ICD

HIGH FIDELITY

DECEMBER 1970 60¢

LAB TEST REPORTS
Sony TA-1144 Amp
Frazier Mediterranean Speaker
Tandberg 6000X Tape Recorder
ADC 220X Cartridge

Best Records of the Year

Buyer's Guide to the Beethoven Symphonies

Records to Give to Children

FISHER STEREO COMPACTS

The Fisher 115 AM/FM stereo compact with Fisher XP-44B speakers. 75 watts. $299.95.

The Fisher 125B AM/FM stereo compact with XP-55B speakers. 80 watts. $329.95.

The Fisher 3056 AM/FM stereo compact with Fisher XP-56 speakers. 90 watts. $369.95.

The Fisher 3070 AM/FM stereo compact with Fisher WS-70 omnidirectional speakers. 90 watts. $369.95.

The Fisher 3580 AM/FM stereo compact with Fisher WS-80 3-way omnidirectional speakers. 100 watts. $399.95.

The Fisher 3560K AM/FM stereo compact with Fisher XP-60K speakers. 100 watts. $399.95.

The Fisher 5055 cassette/phono/AM/FM stereo compact with Fisher XP-55B speakers. 90 watts. $469.95.

FISHER AMPLIFIERS, CASSETTE DECKS & ACCESSORIES

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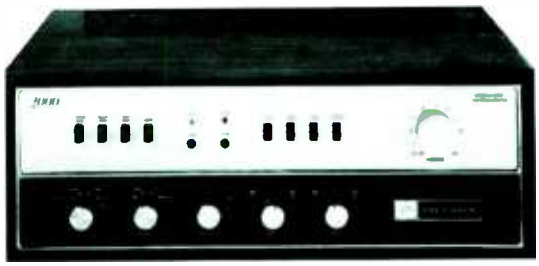
65-watt stereo control amplifier. $149.95†.



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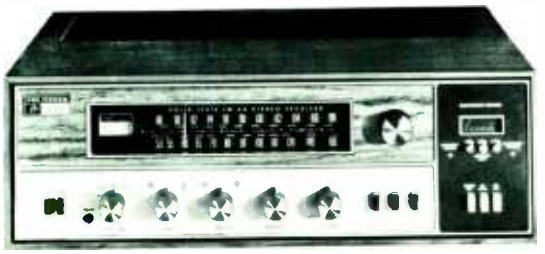
250-watt AM/FM four-channel stereo receiver with AutoScan® electronic automatic tuning. Integrated Darlington output stages. The world's first and only 4-channel receiver. $699.95†.

The Fisher 500-TX
200-watt AM/FM stereo receiver with Tune-O-Matic® push-button electronic memory tuning and AutoScan automatic electronic tuning. $499.95†.



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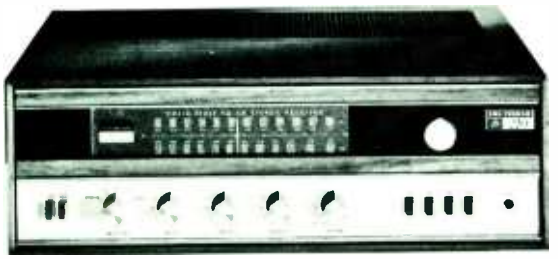
The Fisher 250-TX
120-watt AM/FM stereo receiver with Tune-O-Matic® push-button electronic memory tuning. $349.95**.



The Fisher 210-T
110-watt AM/FM stereo receiver. $299.95**.

The Fisher 202
AM/FM stereo receiver with 100 watts power. $249.95*.

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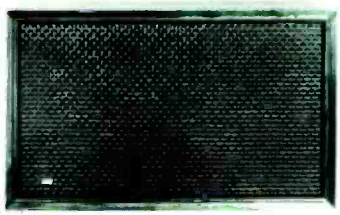
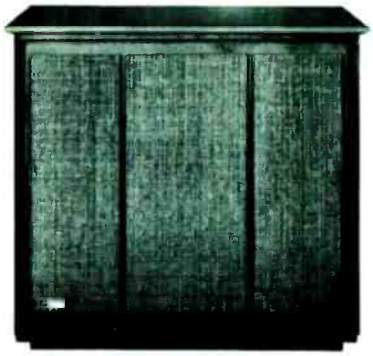
FISHER SPEAKERS

The Fisher XP-44B 2-way speaker system. The world's least expensive good speaker system. Two for $89.00.



The Fisher XP-9C 4-way speaker system. The world's finest bookshelf speaker system. $199.95.



The Fisher XP-18 4-way floor-standing speaker system. The giant woofer speaker system. $359.95.

The Fisher XP-55B 2-way speaker system. The world's best $49.95 speaker system.

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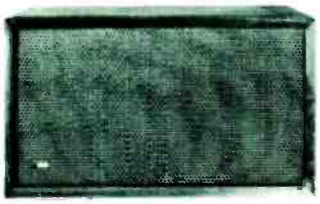
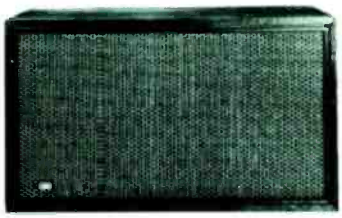
The Fisher XP-60B 2-way speaker system. The world's best $79.95 bookshelf speaker system.

The Fisher WS-80 3-way speaker system. The world's finest omnidirectional speaker system. $99.95.

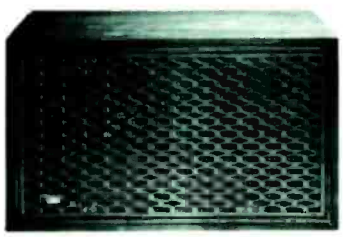


The Fisher XP-66B 3-way speaker system. The world's best $99.95 bookshelf speaker system.

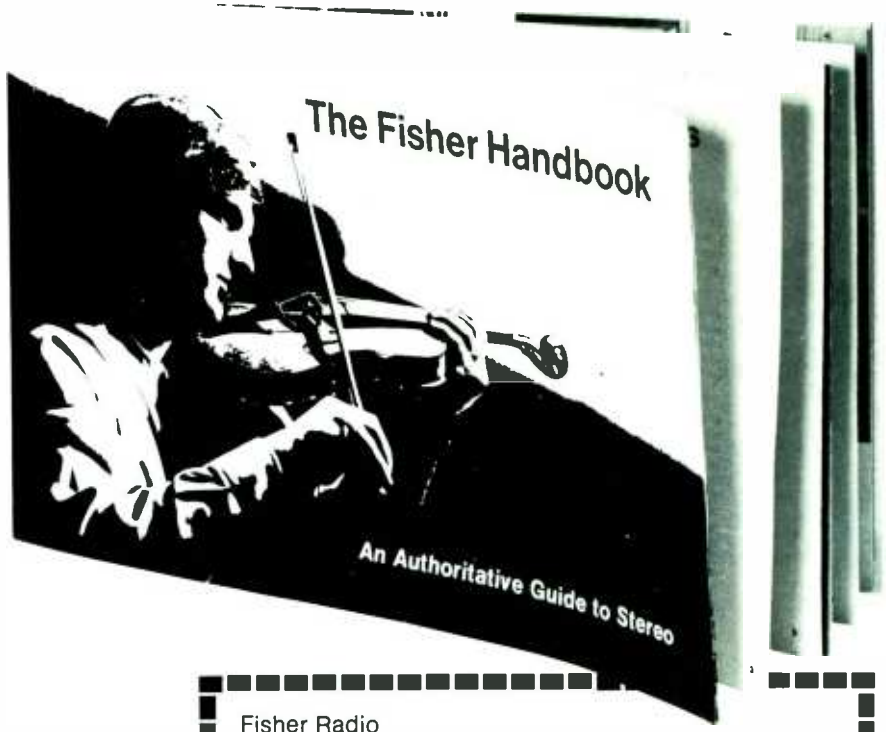


The Fisher XP-7B 4-way speaker system. The world's best $149.95 speaker system.

The Fisher XP-16 4-way floor-standing speaker systems. The world's most beautiful speaker systems, and also among the best-sounding. From top to bottom: Country French in cherry; Contemporary in walnut; Mediterranean in pecan. $299.95 each.



Models XP-60B, XP-66B and XP-7B are available with attractive lattice grills at slight additional cost.



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Mail this coupon for your free copy of The Fisher Handbook. This 72-page full-color reference guide to hi-fi and stereo also includes information on all Fisher components.

