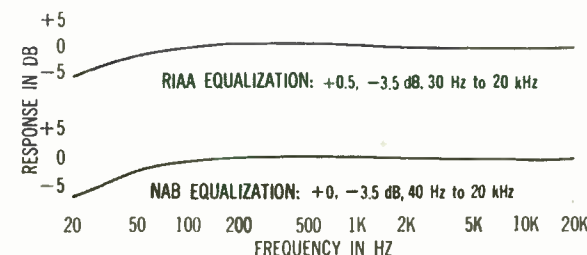
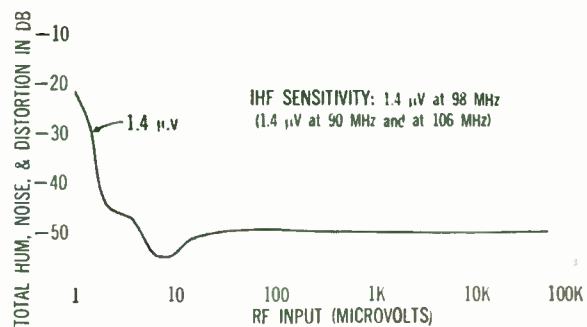
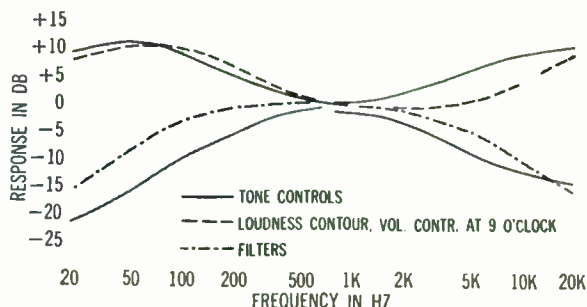
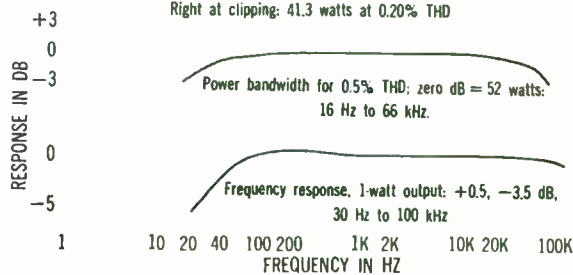
Right at clipping: 47.5 watts at 0.22% THD

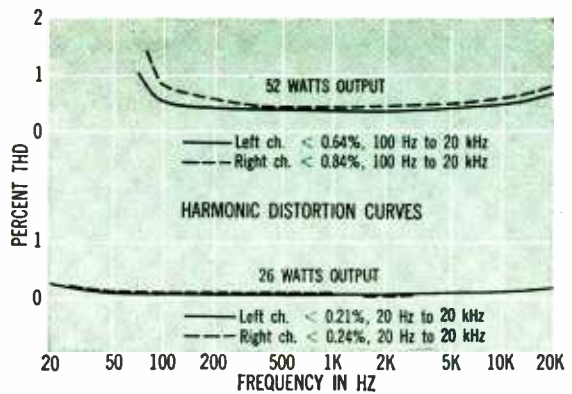
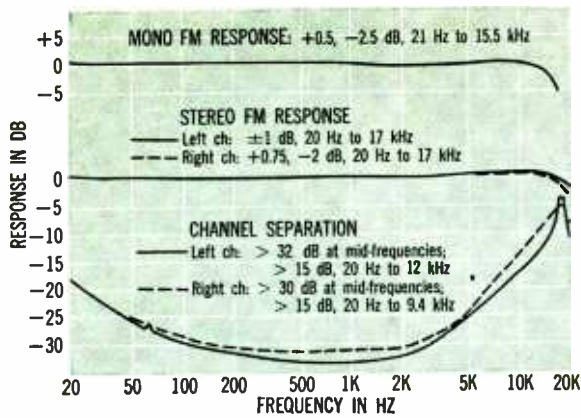
Left for 0.5% THD: 55.0 watts

Channels simultaneously

Left at clipping: 41.0 watts at 0.13% THD

Right at clipping: 41.3 watts at 0.20% THD





"LONG HAIR" PICKUP PROVES ONE OF THE BEST

EQUIPMENT: Stanton 681EE, a stereo phono pickup fitted with elliptical stylus and "long hair" brush. Price: \$60. Manufacturer: Stanton Magnetics, Inc., Plainview, L.I., N.Y. 11803.

COMMENT: Smooth, linear response, very low distortion, high compliance, and excellent tracking characterize this new pickup, the best yet seen from Stanton and easily one of the few top-performing cartridges presently available. Its sound is eminently satisfactory, full, and well balanced across the audible range, and with ample channel separation for fine stereo.

A lightweight model, the 681EE is fitted with Stanton's "long hair" brush which sweeps the record groove ahead of the stylus. Inasmuch as the brush weighs one gram (and thus pushes the cartridge away from the disc by that amount), you must offset this weight when installing the pickup by adjusting for one gram tracking force, and then assume that to be zero and add the required additional force. The recommended stylus force range for the 681EE is $\frac{3}{4}$ to $1\frac{1}{2}$ grams. For arms with antiskating adjustments, the manufacturer recommends (and we agree) using $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ gram less than normally required since the brush's drag is not as much as that of a stylus of equivalent weight in the groove.

Hence, the 1.9 grams needed by the 681EE to track the test bands of CBS Laboratories STR-100 translates effectively to only 0.9 gram. A stylus force of 1 gram (2 grams with the brush) was used for subsequent tests and for playback of commercial discs. Frequency response remained, on either channel, within plus or minus 1 dB across the major part of the audible range. The high-end response rises to a peak just beyond the audible range which does not appear in musical playback. Both channels are very closely balanced across the range. Output voltage measured was 3.6 mV on the left, and 3.7 mV on the right channel. Channel separation is exemplary,

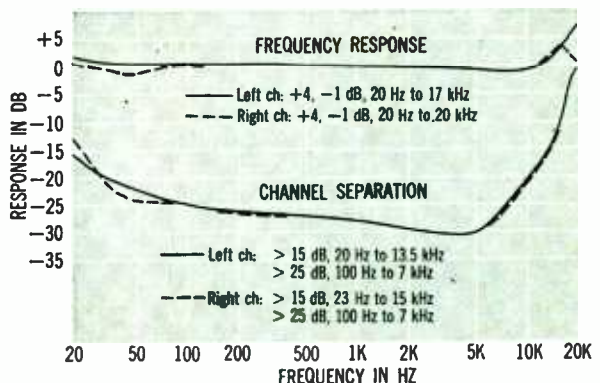
going better than 25 dB across most of the range, and well suited for full stereoism.

The 681EE's distortion—both harmonic and IM—was lower than average, and whatever bass resonance it produced in the test arm used (the SME-3009) was well below the audible range and did not become a factor in its response. High compliance was measured: 22×10^{-6} cm/dyne) laterally, and 14 vertically. When installed as per instructions—that is, parallel to the turntable—the cartridge's vertical angle was exactly 15 degrees—the first, incidentally, that CBS Labs has ever measured that was exactly 15 degrees!

As suggested, the 681EE "listens" as superbly as it "measures." Its sound is utterly neutral, full-range,



*Response to
1-kHz square wave.*



and clean. This is a cartridge that can reveal acoustic differences among recordings, that accommodates itself to the musical demands of the recorded material, and that can track the most demanding of groove passages like a champion. We mark it, in fact, as one of the very best yet auditioned.

The 681EE comes in a snap-box which contains a small metal container not unlike a fancy pill box (to hold extra styli), a deluxe little screw driver (for installing the pickup), instructions, mounting hardware, and a card indicating individual test results made at the factory. Alternate styli are available for use in the same cartridge body: a 0.7-mil spherical (\$25), a 1-mil spherical (\$25), and a 2.7-mil spherical (\$25). The 0.7-mil would be suitable for arms that require up to 3 grams stylus force and is the standard "compromise" size for both stereo and mono microgrooves. The 1-mil is strictly for older mono LPs and can take up to 5 grams tracking force. The 2.7-mil, of course, is the recommended size for playing old 78s.

CIRCLE 158 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

EXPLANATION— PML F-67BS MICROPHONE

The switch on the PML F-67BS microphone [March 1969 equipment report] was incorrectly identified as the impedance selector. It is actually an off/on switch. The confusion resulted from literature accompanying this mike erroneously stating that a goose-neck attachment, with off/on switch, was available as an accessory. According to Ercona, no such goose-neck is available. As for changing the impedance of the mike, the individual leads in the supplied cable may be connected, at the plug end, for either high or low impedance.



RECORDER TAKES 10½-INCH REELS; BOASTS VARIETY OF FEATURES

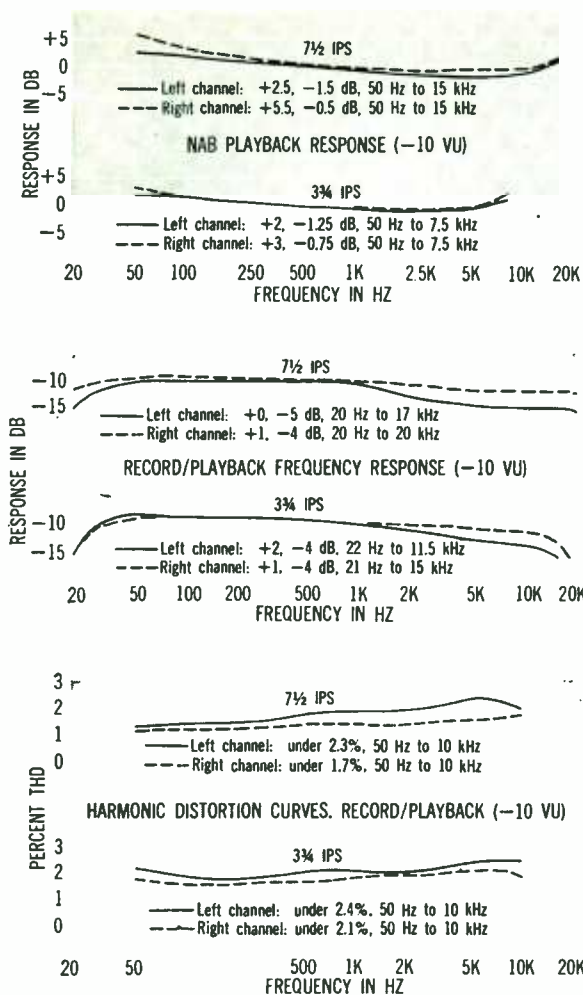
EQUIPMENT: Revox A77, a stereo record/playback tape deck. Dimensions (in wood case supplied): 19¼ by 14¼ by 7¼ inches. Price: \$499. Manufacturer: Revox Corp., 212 Mineola Ave., Roslyn Heights, N.Y. 11577.

COMMENT: The A77 is the latest solid-state version of the European-made Revox, a tape machine long regarded as belonging in the "serious amateur" or "near-professional" class. It is available in a variety of configurations, head assemblies, and speed combinations. These, in sum, are too numerous to catalogue here and those interested should write to the U.S. branch address for detailed information. The model chosen for our tests is the one most likely to interest U.S. high fidelity enthusiasts: quarter-track stereo/mono at 7½- or 3¾-ips speeds, and in deck form—that is, without built-in power amplifiers or speakers—for connecting into an existing stereo system. The wood surround facilitates installation in most home systems: the unit may be placed (vertically or horizontally) on a shelf, or set into a cabinet well. Models with built-in amplifiers and speakers (including a "suitcase" model), as well as in metal housing, also are available.

The most obvious feature of the Revox is its capacity for handling professional-size (10½-inch diameter) reels which can hold twice the amount of a given kind of tape as a 7-inch reel. This translates, for instance, into being able to tape in stereo all of an opera the length of Tosca onto one large reel at 7½-ips speed, or both Tosca and say, *La Bohème*, onto the one reel at 3¾-ips speed. The machine also handles 7-inch and smaller reels. Between the reels

there's a four-digit tape index counter with reset button. A hinged cover hides the head assembly, to the right of which is a pause lever that lets you stop the reels with the tape still contacting the heads so that, by rocking the reels manually, you can locate a specific passage for editing. A groove, and angled slit, atop the head cover serve as a built-in splicing block.

Directly below the transport are the electronic section and operating controls. Once power is turned on, transport movement is controlled by push-button operated solenoids (for rewind, fast forward, play, stop, and record)—all very fast-acting, smooth, and positive. A playback and monitor volume control is concentrically fitted into a playback function switch (stereo, channel 1, channel 2, mono). The channel-balance control is concentric with the tape monitor selector (input to the machine, or output off the playback head), the latter with a choice of equalization. For recording, each channel has its own level control concentric with a signal selector. The fact that these work independently on each channel, combined with their settings, enables you to record in a number of different ways. The selectors on each channel have positions for low-impedance mike, high-impedance mike, radio, track-to-track, and auxiliary. "Radio" refers to a high-level, five-pin (European type) connector; "auxiliary" corresponds to the U.S. "line" input—the normal hookup you'd use when recording signals from a system amplifier or receiver. The track-to-track feature, combined with the machine's separate recording and playback heads, enables you to record with an echo effect, add an echo to existing tapes, dub material from one track to another, record in multiple-track



(overdub) up to six different parts by lifting signals from one channel and reimpressing them with new material onto the other track, record simultaneously from two separate sources, play one track while recording another, mix and fade various inputs.

A stereo headphone jack on the front panel makes for easy monitoring of the signal going into the machine, or for noting how the recorder is taking it down—depending on the position of the monitor switch next to it. Also on the front panel is a stereo pair of mike jacks. Additional signal jacks, found on a panel at the rear topside of the deck, include the five-pin European sockets for connecting speakers to those models supplied with built-in power amplifiers, a stereo pair of phono jacks for the auxiliary or line inputs, a similar pair for mike inputs, the European-DIN socket for radio input and output, and a third set of phono jacks for playback through a standard amplifier. On the same panel are a remote-control socket and the AC power line socket. Below this panel, a hinged cover hides the six-position line voltage selector, a convenient device that permits the Revox to run on 110, 130, 150, 220, 240, or 250 volts AC and at power line frequencies of either 50 Hz or 60 Hz. Construction of the Revox is first-rate, with such niceties as an extra-rigid frame, three motors, electronically governed speed control, electromagnetically operated servo-assisted brakes, photoelectric run-out shut-off, plug-in circuit boards, and cable plug-and-socket interconnections between subassemblies rather than "open" soldering. High-grade parts and workmanship are evident throughout. The 70-page owner's

Revox A77	Additional Data
Speed accuracy, 7 1/2 ips	0.06% slow at 120 VAC; exact at 105 VAC; 0.06% slow at 127 VAC
3 3/4 ips	0.26% slow at 120 VAC; 0.26% slow at 105 VAC; 0.33% slow at 127 VAC
Wow and flutter, 7 1/2 ips	0.03%, playback
3 3/4 ips	0.04%, record/playback
0.04%, playback	
0.06%, record/playback	
Rewind time (7-inch, 1200-ft. reel)	1 min., 6 sec.
Fast forward time (same reel)	same
S/N ratio (ref. 0 VU) playback	l ch: 58 dB; r ch: 60 dB
record/playback	l ch: 53 dB; r ch: 53.5 dB
Erase	63 dB
Crosstalk, record l/play r	61 dB
record r/play l	72 dB
Sensitivity (ref 0 VU) aux input	l: 11 mV; r: 7 mV
mic input, low Z	l: 0.23 mV; r: 0.22 mV
mic input, high Z	l: 2 mV; r: 1.5 mV
Accuracy, built-in meters*	l reads 3 dB high r reads 1 dB high
Maximum output, line	l: 2.1 V; r: 2.4 V
IM distortion, record/playback	
7 1/2 ips, 0 VU level	l: 4.5%; r: 3.5%
-10 VU	l: 2.5%; r: 2.0%
3 3/4, 0 VU	l: 7.0%; r: 7.5%
-10 VU	l: 3.0%; r: 3.0%
*After correction for European standard	

manual contains detailed instructions and colored illustrations.

As far as we can determine—judging from CBS Labs' tests and our own listening tests—the Revox A77 does all that its manufacturer claims, which is considerable. The test data is detailed in the accompanying graphs and charts. Note that speed accuracy is very high; better in fact than specified. Wow and flutter are very low, again better than claimed. Other measurements confirm, within normal tolerance limits, published specifications. Response, either on playback or on record/playback, was within the 5-dB range specified from 30 Hz to 20 kHz at the 7 1/2-ips speed; it remained within the 5-dB range specified from 30 Hz to 16 kHz at the 3 3/4-ips speed. The fact is, this machine sounds as good at its slow speed as many lower-priced recorders sound at their fast speed. Distortion remains low; signal-to-noise ratio is very high; undesirable crosstalk between stereo channels is virtually nonexistent. All our tests were run with the recommended tape for the Revox, Scotch 203. The machine can be readjusted for alternate tapes, but the adjustments—which require getting into the circuit—should be undertaken only by an experienced technician.

All told, we'd say that the A77 offers fully as much in the way of high performance and extra features as one should expect for its price class. It requires more than average understanding to be used to its maximum capabilities, but it offers in return better than average performance.

CIRCLE 159 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

TWO NEW SPEAKER SYSTEMS IN KIT FORM

THE EQUIPMENT: Heathkit AS-48 and AS-38; full-range compact speaker systems in enclosures. Speakers and crossover networks in kit form; enclosures, factory-assembled and finished. AS-48, dimensions: 23½ by 14 by 12 inches; price, \$169.95. AS-38, dimensions: 23¼ by 14 by 11¾ inches; price, \$144.95. Manufacturer: Heath Co., Benton Harbor, Mich. 49022.

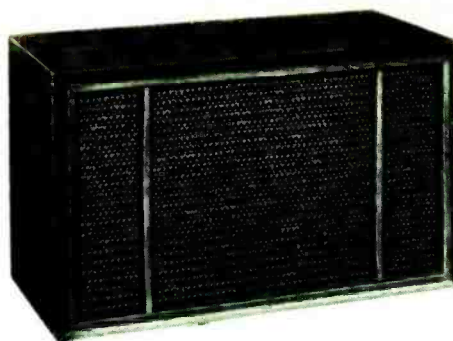
COMMENT: For inveterate do-it-yourselfers, Heath continues to demonstrate that kit-built products can be designed to perform as well as factory-built products, while affording the kit builder a unique kind of enjoyment and saving him money at the same time. Of all Heath's kits, its speaker systems are without doubt the easiest and fastest to build. The work consists merely of lining the preassembled enclosure with sound-absorbent material, wiring the crossover network, screwing it in place within the enclosure, bolting the speakers to precut openings on the front panel, and fitting the decorative front grill. The entire job shouldn't take more than three hours, or—if you reckon time whimsically—through the playing of the Brahms First, the Rachmaninoff Second Piano Concerto, and the Behrend performances of the Guitar Concertos by Rodrigo and Tedesco. On the AS-38, we were fairly into the Beethoven Triple Concerto, but only because we had to drill our holes for mounting the network. The AS-48 cabinet, which had the holes all predrilled, took proportionately less time.

When we finished our pleasant chores, we found we had two new first-rate speaker systems, either of which suggested a level of performance associated with systems costing somewhat more than the kit price for the AS-48 or AS-38.

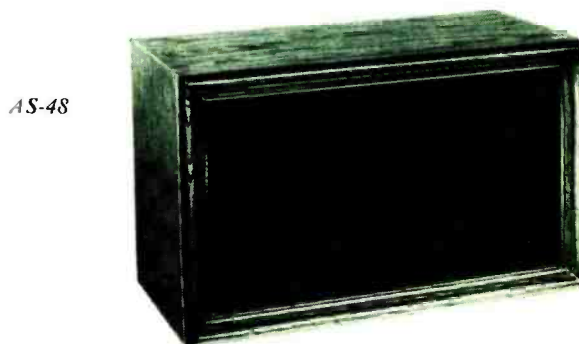
Both systems use speaker elements made for Heath by J. B. Lansing. The tweeter is the same in both systems—a 2-inch, hard-cone unit with a 1¼-pound magnet assembly. The woofer in the AS-48 is a 14-inch job with an 11½-pound magnet assembly; in the AS-38, it's a 12-inch model with a magnet assembly weighing 6¾ pounds. Frequency crossover from woofer to tweeter occurs at 2,000 Hz in the AS-48; at 2,500 Hz in the AS-38. Both systems are rated for 8 ohms. The AS-48 utilizes a three-step switch for adjusting the relative level of the tweeter; on the AS-38 a continuous variable control does the job. Efficiency of either system is moderate—neither high nor low; the AS-48 is rated for handling up to 50 watts; the AS-38 for handling up to 40 watts. Both systems use a sealed, damped cabinet that has a tuned duct on the front baffle for augmenting and smoothing the bass.

Both systems are wide in range and audibly low in distortion, with very good dispersion characteristics and generally uncolored sound. The AS-48 sounds a little stronger at the very low end, and somewhat more forward through the upper midrange—which would indicate that it can cover a larger room with sound than the AS-38. However, we found the latter system very well suited for medium-size and small rooms, with a well-balanced and very smooth output that presented the full sound spectrum.

At the bass end, the AS-48 descends fully and cleanly to its rated response limit of 40 Hz. Although some doubling is evident at 50 Hz, it is not terribly pronounced. Actually, at normal listening levels, the



AS-38



AS-48

system responds fairly cleanly to just below 30 Hz. So does the AS-38, but with a little less volume. Both systems handle the midbass region smoothly, with no phony extra emphasis or boominess. The middles and highs are smooth and level in both systems, with slight directive effects becoming apparent from about 5 kHz upward. This effect scarcely increases before 10 kHz, but even this tone is audible at about 135 degrees off axis. At 11 kHz the output becomes more directive, and can be heard from about 45 degrees off axis. This effect remains about the same to 14 kHz, from which frequency the response slopes off toward inaudibility. On white noise, the AS-48 produces a fairly smooth pattern, moderately directive, and with a slight midrange emphasis. This varies with settings of the rear tweeter control; we found, at least in our tests, that the minimum position of tweeter gain provided the smoothest response.

The AS-38's white noise response was similar, with its continuous control providing a more variable pattern; we finally settled on number 7 on the dial (around the 2 o'clock position) as the one that pleased us most.

In A/B comparisons on program material, the AS-48 sounded a little more open, a bit closer to the audience, and with a stronger ability to project a fairly large sound front into a large room, than did the AS-38. On the other hand, we feel that in a smaller room, the AS-38 would do nicely. The response of both systems to instrumental and vocal material is natural, balanced, and un gimmicky.

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AMPEX MODEL CHANGE

To the 1450 tape recorder reported in our May issue, Ampex has made changes including an added pause control to facilitate tape editing. The new features change the model number to 1455, and the price to \$329.