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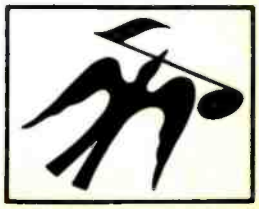
CIRCLE 30 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Fisher 1971



What good is a cartridge that tracks at 3/4 of a gram but delivers less than 3/4 of the music?

Great.

For tracking.

But not for listening.

If you love music, you want 100% of the music all the time. And many cartridges just don't deliver.

Pickering's XV-15 Series does. Every time.

The trouble with many pick-ups is that at higher frequencies they experience a severe loss of output. This leads to a lack of instrumental definition in those ranges so great it may be difficult to distinguish the precise sounds of the oboe, clarinet, flute, etc.

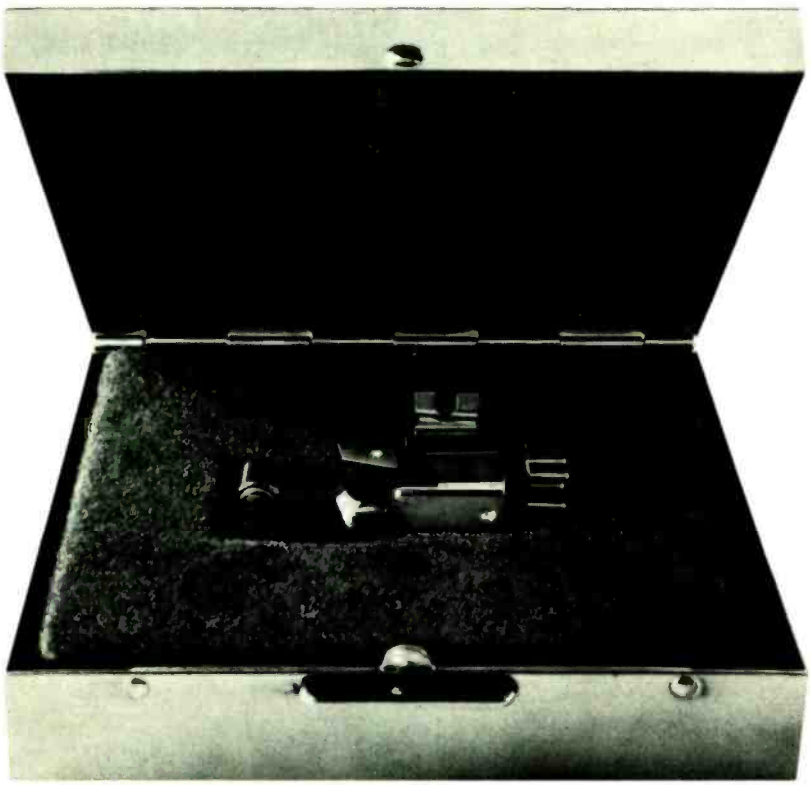
The sounds literally blend together masking the music—and not only at the higher frequencies. When distortion takes place in any part of the audio spectrum it can be reflected throughout the entire spectrum. The result: a masking effect over all the music.

In contrast to this, Pickering's XV-15 series delivers 100% music power 100% of the time.

Our point is simple: when it comes to cartridges, a track record doesn't count unless you sound great—at any frequency.

Pickering: for those who can hear the difference.

Pickering XV-15 cartridges range from $29.95 to $60. For more information write Pickering & Co., Inc., 101 Sunnyside Blvd., Plainview, N.Y. 11803.



PICKERING

"for those who can hear the difference"

CIRCLE 48 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

HIGH FIDELITY

VOL. 20 NO. 12 DECEMBER 1970

music and musicians

audio and video

recordings

etc.

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Wagner for Three-Year-Olds?

DEAR READER:

Mrs. Kulleseid, in her article on children's recordings, seems to have left out possibly the best kiddie records of all: Wagner's *Ring*. I have never quite gotten over my suspicion that these four operas were one big put-on for grownups and were really written for kids; it is my own experience that any red-blooded three-year-old who is exposed to the super-Peter Pan fantasies of Wagner will find them more engrossing than all the *Peter and the Wolf*s and *Young Person's Guide*s in the catalogue.

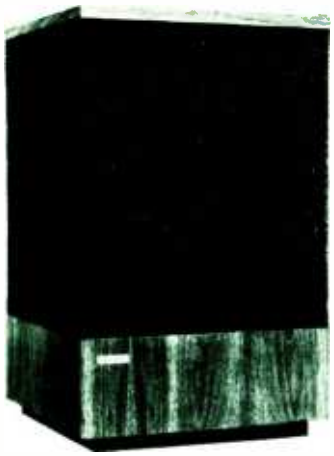
Even *Peter Pan* has only pirates and Indians going for it; look what the *Ring* has: giants and dragons and gods and talking birds and a helmet that makes you invisible and Superman with a brat's temperament for a hero; dwarfs and "flying ladies" and "swimming ladies" and lightning and thunder (if you get the Solti version on London) and King Arthur's or whosoever-it-is magic sword stuck in a tree and conflagration and flood and killing and blood—everything dear to a little boy's heart. Now I don't propose that you sit your toddler in front of a stereo setup for twenty hours' worth of *Ring*; highlights records will do. I still recall my two oldest sons, when they were two and five, flying around the living room with the Valkyries, swimming on the rug with the Rhinemaidens, clomping over the rainbow bridge with the rest of the gods. All it took was telling them the story.

The story is the key, at least for this age group. Or perhaps "action" is more important than mere plot. My boys' absolute favorite was the *Firebird* Suite; Daddy once wanted to hear a new recording of it and to keep the kids quiet told them what was happening. When the birds fluttered their wings, so did the boys; when the hero broke the egg containing the soul of the "mad magician," Stravinsky's frenzy was easily matched by the children's; when the creatures hesitantly emerged into freedom, so did my creatures, from under tables and chairs. Playing outside, they invented a "Firebird" game and used everything from dead leaves to gum wrappers for the magic feather. I could not come home from work without being barraged with requests to "put on the *Firebird*." Before long they could sing the music, keeping better time in the rhythmically complex sections than some orchestras I have heard. At ages four and seven, by now rock-committed, they were finally allowed to attend a live concert to hear Stravinsky's suite. Totally captivated, they waved their arms together with Erich Leinsdorf, easily tossing off the seven-four meters and syncopated rhythms, and at the end getting some good-natured applause from nearby members of the audience. If the amused grownups thought my kids exceptional, they were mistaken; the youngsters knew the music because they had been told the story and liked both together.

I haven't the space to relate how Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet* stimulated a seven-year-old Beatle fan's passion for Shakespeare's play, but whether it's *Firebird* or *Romeo and Juliet*, *Rheingold* or *Tosca*, *Aida* or *Don Quixote*, as long as you tell the bloody details, a child's mind will fill in more colorful and self-engrossing images than all the creative talent behind *Fantasia*. At least in one family, that's all it took to spark in children a taste for the whipped cream of civilization—art.

Speaking of whipped cream, next month we will devote a major section of HF to the two most exciting recent varieties of audio *Schlag* (though certainly not shlock): in FOUR-CHANNEL STEREO you will learn of three basic paths to quadriphony, including five coding techniques and several simulated versions; we also will tell you the results of **RUNNING THE GAMUT OF TAPE RECORDERS WITH TWO DOLBY "HOME" SYSTEMS**. Beethoven's bicentennial year will be lengthened by a month with the conclusion of our complete discography and the remarkable story of **BEETHOVEN'S LAST PUBLISHER**, B. Schott Söhne.

Leonard Marcus



The BOSE 501™ DIRECT/REFLECTING Speaker System*

$124.80

DESCRIPTION:

The BOSE 501 is a floor standing speaker that may be placed against a wall or up to one foot in front of a wall. Each 501 enclosure contains one 10-inch speaker and two 3½ inch speakers. The 10-inch speaker faces forward. It covers the low frequency range and has a specially extended frequency response to supply a small amount of direct energy at higher frequencies to balance the reflected energy of the smaller speakers. The two 3½ inch speakers provide primarily reflected sound at high frequencies. They are directed at angles to the rear wall (See Figure 1) such that stereo can be enjoyed from a wide range of positions while avoiding the point source effect of conventional direct radiating speakers (See Figure 2).

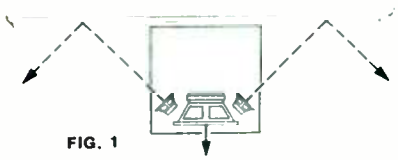


FIG. 1

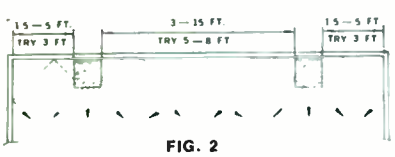


FIG. 2

DESIGN GOALS:

In designing the 501 we set two goals:

A To develop a speaker that would audibly outperform all speakers costing less than the BOSE 901.