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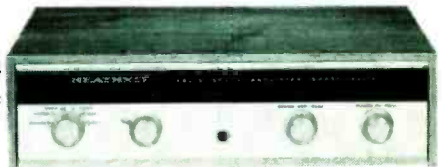
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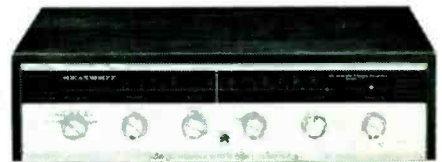


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CIRCLE 48 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Nonesuch Records

by Robert P. Morgan

Fresh Music from the University “Laboratory”



Conductor Arthur Weisberg

Works by Myrow, Reynolds, Wolpe, Rochberg, Shifrin,
Druckman, Schwantner, and Harbison

OUR CONCERT LIFE is almost completely monopolized by orchestras and chamber groups that reflect the musical ideals of a past age. This situation has left the contemporary composer not only without an audience, but without a forum for the presentation, discussion, and development of his ideas and those of his colleagues. Anyone working in a new field needs a “laboratory” where he can experiment: he cannot work in a vacuum. The composer therefore has turned to the university—a traditional haven for science if somewhat less so for the arts. Small performing ensembles have been developed within music departments all over the country for the purpose of performing recent music, as well as rarely performed classics of the earlier twentieth century.

One of the best known and most skilled of these groups is the Contemporary Chamber Ensemble headed by Arthur Weisberg at Rutgers University, and the three Nonesuch records up for consideration here give an ex-

cellent perspective of the scope and quality of their work. Collectively entitled “Spectrum: New American Music,” these recordings present a wide range of compositions that characterize the musical ideals of today’s serious composers. While all of the works included here would probably come under the stylistic label of “advanced” music, their varied non-doctrinaire approach to compositional problems is quite remarkable. No specific school is emphasized: the only requirement seems to be that a piece must at least attempt to make a fresh statement. Of the eleven pieces represented, the oldest dates from 1955 while the other ten were all written since 1964. For the most part, these are works by relatively unknown composers, most of whom are in their twenties or thirties.

The senior composers are all grouped on Volume 2 (Nonesuch H 21220). The oldest and most frequently played of the three is Stefan Wolpe (born 1902), represented here by his *Chamber Piece No. 1* for fourteen

Continued

Works by Myrow, Reynolds, Wolpe, Rochberg, Shifrin, Druckman, Schwantner, and Harbison

players. Written in 1964, the piece is in one extended movement and features a driving rhythmic intensity combined with a sort of prismatic technique of pitch repetition. One constantly hears familiar material in ever new contexts, resulting in a sense of gradual development and accumulation. It is a fascinating piece in every way.

The *Serenata d'Estate* by George Rochberg (born 1918) is both the oldest and most "conservative" of the pieces. Employing a twelve-tone series in a partitioning technique reminiscent of Schoenberg, Rochberg achieves results that are distinctly personal. This work, in fact, exudes a languid, sultry quality—achieved through the opposition of short, totally static sections, clearly articulated from one another—and the musical climate is about as far removed from Schoenberg as can be imagined. The nondevelopmental character of the music may irritate some listeners, but there is no denying the *Serenata's* quiet, almost impressionistic beauty, skillfully projected by the unusual instrumental combination of flute, harp, guitar, and three strings.

Seymour Shifrin (born 1926) represents the middle generation and his *Satires of Circumstance* is to my mind the most impressive work in the entire set. It consists of three songs set to texts by Thomas Hardy; the middle one (*The Convergence of the Twain*, dealing with the sinking of the Titanic) is considerably longer than the other two, and forms the core of the entire composition. The texts are unified by their common concern with irony and this quality is brilliantly reflected in Shifrin's music. The conflicts intentionally set up in the score (and never completely, i.e., unambiguously, resolved) make the piece a particularly difficult one for the listener to grasp immediately, but protracted listening reveals an austere beauty that is both original and compelling.

Volume 1 opens with Roger Reynold's *Quick Are The Mouths of the Earth*, an effective instrumental piece somewhat reminiscent of Stockhausen in its deployment of instrumental forces (three flutes, three cellos, two trombones, two percussion, oboe, and trumpet—you see how specialized the combinations can be). Laid out in six sections, the work manages to sustain interest despite its length (long, at least, for a piece which relies so heavily on color), thanks to the composer's gift for creating interesting sonorities that undergo constantly compelling metamorphoses.

The other side of this disc contains Frederic Myrow's *Songs from the Japanese*, six settings of Japanese poems in English translation. Myrow has a remarkably sensitive ear for instrumental sonority and effect, and his rich, almost exotic sense of color adds much to the flavor of the poetry. Curiously, however, it is precisely the brilliant color of the pieces that ultimately taxes the listener. The more one listens to the music, the more refractory become the luminous brush strokes and the more precious the diffuse, perfumed quality of virtually every page in the score.

I find Volume 3 to be the least interesting of the set. Certainly the most impressive score here is John Harbison's *Confinement*, an extended instrumental composition (for fourteen players) with some truly striking moments. *Confinement* is constructed from layers of sound, differentiated primarily through textural means and played off against one another using techniques somewhat remi-

niscient of Stravinsky. The piece represents a serious attempt to deal with the problem of development and continuity in a structural layout of various layered textures, but the music moves in such a "confined" area (and thus the title, I assume) that the process becomes ultimately stultifying. Side 2 contains two pieces, Jacob Druckman's *Incenters* and Joseph Schwantner's *Diaphonia Intervallum*. The former, scored for thirteen instruments, is one of those "sound-pieces" so popular today. Admittedly Druckman carries off his effects with real flair here, but the music is still essentially decorative in its intent. The Schwantner piece seems to be a kind of rhapsody for saxophone with string accompaniment, plus flute and piano operating as *concertante* elements. The saxophone is uniformly cast in its traditional role as a lyrical, "seductive" instrument, and eventually one grows a bit weary of this. Equally problematic is the fact that the various instrumental components never manage to coalesce into some sort of larger unit, and the string writing is so minimal that one almost wonders why they were included at all.

In summary, however, let me emphasize that the over-all quality of these pieces is extremely high. Besides, one must remember that any attempt to give a definitive evaluation of such recently composed, thoughtful music at the present time is dubious at best. The real point here is that these scores are valuable and important for us today, regardless of any ultimate future critical opinions, because they reflect the musical inclinations and concerns of many of our most gifted composers.

The performances by Arthur Weisberg and his musicians reveal an unusual expertise in dealing with the problems posed by today's new music. Not all the solutions may be ideal, but considering the difficulty of the music and the recent date of composition (one must keep in mind that a performance tradition simply does not as yet exist for this kind of music), the results are extraordinarily good. The soloists, without exception, are excellent. Listening to these recordings has been an exciting experience—all the more so thanks to the excellent quality of the recorded sound.

Ironically, the Rockefeller Foundation, which had been sponsoring Rutgers's Contemporary Chamber Ensemble since 1965, did not renew the grant for 1969, and the future of the group is consequently in jeopardy. We are particularly fortunate then to have these discs as a permanent document of their accomplishments.

MYROW: *Songs from the Japanese*. **REYNOLDS:** *Quick Are the Mouths of Earth*. Phyllis Bryn-Julson, soprano (in the Myrow); Contemporary Chamber Ensemble, Arthur Weisberg, cond. Nonesuch H 71219, \$2.98.

WOLPE: *Chamber Piece No. 1*. **ROCHBERG:** *Serenata d'estate*. **SHIFRIN:** *Satires of Circumstance*. Jan De-Gaetani, mezzo (in the Shifrin); Contemporary Chamber Ensemble, Arthur Weisberg, cond. Nonesuch H 71220, \$2.98.

DRUCKMAN: *Incenters*. **SCHWANTNER:** *Diaphonia Intervallum*. **HARBISON:** *Confinement*. Victor Morosco, alto saxophone (in the Schwantner); Contemporary Chamber Ensemble, Arthur Weisberg, cond. Nonesuch H 71221, \$2.98.

by Conrad L. Osborne

A First-Rate Performance of a Second-Rate Opera



Pietro Mascagni (1863-1945)

Gavazzeni conducts Mascagni's "L'Amico Fritz"

THIS IS AN EXCELLENT performance, and ought to satisfy the needs of anyone who cares enough about the opera itself to want it in his library.

L'Amico Fritz is a sort of Jewish Alsatian *Oklahoma!* in Italian. I realize this sounds like a capricious definition, but I am prepared to defend it. The piece concerns young Fritz Kobus, who is a Good Catch (he's rich), and a girl named Suzel, timid of manner but just about a-bustin' fer love o' Fritz. I blush to say that the other major character is a rabbi named David who meddles his way through life, the old dear, as a matchmaker. I don't think I need draw a picture of this plot—it would entail further embarrassment for all of us. I will add only that it involves a cherry-nibbling sequence for Fritz and Suzel; a Bible-reading scene; the wager of a vineyard; and a couple of moments in which first Suzel then Fritz, are profoundly moved by the rather wretched songs of a gypsy named Beppe.

It will be observed that this story combines the most unappealing elements of the pastoral folk play, the Jewish domestic comedy, and the Italian opera. Harmless is one word for it; hopeless is mine.

The score has about it an incessant prettiness. It would be foolish to deny that there are moments of genuine charm, or that Mascagni shows himself an adept craftsman, particularly in his clever alternation of perky rhythmic figures with lyrical vocal writing, so that the material sustains itself better than it has any right to. There is a stab at local color in the use of a couple of Alsatian folk melodies, but it doesn't seem to me to add much.

As a piece of composition, then, *L'Amico Fritz* is a good cut above *Oklahoma!* As melodic inspiration, though, it is sadly feeble—in the entire score there is not a page that has the vigor or profile of any of a half-dozen of *Oklahoma!*'s songs. It is listenable, and forgettable.

For those who like the music, and who are not turned off as I am by the libretto, this album should afford much pleasure. Its only competition is the old Cetra

performance, with Tassinari, Tagliavini, and Meletti and conducted by Mascagni himself. It is not without its attractions, but the present cast is vocally and musically superior, if not always more personable, and of course the current recording is far the better of the two. Gavazzeni gives an intelligently understated reading; he keeps it moving and doesn't let it cloy. Freni's singing is very warm and idiomatically phrased. I am always bothered by the artificial darkening of vowels in the upper part of her range—it sounds like an effort to add body to a voice that really should be lighter and higher. But the sound *per se* is lovely, and she treats the music with a modest affection that is most enjoyable.

Pavarotti is splendid. One can criticize his substitution of a mouthy falsetto for a true mezza voce at a couple of points, but it's quibbling. The voice has a fresh, spinning quality and a consistent clarity, with plenty of good ring at the top (including an interpolated C at the end of the Act III love duet).

I have so far missed the New York appearances of Vincenzo Sardinero, and on the basis of this recording, I regret it. He has a firm, warm baritone, manly and bright, and sings with good line and a nice variety of dynamics and colors. His singing here holds fine promise for the Italian lyric repertory; with young men like Pavarotti, Sardinero, and the bass Raimondi coming along, the Italian scene may be brightening at last. Much weaker, unfortunately, is the Beppe of Gambardella, which is ungainly and insecure.

The engineering is straightforward, the sound itself first-rate.

MASCAGNI: L'Amico Fritz. Mirella Freni (s), Suzel; Malvina Major (ms), Caterina; Laura Didier Gambardella (ms), Beppe; Luciano Pavarotti (t), Fritz Kobus; Luigi Pontiggia (t), Federico; Vincenzo Sardinero (b), David; Benito di Bella (bs), Hanezò. Chorus and Orchestra of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. Gianandrea Gavazzeni, cond. Angel SBL 3737, \$11.96 (two discs). Tape: ●● Y2S 3737, 3¾ ips, \$11.98.



A Fascinating Repertory Opens Up

There's more to Hugo Wolf than the songs

by David Hamilton

ALTHOUGH THE 1960 CENTENNIAL of Hugo Wolf's birth did not exactly pass unnoticed by the record companies, they did not range far beyond the standard canon of songs. Aside from the old Urania recording of *Der Corregidor* and various versions of the *Italian Serenade*, the considerable body of Wolf's output for other media has remained untouched, and the fine recording by the New Music Quartet of the early string quartet has long since vanished (for that matter, even a few of the songs still await recordings).

Whether by accident or design, some of these gaps are now being filled. A while ago, Deutsche Grammophon gave us the first complete *Spanish Songbook*, and now the same company adds a new recording of the string quartet as well as an interesting album containing not only another reading of the *Italian Serenade*, but also first recordings of the symphonic poem *Penthesilea*, eight songs as orchestrated by the composer, and the chorus-and-orchestra version of the famous Mörike ballade *Der Feuerreiter*. At the same time, the team of Schwarzkopf and Fischer-Dieskau have followed up their *Spanish Songbook* with an integral *Italian Songbook*.

Chronologically, the first of these works is Wolf's solitary string quartet, which has had a tortuous history. Its first three movements were written in 1879 and 1880, and the final one in 1884 (whether it replaced a now lost earlier movement or was simply added is not known). It was rejected by several quartets to whom Wolf submitted it, and did not receive a public performance until 1903, less than three weeks before his death. A score was published in the same year, heavily edited by Josef Hellmesberger, who altered phrasings, bowings, and a few "irregularities" (shades of Bruckner) and changed the final order of the two middle movements, about which Wolf had apparently vacillated at one time (shades of Mahler). In 1960, a new score, based on the manuscript, was published as part of a complete edition of Wolf's music, and that is what the La Salle Quartet plays here.

On any terms, this quartet is a connoisseur's delight—and an extraordinary achievement for a nineteen-year-old. Wolf obviously grasped the implications of Beethoven's late quartets as well as anyone in the nineteenth century, and his harmonic sense and command of the medium were highly developed. The result is a work of fascinating concentrated detail (notably in matters of phrase balance and extension), and at the same time of

great youthful enthusiasm. How fantastic that Wolf should turn his attention to this medium only twice again, and never for a work on this scale!

If memory serves, the old Columbia recording (which used the Hellmesberger edition) coped more successfully with the intonational difficulties than does this new one. However, I haven't heard it in years, and the La Salle version is quite fine and beautifully recorded.

Before composing the last movement of the quartet, Wolf turned his hand to a symphonic poem, based on an 1808 Kleist drama about a queen of the Amazons (I trust the sleeve note will summarize the narrative, which is more than I can bear to reproduce here). Two years later, in 1885, a public reading of *Penthesilea* was apparently sabotaged by the conductor, Hans Richter, and the composer made to appear ridiculous; he never heard the piece again, and the score published in 1903 was seriously abridged and otherwise doctored. An Urtext score was brought out by Robert Haas in 1937, but the piece has not made much headway in concert.

In three connected and interrelated sections, its shape corresponds to no accepted canon of academic form; although there are obvious repetitions, as well as an elaborated but clear recapitulation of the opening pages near the end, new ideas keep turning up to confuse the issue. In detail, the material and Wolf's treatment are often rhythmically square, and the incessant use of the full orchestral dynamic becomes wearisome and unfruitful; one can imagine that this pour-it-on scoring was a major cause of contemporary amusement. Wolf's command of his language (and of Wagner's, to be sure) is frequently impressive, as in the harmonic extension of the beautifully scored second movement, but a sense of proportion to control the time span and dynamic range is lacking. The recorded performance is quite respectable, with enough impetus to sustain interest over the more garrulous pages and to help one overlook a few smeared spots.

The arrangements that comprise the remainder of the DGG album are anything but routine instrumentations, for Wolf could not resist elaborating his works when he returned to them, and in the song instrumentations he does some fascinating recomposition of textures to accommodate the new medium (as in the "Dahin! Dahin!" passage in *Mignon*). Except for *Prometheus*, which Friedrich Schorr did so impressively on a 78 disc for the Wolf Society, none of these song instrumentations has ever been recorded. I hope there will be further essays

in this area in the future (and that they will include the second orchestration of *Mignon*, which is fascinatingly different from the first one used here). The present ones are disappointing: the orchestra plays fairly well, but is often overbalanced by the voices—particularly by Stewart, whose sound is beefed up with artificial resonance (most prominently in *Prometheus*) to a point where it doesn't seem to be in the same acoustical space as the orchestra. Miss Lear also disappoints by her rhythmic inaccuracy (some of it perhaps deriving from conductorial insecurity), choppy phrasing, and squashed tone above the staff. I'm afraid this sounds like a rushed job.

The other two arrangements date from 1892. The 1887 Serenade for string quartet is reset for solo viola, strings, and pairs of flutes, oboes, bassoons, and horns; the adjective "Italian" was added to the title only at this stage, and Wolf evidently planned to expand the work with two additional movements, sketches for which date from his first stay in the sanatorium in 1897. (Although the small orchestra version is often referred to as Reger's, it seems that all he did was to correct the proofs.) In either form, the Serenade is a masterpiece of harmonic wit and delicacy; I should like to hear what a real virtuoso group such as the London Symphony could make of it, for the present version is on the stodgy side.

Similarly, it will take more of a performance to sell the chorus-and-orchestra version of *Der Feuerreiter* than we have on this record; the choral sound has little bite or focus, and is diffusely recorded to boot. By no means simply a four-part setting, this adaptation hews to the main lines of the song but adds echo effects and new melodic lines. A job for John Alldis or Robert Shaw, I should say.

To sum up: if these records were available separately, I'd say get the orchestral one and skip the vocal one for now—but since they're not, perhaps that advice will help you decide, depending on which facet interests you most. Either way, it's very short measure; the twenty-five minutes of *Penthesilea* are stretched over a side and a half, space that might well have been devoted to such unrecorded works as the incidental music for Ibsen's *Fest auf Solhaug*, for example. Even the song disc has room left over (there are fourteen additional song orchestrations), and there is an 1886 Intermezzo for string quartet that might have been fitted onto the La Salle record. At any rate, a fascinating repertory has been opened up.

The *Italian Songbook* is no novelty, of course, but any recording that reminds us of its richness and variety is valuable. I will not sing its praises at length here, but merely call attention to the immense subtlety of Wolf's rhythmic treatment of the poems—both within each song (*Heb' auf dein blondes Haupt* is a stunning example) and in terms of the whole collection, for all but one of these forty-six songs uses the same five-stress line, with essentially similar rhyme schemes (A-B-A-B, or sometimes A-B-A-B-A-B, followed by one or more rhyming couplets).

Neither of the two singers is new to these songs on records: Fischer-Dieskau recorded sixteen of them in the early Fifties, and then made a joint recording of the entire set with Irmgard Seefried, while Schwarzkopf's disc of twenty-five songs appeared in 1960; however, none of these recordings is still available, but a complete set—and a good one—by Erna Berger and Hermann Prey can be found on Vox SLDL 5532.

Since this is not a narrative cycle, there is no necessity for performing them together, or in their published order—but such is the tyranny of the LP record. For the benefit of those interested mainly in one singer or the other (and who may have some of the records mentioned above), let me note that Schwarzkopf passes to Fischer-Dieskau two songs that were in her solo record—*Auch kleine Dinge* and *Nun lass uns Frieden schliessen*, the first of which the baritone is here singing for the first time on records. I do not observe any significant change of approach over the earlier versions (although there are nat-

urally many variations of detail), except that Schwarzkopf is in perhaps somewhat less good vocal estate than before. These interpretations were impressive when heard for the first time in concert a few years ago but they do not wear well. To be sure, the precision of ensemble is remarkable at all times, and Gerald Moore's playing is full of fine details such as the voicing of chords. However, for all its technical skill the singing often makes me unhappy. Not for some years has Schwarzkopf's tone been light enough for this music, and here she frequently sounds labored, even at times matronly (a few songs are now transposed down, which doesn't alleviate that problem), and Fischer-Dieskau's rough sound at high volume levels (as at the climax of *Dass doch gemalt*) is really unpleasant, as is some pushed, puffy sound in the middle register.

In many of the songs, rather than one musical impulse, there seem to be several successive ones, some textual in origin and occasionally damaging to the musical line. Also, a good deal more liberty with tempo has been taken than would seem desirable in such short pieces, and this undermines the solidity of the musical ideas. A particularly bothersome problem is the tendency to take slow songs very slowly indeed, putting a severe strain on the pianist, who doesn't have the advantage of a real sustained tone; sometimes even the vocal melody loses its forward motion (*Sterb' ich, so hülli in Blumen*, where the basic four-beat meter vanishes entirely and the abundant syncopations lose their significance). Much as I admire all the art and artifice that has gone into these performances, I can't help feeling that these singers might have benefited by working on the music *without* the text, to practice projecting just the musical structure; songs are, naturally, about words, but they are also about music, and the musical relationships are given short shrift in these performances.

Undoubtedly these faults will not seem so serious if one merely dips into the set instead of listening through at a single sitting; I will certainly come back to Schwarzkopf's *Gesegnet sei das Grün* and Fischer-Dieskau's *Schon streckt ich aus*, among others—but heard at length, the cumulative effect of this heavy concentration on detail has the effect of turning these miniatures into monuments, with every little felicity writ very large for posterity's edification. My ideal *Italienisches Liederbuch* contains performances by Hüsch (a couple are reissued on Odeon E 73393), Seefried (Decca DL 9743, deleted, is better than the complete set), Schumann (Angel COLH 102, recently deleted), and Hotter's richly satiric *Geselle, woll'n wir uns in Kutten hüllen* (Angel 35057, a prime candidate for Seraphic attention), as well as some of the Prey and Berger performances. As a starting point, the Vox set strikes me more favorably than the new Angel, for those singers, despite some misses, are equally accurate and sensitive, and they more often reach the musical point of the songs.

Except for a slight loss of definition in the lower register of the piano, Angel's sound is very good, without unwarranted resonance. A leaflet contains the complete texts, excellent English translations by Walter Legge.

WOLF: Quartet for Strings, in D minor. La Salle Quartet. Deutsche Grammophon 139376, \$5.98. Tape: ●● K9427, 7½ ips, \$11.98 (double play).

WOLF: Penthesilea; Italian Serenade; Songs: Mignon; Gebet; Neue Liebe; Wo find ich Trost; Harfenspieler I-III; Prometheus; Der Feuerreiter. Evelyn Lear, soprano (in first four songs); Thomas Stewart, baritone (in *Harfenspieler* and *Prometheus*); Vienna Jeunesse Chorus (in *Feuerreiter*); Vienna Symphony Orchestra, Otto Gerdes, cond. Deutsche Grammophon 139426/7, \$11.98 (two discs).

WOLF: Italienisches Liederbuch. Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, soprano; Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, baritone; Gerald Moore, piano. Angel SB 3703, \$11.98 (two discs).



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BACH: Brandenburg Concertos, S. 1046-51. Franzjosef Maier, solo violin and violino piccolo; Hans-Martin Linde, recorder and flauto traverso; Helmuth Hucke, baroque oboe; Edward H. Tarr, clarin trumpet; Erich Penzel and Gerd Seifert, natural horns; Johannes Koch, viola da gamba; Gustav Leonhardt, harpsichord; Collegium Aureum. RCA Victrola VICS 6023, \$5.00 (two discs). The *Brandenburg Concertos* now outnumber the *1812 Overture* in Schwann, which lists twenty-four complete recordings of the Bach and twenty-two of the Tchaikovsky. With so many versions available, there is clearly something for everybody: high price, low price; big orchestra, little orchestra—we even have competitive versions played on old instruments. Any attempt to categorize and rate them all would fill an entire issue, so I'll simply state that my favorites have been the *Concentus Musicus on Telefunken* (played on old instruments with a high degree of stylistic accuracy), Richter on *Archive* (full of verve, energy, and infectious spirit), and Ristenpart on *Nonesuch* (clean, stylish performances at a budget price). The *Collegium Aureum* combines the best qualities of all three. The solo parts are entrusted to recorders, baroque oboes, a clarin trumpet, natural horns, and a violino piccolo (tuned a fourth higher than a normal violin), and the playing is clean and accurate with fairly good intonation.