B To design this speaker to sell for less than $130.

THE 501 SHARES THE FOLLOWING FEATURES OF THE 901:

A The use of the wall of your room to reflect sound as the stage wall reflects the sound of instruments in a live performance. This eliminates the undesirable point source effect of conventional speakers.

B Radiating a combination of direct and reflected sound to provide localization of sound while maintaining the spatial fullness that is characteristic of a live performance. Stereo can now be enjoyed from almost any position in your room. No special seating arrangements are required as for direct radiating speakers.

C Flat power radiation rather than conventional flat frequency response on axis. This permits the 501 and 901 to reproduce crisp instrumental attacks without the shrillness so often observed in direct radiating speakers.

COMPROMISES TO REDUCE COST:

A The principal compromise introduced to reduce the cost was the use of a woofer in the 501 instead of nine drivers as in the 901. The performance compromises resulting from the use of a woofer are:

1 The 501 does not have quite the bass response (below 40 Hz) of the 901.

2 The 501 does not produce quite the accuracy in timbre of bass instruments as does the 901.

3 The 501 does not have as much power handling capacity as the 901.

4 The 501 does not have as smooth overload characteristics as the 901.

BUT in all these respects the 501 should match or exceed the performance of any speaker costing less than the 901.

B The 501 uses only two speakers to reproduce the high frequency range instead of nine speakers as in the 901. The reduction in the number of speakers operating in the same frequency range reduces the clarity on complex passages. The clarity of the 501, though exceeded by the 901, should be superior to that of all speakers costing less than the 901. Most conventional speakers contain only one speaker covering any one frequency range and do not employ the combination of direct and reflected sound.

C The 501 uses a crossover network. Even though this network and the speaker have been very carefully matched, it is still a crossover network and does introduce sound coloration. It cannot produce the accuracy of instrumental timbre that is achieved in the 901 which uses nine full range speakers coupled with the Active Equalizer.

THE PERFORMANCE OF THE 501:

You be the judge. If we have succeeded in our design goals, the result will be obvious to you when you A-B the 501 with any speaker selling for less than the 901.

* Patents applied for.

You can hear the difference now.

BOSE®

Natick, Massachusetts 01760

CIRCLE 12 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

letters

Opera Reviewers

A rousing *olé*! to Conrad L. Osborne for his review of *The Naked Carmen* [September 1970]. He is to be commended for his objective analysis and tolerant wit in putting this unfortunate effort in proper context. There are countless brilliant instances where a work was adapted and altered by other hands—the point is well delineated in Mel Powell's article in the September issue of *Musical America*. But these have nothing to do with Mercury's fecal-ization of Bizet's masterpiece. *The Naked Carmen* is a bore; the disc comes alive only with those bits of the original score that are left intact.

As for the pseudopsychiatric effort to equate Carmen with Women's Lib—phooey! The poor girl would probably have been bewildered by the whole thing. Back to Psych. I, Mercury!

Leslie Rosenbaum
New York, N.Y.

I was glad to see that Conrad L. Osborne had been invited to review the Karajan *Götterdämmerung* for the September issue. After all the meaningless generalities that pass for music criticism so much of the time, it is refreshing to read one of C.L.O.'s reviews again.

Stephen J. Brown
Schenectady, N.Y.

It was marvelous to see two articles by Conrad L. Osborne in this month's HIGH FIDELITY [September 1970]. His knowledgeable review of *Götterdämmerung* and his incisive probing of *The Naked Carmen* reminded me once again that he is the best opera critic I have yet encountered.

I haven't learned anything from your current stable of opera reviewers. But rarely was there an Osborne article from which I did not learn. Many times Osborne would point out things new to me and a listening check with the record in question would usually prove him right. Although I didn't always agree with him, I could generally understand why he held the opinion he did. Only Osborne can give me an impression of what a voice that I have never heard sounds like. Osborne always analyzes, never pontificates. His judgments are buttressed by very broad knowledge, solidly illustrated examples, and apt comparisons. He never cuts a performer to pieces for the fun of the experience. When harsh conclusions are warranted, they are given—it always seems—with a little sadness.

Elaine Levi
Beverly Hills, Calif.

Beethoven Postscript

I want to call attention to the unfortunate omission of an entire paragraph from the survey of the *Appassionata* Sonata in my Beethoven piano music

Continued on page 9

When we make a $279 speaker system, we don't fool around.

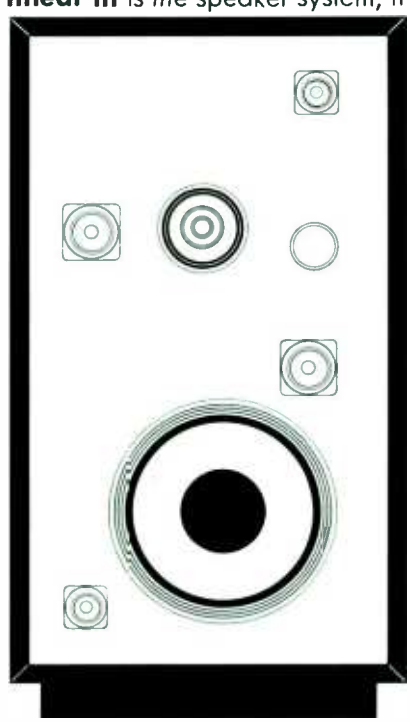
Nearly all of the higher-priced speakers on the market incorporate some kind of gimmick or technical razzle-dazzle.

It may be something as simple as an enclosure of unusual shape or a slightly offbeat tweeter, or it may be a whole new engineering concept destined to revolutionize the speaker industry. In the unbiased opinion of the manufacturer, that is.

The **Rectilinear III** is different. Because there's nothing especially different about it except its sound.

In a largeish box (35" by 18" by 12") are six superbly made but perfectly straightforward cone speakers. One massive 12" woofer, one 5" dual-cone midrange driver, two 2½" tweeters and two 2" tweeters. They are connected to a properly designed dividing network with carefully chosen crossover points, and the whole thing stands on the floor looking very simple, oiled-walnutty and unrevolutionary.

This lack of sensationalism, however, didn't deceive magazines like *Popular Science*, *Stereo Review*, *The American Record Guide* and *Buyer's Guide*. Their equipment reviewers brought out their heaviest superlatives to describe the sound of the **Rectilinear III.** Never before had a speaker won such universal acclaim from the toughest critics. Even today, after several years, it seems to be the consensus of the most expert ears that the **Rectilinear III** is *the* speaker system, if you have the space and the $279 for it.



Music lovers keep telling us that the **Rectilinear III** sounds exactly as it looks, inside and outside. Honest.

No hokey bass, no phony midrange presence, no souped-up treble. Just completely natural, open sound, at any volume level, in any size room. Almost as if the speaker had turned into an open window on the concert hall or recording studio.

Which, in our book, is what a high-fidelity speaker system is for. Playing music.

Not for playing games.

(For more information, including detailed literature, see your audio dealer or write to Rectilinear Research Corp., 107 Bruckner Blvd., Bronx, N.Y. 10454. Canada: H. Roy Gray Co. Ltd., Markham, Ont. Overseas: Royal Sound Co., 409 N. Main St., Freeport, N.Y. 11520.)

Rectilinear III

CIRCLE 53 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

And that's not an exaggeration.

The Citation Eleven preamplifier is the companion piece to the recently introduced Citation Twelve power amplifier. And like the Twelve, which was immediately hailed by High Fidelity magazine as, "a virtually distortionless device," the Citation Eleven extends performance to the limits of current technology.

In fact, the specifications of the Citation Eleven are unmatched by any preamplifier ever made.

But merely quoting a list of specifications, however fine, doesn't begin to convey the scope of this remarkable instrument.

For what really distinguishes the Citation Eleven from all the rest is its unrivalled flexibility. The key to this flexibility is the audio equalizer which allows you to alter the frequency response of your entire component system, so what you actually hear in your listening room is acoustically flat.

Instead of conventional tone controls, the Citation Eleven employs a series of precision filters that permit you to boost or attenuate the signal at five critical points within the audio spectrum.

By judicious use of these controls, you can correct deficiencies in program material, speakers and room acoustics and thus literally shape your system's frequency response.

Needless to say, the Citation Eleven also offers a full complement of the more familiar professional controls, arranged in logical groupings for ease of operation, as well as more than enough inputs and outputs to satisfy the most demanding requirements. For example: two tape monitor switches; front panel speaker selector switch for two sets of speakers; and a special defeat switch to remove the audio equalizer from the circuit for instant comparison of equalized and flat response.

See and hear the Citation Eleven at your Harman-Kardon dealer. And to fully appreciate its extraordinary performance, you should hear it in combination with the Citation Twelve. They could change your ideas about the shape of music.

For complete technical information, write to Harman-Kardon, Inc., 55 Ames Court, Plainview, N.Y. 11803.

Citation Eleven (wired) $295.00.

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A subsidiary of Jervis Corporation

The Citation Eleven can recreate the original shape of music.

CIRCLE 31 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

discography [October 1970]. Many readers, I am sure, reached one of two logical conclusions: the editions that were not discussed—at least ten—were of inferior quality and unworthy of consideration or I didn't bother to hear them all. I give my assurance that no cutting of corners was involved—though heaven knows, the task of listening to all those recordings could try anyone's patience! In fact, some of the excluded entries are distinguished ones. Herewith, for the record, is the ill-fated fragment.

Yves Nat (still listed as Haydn Society HS 9030 in the Schwann supplementary catalogue) and Kurt Appelbaum (Westminster XWN 18895, deleted) are at the opposite pole from Horowitz: both are a shade awkward and shaggy pianistically but triumph over their gaucheries through strong, individualistic perception and gruff, potent drama. Appelbaum had the more flattering sound. Klien's slightly more conventional (and technically smoother) treatment largely parallels the preceding pair's forthright muscularity. My original pressing of it was distorted and blasty, but a replacement copy proved vastly more agreeable to the ear. Reacquaintance has lowered my esteem for Brendel's tight-lipped, old-maidish readings. Lewenthal's 1953 mono version is spruce and traditional. He may not be the most subtle of players, but his work here has a healthy, freewheeling quality that I much prefer to either the Brendel or to Badura-Skoda's flaccid, silky, methodically even-tempered rendition. And though he is hardly a colorist (as I understand that term), Lewenthal seems like a veritable light show alongside Gorodnitzki's bleak, noncommittal efficiency. Goldsand's detailed phrasing makes some fascinating points but his obsession with minutiae causes his performances to become unsteady and lose cumulative impact. I was unable to rehear the Fidelman but remember it as another loose-limbed romantic reading without the redeeming interest and profile of the Goldsand. The Nádás, which I've never heard, was also not submitted for evaluation. I have the deepest regard for Harold Bauer, one of yesteryear's finest musicians. Unfortunately, his fast-paced, heroic, and altogether masterful *Appassionata* is mutilated on the Everest disc by a defective piano roll which limps rhythmically and even stops functioning in the left hand at one point in the first movement. Bauer made a legitimate (albeit ancient) recording of this work, and it would be a thoughtful gesture if RCA honored his memory by issuing it again (it was briefly available on the Camden label in the mid-1950s).

Harris Goldsmith
New York, N.Y.

That Which Is Crooked

Permit me to disagree with your comments about warped records ["Too Hot To Handle," September 1970]. Most records are warped before they are packed into the jackets—they come off the press that way. If the timing cycles of the press are not correct, one side of the stampers and disc will heat and cool at a different rate from the other side, and that will produce a warped or dished record. Attention to the product—which means good inspection—would avoid this problem. But most pressing plants are interested in volume production and do not care about quality.

I have never seen anyone succeed in flattening warped records. I don't think it is possible, due to the nature of the plastic used.

Improper storage can cause the record to warp, but in my experience the cause in the majority of cases is defective molding techniques.

Sometimes the record can be warped by improper heat-sealing of the container. Most records are packed in plastic wrapping; if the record stays in the heated area too long, the plastic will become too tight, thus warping the disc.

Sidney Feldman
Mastertone Recording Studios, Inc.
New York, N.Y.

Jascha Horenstein

Robert C. Marsh's tribute to Jascha Horenstein in the September issue is entirely correct. Horenstein is disgracefully underrepresented on current LPs as are Rosbaud and De Sabata. I might add to Marsh's list such ignored conductors as Fritz Busch and Erich Kleiber (not to mention Felix Weingartner, most of whose recordings did reach LP but are now deleted). Busch did one of the greatest *Eroicas* ever recorded for Remington, and I've heard some unreleased broadcast tapes which are greater still.

Meanwhile, Horenstein collectors may not know that he has made several recordings for the Reader's Digest. One of these is a set, with Earl Wild at the piano, of Rachmaninoff's works for piano and orchestra plus *The Isle of the Dead*. This set of four records (RDA 29) is available in stereo by mail order only. There is one Wagner recording by Horenstein included in a twelve-disc set, "Treasury of Great Music" (RDI 5-K), which also features Wild and such conductors as Munch, Reiner, Krips, Dorati, and Barbirolli. Horenstein appears in a Reader's Digest album called "Scheherazade," and a two-record set of music by Johann Strauss, Jr. issued by the RCA Record Club ("Everybody's Strauss," CSC 602) and available only from them. These are all superbly recorded and the performances are prime samples of Horenstein's genius; I wish there were some way to make them available to the general record-buying public.

Leslie Gerber
Great Barrington, Mass.

Continued on page 12

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CIRCLE 56 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

LETTERS

Continued from page 9

Pen Pal Wanted

Would any of your readers interested in Greek music or records care to exchange correspondence and recordings with me? I am twenty-six, a civil engineer, and appreciate American music and records, most of which are not available here. My tastes are broad—classical, jazz, popular, folk music from all countries.

Paul Spanakis
Averoff 61
Koridallos-Piraeus
Greece

Pictures on Discs

It is always most unfortunate when casual telephone conversations result in printed articles containing a number of misunderstandings, misinterpretations, and even conclusions which turn out to be completely untrue. Just such is the case with your "Pictures on Discs" story in the November issue. All of the factual material was indeed translated by me from the previously published press information released by Teldec in Germany at the time of the world premiere in West Berlin, and given to my friend of many years' standing, now your associate audio-video editor, Robert Long, in a phone conversation. I did not supply either the photographs or their captions, but these were readily available from any number of newspapers which had published them previously.

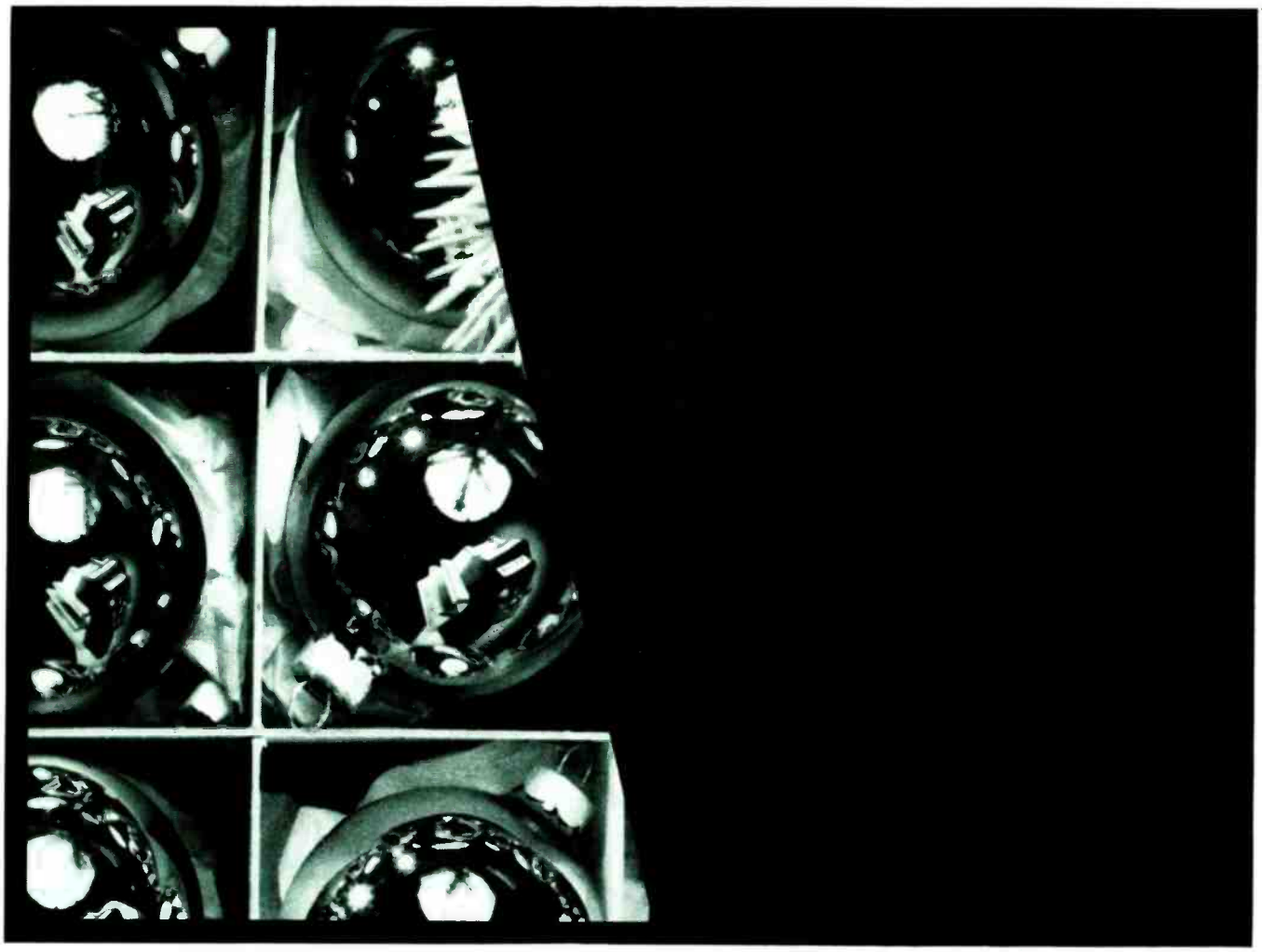
What I must take strong exception to is the inference that Gotham Audio Corporation is in any way whatsoever connected with the Videodisk process, much less is its "functional U.S. representative." While it is altogether understandable that you linked Gotham with this Teldec development—we have for many years imported the Teldec-developed and Neumann-built stereo disk cutting head—it was entirely your own conclusion and should be corrected.