The *ripieno* is assigned to one player per part except in the First Concerto, where six violins, two violas, cello, gamba, and bass are used. The crystalline transparency of this delicate ensemble proves that a larger group is not only unnecessary for the *Brandenburgs* but actually a hindrance in achieving complete instrumental intelligibility. The musicians demonstrate a good understanding of ornamental procedures and they execute all the embellishments with exemplary taste: the middle movement of the Fifth Concerto, for instance, is exquisitely decorated with *appoggiaturas* and trills by all three soloists.

In short, I find this recording as satisfying as any currently available version. The *Collegium Aureum* plays with as much intensity and enthusiasm as Richter's group, and they are the stylistic equals of either the *Concentus Musicus* or Ristenpart. The low price and the clean, natural recorded sound are further points in favor of this set. C.F.G.

BACH: Concertos for Piano and Orchestra: No. 1, in D minor, S. 1052; No. 2, in E, S. 1053; No. 3, in D, S. 1054; No. 4, in A, S. 1055; No. 5, in F minor, S. 1056; No. 7, in G minor, S. 1058. Vasso Devetzi, piano; Moscow Chamber Orchestra, Rudolf Barshai, cond. Melodiya/Angel SRB 4108, \$11.58 (two discs).

Recent research has shown that for the last fifteen years of his life Bach wrote almost no church music and became less and less interested in the musical activities of Leipzig's St. Thomas Church and School. In all probability, his major mu-

sical outlets during these last years were with the city's *Collegium Musicum*, whose directorship he held from 1729 to about 1744. It is thus reasonably certain that these clavier concertos, as well as some other orchestral music and several of the secular cantatas, were prepared for the *Collegium Musicum* concerts. Six of the seven clavier concertos are transcriptions from violin concertos (only three of which still survive in their original versions), and one (No. 6, in F, not included on this recording) is a transcription of the Fourth *Brandenburg Concerto*.

The question of piano versus harpsichord in these works has engaged musicologists and performers for years. There seems to be no clear-cut answer, for this buoyant and spirited music continues to attract pianists and harpsichordists in almost equal number. Barshai sees the concertos, appropriately enough, as good-humored chamber music, and he leads his small, highly skilled, and enthusiastic group of string players accordingly. Tempos are all well chosen, imparting a lively bounce to the outer movements that contrasts nicely with the more lyrical and meditative middle movements. Miss Devetzi seems somewhat less stylistically comfortable, however. Except for two measures in the last movement of the E major Concerto when the piano and orchestra go completely awry, her playing is clean and accurate but there is very little consistency in the thorny matter of ornamentation.

Glenn Gould, in his piano recordings of Nos. 1, 3, 5, and 7, demonstrated that a piano can produce a pointed tone that speaks clearly through the orchestral texture. Here, however, we have round, velvety, pear-shaped tones that simply cannot penetrate tutti passages. The piano has also been too distantly recorded, aggravating the over-all lack of crisp, bright presence. I'm afraid this set does little for me. C.F.G.

BALADA: Guernica—See Schuller: Five Bagatelles for Orchestra.

BARBER: Two Scenes from Antony and Cleopatra; Knoxville: Summer of 1915. Leontyne Price, soprano; The New Philharmonia Orchestra, Thomas Schippers, cond. RCA Red Seal LSC 3062, \$5.98.

This coupling has its attractions: certainly so mammoth an attempt as *Antony and Cleopatra* deserves this much of a rehearing at a remove from the circumstances of its downfall, and *Knoxville* has earned itself enough of a place to qualify for a new recorded interpretation.

That Barber's operas have somehow missed the boat constitutes, to my mind, a miscarriage of a very real operatic talent. Neither *Vanessa* nor *Antony* works; yet there is a fair amount of interesting and effective writing in the former, and some in the latter. There can be no doubt of the composer's gift, or of his love for the voice and for the lyric stage. He has not been fortunate



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Claudio Arrau—faithful and perceptive interpretations of eight Beethoven sonatas.

in his collaborators (or at least in what they have produced for *him*), in the matching of his style to his subjects, or in the milieu for which he has written. One can't help wondering what might have emerged had he been tendered a subtle, poetic libretto on an essentially lyrical subject for an ensemble company of singing actors with no epic pretensions. Futile speculation—but there is something important here that has slipped by in the confusion about what opera is and how it should be produced.

The record, I regret to report, is not successful. The two *Antony* scenes contain some good orchestral scoring and some momentarily arresting effects. Indeed, they are not poor pieces of writing, except that they don't finally add up to much of a statement. My own problem with *Knoxville* is that I am always more moved by the Agee prose than I am by the Barber setting; yet, in fairness, it must be said that the writing is honestly felt, nicely scored, and possessed of a mild but genuine fragrance of its own. I always wonder why it was set for soprano.

Price ought to be a choice performer for all these selections but, at least in this instance, she does not bring them off. There are some extremely pretty moments, usually involving suspended high notes. But the words go almost entirely by the boards, and there is little emotional urgency or depth in any of the singing. Sometimes, particularly in *Knoxville*, the singer resorts to a flat, boyish *parlando*, unattractive as vocal sound and puzzling as a coloristic effect. In general, she is not in her best form.

The New Philharmonia plays magnificently for Schippers and is brilliantly recorded, but the same engineering that accounts for the orchestral splashiness accounts for the relative cheating of the vocal part—Price sounds distant and rather small in this context. Complete texts are included, and they are needed.

C.L.O.

BEETHOVEN: Sonatas for Piano: No. 8, in C minor, Op. 13 (Pathétique); No. 21, in C, Op. 53 (Waldstein); No. 22, in F, Op. 54; No. 23, in F minor, Op. 57 (Appassionata); No. 24, in F sharp, Op. 78; No. 25, in G, Op. 79; No. 27, in E minor, Op. 90; No. 30, in E, Op. 109. Claudio Arrau, piano, Philips PHS 3-907, \$17.37 (three discs).

Claudio Arrau, now in his midsixties, is perhaps better known in Europe than in America. In this country, he has the reputation of being an extremely capable but rather cool pianist. I believe that the detached side of Arrau's character serves him well in this Beethoven album, obviously designed by Philips as a typical crosscut of the Thirty-Two. It is not by any means the typical selection for a Beethoven sonata set; connoisseurs will find some interesting lesser-known pieces among them. Arrau here displays a particularly good legato, and his pedal technique, especially when dealing with Beethoven's partly controversial markings, is admirable. The piano in Beethoven's time was a far cry from ours, and Arrau has admirably solved the extremely difficult problems of transferring the sounds and limitations of Beethoven's piano to our huge concert grand. Arrau is also absolutely faithful to Beethoven's dynamic markings, yet he understands the many sides of Beethoven's character. In this album you have the feeling of benefiting from a lifetime of study. All the repeat signs are taken, which tends to make the music even more impressive. The recording is spacious and clean, but I found some distortion at the end of some of the longer sides. Here are some very brief notes on the individual works, which for clarity have been arranged here in chronological order:

Op. 13 (*Pathétique*; 1798-99). This famous late eighteenth-century (we have to remember that!) piece benefits especially from Arrau's approach. The piano that Beethoven must have used for this sonata

is basically a Mozartian instrument, and thus even the final triple fortissimo has to be played with this limitation in mind. The tempos are all very well judged and the discreet pedal technique is hardly noticeable.

Op. 53 (*Waldstein*; 1803-4). By observing the big opening repeat in the first movement, Arrau increases the *Eroica*-like grandeur of this staggering movement. Arrau's considered tempo also contributes to making the size "right"—*allegro con brio* refers not only literally to the tempo but also to the over-all spirit. In the third movement (Rondo), Beethoven's pedal markings are strictly observed as far as this can be done on a modern piano, and this gives the music a veiled, blurred beauty rather like looking at a marvelous landscape through a rainy pane of glass.

Op. 54 (1804). Always considered a rather weak work, Op. 54 is full of original ideas and Beethovenian fancies. The second (and last) movement is quite rightly played with its huge repeat.

Op. 57 (*Appassionata*; 1804-5). Again Arrau strictly observes all the pedal marks, even in the controversial passage before the Adagio and the coda of the first movement. In the finale, the size of the towering structure is increased by observing all the repeats, as Beethoven obviously intended. Arrau's detached view is an advantage in understanding this revolutionary music.

Op. 78 (1809). The first movement includes two repeats and Arrau observes both. Again, this Chilean pianist is particularly good at recapturing the lyrical, rhapsodic side of Beethoven's style. We sometimes forget altogether that Beethoven must have had a tender and wholly charming way with him, and that he moved in a very sophisticated society. The work is marvelously original and full of whimsical genius.

Op. 79 (1809). This work is generally called "Sonatine," and the first movement is a very amusing *Presto alla tedesca*, i.e., a German Dance. Arrau does both the repeats, which I have never heard before. He is very good with the numerous repeated bars in which Beethoven seems to portray a country bumpkin dance band. In the second movement we seem to gaze into the romantic world of Chopin.

Op. 90 (1814). This highly original sonata was written for Beethoven's friend and patron Count Lichnowsky, who became engaged to his future wife in 1814. Beethoven called the sonata, apropos of this engagement, "Contest between head

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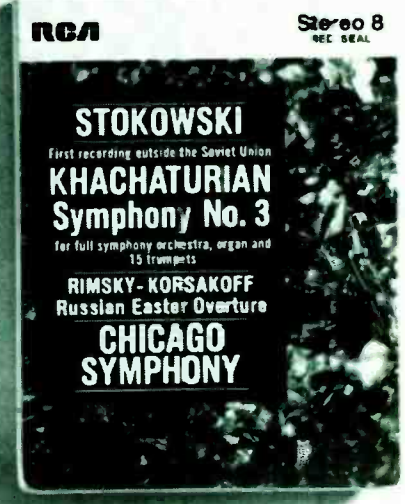
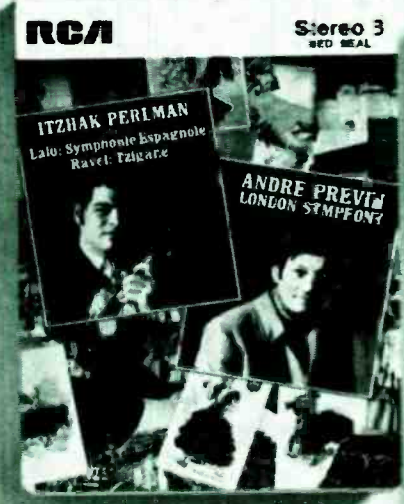
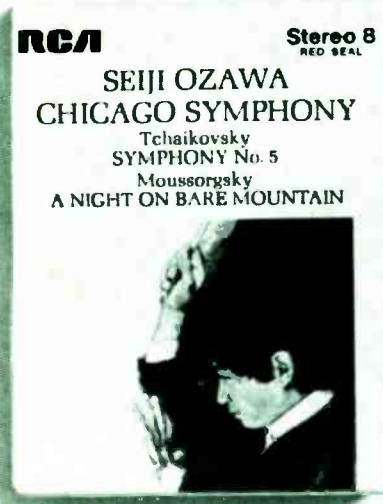
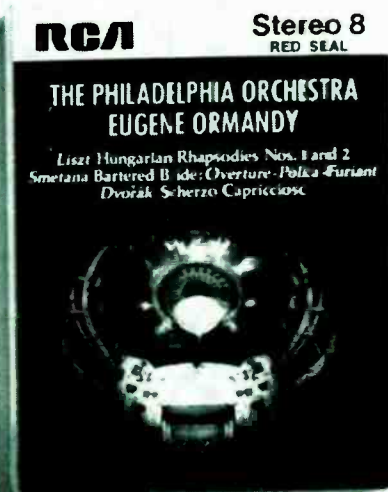
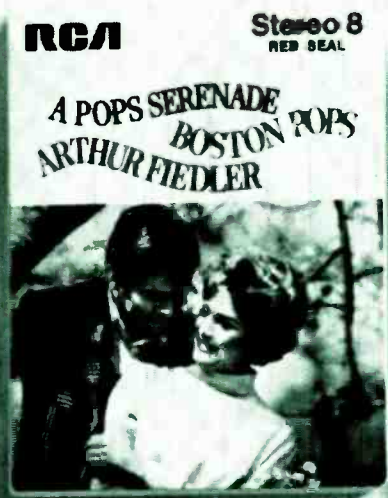
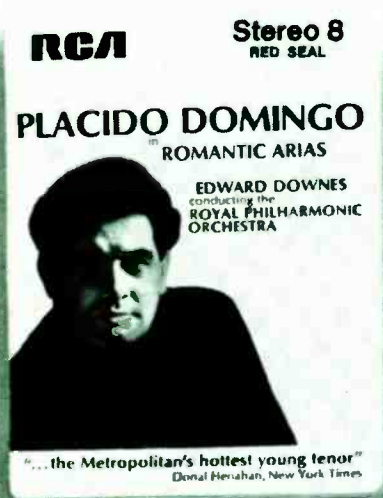
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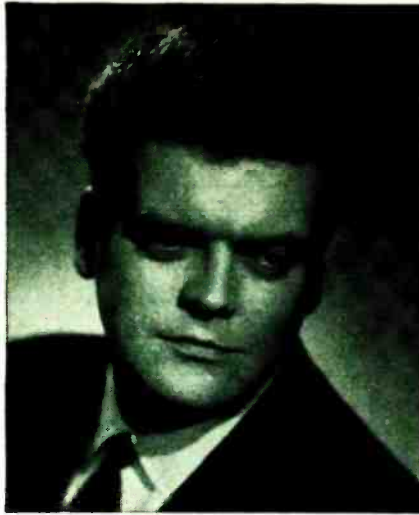
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and heart" (first movement) and the finale "Happy conversations with the beloved." Part of Beethoven's description of how to play the second movement includes the words "very songful"—this is a specialty of Arrau—and later describes the theme as *teneramente*. What an engagement present!

Op. 109 (1820). In the second movement, the difference in the pedal marking *una corda* and later *tutte le corde* is strikingly convincing in Arrau's interpretation. In the last movement, he is very good at sorting out the maze of Beethoven's complicated and occasionally puzzling dynamic marks. He is also excellent in the fiendishly difficult trill passages, all of which are done with great persuasion and discipline.

If you are a beginner at collecting Beethoven's sonatas and would like an intelligent sampler, Arrau would be a great place for you to start. H.C.R.L.



Hermann Prey—easygoing geniality for the Brahms German folk song settings.

BEETHOVEN: Variations (33) on a Waltz by Diabelli, Op. 120. Stephen Bishop, piano. Philips PHS 900220, \$5.79.

This is an impressive performance by the young American pianist Stephen Bishop. His playing begins in a disciplined, almost studied fashion that seems a bit cool and objective, but as variation follows variation, one feels the pianist becoming drawn more and more into Beethoven's drama. By the time we arrive at the "Notte e giorno faticar" variation (so-called for its musical allusion to Leporello's first lines in *Don Giovanni*), there is a fine sense of continuity. The three *minore* variations have an exquisite, hushed tonal beauty that in no way robs them of their poignance and tensile momentum. The massive Fugue in a trifle overstudied perhaps, but the transition to the final *Menuetto* variation couldn't be more deliciously done.

I find Bishop's straightforward interpretation to be more effective than Brendel's rather mannered version on Turnabout; I also find him to be at least Browning's pianistic equal, and certainly on a par with Barenboim in his less polished, not too well-recorded Westminster disc. In short, this is the best Diabelli recording from our current crop of young pianists—the only missing ingredient is that indefinable *Geist* that one gets from a Schnabel, a Serkin, an Arrau, or a Horszowski. It is an inescapable fact that the *aesthetics* of Bishop's generation are completely different from the older pianistic giants, and who is to say that today's studied reserve and analytical objectivity is inherently inferior to yesteryear's editorializing? H.G.

BOCCHERINI: Quintet for Cello and Strings, Op. 37, No. 7—See Mendelssohn: Octet for Strings, in E flat, Op. 20.

BRAHMS: Folk Songs. All mein Gedanken; Erlaube mir, feins Mädchen; Wie komm ich denn zur Tür herein?; Ich stand auf hohem Berge; Mir ist ein schöns brauns Maidelein; Mein Mädal hat einen Rosenmund; Ich weiss mir'n

Maidlein; Ach, englische Schäferin; Feinsliebchen, du sollst mir nicht barfuss gehn; Wach auf, mein Herzensschöne; Soll sich der Mond nicht heller scheinen; Es steht ein Lind; Da unten im Tale; Die Sonne scheint nicht mehr; Jungfräulein, soll mit euch gehn; Schöner Augen schöne Strahlen; Schwesterlein wann gehen wir nach Haus?; In stiller Nacht. Hermann Prey, baritone; Karl Engel, piano. Deutsche Grammophon 139375, \$5.79.

A couple of Brahms's folk song settings on a recital program can offer a welcome light relief from the heavier delights of the German Lied, but eighteen of them at one sitting are perhaps more than any reasonable person will care to digest. Part of the problem lies in the raw material itself. The German folk song tradition is simply not a terribly interesting one: the broad diatonic melodies begin to cloy after the third or fourth song; the four-square rhythmic patterns tend to recur with tiresome consistency; and the emotional scope is a limited one, dealing in an overly coy fashion with forlorn lovers, bitchy young Fräuleins, birds on twigs, etc. The best songs in this release are those which show Brahms at his most inventive in spicing the accompaniments with imaginative harmonic changes and rhythmic subtleties (*Soll sich der Mond* or *In stiller Nacht*) or those that simply aim for a fresh, impish humor (*Mein Mädal hat einen Rosenmund*). Otherwise this music is recommended in small doses only.

Several years back Elisabeth Schwarzkopf and Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau recorded all forty-two solo songs in a two-disc Angel album. This is a valuable set into which one may want to dip occasionally for fun and profit, but I suspect that Hermann Prey's judicious selection will quite nicely satisfy most tastes. The baritone deals with this material in his customary direct, honest manner, and the songs benefit enormously from such sparkling good spirits and virile projection. I for one miss the added twinkle and savor that such old hands as Patzak or Kunz bring to these lyrics and at times Prey gives the impression that he would be more comfortable in a lower key; but on the whole his easygoing

geniality is more appropriate than the rather oversophisticated work of Schwarzkopf and Fischer-Dieskau. Karl Engel provides a fine touch at the keyboard and DGG's true acoustic is warm and intimate. P.G.D.

BRAHMS: Trio for Horn, Violin, and Piano, in E flat. Op. 40. Frederick Vogelgesang, horn, violin, and piano. Lance 1, \$5.79 (available from Music Masters, 25 West 43rd St., New York, N. Y. 10036).

Frederick Vogelgesang is a real triple threat. During the course of his colorful career, he has studied at the Curtis Institute with Zimbalist, appeared as a violin soloist at the Philadelphia Orchestra's youth concerts, served in that orchestra both as a violinist and as their official pianist, and played fourth horn in the Denver Symphony. Vogelgesang has also spent some time with both the Radio City Orchestra and the New York Philharmonic, and occasionally conducts on the side (though there is no mention that he has waved a baton over the present performance!).

The liner tells us that this recording is not being offered as a stunt. "If it doesn't stand on musical merit, it doesn't stand at all." It *does* stand, and, surprisingly enough, it is not quite the metronomical performance that one might have expected. Vogelgesang's reading is intelligent, musicianly, and well planned. The balance is reasonably good (the piano track was recorded first, followed by the violin and the horn) with only a bit of murkiness to betray the multiple recording process. One wonders, though, why the identical performance is pressed on *both* sides of the disc. Or is it the identical performance?

If Vogelgesang can play the Brahms Horn Trio in concert as well as he does on this record, he *really* has something (S. Hurok Attractions, please note!).

H.G.

BRAHMS: Vocal Quartets. Op. 31: Wechsellied zum Tanze; Neckereien; Der Gang zum Liebchen. Op. 64: An die Heimat; Der Abend; Fragen. Op. 92: O schöne Nacht; Späterbst; Abendlied; Warum. Op. 112: Sehnsucht; Nächstens. Mary Plakogiannis, soprano; Paula Gladwell, mezzo; Richard Levitt, tenor; Edmund Najera, bass; Myron Fink, piano. Everest 3249, \$4.98.

Brahms wrote well over 300 songs. Most of them are for solo voice, but the composer also wrote a considerable number of vocal duets and quartets that rival the solo songs in terms of sheer quality. It is thus a great misfortune that there are so few performances of this literature. Vocal quartet concerts are virtually unheard of nowadays and I doubt that many families make a habit of gathering around the piano to sing these pieces for home entertainment.

The most substantial quartets are included in Everest's release, and it is amazing how well they fit together as a collection—the pieces even seem to gain in stature when heard in sequence. This is largely due to their great variety: the

Continued on page 90

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CIRCLE 2 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

L'Ormino— a delicious 325-year-old operatic hit

by Susan T. Sommer

THE JULIARD SCHOOL of Music's 1968 production of *L'Ormino*, an opera by the virtually unknown Italian composer Francesco Cavalli (1602-1676), surprised almost everyone by turning out to be a smash hit. A combination of lively plot, sensuous melody, and subtle characterization, *L'Ormino* was resurrected for twentieth-century audiences by Raymond Leppard, whose edition was first staged at Glyndebourne in 1967. Now that performance is available on three sumptuously recorded discs and provides a delightful evening's home entertainment for armchair operagoers.

Cavalli wrote *L'Ormino* in 1644 for the Venetian theater of San Cassiano which seven years before had opened its doors to the first public audience ever to see an opera (the new medium had hitherto been reserved exclusively for the Italian nobility). San Cassiano was a success and Venice soon became crowded with new theaters and new works. *L'Ormino*, like Monteverdi's *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* of 1642, which it resembles in many respects, was very much in the mainstream of popular style and carefully calculated to please its audiences.

When the opera opens, two princes, Ormino and Amida, are courting Erisbe, queen to Ariadeno, ruler of Morocco and Fez. After a light bantering scene between Ormino and Amida, a more serious note is struck by the entrance of Princess Sicle, who has come from her native Susio disguised as an Egyptian fortuneteller seeking Amida, her faithless lover. Learning that he is pursuing Erisbe, Sicle pours out her grief in a magnificent and moving lament. Sicle then encounters Amida and Erisbe. After reading Amida's palm, Sicle denounces him as a false lover, counseling Erisbe to concentrate her attentions on Ormino. Amida is contrite and enlists the aid of Sicle's old nurse Erice to regain his former love. But just when everything seems resolved and Erisbe decides to settle into a comfortable affair with Ormino, he announces that he has been called off to war. Rather capriciously she decides to accompany him, and the first act ends as the lovers escape.

In the second act Amida and Sicle are reconciled by Erice's wiles. The nurse pretends to conjure up Sicle's ghost—in reality the princess herself—and the distraught Amida is only too glad to find that she is alive and willing to take him back. Meanwhile Ariadeno is furious at the flight of Ormino and his queen. He orders them captured and put to death. Osmano, the king's messenger, reluctantly accepts his role as executioner and brings poison to the unhappy pair who bravely accept their fate. In a truly touching love death, Ormino and Erisbe drink the poison and take leave of one another. The king enters and reflects sorrowfully on the events; his rage has passed and, like Wagner's King Marke, he realizes that these two were indeed dear to him. In a nineteenth-century opera the curtain would fall here, but we know there has to be a happy ending—and sure enough, the messenger, pitying the unhappy lovers,

has given them only a sleeping potion. They awake, everyone apologizes, the king gives Ormino both his wife and his kingdom, and Amida and Sicle arrive to join the general celebration.

Cavalli wrote *L'Ormino* at a time when opera had not yet hardened into the cast-iron molds of *opera seria*; a composer could use the utmost flexibility in expressing the lyric and dramatic possibilities of the text. The characters, for example, may be types, yet each has individual human qualities. Lighthearted Erisbe and the brash young Ormino mature during the course of the opera by accepting the consequences of their impetuous behavior. Their attitudes and music in the last scene reflect a new and deeper awareness of their relationship. The proud and passionate Sicle is reluctant to regain Amida's affections through trickery—she must be pushed and coaxed by the wily Erice, a delightful model of the intriguing old nurse. Perhaps the most remarkable character of all is the king, Ariadeno: quite surprisingly we feel that his goodness is real, his anger spontaneous and justified—even his renunciation is not purely an artificial contrivance.

The music has immense vitality and plasticity, readily adapting itself to each dramatic situation. Cavalli is a natural opera composer whose musical orientation is basically dramatic, yet capable of pouring out an inexhaustible supply of delicious melody when the occasion warrants. He casts his arias in a variety of short forms—strophic songs, modified ABA forms, melodies written over a ground bass, freely arranged rondos—each molded by the dramatic situation and the changing text. His melodic style is characterized by a flowing triple meter with an incredible variety of subtle internal accents, while a Puccini-like arioso propels the dramatic action. Cavalli does not use the ensemble *per se*, but there are frequent duets—one between Erisbe and her servant Mirinda is a worthy forerunner of *Butterfly's* Flower Duet—and comic set pieces such as Nerillo's description of the hustle and bustle of city life.

It would be interesting to subject *L'Ormino* to more detailed analysis, but here one runs into a problem: where does Cavalli leave off and his arranger begin? Mr. Leppard has left his trail throughout the production; sometimes it is clearly marked, but more often clues are evident only to the experienced tracker. Those who have seen Giovanni Faustini's original 1644 libretto in the British Museum point out many discrepancies between the text as written and as performed here. The comic lines sung by the fake Egyptian fortunetellers in their wonderful spoof on operatic incantation scenes do not appear in the original. The passionate Poppea-like duet sung by Erisbe and Ormino as they depart at the end of the first act is lifted from another Cavalli opera, *La Virtù de' strali d'amore*. The final full-cast ensemble was arranged by Leppard from a duet. A page of notes in the vocal score discloses some of these alterations, but there is still much to



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question. For instance, Cavalli intended the part of Ormindo for an alto; what harmonic changes and alterations in the surrounding vocal and instrumental parts were necessitated by Leppard's transposition of the role to the tenor register, we cannot tell.

The actual sound of the instrumental accompaniment is also as much Leppard as Cavalli. Assuming—and with good reason—that the orchestra in a seventeenth-century Venetian opera house could not afford more than a string orchestra and a variety of continuo instruments, Leppard has scored for a lush five-part string accompaniment and devised ingenious and imaginative tasks for his thirteen continuo players. This may all be within a seventeenth-century framework, but when the strings play with the brilliant tone and vibrato of twentieth-century orchestras and the whole is amplified by the glorious but somewhat unreal acoustical ambience of modern-day recording, the result is miles from the sound heard by the Venetian audience at San Cassiano.

Does this all really matter or is it merely musicological nit-picking? If you simply wish to sit back and enjoy the music, I would say no, it doesn't matter—every note here sounds perfectly wonderful. But in order to give this marvelous score serious study on its own dramatic, musical, or historic terms, we should be told what is original and what improvements have been added by Mr. Leppard.

The Glyndebourne performers are all first-rate. Hanneke van Bork makes a superb Sicle; her first act aria, "*Chi mi toglie al die*" is easily the vocal highlight of the opera and she sings it magnificently. Anne Howells, a charmingly lyrical Erisbe, is billed as a mezzo, but her voice has a light soprano quality, and she handles her A's with ease. John Wakefield and Peter-Christoph Runge are suitably manly as the rival lovers, and Federico Davia, a splendidly noble bass, makes the most of Ariadeno's low E's and F's. Except for a bit of uncalled for mugging by Jane Berbié, the smaller roles are handled excellently.

Those familiar with Leppard's recorded Monteverdi realizations will not be surprised by the opulent sound of both the orchestra and the recording. This is an in-depth stereo performance that surrounds the listener in a bath of glorious sound. If your operatic taste runs to delectable melodic writing, glistening sound, and a mixture of love and laughter à la *Così fan tutte* or *Ariadne auf Naxos*, then *L'Ormindo* should be just your dish.

CAVALLI: L'Ormindo. Hanneke van Bork (s), Sicle; Isabel Garcisanz (s), Nerillo; Anne Howells (ms), Erisbe; Jane Berbié (ms), Mirinda; Jean Allister (c), Melide; John Wakefield (t), Ormindo; Hugues Cuenod (t), Erice; Peter-Christoph Runge (b), Amida; Federico Davia (bs), Ariadeno; Richard van Allen (bs), Osmano; London Philharmonic Orchestra, Raymond Leppard, cond. Argo ZNF 8/10, \$17.85 (three discs).

Continued from page 86

music ranges in complexity from the simple, almost folklike settings to the subtleties of the Op. 112 quartets, written near the end of the composer's life. But all the music here maintains a remarkably high over-all excellence.

I wish I could be equally enthusiastic about the performances. The four soloists are members of the Gregg Smith Singers, a choral group whose work has impressed me considerably. But the four solo voices as recorded are simply not up to the demands of this music—only soprano Mary Plakogiannis impresses as being technically adequate. The other voices sound thin and strained, and frequently there are acute balancing problems. Yet the group does manage to project the spirit of the music reasonably successfully, due in no small measure to pianist Myron Fink's sympathetic accompaniments.

The record jacket bills this recording as "the complete vocal quartets." This is "complete" nonsense. Even the liner notes point out that Brahms wrote over sixty such quartets! The four *Zigeunerlieder* of Op. 112 are missing, as are all the *Liebeslieder Walzer*, Op. 52, and the *Neue Liebeslieder Walzer*, Op. 65, as well as the *Kleine Hochzeits-Kantate*. The disc's presentation is made all the more irritating since it is impossible to tell from the jacket exactly what is included on the record. Texts are furnished, but no translations. R.P.M.

CHARPENTIER, M-A. Messe de Minuit. PURCELL: Te Deum. April Cantelo (s), Helen Gelmar (s), James Bowman (ct), Ian Partridge (t), Christopher Keyte (bs); Andrew Davis, organ; King's College Chapel Choir; English Chamber Orchestra, David Willcocks, cond. Angel S 36528, \$5.98.

I'm afraid this disc got lost in last Christmas' wrappings and is only now coming to light in these pages. No matter. Despite its title the Charpentier Mass is a delight at any time of the year. True, the perky tunes are drawn from French Christmas carols, but the melodies are not likely to be familiar ones and won't seem unduly seasonal to an American audience. The Mass has a natural charm combining tuneful vocal writing with a sparkling French baroque orchestral accompaniment. The performance matches the spirit of the music, and the sound is magnificent.

Purcell's *Te Deum*, which rounds out the disc, features an exceptionally fine countertenor, James Bowman. His voice resembles Alfred Deller's yet he sings without Deller's mannerisms and with a better sense of the appropriate moment for blending into the vocal ensemble. The other soloists sing with gusto, and the brilliantly played accompaniment contributes to a festive performance. S.T.S.

DALLAPICCOLA: Piccola musica notturna—See Schuller: Five Bagatelles for Orchestra.

ELGAR: Introduction and Allegro, in G minor, Op. 47; Serenade for Strings, Op. 20; Elegy, Op. 58; Sospiri, Op. 70; The Spanish Lady: Suite (arr. Young). Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, Neville Marriner, cond. Argo ZRG 573, \$5.95.

Looking at the table of contents and the performing personnel listed above, I must say that the idea of Sir Edward Elgar for chamber orchestra intrigued me. Having heard the record, I'll confess that my opinion of the composer has risen.

In the early *Serenade*, Marriner and his superb small forces get anything but a small sonority, but they never force. While the performance largely duplicates the excellently chosen tempos of the recent George Weldon/Royal Philharmonic release, it also adds a degree of trim vitality and stylish precision; in the *largo*, for example, the St. Martin-in-the-Fields account is quite as expressive and idiomatic but decidedly less arch. The most impressive work on the disc, of course, is the *Introduction and Allegro*, in which the orchestra is joined by a fine string quartet (Hugh Maguire and Raymond Keenlyside, violins; Kenneth Essex, viola; Kenneth Heath, cello). Here the scaled-down roster of performers decidedly works to the music's advantage. The opening flourish of the *Introduction*, in particular, projects a bite and sheer agility that are beyond the capabilities of a larger ensemble (as, for instance, Barbirolli's New Philharmonia Orchestra/Allegrì Quartet). Again, both the *Elegy* and the *Sospiri* are given sinewy, sleekly groomed presentations which manage to sound elegiac without sounding mawkish. In short, purged of excess flab, Elgar is beginning to impress me as very nearly a masterly composer.

The Suite from *The Spanish Lady* was drawn by Dr. Percy Young from an unfinished opera Elgar was building around Ben Jonson's *The Devil is An Ass*, and contains more music than is included on the present disc. The three Dances here given, however, are frothy and charming, with performances that match those qualities. nuance for nuance.

Argo's recorded sound is brightly incisive, warm, and realistic. H.G.

HAYDN: Concerto for Harpsichord and Orchestra, in D—See Mozart: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 9, in E flat, K. 271 (Jeunehomme).

HENZE: Doppio Concerto per Oboe, Arpa, ed Archi; Fantasia für Streicher; Sonata per Archi. Heinz Holliger, oboe; Ursula Holliger, harp; Collegium Musicum Zürich, Paul Sacher, cond. Deutsche Grammophon 139396. \$5.79.

Even in his nonvocal works, Hans Werner Henze keeps half an eye on the operatic stage. The Double Concerto, written in 1966 and the major work on DGG's latest addition to its recorded survey of the composer's *oeuvre*, is full of theatrical gestures that seem to describe some sort of abstract musical scenario. Henze's very



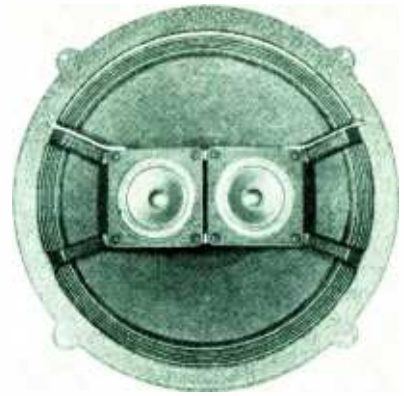
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choice of instruments—oboe, harp, and eighteen solo strings—emphasizes his dramatic intentions. The oboe's plangent lyricism and articulate narrative character contrast vividly with the fantastic arpeggiated flights of the harp; and to further this already tense instrumental relationship, Henze does not hesitate to exploit many unconventional technical devices such as quarter-tone glissandos, double harmonics, and several types of flutter-tonguing. As a background to this varied dialogue, the strings provide a rich, pungent tapestry of luminous sonorities. The shape of the Concerto's continuous thirty-minute span is not always readily apparent, but the composer's compelling rhetoric and ingenious effects help to

bridge those sections of the score that seem somewhat irrelevant to the musical argument.

The *Fantasia*, also dating from 1966, is something of a dud. Most of the musical ideas here are pretty thin and the episodic nature of the piece is hardly justified by its title. This music was composed as a background to Volker Schlöndorff's film *Der junge Törless* and perhaps when heard in its original environment (played on Renaissance instruments), the work might have more point.

The *Sonata for Strings* (1957-58), on the other hand, is one of Henze's finest achievements. In the course of its two compact, classically structured movements (a sonata allegro followed by a theme

and thirty-two variations), the *Sonata* exhibits some of the most attractive features of the composer's style: beautifully arched melodies of great intensity, a marvelous variety of fascinating string textures, and virtuoso instrumental writing of tremendous flair. Each variation is a tiny etude in itself, cunningly crafted into a string of glittering jewel-like miniatures.

Both the *Sonata* and the *Double Concerto* are dedicated to Paul Sacher and were undoubtedly written with his accomplished ensemble in mind: the performances are, needless to say, immaculate in every detail. The Holligers meet the formidable challenges of their solo parts with ease—particularly Mr. Holliger, whose oboe tone remains sweet and true even in the uppermost octaves. DGG's sonics are appropriately lush, vibrant, and decidedly in the demonstration class.

P.G.D.

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HINDEMITH: *Symphony from "The Harmony of the Universe."* Festival Symphony, Paul Hindemith, cond. Everest 3226, \$4.98 (rechanneled stereo only).

Like *Mathis der Maler*, *The Harmony of the Universe* is an opera from which Hindemith extracted a symphony even before the original score was finished. Since *Mathis* is an opera about a painter, its three movements, with their choiring angels, their lament at the tomb of Christ, and their assault of monsters on a helpless St. Anthony, are highly descriptive and pictorial. *The Harmony of the Universe*, on the other hand, is an opera about the mathematician, astronomer, and philosopher, Johannes Kepler. The symphony drawn from it therefore has no picturesque qualities at all; it is all pure music, perhaps the best Hindemith ever wrote for a full symphony orchestra.

The title of the first movement is "*Musica Instrumentalis*." This refers not to musical instruments but to those of mathematics and astronomy, and it provides Hindemith with the opportunity to write a big, dramatic, highly contrapuntal, highly "mathematical," but wonderfully pungent and dynamic sonata allegro. The second movement is "*Musica Humana*"; the human condition it reflects is sad, pensive, elegiac, but dwelt upon for only eight minutes. The finale is "*Musica Mundana*," the music of the spheres, which Kepler tried to define. This is a passacaglia wherein a nine-bar theme is given ninefold treatment (there are nine planets, after all, even if Kepler didn't know that); and the music is full of appropriate, shrewdly calculated climaxes and infinities.

The performance is superb, although the *ad hoc* orchestra is not of the best and the recording must have been made before 1963. But this is the only recording available of one of the greatest symphonies of modern times, and with Hindemith himself conducting it has the authority of the composer in its interpretation. Everest's notes discuss Hindemith as if he were still very much alive.

A.F.

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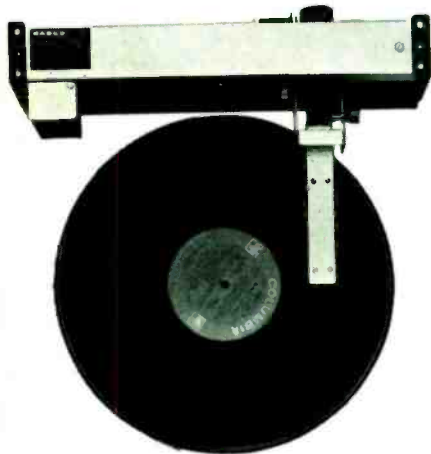


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CIRCLE 46 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

MASCAGNI: *L'Amico Fritz*. Mirella Freni, Luciano Pavarotti, Vincenzo Sardinero; Chorus and Orchestra of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, Gianandrea Gavazzeni, cond. For a feature review of this recording, see page 77.

MENDELSSOHN: *Octet for Strings*, in E flat, Op. 20. **BOCCHERINI:** *Quintet for Cello and Strings*, Op. 37, No. 7. Members of the Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields. Argo ZRG 569, \$5.95.

Mendelssohn's octet occupies a place in music midpoint between the intimacy of the chamber hall and the public atmosphere of an orchestral theater. The performance here stresses the latter ambience, emphasizing homogeneous textures, over-all smoothness, and breadth of sound. The recording too, in its distant miking and soft-focus reverberation, imbues the performance with a feeling of largeness, though at a healthy distance.

Tempos are comfortable throughout, avoiding the nervous excess that characterizes the Heifetz-led account on RCA but failing to achieve the spiritedness of the captivating and effervescent performance by the combined forces of the Smetana and Janáček quartets on Westminster. The S and J coalition makes the most of the chamber qualities of the music, and the close-to recording (still perfectly fine, though years old) adds much to the sense of immediacy achieved by the pepped-up musicians. In direct comparison the current entourage seems aloof, but then seldom does one listen for pleasure under the circumstances of A-B tests. On its own, the Argo performance strikes me as an amiable if not rousing interpretation of this gem of early Mendelssohniana.

The Boccherini quintet is one of more than a hundred such works by the Italian cellist/composer. It is an expressive if episodic bit of music, strung together with delectable melodic clichés and charming ornaments. The five players (unnamed save for cellist Kenneth Heath) bring it off with much grace and occasional drama. S.L.

MOZART: *Concerto for Oboe and Orchestra*, in C, K. 314; *Symphony No. 34*, in C, K. 338. Leon Goossens, oboe (in the Concerto); Sinfonia of London, Colin Davis, cond. RCA Victrola VICS 1382, \$2.50.

Here is a stunning set of Mozart performances—it is difficult to determine which side deserves the warmer praise.

Goossens will absolutely sell you on the oboe concerto (not that the job itself is so difficult), because the delicacy, the high articulation of his playing match those same qualities in Mozart, note for note. Whether in the galant style of the first movement, the elaborate solo embellishments of the second, the chamber-music interplay with the tutti in the third, Goossens is utterly lucid, utterly intelligent, and has the full collaboration of the London Sinfonia all the way. Even the cadenzas are lovingly done, and tasteful.

Having almost run out of superlatives before arriving at Colin Davis' performance of the heroic *Symphony No. 34*, let me take a deep breath and start all over again. The triumphal opening *allegro vivace* gets its full measure of flesh, bone, and sinew, followed by wonderfully delicate string work in the second subject. For the rest, the clarity and warmth, the perfectly gauged dynamics, the elegant little essays by the oboes in the finale—all add up to one of the finest Mozart discs I have heard. S.F.

MOZART: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra*, No. 9, in E flat, K. 271 (*Jeunehomme*). **HAYDN:** *Concerto for Harpsichord and Orchestra*, in D. Igor Kipnis, harpsichord; London Strings, Neville Marriner, cond. Columbia MS 7253, \$5.98.

When I saw the words on this frightful jacket underneath the Mozart listing, "first recording on the harpsichord," my heart sank. But as matters turned out, the front of the jacket, with its ridiculous portrait of Mozart and the rather bad portrait of Haydn, is the only bad thing about this otherwise superb record. The excellent notes by Judith Robison make a very persuasive case for the supposition that Mlle. Jeunehomme, for whom K. 271 was written, played not on a *forte-piano* (as the early pianos were usually called) but on a harpsichord. And, anyway, a harpsichord is certainly preferable to the monstrous nine-foot modern grand piano, which is singularly unsuited to Mozart's music.

Igor Kipnis is an excellent harpsichordist. I particularly enjoyed the silvery tone of his beautiful instrument, which was made by Rutkowski & Robinette. The added ornamentation in the Haydn is in the very best taste; he uses Mozart's own cadenzas in K. 271. I have never heard a bad recording by Neville Marriner, and here his stylish accompaniment is everything one could wish for. A delightful record and one which I highly recommend. H.C.R.L.

MOZART: *Symphony No. 40*, in G minor, K. 550; *Serenade No. 6*, in D, K. 239 (*Serenata Notturna*). English Chamber Orchestra, Benjamin Britten, cond. London CS 6598, \$5.98.

It must have been nearly twenty years ago that the distinguished Austro/British music critic Hans Keller wrote an article describing Britten's affinity with the music of Mozart. This magnificent record well supports Mr. Keller's theory. It is my considered opinion that this is the finest Mozart record that has been made in many years. The symphony is recorded with all its repeats, which takes up one-and-one-half sides of an LP. This is the way Mozart must have conducted the symphony in Vienna, and this uncut version is most welcome, increasing, as it does, the scope and depth of one of the eighteenth century's most staggering masterpieces. The English Chamber Orchestra's playing is beautiful, quite beyond words. The performance of K. 239—another kind of work—is delicious.

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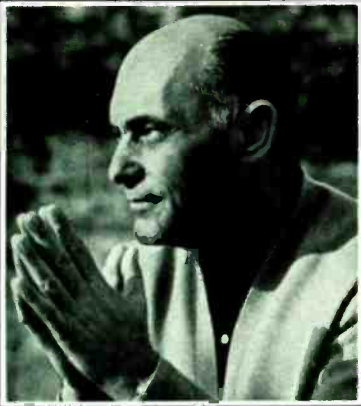


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The notes by Erik Smith, who has now left Decca to become head of a & r for Philips, are as always, very interesting.

I believe that this record is a milestone in twentieth-century understanding of Mozart's mind. For any Mozartian it is absolutely indispensable. H.C.R.L.

PARTCH: *Daphne of the Dunes; Barstow; Castor and Pollux.* Instrumental and vocal ensemble, Danlee Mitchell, cond. Columbia MS 7207, \$5.98.

Like other works of Harry Partch previously reviewed in these columns, these three are written for instruments which the composer himself has created to give accurate expression to his extremely acute sensibility in the matter of pitch. As everybody knows, he has created a scale of forty-three notes to the octave from which many interesting theoretical possibilities result. To a less acute ear, these pitch differences, while clearly perceptible, are less important than the marvelous range of sound tints which the instruments produce. They are largely plectrum and percussion instruments; the percussion instruments are made of cloud-chamber bowls, electric light bulbs, glass rods, bamboo, gourds, and all manner of rich-sounding woods. All told, Partch has created an ensemble almost as complex and varied in tonal colors as the symphony orchestra, but here is where the resemblance ends.

The complexities of the Partchian rhythms are as grandly scaled as his spectrum of timbres; in fact, rhythm and timbre are largely what this music is all about. Melodic patterns are entertaining but not very striking, while harmonic and contrapuntal interest are almost totally lacking. A certain monotony is inevitable after a while; it is possible for a work by Partch to go on too long, just as it is possible, to the Western ear at any rate, for a piece of Indian music to go on too long. Partch's music has its analogies with the music of India, and the great recent success in the West of musicians such as Ravi Shankar is bound to arouse public interest in Partch as well.

Daphne of the Dunes is a film score and *Castor and Pollux* a score for the dance, and they both sound very much alike. *Barstow*, however, is a vocal work. A tenor, in one speaker, and a baritone, in the other, declaim, inflate, and play around with hobo graffiti found on fences in the Mojave Desert railroad town after which the work is named. Partch has done a good deal with hobo literature, and *Barstow* is, in fact, only one part of a much larger work dealing with it; unfortunately, the instruments often cover the voices in the recording and the full irony of the text does not come through. The recording seems excellent otherwise, and makes most interesting use of the ping-pong effect. A.F.

PERKINS: *Music for Thirteen Players; Caprice*—See Shapey: *Incantations*.

POULENC: *Songs: Air champetre* (Moréas); *Trois chansons* (Lorca); *Cinq poèmes* (Jacob); *Trois poèmes* (Apolinaire); *Air vif* (Moréas); *Fiancailles pour rire* (De Vilmorin); *Trois poèmes* (De Vilmorin); *Metamorphoses* (De Vilmorin). Maxine Makas, soprano; Anthony Makas, piano. Westminster WST 17146, \$4.79.