There is also an obvious misprint in which I allegedly suggested a record player sales price of $325. The actual figure is $125 and I have no reason to suggest any other. That also was a direct translation from the press report which indicated 500 German marks.

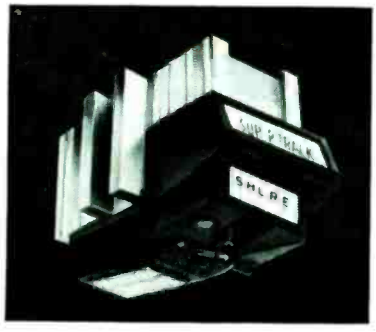
Stephen F. Temmer
President
Gotham Audio Corporation
New York, N.Y.

We sincerely regret the errors contained in our report—particularly since Mr. Temmer was kind enough to give us the benefit of his translations of the Teldec material. Careful readers may have noted that the record player price as printed did not logically jibe with the others quoted. They will also have noted a discrepancy in our caption for the photomicrographs comparing LP grooves with those of the Teldec disc. Our printer

Continued on page 14



A cartridge in a pear tree.



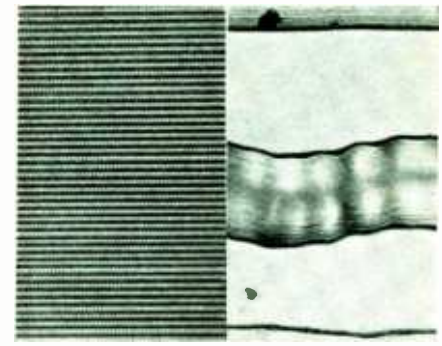
A gift of the *Shure V-15 Type II* Improved stereo phono cartridge will earn you the eternal endearment of the discriminating audiophile who receives it. What makes the V-15 such a predictable Yuletime success, of course, is its ability to extract the real sound of pipers piping, drummers drumming, rings ringing, et cetera, et cetera. Stereo Review, in a test report that expressed more superlatives than a Christmas dinner, described the performance of the V-15 Type II Improved as ". . . . Unstrained, effortless, and a delight to listen to." All of which means that if you're the giver, you can make a hi-fi enthusiast deliriously happy. (If you'd like to receive it yourself, keep your fingers crossed!) Shure Brothers Inc., 222 Hartrey Avenue, Evanston, Illinois 60204.

SHURE

CIRCLE 58 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Continued from page 12

trimmed the picture to fit the page makeup, and in so doing not only inverted it (putting the Teldec sample on the right, rather than the left as specified in the caption) but omitted the neighboring grooves from the LP section, making it impossible for the reader to see just how much space is unused with standard groove modulation techniques. The photomicrograph is shown correctly below. Since our report was prepared, incidentally, Teldec has shown a record player model more advanced than the laboratory prototype we reproduced.



Will the Real Amneris Please Stand Up?

David Hamilton's glowing tribute to a great soprano ["The Ponselle Miracle," September 1970] is indeed gratifying. However, I must quarrel with his statement that Ponselle did not have soft floating high notes. Ponselle's pianissimo high notes were one of her most treasurable attributes. Read Ida Cook's comment in *We Followed Our Stars* of how this particular ability aroused the audience's enthusiasm at her Italian debut in Florence.

A. R. Blacksmith
San Diego, Calif.

Mr. Hamilton has made a few minor errors. The "*Suicidio!*" from *La Gioconda* does not demonstrate the Ponselle voice in a range "well below middle C," as the aria's lowest pitch is a C sharp. The only Ponselle waxing of a note below middle C (prior to her LP recordings of the 1950s) is found in an early Columbia recording of Victor Herbert's *Kiss Me Again*. The resonance of her low voice on that disc must have been the envy of many contraltos. As for Ponselle's lack of "floated high notes," only check her 1919 recording of "*D'Amor sull'ali rosee*" from *Il Trovatore*.

Mr. Hamilton states that "somebody forgot to include the name of Grace Anthony, who sings Amneris in the Tomb Scene from *Aida*." The actual Amneris of the recording is Elsie Baker. Miss Anthony was a soprano with the Metropolitan Opera in the 1920s and can be heard as the Priestess in the Martinelli/Pinza version of the *Aida* Temple Scene.

Continued on page 18

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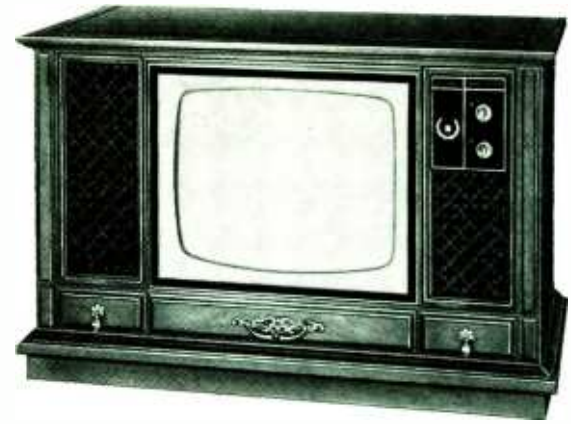

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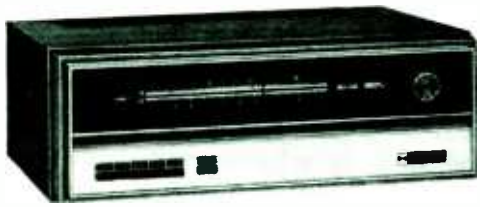

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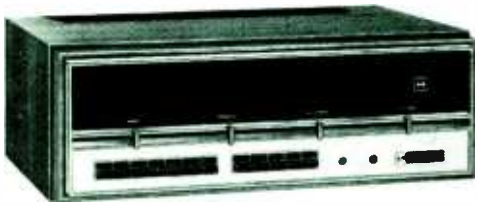

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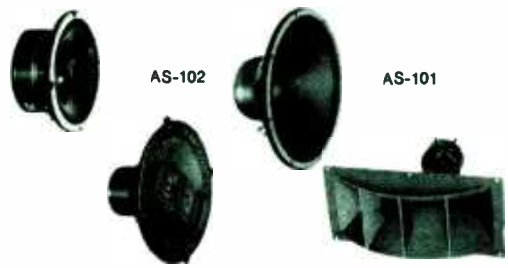

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CIRCLE 33 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

LETTERS

Continued from page 14

Miss Baker was a noted concert contralto and a staff artist with the Victor Company for many years.

Lawrence F. Holdridge
New York, N.Y.

Somewhere I picked up the information that the anonymous contralto who sang Amneris' lines was named Gladys Rice.

Richard A. Suter
Parkersburg, W. Va.