The browser who comes upon this record in the bin will be startled by an apparent profile of De Gaulle in bold caricature. Be not misled: it is the face of Francis Poulenc (1899-1963), who might have been amused at the resemblance—for the personalities of no two Frenchmen could be more dissimilar. Poulenc's was a mercurial character, reaching deftly into many folds of experience, exploring with music (aided sometimes by words) the nature of faith, ridicule, infatuation, concerned as frequently with the hidden surface as with the revealed. He was an inventive man (but not a harmonic innovator), a cerebral man. His songs show all these traits.

Most of the twenty-five songs recorded here are miniatures, some no more than half a minute long. They are a jumble of real gems and paste beads, each intended to be held for a moment to the light and then to be put aside. Many are single bursts of illumination, some are slightly more extended periods of insight. You will either like or dislike them immediately; this is not the kind of music that grows on one.

It was both original and commendable of Miss Makas, a young American soprano, to make what has obviously been a deep study of this music. Her master was Pierre Bernac, the baritone who introduced more than eighty of Poulenc's songs to the public. Her voice is young, clear, free from mannerisms, and has a fresh, "American soprano" sound. Her command of French is excellent without being entirely native—a subtle but important point in this music.

There is a great deal more in these songs than she extracts from them: finer shadings of tone, more confident nuances with the word and musical phrase, a greater variety of emotional temperature. These qualities tend to escape her—as they do not bypass, for instance, Gérard Souzay, whose best Poulenc recital may be found on Philips PHS 900148; or Régine Crespin (London OS 26043); or above all Bernac himself (Odyssey 32 26 0009).

The disc is impeccably engineered and the surfaces are excellent. Program notes are by Pierre Bernac who has written excellent prose summaries of the verses: but with music of this pace and subtlety, it is inexcusable not to have provided parallel full texts in both languages. Spoiling the ship for a halfpenny worth of tar, I calls it. G.M.

PURCELL: *Te Deum* (Willcocks recording)—See Charpentier: *Messe de Minuit*.





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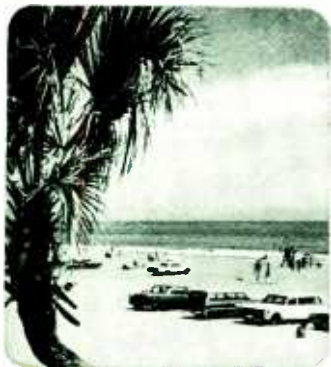
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ROSSINI: Sonatas for Strings: No. 1, in G; No. 2, in A; No. 3, in C; No. 6, in D. Members of the Berlin Philharmonic, Herbert von Karajan, cond. Deutsche Grammophon 139041, \$5.79.

These sonatas—saucy and urbane—are the work of the young Rossini (though whether he was actually twelve at the time of their composition, as would be inferred from the preface to the original score, has been subject to question). They are great fun, for the composer wrote them originally for two violins, cello, and double bass, and set a variety of obstacles for his friend the double bassist Agostino Triossi. The pieces were later transcribed—by other hands—for normal string quartet, for woodwind quartet, for string orchestra; the present version is the most frequently recorded, and no one can fail to be entertained by the overt drama of No. 6, with its last movement rising in the chromatic waves so beloved of Berlioz, or the occasional galloping efforts of the double basses, bravely taking their turn at figurations more at home on the fiddles.

But you will get more of the snap of young Rossini from the Solisti di Zagreb than from maestro Von Karajan, who takes a decidedly middle-aged view of things. In his version the tempos propounded by the Zagreb are slowed to half, the skipping rhythms smoothed out to a sedate stroll, and the crisp incisiveness of a small group of strings broadened to the fatter sound of a large conglomerate. The playing itself is first-rate, but the zip is missing. S.F.

SCHUBERT: Moments musicaux, D. 780. SCHUMANN: Nachtstücke, Op. 23. Emil Gilels, piano. Melodiya/Angel SR 40082, \$5.98.

Gilels is at his best in this recording. His pianism, while remaining essentially uncomplex, has much more nuance and color than has often been the case (helped no doubt by the wonderfully full, round piano reproduction), and he also achieves a far finer true legato line. Some might prefer their Schumann played with a bit more weight, but I find the Russian's cogency rather refreshing. At any rate, with the exception of No. 4, Schumann's *Nachtstücke* are very rarely performed and this version is the only integral set currently listed in Schwann. They are excellent examples of Schumann's output, similar in scope to the *Novelletten*, which were written at approximately the same time.

Gilels gives an account of the Schubert *morceaux* with each expression mark didactically translated and each repeat scrupulously observed. It is a strong, manly kind of Schubert playing (happily removed from the mincing inanities of Badura-Skoda and some of his Viennese ilk), and if in the end I prefer the readings of Kempff (DGG) and Schnabel (Angel COLH 308), it is because those artists go further than Gilels in grasping what Schubert was driving at *beyond* the printed instructions. In the matter of sheer technique, however, I doubt if I have ever heard a more literally machine-perfect rendition of No. 5, with its

treacherous, leaping chords: Gilels actually makes it seem easy! H.G.

SCHUBERT: Sonatas for Piano: in A, D. 664; in C, D. 840; Allegretto in C Minor, D. 900. Wilhelm Kempff, piano, Deutsche Grammophon 139322, \$5.79.

This is a most welcome record, particularly for its fine performance of the C major ("*Unfinished*") Sonata—an excellent replacement for the deleted dynamic Serkin recording. Neither the abnormally slow Sviatoslav Richter performance (Monitor) nor the tight-lipped, overly literal Wührer reading (in Vox's complete Schubert Piano Sonatas, Vol. 3) offered adequate solace for the withdrawal of the Serkin disc. Kempff's recording does. Though at times his playing tends to be a bit salonlike, colored, and shaped with more intimate grace, he shares with Serkin a certain Beethovenian astringency that projects Schubert's power as well as his lyricism. Like Serkin, Kempff plays only the two completed movements of this immense torso. Richter stopped dead in his tracks at the precise point where the manuscript ends, while Wührer utilized a complete performing edition prepared by Ernst Křenek.

Kempff's account of the "little" A major Sonata observes the double repeat in the first movement; but then (to show that he is no blind literatist, I suppose!), he inexplicably takes no repeat at all in the finale. Here is a solid, slightly four-square and old-fashioned performance, finely nuanced (especially in the slow movement), with a steady if not incandescent facility. The C minor Allegretto receives a lovely, completely direct and to-the-point statement. In other words, Kempff is in top form here, and the collection is pretty much what one expects from one of the finest (if maddeningly uneven) Schubertians of the older generation.

DGG's sound has a clean, bright, jewel-like sheen and the surfaces are excellent. H.G.

SCHULLER: Five Bagatelles for Orchestra. BALADA: Guernica. DALLAPICCOLA: Piccola musica notturna. Louisville Orchestra, Jorge Mester, cond. Louisville LS 686, \$8.45.

The best thing here is the Schuller. To judge by the composer's annotation, the piece was written to introduce the modern atonal idiom to audiences unfamiliar with it. He goes about this aim in an admirably systematic way by devoting each *Bagatelle* to a different compositional problem. No. 1 is a study in contrasting sonorities and No. 2, a study in contrasting dynamics; the third touches on the idea of *Klangfarben-melodie* and the fourth deals in varied rhythms. The finale sums up the whole. The entire achievement is neat, brilliant, convincing, communicative, and subtle; Schuller has never written a better orchestral work than this.

The brief tedium of Dallapiccola's *Piccola musica notturna* need not detain us beyond the observation that it seems

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surprisingly uninventive for so distinguished a composer. Balada's *Guernica* is better. Leonardo Balada is a Spanish composer, now living in New York. The fantastic sonorities of his work would be more convincing if the piece were given some other title: Picasso's masterpiece, after which *Guernica* has been named, is tough, imaginative competition for anybody. But Balada brings off some powerful pages nevertheless.

This recording may well be the best in Louisville's entire series. A.F.

SCHUMANN: Nachtstücke, Op. 23—See Schubert: Moments musicaux, D. 780.

SHAPEY: Incantations. PERKINS: Music for Thirteen Players; Caprice. Bethany Beardslee, soprano (in *Incantations*); Easley Blackwood, piano (in *Caprice*); Contemporary Chamber Players of the University of Chicago, Ralph Shapey, cond. (in *Incantations* and *Music for Thirteen Players*). Composers Recordings CRI 232, \$5.95.

CRI continues its admirable and valuable series of recordings by university-based performing groups with this release from the University of Chicago's Contemporary Chamber Players. The director of the group, Ralph Shapey (b. 1921), is a composer of considerable accomplishment, with an unmistakably personal style: although a student of Stefan Wolpe, he clearly owes a good deal to the example of Edgard Varèse. *Incantations*, composed in 1961, is a work for soprano solo (singing a purely syllabic, meaningless text) and a spatially disposed ensemble: cello (up front with the soprano), horn, gongs, tom-toms, and irons (on the listener's left), alto saxophone and piano (at the rear), trumpet, cymbals, and timpani (at the right). In the first two movements, the cello shares a sort of *concertante* role with the voice; both are silent in the third movement, where the latent violence built up earlier by the rhythmically asymmetrical gestures finally breaks out into a strenuous and complex tutti passage. This leads into the trancelike finale, scored only for voice (humming rather than singing for much of the time) and percussion. All of this is shaped with a sure hand, and makes a tremendous effect, especially in Bethany Beardslee's intense and marvelously controlled performance.

John MacIvor Perkins, born in 1935, now teaches at Harvard but was formerly associated with Chicago: judging from the biographical note on the liner, he seems to have studied with practically everybody from Nadia Boulanger to Roberto Gerhard, and the pieces on this record attest to no mean technical fluency and inventiveness. *Music for Thirteen Players* deals with changing levels of textural activity, but even the most complex aspects of the maximum-density ritornello that forms its backbone are transparently clean and delicate. Both here and in the *Caprice* for piano, the inviting, almost conventionally attractive surface offers identifiable fea-

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tures that facilitate structural comprehension. I like the way Perkins' ear works, and his music is none the worse for its elegant sound.

A few rough splices regrettably mar Easley Blackwood's quite spectacular piano performance, but the ensemble piece is very well recorded and seems to be played with a good deal of security. D.H.

STRAUSS, R.: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in D minor, Op. 8; Burleske for Piano and Orchestra, in D minor. Carroll Glenn, violin; Eugene List, piano; Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Kurt List, cond. Odyssey 32 16 0312, \$2.98. Strauss not only outgrew the traditionalism of these two youthful compositions but he eventually rejected the very aesthetic foundation on which they were based. Both the Violin Concerto and *Burleske* share a common background of what was, at the time, a deep strain of German conservatism—the Violin Concerto especially lacks originality, well made though it may be. The *Burleske* suffers a bit less in this respect: it at least possesses a mercurial brilliance and humor that clearly looks forward to the composer of *Till Eulenspiegel*.

Both Eugene List and his wife, Carroll Glenn, are fine instrumentalists with impeccable instrumental techniques and a considerable amount of musical imagination. Even in the formula-ridden Violin Concerto, Miss Glenn's playing has plenty of temperament, rhythmic vitality, and thoughtful phrasing. Not having heard Mr. List perform in several years, I found him somewhat less nettlesome here than I remembered. His performance of the *Burleske* misses a touch of the light fantastic that it so badly needs. He has an ample supply of virtuosity, but Strauss without style is a flat experience indeed. Conductor List (no relation) unfortunately suffers from even greater shortcomings, and perhaps his deficiencies on the podium contributed to his soloist's lack of fire.

Since the current Schwann catalogue lists no other recording of the Violin Concerto, this disc recommends itself to dedicated Straussians. If it's only the *Burleske* that interests you, Byron Janis offers a superb version on Victrola with Fritz Reiner and the Chicago Symphony at their very best. P.H.

VICTORIA: Requiem Mass (sex vocibus); Gaudent in coelis; O Magnum mysterium; Ave Maria; Ascendens Christus. Choir of St. John's College, Cambridge, George Guest, cond. Argo ZRG 570, \$5.95.

Question: what do Karlheinz Stockhausen and John Cage have in common with Tomás Luis de Victoria, a somber sixteenth-century Spaniard who devoted his life and music to the Church? Answer: the use of sonority as a basis for musical form. Berlioz and Gabrieli are usually singled out as pre-twentieth-century practitioners of this modern method of music-making, yet I wonder if there was ever a greater master of this dramatic technique than Victoria.

The Requiem is probably this composer's masterpiece. Victoria is justly famous for his motets, but the Requiem verses afford him a larger canvas for the dark brilliance of his style at the same time providing him a dramatic text more suitable to his talents. Tiny blocks of sound, each only a measure or two in length, form the pieces with which the composer builds a vast mosaic of striking sonorous contrasts: long-held notes emphasize the ebb and flow of the various voices; sections of sophisticated choral writing are interspersed with simple plainsong statements assigned to high, clear sopranos; dark brooding passages are suddenly illuminated by bright, angelic tones; the beatific *Requiem aeternam* and the cool static beauty of the Kyrie and Sanctus are countered by the intense movement of the Offertory and the impassioned *Libera me*. In all, a work of remarkable dramatic power.

I am happy to report that the performance by the choir of St. John's College at Cambridge is as splendid as the music itself and the blend of choral color is marvelous. George Guest has achieved the next to impossible—he has taught his boy sopranos and altos not only to sing beautifully but with astonishing mu-

sical sensitivity. Furthermore, the tenors never sound strangled, and the basses (who usually fare best in this kind of music) are in top form. Guest is a conductor who can mold an individual phrase expressively—the plainsong is extraordinary in this respect—without losing touch with his conception of the whole. Argo completes the package with gorgeously spacious sound. S.T.S.

VIVALDI: L'Estro Armonico, Op. 3: No. 1, in D; No. 2, in G minor; No. 3, in G; No. 4, in E minor. Lucerne Festival Strings, Rudolf Baumgartner, cond. Archive 198449, \$5.79.

This is a very fine account of where it all began—"it" being the solo instrumental concerto which, a hundred years after *L'Estro Armonico*, would give supreme expressive rights to the hero-protagonist so adored of the romantic composers. In Vivaldi's Opus 3 the hero began first to shoulder his way to the fore, and it is part of the fascination of this set of twelve concertos that one never knows from one piece to the next whether he will appear alone, in twos, or in fours; or whether, indeed, he will retire into the concertino group already

established as part of the Corelli tradition. It was *L'Estro Armonico*, of course, that so attracted Bach; he transcribed half the opus for keyboard.

The Lucerne Festival strings, in a sense, bring Opus 3 up to date. This is a very modern performance—brisk and snappy, as impressive in its tutti unisons as in the urbane work of the soloists (who are unnamed on the advance pressing which I received). Where there are two soloists (No. 2) they think as one; where there are full orchestral chords, they are as beautifully balanced as the front wheels of a brand-new Porsche. In fact it comes as something of a surprise to encounter the almost romantically expansive solo lyric line in the Largo of No. 3—but there's your hero making his statement as he sees it, and Vivaldi would have approved. The old Vienna State Opera Chamber Orchestra version on Vox sounds, with its arpeggiated continuo chords and its deliberate pacing, quite old-fashioned in this company. The Lucerne is the latest word, and worth hearing. S.F.

WAGNER: Die Feen (excerpts). Soloists; Chorus and Orchestra of the International Youth Festival, Bayreuth 1967, John Bell, cond. Colosseum St/M 4002. (Obtainable by direct mail order from Youth Festival Office, Festspielhaus, 8580 Bayreuth, Germany.)

No audience ever heard Wagner's first opera while he lived, and very few have had the opportunity since. Occasional arias have been performed in concert, a process that began soon after the score was finished in 1833. The opera was written while the composer held his first job, as chorus-master in Würzburg. Wagner's musical education may have been haphazard, but the creative furnace was even then alight; many passages in this young opera give proof of that.

The eye trained to English does not easily catch the work's title: it means *The Fairies*. The libretto treats of a collision between the world of mortals and the supernatural netherworld, where a human king falls in love with a fairy lass, Ada. She desires to become human and in that cause must undergo severe trials. The echoes of *Zauberflöte* and the premonitions of *Die Frau ohne Schatten* do not need to be underlined.

The music too has echoes and forecasts: it is easy to pick out bits that remind you of Beethoven, Nicolai, and Weber. But there are enough fresh and original things in this brief disc of excerpts to establish a real desire to see *Die Feen* in its entirety, and staged with imagination. The choral and orchestral writing in particular show an impressive professional technique for a musician of twenty years.

It boots little to comment upon the performance. There is not a measure of *Die Feen* to be found in Schwann, and the simple news of the availability of this disc will be of interest to Wagnerites, who will want to "collect" it. The performers are all students, some better than others. The acoustics are recognizably those of Wagner's own theater—

Schubert Among Friends

by Shirley Fleming

SOME MONTHS AGO while reviewing the Münchinger/Vienna Philharmonic version of Haydn's *Creation*, I was impressed by the musicality of Elly Ameling and remarked that she had an ideal oratorio voice. Now it is time to expand that judgment upward and outward, for she proves here that she can convey the sense and poetic implication of a Schubert song, build to a climax where a climax ought to be, and create a special aura of lighthearted jubilation in songs like *Die Vögel* and *Der Musensohn* in which flexibility and translucence are everything. She is not an overwhelmingly warm singer, and she does not, perhaps, plumb all these songs to their fullest depth—the darker aspects of melancholy seem to inhibit her a bit (a case in point is *Greichen am Spinnrade*, in which the bravura measures carry more conviction than the despairing ones). But her fluid, evenly controlled legato, to say nothing of her vocal aplomb in the face of those nasty downward leaps in *Der Hirt auf dem Felsen*, gives this recital life and dimension.

The selections themselves are varied and nicely paced; one moves from the chromaticism of *Du liebst mich nicht* (a real cry of pain, as Mme. Ameling sees it) to the passion of *Heimliches Lieben* and to the lighter simplicity of *Im Frühling*—one's attention

never languishes. The showpiece of the disc is *Der Hirt*—Schubert's last song, essentially a dramatic duet for clarinet and voice with piano accompaniment, and full of small adventures (clarinetist Deinzer is a sensitive partner here). The recital as a whole is designed to suggest one of those evenings Schubert spent among friends, presiding at the piano and accompanying the singer Johann Michael Vogl. Jörg Demus is no Schubert, at least in the *Ländler*, where his hard-working approach, with its mannered holding-back at each strong beat, wears on the nerves; and the all-important spinning figure in *Gretchen* is simply not articulate enough. But for the rest, the accompaniments run smoothly enough, on an original Viennese piano of 1835. A most pleasant disc.

Schubert: Songs and Piano Music. *Der Hirt auf dem Felsen*, D. 965; *Seligkeit*, D. 433; *Gretchen am Spinnrade*, D. 118; *Du liebst mich nicht*, D. 756; *Heimliches Lieben*, D. 922; *Im Frühling*, D. 882; *Die Vögel*, D. 691; *Der Jüngling an der Quelle*, D. 300; *Der Musensohn*, D. 764; *Twelve Ländler*, Op. Posth. 171, D. 790. Elly Ameling, soprano; Jörg Demus, piano; Hans Deinzer, clarinet (in *Der Hirt auf dem Felsen*). RCA Victor, VICS 1405, \$2.50.



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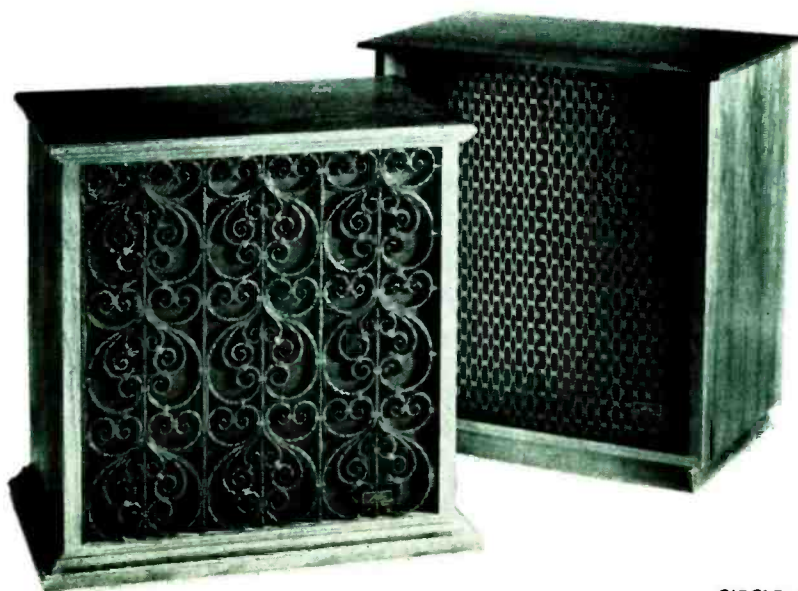
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CIRCLE 4 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Perhaps not "Fabulous" but some excellent singing anyway

by Conrad L. Osborne

"FABULOUS" IS NOT the adjective that forces itself on me to describe the vocal level that obtained at the Metropolitan during the 1940s. Without putting too nasty an edge on it, it would be possible to suggest that this decade marked one of the dips in the institution's history, rather than a peak or even a hillock.

Nonetheless, in those days, there were some great individual artists at the 39th Street house (though many of them were past their prime), and a fair number of them recorded for Columbia at one point or another.

This disc represents with reasonable accuracy the strengths of the Met repertory during the '40s—heavy on Wagner, much heavier on French opera than is currently the case, with the *Figaro* operas thrown in. But there is nothing at all from the Italian romantic repertory—which was served rather badly, and then least badly with young American singers (like Warren and Peerce) who recorded for Victor.

Columbia has put together an attractive potpourri. There is nothing here that will stop one in one's tracks, but there's plenty of enjoyable listening, particularly for those who may be nostalgic about some of the artists.

To run through the contents quickly: *Stevens*: Vocally rich (the constrained climax may be due in part to cramped recording), stylistically quite quick and perfunctory to a contemporary ear. *Baccaloni*: A pleasant, light-hued rendition, surprisingly straightforward and musical when contrasted with the singer's later shenanigans; one of his better discs. *Tourel*: Stylish and musically neat, but rather unsettled vocally.

Pinza: Not one of his very best records; but excellent considering the date (1946), and uniquely vital. It is presumably from the Mozart aria album conducted by Walter, who, like all the conductors here, goes uncredited. *Pons*: A brainless song, and not one of her best efforts, especially with respect to intonation. Still, she comes smilin' through. *Singher*: Stylistically, the standard reference point for this aria. Latter-day conductors should note the effectiveness of the sensible tempo. Vocally dry, but the expertise wins out anyway. *Sayão*: A really treasureable item, very musical and deeply

felt, with her floating, feminine tone beautifully suspended. The closing phrases are perfect.

Weede: Vocally virile and dashing, musically OK, linguistically shabby. *Castagna*: Lovely, respectful singing, tastefully phrased but a bit short on sensuality. *Ralf*: Disappointing. A hot-potato sound, with a good deal of strain in the top A's. *Varnay*: Despite the square, unvaried approach, the disc is worth hearing for evidence of the round, beautiful sound that can be heard at several points. One can understand why certain critics considered her the house's potential answer to the Italian dramatic soprano problem. Though Varnay became an intriguing artist, the real promise of her voice was somehow sidetracked.

Traubel: Representative of her better discs—stately, a little uninvolved, and most beautiful. This was a marvelous instrument. *Melchior*: The turns are not quite right, but it is *the* Heldentenor in a seldom-recorded excerpt. The juice and solidity of the voice are present.

My electronically faked-stereo copy is a typical example of this hideous crossbreed, with top notes suddenly leaping from their own isolated spots. Playing it mono effects some improvement, but it still sounds hollow, and full of phony space.

The Fabulous Forties at the Met: *Gluck: Orfeo: Che farò* (Risè Stevens, ms). *Rossini: Il Barbiere di Siviglia: A un dottor della mia sorte* (Salvatore Baccaloni, bs); *Una voce poco fa*: (Jennie Tourel, ms). *Mozart: Le Nozze di Figaro: Se vuol ballare* (Ezio Pinza, bs). *Gounod: Mireille: O légère hironnelle* (Lily Pons, s); *Roméo et Juliette: Mab, la reine des men-songes* (Martial Singher, b). *Massenet: Manon: Adieu, notre petite table* (Bidù Sayao, s). *Bizet: Carmen: Votre toast* (Robert Weede, b). *Saint-Saëns: Samson et Dalila: Printemps, qui commence* (Bruna Castagna, ms). *Wagner: Die Meistersinger: Preislied* (Torsten Ralf, t); *Die Walküre: Du bist der Lenz* (Astrid Varnay, s); *Lohengrin: Einsam in trüben Tagen* (Helen Traubel, s); *Rienzi: Allmäch'tger Vater* (Lauritz Melchior, t). *Odyssey 32 16 0304*, \$2.98 (from originals recorded 1941-46—electronic stereo only).

where the established canon begins with *Höllander*, and never digs back to *Das Liebesverbot* or *Rienzi*, let alone *Die Feen*. G.M.

WOLF: Quartet for Strings, in D minor; Italian Serenade; Penthesisilea; Songs with orchestral accompaniment; Italienisches Liederbuch—For a feature review of these recordings, see page 78.

recitals & miscellany

CONTEMPORARY CHAMBER ENSEMBLE: Works by Wolpe, Rochberg, Schifrin, Reynolds, Myrow, Druckman, Schwantner, and Harbison. Contemporary Chamber Ensemble, Arthur Weisberg, cond. For a feature review of works by these contemporary composers, see page 75.

WILHELM FURTWÄNGLER: "The Genius of Wilhelm Furtwängler." Brahms: Variations on a theme by Haydn. Strauss: Till Eulenspiegel. Mozart: Symphony No. 40, in G minor: Fourth movement. Schubert: Symphony No. 8, in B minor, D. 759 ("Unfinished"): rehearsal excerpt. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Wilhelm Furtwängler, cond. Everest 3252, \$4.98 (electronic stereo only).

Everest's little schlock operation continues its Furtwängler deprecations with this peculiar release. The Brahms is drawn from the odd side of the MK/Unicorn Beethoven Ninth; it is dated 1943 on the Unicorn label, and the virtuoso coughing confirms that this is indeed a concert performance. The recorded sound is rather better than in the Ninth—almost passable, in fact, although once again the Everest "stereo" is no improvement. As usual, Furtwängler in concert is freer than Furtwängler in the studio, the comparison being with the Vienna recording of about 1949 (last seen on Odeon E 90025, although not currently listed). I like the gently "chiffy" Berlin wind sound and the expansive reading of Variation IV, but will have to admit that the more sober Vienna reading is cleaner, if less brilliantly accented, in Variation V, generally more responsive to such subtleties as the connection between the theme and the first variation, which is almost suppressed in the Berlin reading.

The remainder of the record is drawn from the sound track of a postwar film about the Berlin Philharmonic, and these performances, along with other fragments (some conducted by Sergiu Celibidache) and a tiresome narration, were once available on Period SPL 716. Since that record did not state—either on jacket, label, or sound track—that Furtwängler was the conductor of the Mozart movement, perhaps someone who has seen the film could verify this. The idea is

ROBERT E. MCCOURT
ATTORNEY AT LAW
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02215

March 7, 1969

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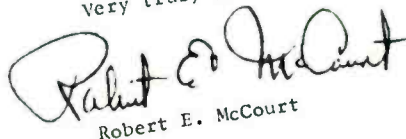
Gentlemen:

I am quite sure that you will be most interested in a series of recent incidents relating to your new A-25 Aperiodic speaker system. For some time I had been looking for a pair of light weight, high quality speakers for my daughter which could be transported about along with her tape recorder and separate 70 watt amplifier. This past week when I visited the local Dynaco dealer to check the sound against your brochure, I was informed that he had not even bothered to set up an A-25 with his other array of speakers as his customers would buy this speaker right in the carton without listening to same, since it was a new Dynaco product. Strangely enough, I concurred with the man's thinking and purchased two of these units in their cartons, sight unseen and sound unheard.

The music room in my home is specially constructed with heavy drapes for damping and a lowered ceiling for better sound, and qualifies as a true testing area for even the best equipment. Your Stereo I20 and PAT-4 preamplifier plus other components make up my system - which just has to rate as the best that money can buy. My speakers are the bookcase type. Each weighs approximately three and one half times more than your speaker, they are almost twice the size of the A-25 and cost nearly four times as much. The other evening, out of pure curiosity, I decided to compare the A-25 with my speakers, using all of my permanently affixed components. What was planned as a ten minute period of comparison became a three hour affair where I actually ended up digging for records containing passages which would place the A-25 right out of contention. Do you know, I was unable to find such a record and your speakers stayed right with mine except for the most minor differences. I have been a pioneer in stereo since 1958, but I do feel that your A-25 speaker is the greatest single improvement considering its weight, size and cost, that I have encountered in an eleven year period.

This is the first letter I have ever written to a manufacturer but in this instance a "well done" is warranted and very much in order.

Very truly yours,



Robert E. McCourt

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plausible, for the performance is similar to the studio version (Odeon SMVP 8053) if—expectably—differing in details.

As for the *Till*, this is the least desirable of the three Furtwängler LP versions—it seems to be a good performance, but is dismally recorded, with some obvious intercutting between takes. My recommendation would be the Vienna version of March 1954 (now on Odeon HQM 1137), or even the 1947 Berlin concert version formerly on DGG LPM 18960, which will probably be along on Heliodor one of these days. All three are essentially the same performance, firmly grounded on the basic phrase structure, played with great élan if hardly at record-breaking tempos.

Finally, there is a rehearsal snippet: the first sixty measures of the "*Unfinished*," which Furtwängler interrupts only briefly to correct some dynamics and a bit of phrasing.

Everest's notes as usual, are uninformative about the sources of the recordings and unreliable about various matters, including spelling. Needless to say, there is no transcription of Furtwängler's remarks during the rehearsal, let alone a translation. I strongly encourage the non-purchase of this record; not since the heyday of Allegro/Royale has any record manufacturer so assiduously cultivated the bottom—indeed, the shady side of the bottom—of the barrel as Everest is currently doing. D.H.

NEW YORK PRO MUSICA: "Petrucci, First Printer of Music." Ninot le Petit: *Ela la la*. Ghizeghem: *De tous biens playne*. Josquin: *De tous biens playne, canon a 2; El grillo; Missa Ave maris stella*. Ghiselin: *La Alfonsina*. Bruhier: *Latura tu*. Compère: *Lourdault, lour-dault*. Dalza: *Pavana alla veneziana; Saltarello; Piva*. Bossinensis: *Recercar and Lauda Processionale; Se mai per maraveglia*. Rossinus Mantuanus: *Un sonar da piva in fanchinesco*. Anon.: *Ave maris stella*. New York Pro Musica, John Reeves White, dir. Decca DL 79435, \$5.79.

As one whose primary concern is with old-fashioned linear print, I was delighted to see the Pro Musica's salute to the first and greatest music printer and publisher, Ottaviano dei Petrucci. For not only did this man singlehandedly develop a method for printing polyphonic music—certainly the most beautiful visual layout to be devised by any music printer right up to the present day—but he also brought the cream of a half century of music to the European public at the turn of the sixteenth century. Drawing his material from the modern repertory with a generous sampling of the traditional, he published over fifty collections ranging from anthologies of popular music of the day to a complete set of Josquin's Masses.

The Pro Musica recording reflects the Venetian printer's catholic taste: the selection here ranges from Ghizeghem's Burgundian chanson "*De tous biens playne*," a golden oldie to which Petrucci added a modern lute part, to more recently composed Italian dances, here performed with the dazzling variety of instrumental color that we have come to expect from the Pro Musica. Of these short pieces I particularly liked "*Lirum bililirim*," a lover's lament with a lullaby lilt whose warm, full texture shows the ensemble at its best.

Josquin's *Missa Ave maris stella* from Petrucci's second book of the composer's Masses (1505) is a new and welcome addition to the catalogue. Based on the Gregorian hymn (sung here before the Mass itself), the work uses the chant both as a *cantus firmus* in the tenor voice and as a basis for paraphrase treatment. As a result the original tune permeates all the voices, bringing the parts together in a flowing stream of chant-colored melodic motives. Subtly juxtaposing contrasts of rhythmic proportion and vocal scoring, the splendid architectural framework of the Mass reveals Josquin at his most characteristic.

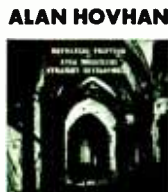
Unfortunately the Pro Musica performances are somewhat below par and I miss the lovely choral tone displayed on last year's Machaut recording. The sopranos in particular sound harsh and piercing—Mr. White's quick tempo in the Mass forces them to snap annoyingly at a recurrent ascending third at the top of the phrase. Some of the blame lies with Decca: the engineering sounds curiously flat despite good stereo separation. The company has, however, designed a particularly handsome jacket with a layout worthy of the man to whom the disc is dedicated. S.T.S.

HEADLINERS FROM C.R.I.



BEN WEBER: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra*. William Masselos, piano; Gerhard Samuel, cond.

CHARLES WUORINEN: *Piano Concerto*. Charles Wuorinen, piano; James Dixon, cond. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. **CRI 5239**



ALAN HOVHANNES: *Triptych*. Benita Valente, soprano. **KAREL HUSA:** *Mosaiques*. **WILLARD STRAIGHT:** *Development*. **CRI 5221**

JOHN CORIGLIANO, JR.: *Sonata for Violin and Piano*. John Corigliano, Sr., violin; Ralph Votapek, piano.

GERALD STRANG: *Concerto for Cello with Woodwinds and Piano*. Gabor Rejto, cello. **CRI 5215**

WALLINGFORD RIEGGER: *Music for Brass Choir; Movement for Two Trumpets, Trombone and Piano; Nonet for Brass*.

ALVIN ETLER: *Concerto for Brass Quintet; String Orchestra and Percussion; Sonic Sequence for Brass Quintet*. The American Brass Quintet; National Orchestral Association; John Barnett, cond. **CRI 5229**

HENRY COWELL: *Variations for Orchestra; "... if He please" Synchrony*. Polish National Radio Orchestra, William Strickland, conductor. **CRI 5217**

LOU HARRISON: *Symphony on G*. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra; Gerhard Samuel, cond. **CRI 5236**

HARRY PARTCH: *And on the Seventh Day Petals Fell in Petaluma*. Gate 5 Ensemble. **CRI 5213**

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A SELECTIVE GUIDE

TO THE MONTH'S REISSUES

BEETHOVEN: Sonatas for Piano: No. 21, in C, Op. 53 ("Waldstein"); No. 23, in F minor, Op. 57 ("Appassionata"). Walter Gieseking, piano. Odyssey 32 16 0314, \$2.98 (rechanneled stereo only) [from Columbia ML 4774, recorded in 1939].

Walter Gieseking recorded very little stereo material before his death in 1956 and, as a result, most of his discs are virtually nonexistent. Both his Angel and Columbia mono-only versions of these two sonatas have all but disappeared from sight so Odyssey's timely reissue of the earlier Columbia performance should have been a noteworthy event. Unfortunately the piano reproduction on this rechanneled disc is so distorted, blurred, and tubby, that the pianist's beautifully colored performances are scarcely recognizable. Odyssey nowhere states on the jacket that electronic stereo processes have been used in pressing this disc. It's bad enough to produce shoddy merchandise but to disguise it in such a cavalier fashion is carrying cynicism a bit too far.

DEBUSSY: Images for Orchestra. BARBER: Medea's Meditation and Dance of Vengeance. Boston Symphony Orchestra, Charles Munch, cond. RCA Victrola VICS 1391, \$2.50 [the Debussy from RCA Victor LSC 2282, 1958; the Barber from RCA Victor LM 2197, 1957].

Munch's forthright vigor and heady exuberance, while attractive qualities in themselves, are somewhat misplaced in Debussy's delicate tone poems where balanced sonority, linear clarity, and pliantly controlled rhythms are all important. These performances are, to put it bluntly, on the crude and heavy-handed side. Monteux's brilliantly conceived version on Philips is still the choice here, although a new Boulez reading due shortly from Columbia may prove a strong competitor.

After the Debussy, unsatisfactorily performed though it may be, Barber's *Medea* music sounds tawdry and obvious and the excellent, letter-perfect performance only points up the fact. Sonically, this disc is still absolutely resplendent.

PUCCINI: Il Trittico. Soloists; Chorus and Orchestra of Radio Italiana, various conds. Everest S 464/3, \$8.94 (three discs, rechanneled stereo only) [from Cetra originals, 1950].

Like most of the Cetra operas, these recordings of Puccini's three one-acters have some very rough edges. Many of the vocal performances, including those

by a few singers in important roles, are excruciatingly bad; there are musical errors aplenty; the musicians shuffle their feet, cough, hit their music stands with blithe disregard for proper studio manners; and each recording gives the impression of being a straight run-through, without any backing up for corrective retakes. But what vitality these performances possess—*Gianni Schicchi* in particular strikes me as one of the most convincing operatic recordings ever made. The horseplay comes across beautifully, the relatives are all hilariously characterized, and Giuseppe Taddei, whose rich baritone has never sounded better, does a virtuoso job with the title role.

Suor Angelica's principal strength is Rosanna Carteri's fresh soprano and touching youthful appeal in the title role, while the chief attraction of the *Tabarro* performance is the smoldering sensuality of Clara Petrella's wild but passionately sung *Giorgietta* and the marvelous over-all realization of the opera's stifling atmosphere. In fact I prefer this entire production to London's more pretentious *Trittico*, which sounds very lifeless in its prim precision. Cetra's original sound was typically shallow and restricted, but Everest has at least not aggravated the situation: aside from some added shrillness, these recordings will probably never sound much better.

TCHAIKOVSKY: Eugene Onegin. Valeria Heybalova (s), Biserka Cvejic (ms), Drago Startz (t), Dushan Popovich (b), Miro Changelovich (bs), et al: Chorus and Orchestra of the National Opera, Belgrade, Oscar Danon, cond. Richmond SRS 63509, \$6.47 (three discs) [from London A 4324, 1956].

Decca/London's forays into Yugoslavia during the mid-Fifties in search of Russian opera yielded half a dozen recordings including Borodin's *Prince Igor* (with the oft-omitted Act III), Mussorgsky's *Khovanshina*, and Rimsky-Korsakov's *Snegourochka*. The repertoire was certainly interesting and the sound far better than anything coming out of Russia at the time, but it soon became apparent that while the singers of the Belgrade National Opera tried harder, they definitely ranked No. 2. At a budget price there is certainly a great deal of worthwhile material here for the curious opera collector, and hopefully Richmond will eventually recirculate the entire series.

As the only *Eugene Onegin* readily available, this performance has its points. It is superior to the prewar Period set—

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which does, however, boast Ivan Koslovski's magnificent Lensky—but not as good as the more recent, exceptionally fine Bolshoi performance on imported MK discs. None of the Belgrade singers makes an especially vivid impression, but they are all solidly versed in the music and quite successfully capture the opera's autumnal, bitter-sweet flavor. Danon gets spirited albeit rather ragged playing from the orchestra and the respectable early stereo is thoroughly representative of London, vintage 1957. It's difficult to muster up too much enthusiasm here: *Onegin* is a fragile score that requires first-class artists of a very special sensitivity. Still if you're unable to locate the MK set, this performance does offer a satisfactory alternative.

WAGNER: Die Walküre: Act 1, Scene 3; Act III. Helen Traubel (s), Emery Darcy (t), Herbert Janssen (b), et al.; New York Philharmonic Orchestra, Artur Rodzinski, cond. Odyssey 32 26 0018, \$5.96 (two discs, rechanneled stereo only) [from Columbia SL 5, 1945].

After the first twenty minutes or so of this Odyssey "Legendary Performance," most listeners might very well be asking themselves why Columbia ever bothered reissuing it at all. The *Ride of the Valkyries* sounds like a jogging travesty of itself, the Valkyries stand out as parodies of shrieking warrior maidens, Sieglinde is thin-voiced and squaly, and the light-weight Wotan projects a monumentally ineffectual towering rage. Matters improve tremendously, however, once Wo-

tan and Brünnhilde get down to their discussion of filial disobedience: Janssen, always a sensitive and appealing singer, settles into the role; Traubel remains in resplendent voice throughout; and by the time we arrive at "Wotan's Farewell," Rodzinski has the orchestra throbbing warmly.

Traubel, in fact, is really what this reissue is all about, for it is one of her most successful recorded performances. There's hardly much dramatic insight in her work here (there never was), but the sheer nobility of this huge, full, even shaft of sound carries enough suggestion of a Brünnhilde to make any further vocal coloration almost unnecessary. Her Sieglinde in Scene 3 of Act I may not be quite so convincing, although she seems more at ease than when she performed this music with Toscanini (available on Victrola VIC 1316). Emery Darcy—whose Met career consisted primarily of assorted messengers and heralds in addition to the title role in *Parsifal*—is competent enough as Siegmund. Had he possessed a bit more imagination and a viable upper range, he might have been a major artist. Odyssey does not credit the Valkyries, but for those whose nostalgia for 1940s' camp extends to Met *comprimario* singers they are Doris Doree, Maxine Stelman, Irene Jessner (who also sings Sieglinde's few lines), Jeanne Palmer, Doris Doe, Anna Kaskas, Martha Lipton, and Herta Glaz.

SIR THOMAS BEECHAM: Beecham Bonbons. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and French National Radio Orchestra, Sir Thomas Beecham, cond. Seraphim S 60084, \$2.49 (from various EMI originals, recorded between 1959 and 1961).

Not only does this *bonbonnière* offer Sir Thomas in his always welcome role as confectioner, but it provides some unusual tidbits from the light French repertory as well. Delibes' elegant ballet music for Victor Hugo's *Le Roi s'amuse* is a far cry from Verdi (who, of course, used the play as a basis for *Rigoletto*); yet these late-nineteenth-century imitations of old French dances have a sophisticated charm somewhat reminiscent of Strauss's equally ingenious if less delicate evocation of Lully in the *Bourgeois gentilhomme* Suite. The other extended work is Fauré's *Dolly Suite*, and Beecham manages to restore much of the original drawing-room charm of the four-hand version despite Rabaud's rather Wagnerian orchestration.

Debussy and Gounod are represented by two tasty trifles: the former's *Cortège et air de danse* from *L'Enfant prodigue* and *Juliet's Slumber* from the latter's *Roméo et Juliette*. More familiar items are Berlioz' *Le Corsaire Overture* and the *Dance of the Priestesses* and *Bacchanale* from Saint-Saëns's *Samson et Dalila*. The hokey *Bacchanale* is played, for a change, for whatever musical merits it may possess rather than as a vulgar, high-powered hootch dance. But then all the performances are beautifully refined and at the same time immensely vital. Not the most exciting stereo sound here but perfectly serviceable.

PETER G. DAVIS

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Recently, manufacturers have tried to reproduce sound which they believe is comfortable to the human ear—thus, the advent of unreal booming bass and strident highs. And, a great many people like it that way because they think it's high fidelity (in a way it is), but it usually isn't NATURAL sound the way it was originally produced.

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Cone: 2"	Cone: 2"
Cabinet — Removable grille Straight-grain American Walnut	Removable grille Straight-grain American Walnut
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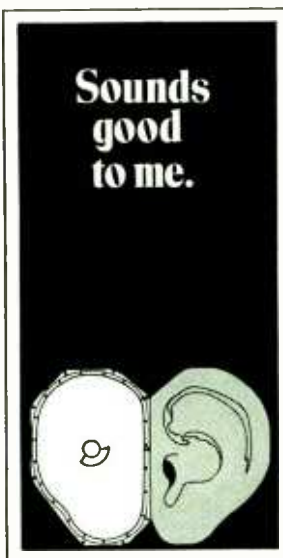
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the lees side



RCA Records

The Underrated Sinatra

AS FOLLOWERS OF the Serkins, Menuhins, Barenboims, Gilelses, or Rostropoviches are aware, talent tends to run in families. It has always been so. And it is as true in popular music as it is in classical. Michel and Christine Legrand are the children of Raymond Legrand, a famous French orchestra leader. The members of the Free Design, the most musical of the rock groups, are the children of Art Dedrick, a trumpeter and arranger prominent in the big band era. Saxophonist Zoot Sims is the brother of trombonist Ray Sims; and they're the progeny of vaudevillians. Liza Minelli is the daughter of Judy Garland and director Vincent Minelli. Jack Jones is the son of singer and actor Allan Jones.

It is, therefore, unfair that a certain skepticism should cloud the career of one Frank Sinatra, Jr. To be sure, there is a nepotism in show business (as in the medical and legal professions) and some very famous people have tried to push some very inferior talent at us in the form of their children. I can think of a number of cases of sons or daughters of famous fathers who were thrust on the public in spite of a genuine and obvious lack of ability. But these people, as embarrassing and pathetic as they were, usually faded quickly and sadly from the scene.

Frank Sinatra, Jr. is not one of these. Indeed, his name has been a curse on his career, and if it weren't too late and if he weren't already too well known, I'd urge him to change it. But he's stuck with it now.

When he first popped into sight a few years ago, people said, more or less, "Ah, he's just an imitation of his father." Jack Jones, Bobby Darin, Steve Lawrence, Vic Damone, and countless others

phrase like Frank Sinatra. But Frank Sinatra, Jr. ain't supposed to do it, right?

It is my opinion that Jack Jones, now thirty, and Frank Sinatra, Jr., now twenty-eight, are the most talented of the second-generation performers in popular music today. And he *doesn't* sing like his father. As a matter of fact, if Frank Jr.'s singing resembles that of anyone else, it's Johnny Mercer's. He has a way of producing slightly nasal sounds going into a high-speed terminal vibrato (rather like French vibrato) that puts me in mind of the records Mercer made in the 1940's.

There's another substantial difference between the Franks Jr. and Sr. Though the father is a marvelous intuitive musician, Frank Jr. is by far better schooled and trained. He is a *very* good pianist. I caught his nightclub act; he does one number in which he accompanies himself. I expected a few adequate chords behind the voice, and when I heard a warm, full, muscular kind of playing, I was startled. I asked him, "Where did you learn to play the piano so thoroughly?" "Nineteen years of study," he said. Then I remembered what composer Alec Wilder, who knew him in his infancy, once said about him: "If he'd chosen to go a different route, I think he would have become a major composer—and I don't mean a mere songwriter."