Mr. Hamilton replies: Since I was not privileged to hear Ponselle in person, my observations about her attainments are necessarily limited to what can be heard on records; even in the 1919 Trovatore aria (reissued on Scala 803) I do not hear precisely the quality to which I referred (somewhat imprecisely, I fear) in Milanov's best singing. Mr. Holdridge has fairly and squarely caught me relying on my memory about the 'Suicidio!" recording and about the Amneris —of course Grace Anthony sang in the Temple Scene, not the Tomb Scene. The Amneris is not identified in any source that I can trace, but the name of Elsie Baker is a familiar one, while Gladys Rice is a new candidate to my ears. The matter is not of earth-shaking importance, but perhaps someone with access to the Victor files could clear it up once and for all.

CORRECTION

Superex's Model SW-2 Swinger headset was inaccurately priced in "A Bumper Crop of New Products" (October 1970). The correct price is $24.95.

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too hot to handle

After years of owning a manual turntable, I bought a PE for the convenience of the automatic shutoff. I'm tempted also to play records by the stack, for the changer seems gentle enough, but I'm not sure. Do you think it is harmful to the records to play them on an automatic turntable?—Joel Garfield, Sherman Oaks, Calif.

In our experience the PE turntables are among the gentlest in handling records automatically. And this class of equipment has virtually abolished the threat to the records now that LPs are contoured so that only the label area and outer "bead" of adjacent records in the stack will touch. Frequent automatic play does, however, make it somewhat harder to keep records absolutely clean, and dirt—particularly gritty dirt—will degrade the sound in your records' grooves.

I have two AR-4x speakers wall-mounted in my living room. As the room is rather spacious I have been considering moving up to some AR-3a's. A friend told me that I would do better to simply purchase another pair of AR-4x's and wire them in parallel with my existing pair. If they're placed next to the existing pair, he says the sound should closely approximate that of a pair of AR-3a's. Do you agree?—J. M. Johnston, Silver Spring, Md.

No. This is a common fallacy that has been disavowed by AR itself. The only thing that multiple identical speakers in parallel on the same channels can do is spread out the sound to fill the room and solve problems of stereo perspective. But since your friend is talking of placing the coupled speakers together, this use evidently is not what he has in mind; and in any case it would not make four AR-4x's sound like two AR-3a's.

I use the Watts Parastat on all my records. The antistatic fluid doesn't last long and costs $2.00 for a 2-ounce bottle. Several people have suggested I make my own antistatic fluid from 50% isopropyl alcohol and 50% distilled water. Others have recommended 50% Williams Lectric Shave instead of the isopropyl alcohol. Can you give me an effective formula?—Martin J. Ploy, Jr., Ventura, Calif.

Would you believe 100% distilled water? It will clean all but stubborn contaminants (the alcohol would help with those) from the record and tends to dissipate any static charge—though it won't prevent a new static charge from forming when you play the record. Presumably the Watts formula has some ingredient for the latter purpose. But for pity's sake, don't use a commercial preparation of unknown ingredients that is designed for some other use: it may contain nothing deleterious today, but tomorrow's "new improved" formula could be death to records—whatever it will do to beards.

Is there any stereo cassette recorder player available that has all of the following characteristics: Dolby circuitry; can play more than one cassette; can automatically reverse the cassette?—S. K. Rangnekar, Minneapolis, Minn.

Not yet. If by "play more than one cassette" you mean to specify a unit that will change cassettes automatically, then no two of your criteria are satisfied by any unit on the market as of this writing. Lenco-made devices that will both reverse the cassette and change cassettes automatically have been shown by Benjamin Electronics; but they are basic mechanisms only, rather than complete units. And while other companies (including Roberts and Panasonic) have demonstrated prototypes of recorders incorporating similar devices, they are not yet available for purchase. When they are, you could add the Advocate 101 noise suppression unit (made by Advent under license from Dolby) to such a machine to achieve all the characteristics you mention. But as far as we know no company is presently preparing a single unit that would cover all three.

Which is the better changer, the new Lesa PRF-6 or the Dual 1219?—W. B. Brigham, Rochester, N. Y.

Maybe you can tell us. The differences in measured performance characteristics between the two models are of no real significance. As for features, the Dual 1219 has adjustable stylus overhang and adjustable vertical angle; in the Lesa PRF-6 these settings are not adjustable. However, the difference here is, again, of no discernible or audible importance. In short, both models are excellent—pick the one whose "personality" appeals to you more.

Has Rek-O-Kut (turntables) gone out of business?—C. M. Delaney, Aurora, N.Y.

No. About a year ago Koss Electronics, Inc. sold its Rek-O-Kut division to CCA Electronics, 716 Jersey Ave., Gloucester City, N.J. 08030. CCA has been advertising Rek-O-Kut turntables to the professional market and selling them through selected dealers serving that market. If you want to buy one and can't find a dealer locally, you can write directly to CCA.

I am planning to purchase a pair of moderate-efficiency speakers, hoping to trade them in on a pair of Bose 901s in the future. If I get a 60-watt-per-channel power amplifier kit like the Harman-Kardon Citation XII or Dynaco's Stereo 120 for the present, could I expand to 120 watts per channel by merely buying a second identical stereo power amp and using both channels of one amp, in parallel, for each speaker when I purchase the Bose?—Timothy R. Waltenbaugh, Canton, Ohio.

Manufacturers of solid-state amplifiers generally warn against the sort of hookup you're talking about. The manufacturers of both models you mention do so specifically for those models, in fact. Unless the inputs to the two channels are precisely matched and the gain identical in both channels (something that may not be true, particularly if there is a malfunction in one channel) the results can be disastrous. In normal rooms, however, sixty watts of good, clean, conservatively rated power should be adequate for the 901s, even if they are driven to fairly high levels. If you live in a barn or like ear-shattering sound, of course, you should think in terms of installing a more powerful stereo amplifier right off the bat.

I plan to replace the original magnetic cartridge supplied with my Pioneer PL-41 turntable with the new Shure V-15 Type II Improved, with an elliptical stylus. But the recommended tracking force is 0.75 to 1.5 grams with that cartridge, and I currently must use between 1.5 and 2.0 grams to track warped records, of which there seem to be more and more coming out. Is there any elliptical-stylus cartridge that will operate well sonically at over 1.5 grams with no increase in record damage?—William R. Gowen, Great Lakes, Ill.

The ellipticals made in the range of 1.5 or more grams generally are intended to match the requirements of the arms in less expensive record changers, where mechanical tolerances are simply not fine enough to accommodate the best cartridges. We'd suggest you go ahead with the Shure project and use it at the recommended tracking force for your unwarped records. As long as you don't have to raise it beyond 2 grams for the warped ones, you should suffer no appreciable loss in sonic quality. And remember that wear characteristics increase relatively slowly as you increase tracking force; a gram too much generally is far less damaging than a half a gram too little.

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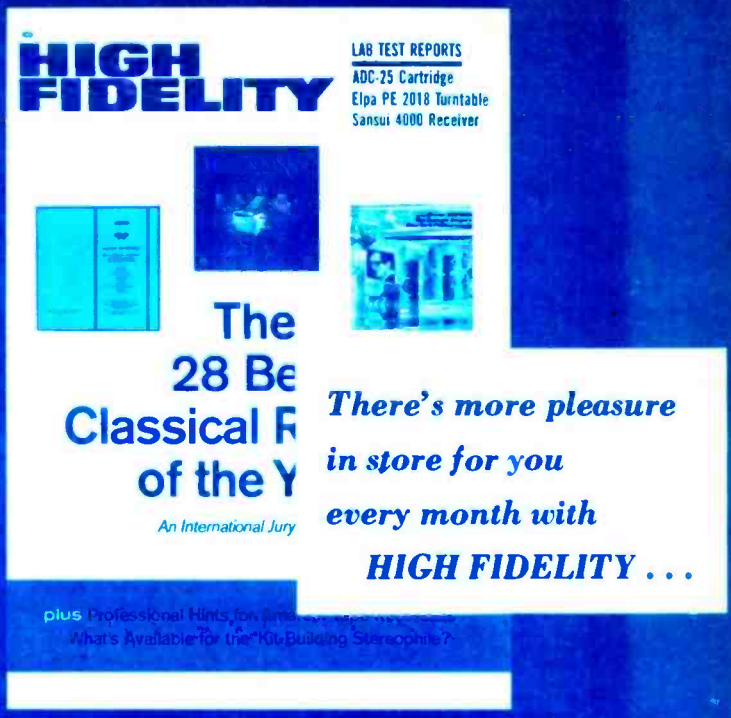

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1-ADC 230xe elliptical diamond cartridge-low tracking, high output.

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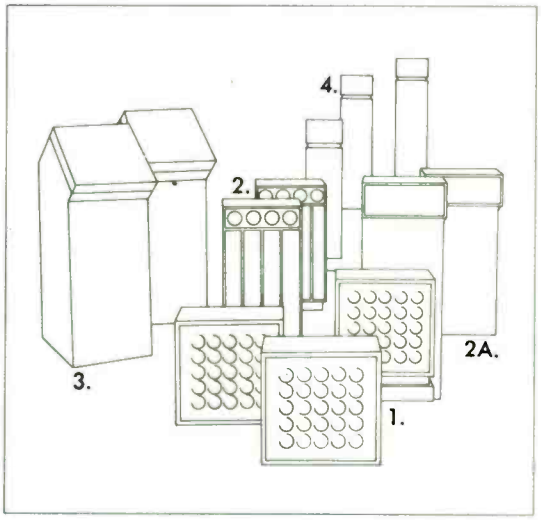
CIRCLE 13 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Listen.
It's a whole new world.

Sound has broken free.
It can start anywhere, end anywhere.

There are five new JBL Aquarius speakers. They range from a very modest cost to very expensive.

They're a new sound. Environmental sound. (Close your eyes and those beautiful new speakers go away.)



Aquarius 1 is for bookshelf or floor. Aquarius 2 is the sound of contemporary design. Aquarius 2A is angles and curves and color. Aquarius 3 puts it all together in 50"x18"x20". Aquarius 4, if you don't want to give up anything, including space.

Aquarius 2 is only available in oiled walnut. Aquarius 2A comes in wild red or satin white. All the rest are available in satin white or oiled walnut.

Is the sound of Aquarius better than directional sound? No. It's different.

Put Aquarius where it pleases the eye. Anywhere. Like a print or a vase or a painting. (Forget about acoustics, the engineering is inside.) Play it softly; the smallest sound will find you. Now, play it full. Everything you hear is true.

Look for your high fidelity specialist. Then listen to Aquarius. It's a whole new world.

Aquarius® by JBL. The next generation.

James B. Lansing Sound, Inc., 3249 Casitas Avenue, Los Angeles 90039. A division of Jervis Corporation.

CIRCLE 45 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

video topics

AMPEX SHOWS LOW-COST VIDEO TAPE CARTRIDGE

Instavision system (upper right) includes camera, deck, and tape. Monitor is optional since regular TV receiver can be used (at left). Battery pack allows recording in the field (below).

Ampex, the company that launched video tape back in th 1950s as a professional tool costing upwards of $30,000 for a monochrome unit and later introduced color VTRs at $50,000, has announced a consumer-oriented video tape cartridge system called Instavision which, in color version, will cost as little as $900. These prices, by the way, do not include color cameras which were and still are expensive. In fact there is no color camera yet for the new Instavision system although you can get color pictures on tape from your color TV set with the Ampex deck plugged into it.

A monochrome Instavision player will cost $800; a monochrome recorder/player, $900; a color player, $900; a color recorder/player, $1,000. The first three units can be adapted after purchase for the additional functions by insertion of circuit boards. All units can record from and play through standard television sets. The ½-inch tape can accommodate the video plus two audio channels, the latter being very usable for stereophonic sound. A blank tape cartridge, for up to 30 minutes of running time, will cost $13.

The tape cartridge itself is a small round packet, 4.6 inches in diameter and 0.7 inches thick. It fits into place on the new deck and automatically threads onto a hidden take-up reel when you press the start button. The deck runs on flashlight batteries, or power-pack accessory, or automobile electrical systems, or regular household AC. It can provide slow motion and stop action. The optional $400 camera for live monochrome work includes a built-in electronic viewer, zoom lens, and remote start/stop for the recorder.

According to Ampex spokesmen, Instavision conforms to the International Standard Type I format for video tape, which means it should be compatible with existing ½-inch VTR equipment, including open-reel models. Instavision, which we saw and heard demonstrated at a press showing, appears to work most satisfactorily; Ampex plans to market it by midyear.

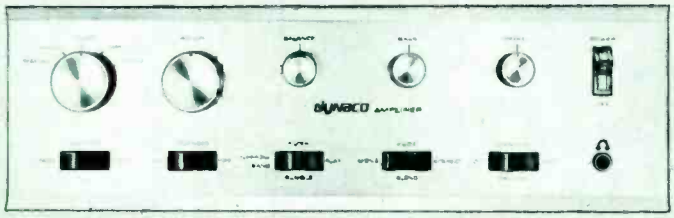
CIRCLE 147 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

4-Dimensional Stereo

FRONT

with the Dynaco SCA-80.

LEFT



SCA-80 ($169.95 kit, $249.95 assembled)

RIGHT

The Dynaco SCA-80 is a high quality two-channel stereo control amplifier incorporating patented circuitry* so you can enjoy the Dynaco system of four dimensional stereo (front and back as well as the usual left and right) by adding just two more loudspeakers . . . just two more speakers.

In addition to recordings made specifically for the Dynaco system, many of your **existing** stereo recordings (disc and tape) already include the phase relationships required for four dimensional playback. You can use **present** stereo phonograph cartridges or tape recorders without any modifications. Four dimensional programs are **now** being received by **existing** FM stereo tuners.

*U. S. patent #3,417,203

BACK

The Dynaco four-dimensional system fully utilizes material **already** on stereo recordings. It faithfully reproduces in your own listening room the acoustical environment in which the recording was made.

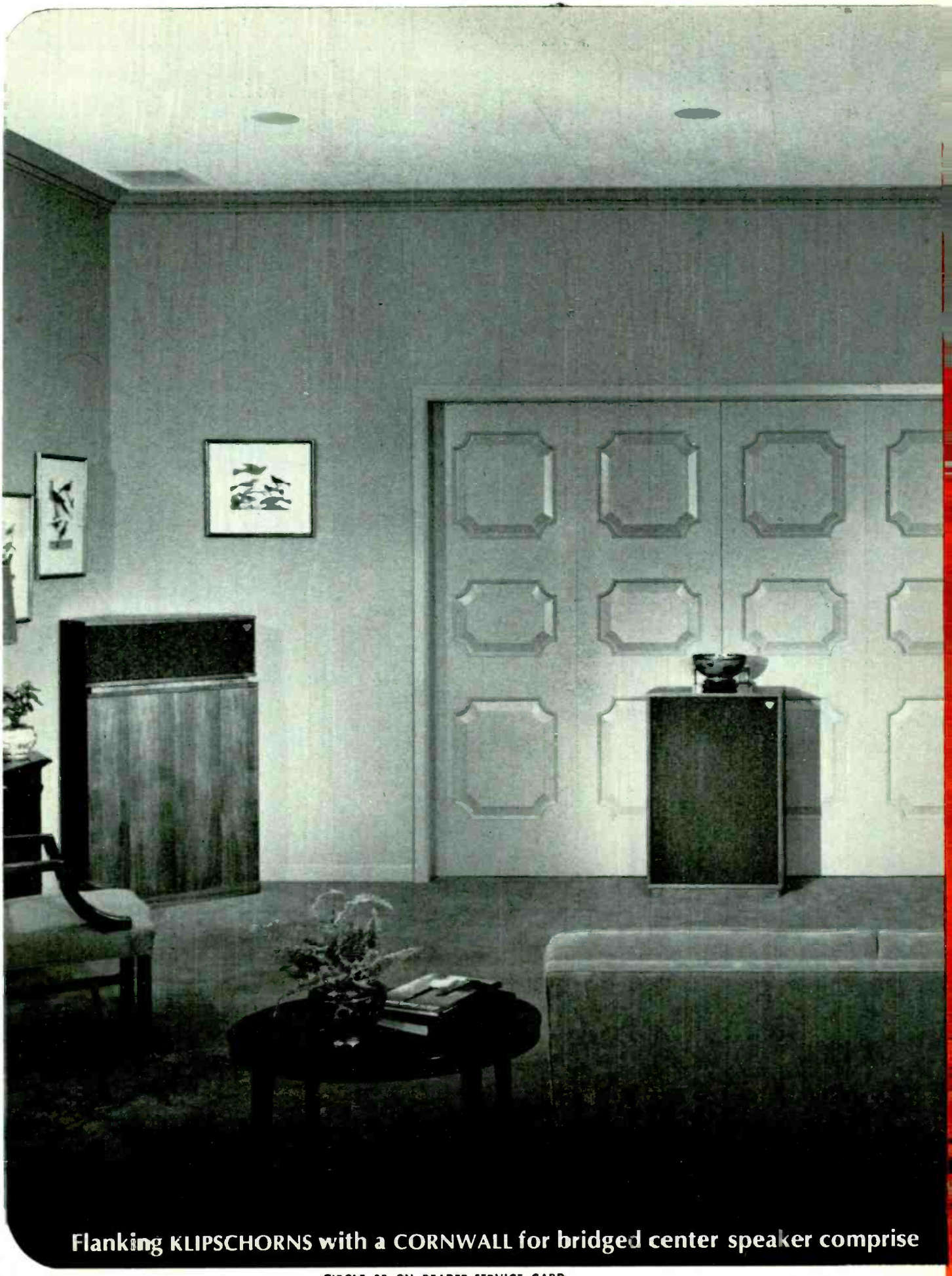
Dynaco four-dimensional sound can be played back through the SCA-80 (or the PAT-4 or PAS-3x preamplifier and any stereo power amplifier) with a total of four loudspeakers, connected as Dynaco specifies. This configuration is completely compatible with playback of all stereophonic and monophonic recordings, and enhances virtually all stereophonic material.