Frank Jr. is terribly intense—too intense, in fact. He hasn't yet developed a full sense of life's idiocy, despite a rather sharp sense of humor. His humor more often expresses itself in sardonicism than laughter. In his nightclub act, which is polished and professional to a fare-thee-well, he makes altogether too many wisecracks about his father, as if to assert

publicly that he doesn't give a damn and refuses to trade on the name. At one point, he says, "I'd like to devote five minutes to my father." A pause. "After all, he once told me that that's how much time he devoted to me."

Terrible. That sort of thing should be said in a screaming row with his father, not on a nightclub floor. I heard people in the audience muttering their resentment at it. (After all, his father has fans.) And yet, in private, he said to me, "He [meaning his father] is the greatest interpreter of lyrics in the twentieth century." So there's a great pride there, and an enormous admiration, coupled with the obvious resentment. When his father was married to Mia Farrow, and she and the Beatles were meditating with the Maharishi, Frank Jr. was asked on a national television show what he thought of all this. He said, "I do more meditating on the job in the morning than they do in a week."

Frank Jr. is a pop-off, and a recklessly courageous one. I've heard him blister some of the most powerful business figures in music. Not one of his indictments was inaccurate. I'm not going to repeat any of them here, however, because I don't want to create anymore trouble for him with these people than he has already caused himself. I'll say these things, and say them in print, but then I don't care about getting hurt, and he can't afford *not* to care. But, man, has he got everybody's number.

Frank doesn't have a record contract at the moment. He apparently can't get along with some of the brass at Warner Bros./Reprise, for whom his father and his sister Nancy record; and his brief deal with RCA Victor is terminated—according to Frank, because they wouldn't let him have any say in the mix of his records. And some of the labels that might be interested won't touch him because he refuses to do so-called "now" music, seeing it for the trash that most of it is. That's a funny switch. A few years ago, the elder Sinatra was sounding off about the river of musical sewage with which we were being inundated. Now he's recorded some of it, and Frank Jr. (along with Tony Bennett) is a lonely defender of good music and good taste. More power to him, if he survives. Everybody else has given in to the pressures, even Jack Jones.

I think he *will* survive. First, he sings very well indeed, despite moments of vaguely uncertain sound that I can't somehow square with his over-all musicianship. He's got great time—he swings hard in up-tempo material—and the one Sinatra characteristic I consider indispensable to good singing: a sense of the meaning of words.

He'll break through when the intensity fades a little, and the anger goes, and he gets in touch with a part of himself that I don't think he realizes even exists: an immense natural charm. When he lets his guard down, when he is at ease, he has a smile that lights up rooms, and a real warmth. Watch out for "the Volkswagen in the Sinatra garage," as he calls himself. I think this dark and somehow lonely young man is going to make it.

GENE LEES

the lighter side

reviewed by


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an exceptional recording



JIMMIE & VELLA: *Heartbeat*. Jimmie and Vella Cameron, vocals; instrumental accompaniment. *Well; Hey Boy Over There; Tomorrow; Yes or No; People Make the World; Such a Mystery*; six more. Imperial 12419, \$4.79.

It's still pretty much a white world so far as pop music goes. Even the success of a few black groups is insignificant compared to the quality of the talent involved. With the arguable exception of Aretha Franklin and perhaps one or two others, black performers are not receiving the attention they deserve from white audiences. Partly to blame are the masters of media who continue to discourage black faces, especially from appearing on TV. But partly, too, the fault lies with the performers (or more likely their managers), who, hoping to attract a wider audience, get caught up in trying to alter their style to make it more appealing to whites. Instead of doing their, um, thing, they (at worst) enervate their music or (at best) sound vaguely apologetic for it (Wilson Pickett always sounds like he's about to break up when he sings some fey piece of fluff like *Hey Jude*). The ones who stay themselves, the James Browns and B. B. Kings, usually maintain only a limited if very attentive white following.

The only group that really has broken down the barriers is Sly and the Family Stone, an unabashedly black and beautiful band from San Francisco that recently has enjoyed a long run at the top of the pop charts. They are about to be joined by the brother-and-sister team of Jimmie & Vella.

Jimmie Cameron is a good songwriter and *You Should Be Ashamed* should be a big hit if it's released as a single. But it is as performers that Jimmie & Vella are startling. Both still in their teens—she seventeen, he nineteen—they are already remarkably intense communicators.

Heartbeat is a strong, personal, dramatic album. In approach, it is straight r & b—in both form and content it follows all the conventions—except that there is no shuffling. Jimmie & Vella are not afraid to be direct and Rene Hall's charts are solid and unpretentious (the back-up group includes Bobby Womack on guitar and Jim Horn on flute). Jimmie & Vella don't shy away from r & b's strengths: *Heartbeat* is vigorous and raunchy. I recommend it. J.G.



JOHN D. LOUDERMILK: *The Open Mind of John D. Loudermilk*. John D. Loudermilk, vocals, guitar, organ, and bass; rhythm section and vocal quartet. *More than He'll Give; Nassau Time; Goin' to Hell on a Sled*; nine more. RCA Victor LSP 4097, \$4.98.

The three most interesting songwriters in the country-and-western field, to my mind, are Roger Miller (what's he doing these days?), John Hartford, and John D.

Loudermilk. I don't really think of Bobby Russell as a c & w writer. Miller has a wacky humor to commend him; Hartford has the true touch of the poet; and Loudermilk has a shrewd focus on life.

His work is uneven. When he misses, his songs are ordinary—*Geraldine*, for example. But when he connects, as he does in *Going to Hell on a Sled*, his songs can bite like acid. Unlike Bob Dylan, Loudermilk doesn't take doctrinaire positions, and the simplistic view that there are good guys and bad. Loudermilk lets fly both at the Establishment and the rebels attacking it, seeing both groups as the dangerous irresponsibles that they are. In a curious song called *The Jones*, he pillories oligarchic ownership of communications media—a problem that only belatedly has begun to trouble the Federal Communications Commission.

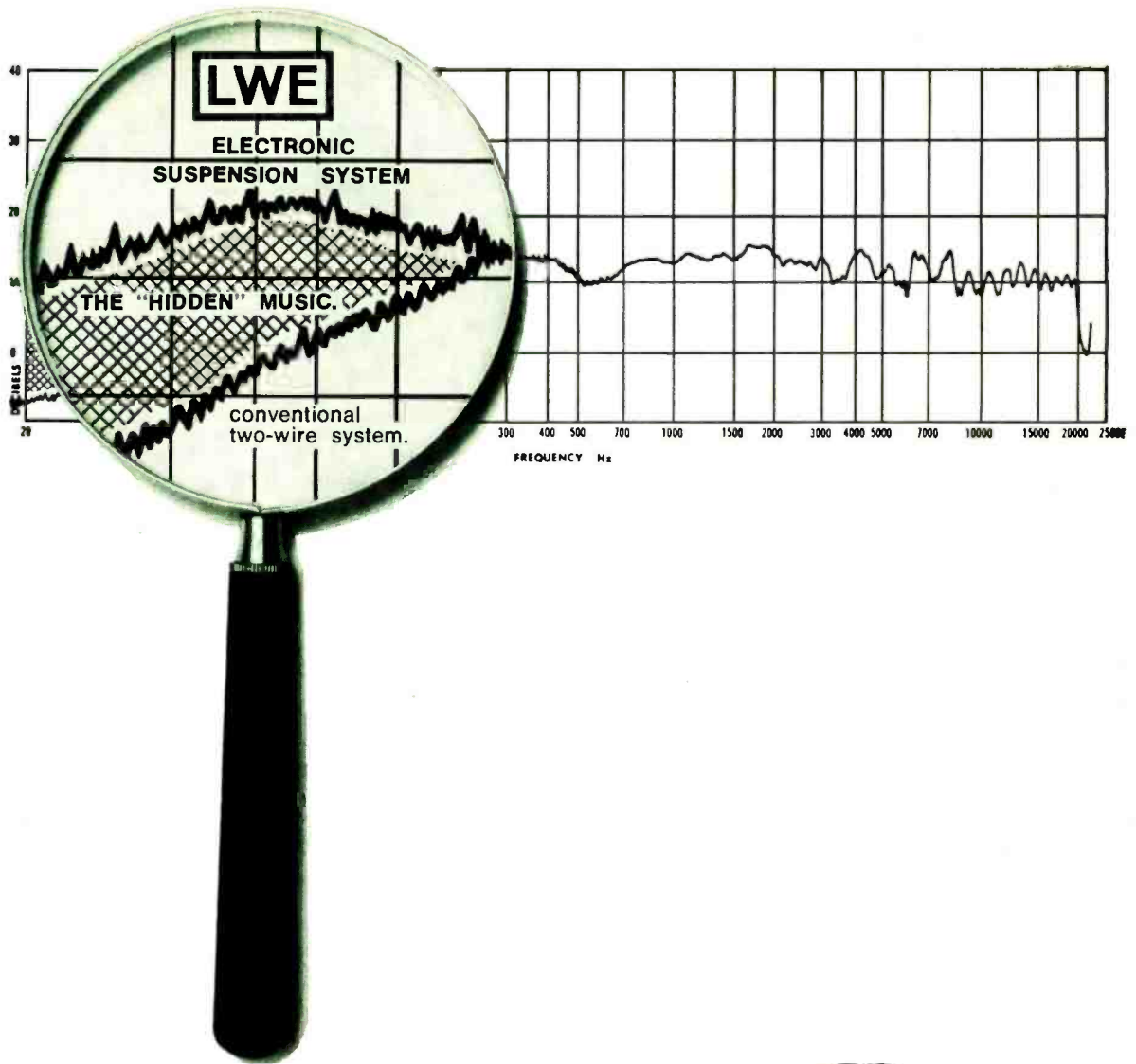
There are, you might say, two sides of country-and-western music these days. On the one hand there is the banal and weepy sentimentality that many people think of as representing all of c & w—a kind of holdover of the Gay Nineties. Birds still languish in gilded cages, pictures are still turned to walls, and little girls still are trying to telephone mothers in heaven. That sort of thing. On the other hand there is a seeing-it-exactly-for-what-it-is kind of realism that is typified by Loudermilk. It is the cold-eyed shrewdness of the southerner transformed into music, and even when he is expressing his obvious liberality, as in the song *Brown Girl* (which treats of a racially mixed love affair), Loudermilk doesn't slip on the banana peel of wishing. No well-haired northern hippy could have written these songs, for those kids are inherently middle class, a part and a symbol of the very thing they claim to loathe. Loudermilk's songs remind me of some of the brilliant young southern reporters (one, with a thick Kentucky drawl, was a Rhodes scholar) with whom I once worked at the *Louisville Times*. What a sharp vision they had of what goes on in this country. So has Loudermilk.

Give a listen to him, if you haven't already. G.L.

CLARENCE CARTER: *The Dynamic Clarence Carter*. Clarence Carter, vocals; instrumental and vocal accomp. by Rick Hall, arr. *Think About It; You've Been a Long Time Comin'; Light My Fire; Steal Away; Harper Valley P.T.A.; Weekend Love*; six more. Atlantic SD 8199, \$4.79. **TYRONE DAVIS:** *Can I Change My Mind*. Tyrone Davis, vocals; instrumental accomp. *She's Lookin' Good; Knock on Wood; Slip Away; Let the Good Times Roll; Call on Me; You Can't Keep a Good Man Down*; five more. Dakar SD 9005, \$4.79.

Atlantic has developed a very successful formula for its r & b vocalists, the prototype for which is probably shouter Wilson Pickett. The basics include a mixture of simple pop, c & w, and r & b tunes

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tunes done in an r & b format of riffing horns, echo chambers, and gospel backgrounds. The formula is most successful when it doesn't quite work—Aretha Franklin uses it as scaffold, skipping above it, ignoring it; Solomon Burke wiggles around inside it, toying with it, undermining it; and Pickett himself smashes it to bits—but it can be a terribly repetitious and constricting recipe in ordinary hands.

On *This Is Clarence Carter*, released last fall, the singer seemed to have the makings of a first-rate r & b personality. He had a vigorous full-bodied voice, a better-than-average songwriting talent, and was seemingly not intimidated by Atlantic's charts. Last Christmas he released *Backdoor Santa*, easily the best, and raunchiest, Christmas record of the season. Somewhere along the line though, Atlantic apparently decided to stop letting him have his head. The new album goes the safe-formula route (although no record that includes Cabwhiss Grandberry among its vocal support can be *all* bad). The LP's highlight is the 378th imitation of José Feliciano's version of *Light My Fire* and it's all down hill from there. (The album is almost redeemed by Carter's hilarious rendition of *Harper Valley P.T.A.*, but, alas, one cut does not an album make).

Can I Change My Mind introduces another singer who sounds like he might break out of the formula. Tyrone Davis' debut is already one of the best recent r & b collections, but in the light of what happened to Carter and others, I'm not about to venture any predictions. The LP was made in Chicago by Willie Henderson for Dakar, an Atlantic subsidiary, but you can bet your turnip greens that the second record will be produced in New York (by Rick Hall or Tom Dowd or one of the other little elves) and that will be the real test. In the meantime this is a good album and, because of Davis' hearty style, one that becomes more interesting with repeated listening. J.G.

STEVE LAWRENCE AND EYDIE GORME: *What It Was, Was Love*. Steve Lawrence and Eydie Gorme, vocals; Gordon Jenkins, Peter Matz, and Nick Perito, arr. *A Secret Place; There Goes the Bride; We Had It All*; ten more. RCA Victor LSP 4115, \$4.79. Tape: P8S 1420, \$6.95; TP3 1001, \$6.95, 3¾ ips.

The first thing one notices about this album is its dated concept. It is called an "albumusical," written by Gordon Jenkins, whose long-past "album shows" include *Manhattan Tower* and *Seven Dreams*. Steve Lawrence and Eydie Gorme comprise the show's cast. The story is boy-meets-girl-through-song, as it might have happened in the '40s. Viewing the current youth scene, where issues like pre-marital sex pose approximately the same conflict as whether to wear the orange bell-bottoms or the olive green Edwardian suit, one has an impulse to laugh hysterically as Steve and Eydie sing, "Boys and girls were made to fall in love."

Dealing with a world that isn't there, Jenkins has written a pretty lifeless set of songs. There are two exceptions. One is *The Room With a View Inside*. Despite its old-fashioned references, it's bright and sophisticated. The other is *Old Man*. No composer deals more touchingly with the subject of growing old than Jenkins. Miss Gorme sings: "Old man . . . tell me of the places you've been." Lawrence answers: "I've been in New Orleans for the Mardi Gras parade, and I've been in a room where Horowitz played."

As always, Lawrence and Gorme sing with professionalism and cutting clarity. Miss Gorme is her overbearing self; Lawrence finds his experienced way around her.

As little as ten years ago, this album would have had bite. Today it is primarily an index of changing social climate. One responds with nostalgia and a guiltily stifled yawn. M.A.



THE BEACH BOYS: 20/20. The Beach Boys, rock quintet, orchestra, Bluebirds *Over the Mountain; All I Want To Do; Time To Get Alone; Never Learn Not To Love; Our Prayer*; six more. Capitol SKAO 133, \$4.79.

The Beach Boys have had one of the longest, most successful, and most consistently creative careers in rock. They founded the "surfing sound" and they have been responsible for such "classics" as *California Girls* and *Good Vibrations*—songs, it might be said, that will live as long as rock itself.

They have also become culture heroes in the manner of the Stones and Beatles: their ups and downs are charted no less carefully by rock aficionados than are Kosygin's by the CIA. So it has been of some importance to note that up to now they have been guided by Brian Wilson, who fraternally shares the composing, arranging, and producing duties on *20/20*. Wilson is a major figure in Sixties pop and like many of the leaders he has been through some heavy changes that have considerably affected the content and quality of his work. So good has he become that he has left the rest of the group behind musically and there are rumors that the other members have rebelled at his more advanced tendencies. On *20/20* brother Dennis Wilson emerges as an excellent songwriter, but then it's never been a secret that every member of this group contributes to the total product.

This album spans all the styles that have been associated with the band including groovy, danceable rock (especially *All I Want To Do*), and another show piece, *Cabinessence*, written by Brian and Van Dyke Parks. Throughout the record you can hear some of the most beautiful singing in pop. The Beach Boys are also interesting for being virtually the only group that can incorporate all sorts of innovative musical sounds and studio techniques without distracting

the listener or altering their basic style. 20/20 is one of the best albums so far this year. J.G.



HUGO MONTENEGRO: Good Vibrations. Orchestra and Chorus, Hugo Montenegro, arr. and cond. *Knowing When to Leave; Night Rider; Another Time, Another Place;* eight more. RCA Victor LSP 4104, \$4.98.

When arranger Hugo Montenegro put this album together, he wanted to use a current sound involving both orchestra and voices. His main concern was to get the basic character of the sound from the voices.

At present, there are two breeds of studio singer in the recording field. The more established group produces an ethereal, flawless, almost classical clarity. Lovely as it is, the sound does not accommodate itself to the rock era. Thus, a second breed has emerged, the singer who can produce a harder sound and newer feel (not feeling). To put it metaphorically, the traditional studio singer's sound seems to come from the top of the head, while the newer singer makes it come from the shoulder muscles.

A leader of this second breed is singer/arranger/contractor Ron Hicklin, who grows busier every day. It was to Hicklin that Montenegro turned with this album in mind, explaining the sound he wanted. "You just write it," said Hicklin. "We'll sing it."

And they do, vibrantly. Particularly impressive here is Mason Williams' *Classical Gas*, beautifully arranged by Mr. Montenegro and enthusiastically sung by Hicklin's all-male chorus. My favorite track is Lalo Schifrin's haunting *A Future Left Behind (Theme from the Big Valley)*.

Congratulations all around. M.A.

WOODY HERMAN: Light My Fire. Orchestra; Woody Herman, alto and soprano saxophones and cond. *MacArthur Park; I Say a Little Prayer; Hush;* seven more. Cadet 17376, \$4.98.

Both the Woody Herman and Buddy Rich big bands have lately been getting bookings in rock concerts. In both cases, the results have been screaming applause. The youngsters often won't let the bands leave, won't let the rock groups on. Perhaps it's inevitable. After years of bumbling rock drumming, Buddy's playing must scare them out of their wits; after years of rock "ensemble" playing, Woody's band must seem a marvel of glistening, crackling precision and togetherness.

Here's an album Woody made specifically for the kids. The material consists of current pops. Richard Evans, who produced it, also did the arrangements, which are simple, sometimes a little shallow, but generally effective. The best track has roots not in rock but in rich Brazillian soil: Edu Lobo's *Ponteio*.

The album represents something of a change of philosophy for Woody, who wouldn't touch this kind of material for

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a long time. He told me recently, "You have to give 'em *something* they can relate to." There's nothing wrong with that. The big jazz bands of the Thirties and early Forties were built on current pops played in a jazz way. Then along came snobs like Barry Ulanov, Nat Hentoff, and André Hodeir to tell jazzmen: "naughty, naughty, you mustn't make yourself comprehensible to the people; otherwise how can I take pride in liking you?" This just about put jazz out of business.

If anybody can put it back in business, it's Woody Herman and Buddy Rich. May ventures like this one, meant to rebuild their audience, succeed. This album is already selling well. G.L.

jazz



MODERN JAZZ QUARTET: Under the Jasmin Tree. John Lewis, piano; Milt Jackson, vibraharp; Percy Heath, bass; Connie Kay, drums. *The Blue Necklace; Three Little Feelings; Exposure; The Jasmin Tree.* Apple 3353, \$4.79.

Most long-lived jazz groups, even those that seemed rather adventurous when they were new, eventually settle into a

rut where they efficiently go through the motions of making music. This does not necessarily diminish their popularity — it may, in fact, help to solidify their appeal—but it's one reason why aging jazz groups frequently become less and less interesting. The Brubeck Quartet and the Basie Band are two prominent cases in point.

The Modern Jazz Quartet has managed to reverse the process. With its stiff formalities and John Lewis' insistent interest in fugueing, the group quickly fell into a rut. But over the years the Quartet has gradually loosened up, shed its air of pretentiousness, and gained an inner vitality not apparent in its early days. The change for the better centers on John Lewis' development as a pianist. Originally a somewhat tentative and withdrawn performer—a pale presence beside Milt Jackson's open, swinging attack—Lewis has learned to concentrate his neat, precise, and economic style with such implied rhythmic force that he has become the swinging core of the group. Given this positive direction, the Quartet is now a much more lithe, open, and compelling group than was evident in the full flush of its success. This disc, the group's first for Apple Records, is the most completely satisfying collection the group has ever put out. The four compositions all have the typical Lewis lilt and bounce, laced with his remarkable single note solos that have more force and rhythmic sustenance than most pianists can generate with ten fingers. Jackson is pre-

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sented in more varied surroundings than he usually achieves with straight-out solos. For instance, Lewis' prodding solo in *The Jasmine Tree* builds into a duet with Jackson that brings the vibraharpist closer to the concise expression of Lewis' style than when he moves out on his own. The broad, strong foundation that Percy Heath and Connie Kay always give the group is as vital as ever in these pieces, and the excellent recording serves to keep in clear focus the marvelous spread of Kay's carpet of sound. J.S.W.



CLARE FISCHER: One To Get Ready, Four To Go! Clare Fischer, piano; Gary Foster, tenor saxophone; Bobby West, bass; Jim Keltner, drums. *Liz Anne; Lover Man; You Stepped Out of a Dream*; three more. Revelation 6, \$4.98.

Keep an eye out for the Revelation label. This is the sixth LP released by this West Coast outfit. Most of them have been derived from tapes made two to five years ago by musicians such as Anthony Ortega and Gary Foster who, on name alone, are not apt to sell very many records but whose thoughtful, provocative performances should interest anyone who has any feeling for jazz.

This disc by Clare Fischer follows in the same pattern except that Fischer is somewhat better known than most of Revelation's other "stars." Half of it is made up of beautifully stated piano solos by Fischer—direct, to the point, with nothing extraneous—recorded in 1963. The remainder is given over to two long quartet selections, in which Gary Foster on tenor saxophone and Fischer play duets that are made up of such tightly involved lines that one can only wonder how they managed to swing so freely in the midst of their concentration. Fischer's solos have a distinctively vital charm but his involvements with Foster's tenor saxophone are absolutely fascinating, particularly on *Free-way*, a free form opus which carries the notation "If you can write it down, you can publish it." I'd rather listen. J.S.W.

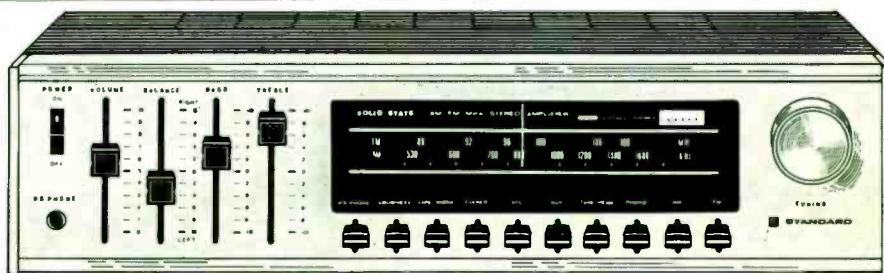
PAUL DESMOND: Summertime. Burt Collins, John Eckert, Joe Shepley, and Marvin Stamm, trumpets; Wayne Andre, Paul Faulise, Urbie Green, J. J. Johnson, Bill Watrous, and Kai Winding, trombones; Ray Alonge, Jimmy Buffington, and Tony Miranda, French horns; Paul Desmond, alto saxophone; George Marge and Bob Tricario, woodwinds; Joe Venuto, marimba; Mike Mainieri, vibraharp; Herbie Hancock, piano; Joe Beck, Jay Berliner, Eumir Deodato, and Bucky Pizzarelli, guitars; Frank Bruno and Ron Carter, bass; Aírto Moreira and Leo Morris, drums; Don Sebeskey, arr. *Olvidar; Autumn Leaves; Lady in Cement*; seven more. A & M 3015, \$5.79.

Paul Desmond's first album since the break-up of the Dave Brubeck Quartet in December 1967 is a pleasantly airy set of performances in which Desmond

works primarily with Latin-type rhythms. Don Sebeskey's arrangements are sufficiently open, giving Desmond leeway to fly on his own almost all the way. The only other soloist is Herbie Hancock, whose occasional easy-flowing piano sorties point up the tight, overly deliberate quality that colors some of Desmond's playing. This is particularly noticeable in the slower pieces—*Emily* and *Where Is Love*. Desmond's lyricism, which used to provide an effective contrast to Brubeck's heavy piano playing, is less impressive in this set. There is a tenseness in his approach to pieces that should soar and sing. With a lighter, brighter rhythm, he is far more successful. On *Samba with Some Barbecue* (a delightful variation on Lil Armstrong's forty-year-old *Struttin' with Some Bar-*

becue), a calypso-like treatment of *Ob-La-Di*, Desmond's own *North by Northeast* (a medium tempo piece), and a 5/4 version of *Summertime*, he loosens up and finds his wings. But there's always Herbie Hancock moving in behind him to set up a contrasting example of how relaxed a good jazz solo can be. J.S.W.

DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA: Hot in Harlem, 1928-1929. Bubber Miley, Arthur Whetsol, Louis Metcalf, Freddy Jenkins, and Cootie Williams, trumpets; Tricky Sam Nanton, Harry White, and Juan Tizol, trombones; Johnny Hodges, Barney Bigard, Harry Carney, and Otto Hardwick, reeds; Duke Ellington, piano; Fred Guy



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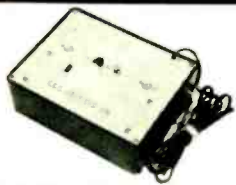
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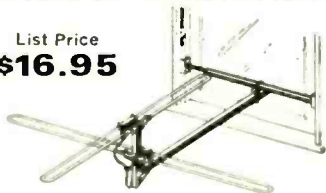
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and Teddy Bunn, guitars; Wellman Braud, bass; Sonny Greer, drums; Blinky Randolph, kazoo; Bruce Johnson, washboard. *Rent Party Blues; Black and Blue; Jazz Convulsions*; ten more. Decca 79241, \$5.79.

The second volume of Decca's Duke Ellington reissue series concentrates on the period from October 1928 to October 1929, his second year at the Cotton Club. Only one familiar Ellington classic shows up in this set (*The Mooche*, in a version which includes an Ellington solo) but the early Ellington style is in full bloom. The rich reed ensembles are balanced by the growling cry of the brasses. Fats Waller and Don Redman are represented as composers, along with Ellington. The Duke makes one of his earliest ventures into the standard jazz repertory with a driving, somewhat uncharacteristically shrill treatment of *Tiger Rag* that originally appeared on two sides of a 78-rpm ten-inch disc. The gutty drive of Harry Carney's baritone saxophone was already fully formed on *Jungle Jamboree*, although Carney had just turned nineteen when he made the record. Johnny Hodges, Barney Bigard, and, of course, Tricky Sam Nanton had arrived at their characteristic voices, and Cootie Williams, who joined the band during the year, was finding his. The ensembles in these performances are particularly impressive—the saxophones for their swinging, subtle smoothness, and the brass for their brash, strutting attack (notably on the glorious *Jolly Wog*).

The disc includes one curiosity—a piece by eight Ellington men plus Teddy Bunn on guitar, and a kazoo and washboard: they are identified as The Six Jolly Jesters. It is characteristically Ellingtonian but the kazoo and washboard manage to cover up much of the solo work. Incidentally, on my copy, *Paducah* and *Harlem Flat Blues* have been transposed. J.S.W.

in brief

ANITA KERR: Yestergroovin'. Dot DLP 25918, \$4.79.

Miss Kerr, one of the few women arrangers in the business, puts three Mexican-style guitars (called, with mangled Anglo-Franco-Spanish grammar, Les Très Guitars) in front of strings, woodwinds, and rhythm section and comes up with a low-key pop album of real charm. G.L.

JOE HENDERSON: Tetragon. Milestone MSP 9017 \$4.79.

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BOBBY RUSSELL: Words Music, Laughter and Tears. EIf 9500, \$4.79.

A vocal album from the man who wrote *Honey* and *Little Green Apples*. He's not much as a singer, but the songs are touching, personal, and distinctive. M.A.

BRIAN AUGER & THE TRINITY: Definitely What! Atco SD 33-273, \$4.79. Tape: Ⓜ M 8273, \$6.95.

Excellent organist from England, skilled enough for jazz, young enough for rock. Two beautiful tracks are *A Day in the Life* and vocal on an Auger original, *Far Horizon*. M.A.

SKEETER DAVIS: The Closest Thing to Love. RCA Victor LSP 4124, \$4.98.

Skeeter Davis, a big c & w star, is as good as her material, which here is both horrid and excellent, including the best cut yet of *Angel of the Morning*. Miss Davis deserves a much wider audience. J.G.

CHARLIE BYRD: The Great Bird. Columbia CS 9747, \$4.79. Tape ●● CQ 1072, \$7.98, 7 1/2 ips; Ⓜ 1810 0574, \$6.98; Ⓜ 1410 0574; \$5.98.

More chicken rock from a musician too good to indulge in it. The result is galloping mediocrity. G.L.

PETER NERO: Impressions. RCA Victor LSP 4072, \$4.98. Tape: Ⓜ P8S 1385, \$6.95.

Peter Nero plays Burt Bacharach? This self-same album has been recorded by about ten other performers, even Stan Getz, thereby making Bacharach just about the smartest promoter in the music business. G.L.

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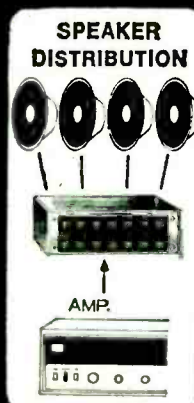


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JAMES COTTON BLUES BAND: Cotton in Your Ears. Verve/Forecast FTS 3060, \$4.79. Tape: ●● X 3000, 3¾ ips, \$5.95; ●● 83060 M, \$6.95.

Cotton, formerly with Muddy Waters' group, is one of the finest and most accessible of Chicago bluesmen. This is his best album. J.G.

GUY LOMBARDO: The New Songs! The New Sounds! Capitol ST 128, \$4.79. ●● YIT 128, \$6.98, 3½ ips; ●● 8 KT 128, \$6.98; ●● 4GT 128, \$5.98.

One of the funniest albums of the year comes to pass when Carmen, Lebert, Victor, and Guy try to come to grips with *Gentle on My Mind*, Harper Valley P.T.A., and the like. G.L.

WAYLON JENNINGS: Just to Satisfy You. RCA Victor LSP 4137, \$4.98.

Waylon Jennings is one of the most virile country-and-western performers, and if you're not familiar with him, this disc is worth a listen. *Lonely Weekends* is the strongest track. G.L.

FLYING BURITTO BROTHERS. A & M SP 4175, \$4.98.

Mandolinist/guitarist Chris Hillman (formerly of the Byrds) and group manager Steve Alsberg are old friends of mine, and that has something to do with why I like this album. Still they're good. The music is country rock, played with devotion, warmth, and a touch of humor. Very possibly a trend-setter in one branch of rock. M.A.

theater & film

DEAR WORLD. Original Broadway cast album. Angela Lansbury, Milo O'Shea, and Jane Connel, vocals; orchestra and chorus. Columbia BOS 3260, \$6.98. Tapes: ●● OQ 1130, 3¾ ips, \$9.98; ●● 18120040, \$8.98.

The inversions of our time never cease to amuse me.

Jerry Herman, who did the score for *Dear World* (as well as *Mame*) has a house on Fire Island in which he keeps a large piano. Getting it over there obviously was quite a task, and when someone asked him what it took to do it, he replied charmingly: "Lots of money." Jerry Herman is an Establishment songwriter, writing for the Establishment, Broadway theater.

Now, Columbia records recently ran an ad for some of its "protest" albums, saying, "America listens while the Establishment burns." How's that again? Is there anything in the world more Establishment than Columbia Records and its parent corporation, CBS? The Establishment has so refined its methods that it makes money on the revolution against it.

Put these three together—Jerry Herman, the Broadway theater, and Columbia Records—and you have to come

up with *Dear World*. It's chemically inevitable. *Dear World*, based on Giraudoux's *Madwoman of Chaillot*, is a glossy complaint about the Establishment, designed to make money for same.

Charles Burr says in the liner notes to the album: "The world is no longer a happy place. Not only is it no longer polite, it is in the hands of an Establishment perverted by power. They have eyes of gelatine and the souls of pimps." Yes they have, Charles. By George, there's no denying it. The halls of the CBS building in New York are absolutely shiny with gelatine eyes.

I wouldn't care so much about all this hypocrisy if, in their money-grubbing, the people involved in this project had come up with something valid, musically or otherwise. But Jerry Herman's music is cheesily predictable. Nor do I want to hear that saw about our western musical vocabulary being worn out and effete. The Brazilians keep writing fresh music with it: why can't the people on Broadway do the same? If Jerry Herman's music is ordinary, his lyrics are more so (except for one great song in *Mame—If She Walked Into My Life*). Both are utterly lacking in style. And his "protest" material (about industrial pollution, among other things) in *Dear World* is coy to the point of icky-poo. The title song is positively squirm-making.

But hurry out and buy the album anyway, folks. You can be as square as your offspring collecting Beatles and Bob Dylan records: suckers to an Establishment so cunning that it complains about itself—for a price. G.L.



SWEET CHARITY. Original soundtrack album. Shirley MacLaine, Sammy Davis, Jr., vocals; orchestra and chorus. Decca DL 71502, \$5.79.

I usually like movie soundtrack recordings of musicals better than the Broadway original cast recordings. They're freer, looser, and more suited to reproduction on records. That's the case with this album, as with so many others in the past.

I never saw *Sweet Charity*, but it con-

tains great songs, and that alone makes this album infinitely more commendable than most show score recordings. *If My Friends Could See Me Now*; *Big Spender*; *My Personal Property* (which was added for the movie version)—these are fine songs. Cy Coleman has a capacity to get wit into music that isn't equaled by anybody I can think of who's writing for the theater today. And Dorothy Fields, one of our most skillful lyricists, whose career has been long and distinguished, works beautifully with him.

I'd rather hear Tony Bennett do *My Personal Property* than Shirley MacLaine, and I'd rather hear Peggy Lee do *Big Spender* than the chorus that performs it here. But if hearing songs in their original context has some special meaning for you, the *Sweet Charity* material is done well in this album. G.L.

BULLITT. Music from the film. Orchestra, Lalo Schifrin, composer and cond. Warner WS 1777, \$4.79. Tape X 1777, \$5.95.

If you see a film and then buy the soundtrack album, you may find—in fact, almost certainly will—that the music isn't identical to that in the picture. One reason is that movie recording quality usually isn't up to record industry standards. Another is that the composer wanted to extend and develop themes heard only fragmentarily in the picture. The third and most compelling reason is financial. If you issue the actual soundtrack in album form, you have to pay the men who played the music all over again, and at record industry scale, which is \$67.50 an hour per man. When you use more than fifty musicians, as Lalo Schifrin did at times in the *Bullitt* score, this would be expensive. So you might as well go back into a studio and do it over, this time using a smaller orchestra. Here, only twenty-five men are used. There is no feeling of lost scope. On the contrary, because of the thematic extensions, the music is more satisfying in album form than it was in the film.

It's an exceptionally good album, jazz-oriented in places, dipping into rock in others, and often warmly melodic. One of the best tracks is *Ice-Pick Mike*, scored for low (and sinister-sounding) piano, electric bass, and sub-tone unison saxes. It's chilling. G.L.



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JUNE 1969

the tape deck

BY R.D. DARRELL

News—Mostly Good. Recorded tapes in cassette format will soon be appearing under the various labels of the CBS/Columbia and RCA companies—the last of the major manufacturers to be represented in the cassette catalogues. RCA, however, decided to bar direct competition with its own 8-track cartridge tapes by pricing both formats at \$6.95. Thus its forthcoming cassettes will join those imported by Deutsche Grammophon and Philips in a premium price class, \$1.00 higher than the current standard of other major cassette producers.

RCA has good news for open-reel collectors too. The 3¾ ips TR3 series, hitherto primarily confined to musical shows, multiple-play operas, and double-play couplings of two different disc-edition programs, will shortly be expanded to include single-play RCA releases. Here too RCA has adopted a nonstandard price for a 3¾ ips classical single—somewhat less than the established industry norm.

A less vital, yet by no means negligible, policy change by RCA is the company's decision to package its 8-track cartridges in a conventional stiff-paper container to replace its former bathtub-shaped plastic box. I'm glad to see that both the label on the cartridge and the outside container list the program contents—an advantage not often supplied by some companies. I still prefer the open-sided packaging (also individually imprinted) that Ampex uses on all of its cartridges.

Values—Mixed. In the end, however, what really counts is not a tape's format, convenience, or even price, but its musical, executant, and engineering merits. And here my praise for RCA's new single-play 3¾-ips open reels must be somewhat qualified by the first two specific examples at hand: the Grieg A minor and the Liszt First Piano Concerto with Van Cliburn and the Philadelphia Orchestra under Eugene Ormandy (TR3 1001, 48 min., \$6.95); and Chopin's Second Piano Concerto and *Grand Fantasia on Polish Airs*, Op. 13, played by Artur Schnabel, also with the Philadelphians (TR3 1002, 47 min., \$6.95). These performances, by the way, are also available as 8-track cartridges R8S 1113 and R8S 1110, \$6.95 each. The Grieg/Liszt program must rank high among its many competitors as a dazzling display of virtuosity, although Cliburn's rather idiosyncratic (yet often fascinating) interpretations and the transparent but sometimes hard-toned recording are a bit more questionable. The other reel is a must for every Chopin collector if only because it offers a first tape edition of the quaintly old-fashioned yet irresistibly

engaging *Polish Fantasy*; but unfortunately the Second Concerto represents neither Rubinstein nor RCA's engineers at their best. My recommendation remains the magically gleaming and graceful 1960 Ashkenazy taping for London.

It is a pity that the new "single" reel medium wasn't chosen for the major attraction in the new Philadelphia/Ormandy series, the Tchaikovsky *Pathétique*. It's available singly in cartridge format (R8S 1112, \$6.95)—the open-reel edition (TR3 5040, 102 min., \$10.95) couples it with Ormandy's Bruckner Seventh in what strikes me as a fatally hurried and unidiomatic Bruckner reading. On the other hand, Ormandy's well-known emotional interpretation of the *Pathétique* is spellbindingly realized by the Philadelphians' ultrabravura playing. Technically, the recording qualities of this release are markedly different from Columbia's Philadelphia engineering, a fact dramatically emphasized by a recent re-hearing of the best-selling reel edition of this same symphony (Columbia MQ 368) released in 1961. Yet RCA's sonics sounded more attractive to my ears than they evidently did to my colleague, Harris Goldsmith, who reviewed the (possibly less well processed) disc edition in the April issue. In any case, one or the other of the Ormandy *Pathétique* tapings is sure to be the popular choice.

Satie Thumbs a Ride. Another newcomer to the tape catalogues is pianist Aldo Ciccolini, whose Vol. 1 of his acclaimed series devoted to Erik Satie is now available in 8-track cartridge format (Angel 8XS 36482, \$6.98). Besides the well-known *Gymnopédies*, *Gnossiennes*, and *Morceaux en forme de poire*, there are a number of saucy later works. It had seemed to me that one could derive more pleasure from playing this informal music than listening to it, but I now find it functions ideally as car-borne entertainment. It tickles the ear but does not distract one's mind from driving exigencies.

With Respect, but no Great Warmth. While I am impressed with two new taped operatic blockbusters, I have no inclination to hear them again. Still, for the opera buff, I must point out the immense variety provided in "The Royal Family of Opera" anthology (London/Ampex EX+ LOF 90144, 2 reels, approx. 76 and 70 min., \$9.95). The price is indeed a bargain: thirty-one arias and scenes performed by a galaxy of operatic stars. The second package is Karajan's version of *Das Rheingold* (Deutsche Grammophon/Ampex EX+ DGG 9228, 2 reels, approx. 92 and 52 min., \$19.95). Beautifully transparent sonics, an often poetic performance (especially in the enchanting

opening Rhinemaidens' scene), and a refusal to indulge in audio gimmickry are sure to please many opera connoisseurs. Yet there is a disappointing lack of any real thrills in this release. I still prefer the earlier Solti/London reels which have lost none of their vitality in spite of their age.

A Parade of Pianists. A number of piano tapings released this month are more than welcome for their musical contents, bravura performances, and ringingly vivid recordings. The open-reel examples include the restrained playing of Alfred Brendel in Mozart's K. 310 Sonata, K. 396 Fantasy, K. 511 Rondo, and K. 573 *Duport Variations* (Vanguard/Ampex EX+ VGC 1043, 51 min., \$7.95—also available in cartridge and cassette editions) and the spectacular sound track of the "Horowitz on TV" program, which features not only three of the master's Chopin specialties, but also his *divertissement* on themes from *Carmen* (Columbia MQ 988, 47 min., \$7.95—also available in 8-track cartridge format).

For cartridge-only corroboration that the Grand Manner is still alive and flourishing in the United States, try Van Cliburn's Second and Third Chopin Piano Sonatas (RCA Red Seal R8S 1114, \$6.95). While I've heard only the 8-track cartridge edition (Deutsche Grammophon/Ampex DGM 89383, \$6.95) of Martha Argerich's Liszt and Chopin First Piano Concertos with the London Symphony under Claudio Abbado, it was enough to convince me that the open-reel edition (DGC 8393, \$7.95) may be recommended without reservation for its exciting interpretation and brilliant sonics.

Even in the technically immature cassette format, there's no mistaking either the executant or sonic attractions of Sviatoslav Richter's romantic version of the Rachmaninoff Second Piano Concerto with the Warsaw Philharmonic under Stanislaw Wislocki. Richter's performance has been recoupled, especially for this edition, with the engaging Beethoven Concert Rondo in B flat, accompanied by the Vienna Symphony under Kurt Sanderling (Deutsche Grammophon 923059, \$6.95). Another imported DGG cassette (923064, \$6.95) stars Margrit Weber—making her tape debut, I believe—in an unusually cool, crisp, and nonromantic version of the Rachmaninoff *Rhapsody on a Theme by Paganini*. This is coupled with two tape Firsts: Carl Maria von Weber's familiar *Konzertstück* in F minor, Op. 79 (sounding a bit contrived for all the pianist's tonal sweetness) and the ten fascinating little Bagatelles, Op. 5, by Tcherépnin. The accompanying forces are the Berlin Radio Symphony under the late Ferenc Fricsay.

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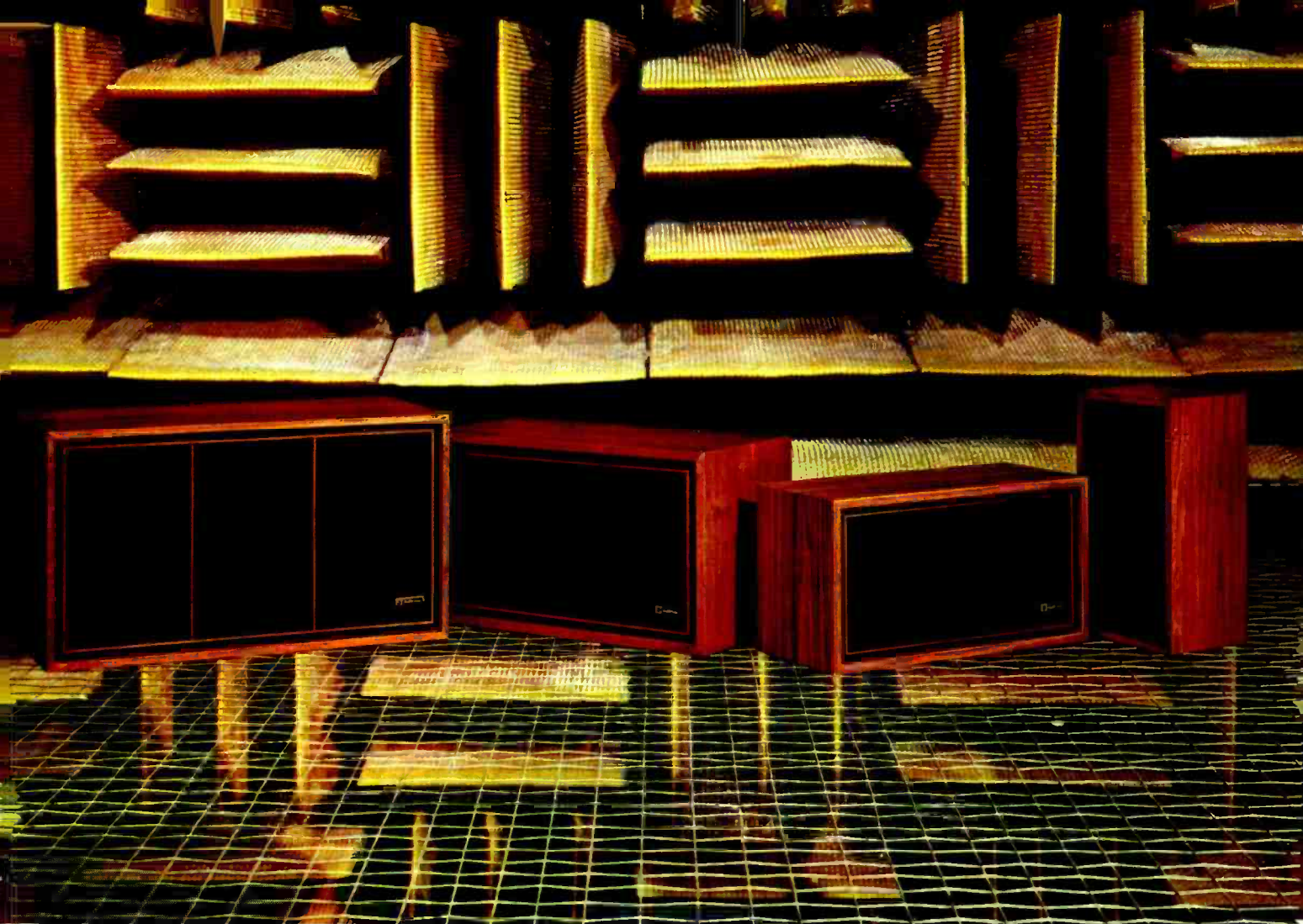
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