Write for full details on how you can connect four speakers to enjoy Dynaco four-dimensional stereo.

Dynaco A-25 speakers ($79.95 each—assembled only)

dynaco INC. **3060 JEFFERSON ST., PHILA., PA. 19121**

IN EUROPE WRITE: DYNACO A/S, HUMLUM, STRUER, DENMARK



Flanking KLIPSCHORNS with a CORNWALL for bridged center speaker comprise

CIRCLE 38 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

the Klipsch Wide Stage Stereo Array.

STEREO FOR BEGINNERS

You'll end up wanting Klipsch stereo speakers. Why not start with them? Think of all the expensive trades you'll avoid. And you'll be hearing original sound from the beginning.

Like the people who started with KLIPSCHORNS in 1951. They can even bring their speakers up to 1971 performance with a few inexpensive modifications. That's because Klipsch exponential horn design is fundamental. No need to change it.

So begin with the best. You'll still have the best in 2001.

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Please send me complete information on Klipsch speakers and Klipsch Wide Stage Stereo. Also include the name of my nearest Klipsch Authorized Audio Expert.

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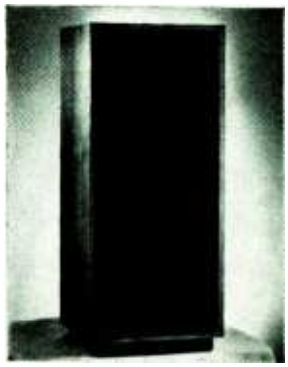
CIRCLE 38 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

equipment in the news

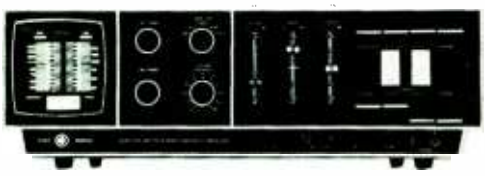
"Transmission Line" speaker at lower cost



By "Transmission Line" speakers, a term used in announcing the Monitor loudspeaker systems, IMF Products means both the uncolored, direct-from-the-source impression that the sound is intended to create and the unusual enclosure design used to achieve that impression. New to the TLS line is the Studio, a system using the same midrange and high-frequency drivers as the Monitor Mk II (See HF test report, June 1970) but with the price reduced to $300 through the elimination of the hand-applied surfacing used on the Monitor enclosures. The TLS Studio measures 36 by 16 in. and is 14 in. deep.

CIRCLE 148 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Striking styling, features in Nikko receiver



The Nikko 1101 stereo FM/AM receiver looks unusual largely because of the dual VU meters on the front panel and the vertical tuning dials for AM and FM reception. In normal use these dials light only when the selector switch is turned to the appropriate function, so that AM and FM scales—which tune independently of each other—do not light simultaneously. A sliding panel covers the meter calibration controls, headphone volume control, and jacks for microphones, external tape recorder, and headphones (shown here on the bottom panel) when they are not in use. A back-panel switch compensates for bass-shy budget speakers. But perhaps the most unusual feature—and one claimed to be unique by Nikko—is the separate volume control governing the level of the second pair of speakers. The 1101 sells for $399.95; an optional walnut case is $20.

CIRCLE 151 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Enlarging cassette sound

Bell & Howell has found a novel solution to the sonic problem posed by the tiny speakers that for want of space must be used in portable cassette recorders. Its Bass Boom Box package includes a Model 294 portable recorder (mono), microphone, earphones, and the box itself—an enclosure for a 5-inch air-suspension speaker system plus the recorder. A special interconnect cord allows the 294's speaker to continue playing while the accessory speaker is in use, the latter reinforcing response below about 1 kHz. Both the 294 and the bass amplifier within the Boom Box are battery powered but may be driven from line current with an accessory adapter. The basic package costs $79.95 and is available in three styles: ebony, mod, and walnut.

CIRCLE 150 ON READER-SERVCE CARD

Sonic Research equalizer claims unusual versatility

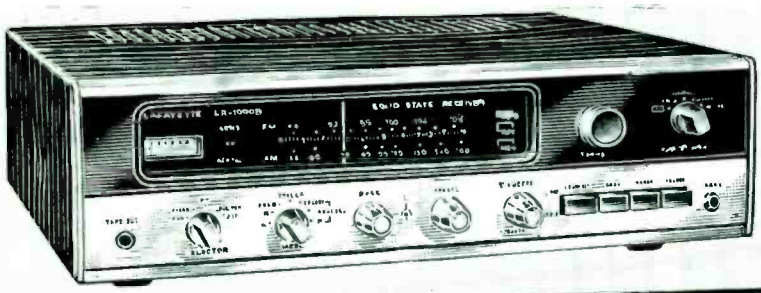
The Sonex (for Sonic Expander) Compensator, made by Sonic Research Co., Inc. of Pasadena, Texas is a recent addition to the growing list of special controls designed to be used between preamp and power amp or to be plugged into the tape-monitor connections of integrated units such as stereo receivers. It can be used to compensate for subjective loudness effects, for common speaker deficiencies, or for "problem" program material by combining the functions of its four controls with those on existing systems, according to the company. The "lo-bass" control introduces a narrow-band peak of up to 13 dB at 40 Hz; the "hi-treble" a similar peak at 20 kHz. Bass and treble controls act similarly to those included in regular equipment, but leave the midrange virtually unaffected from about 500 Hz to above 1 kHz. The Compensator costs $239.

CIRCLE 149 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

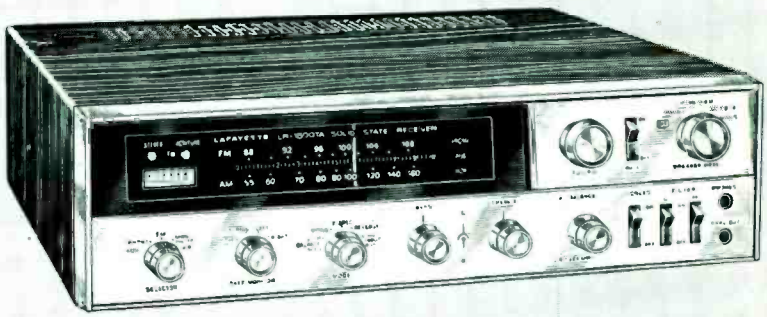
Put some sound in silent night.

All is calm, all is bright. It's a time of joy, a time of peace, a time to share with family and friends. Enhance these beautiful moments with beautiful sound from Lafayette. Each of our receivers is built to the same standards of high performance and reliability and incorporate advanced FET and IC IF solid-state circuitry at prices that even Old Scrooge couldn't sneer at.

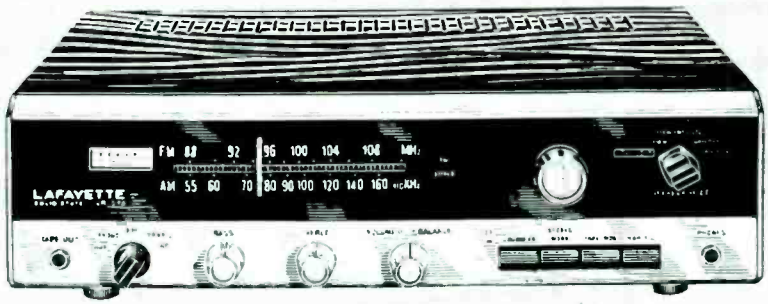
P.S.—We also have complimentary speaker systems at low prices! Hear them and get full details at your nearest Lafayette dealer or write . . .



NEW LR-1000B 150-WATT AM/FM STEREO RECEIVER
Features: "Acritune" for visual pinpoint tuning accuracy; Output Power: 150 watts ± 1 db; FM Sensitivity: 1.65 μV; Frequency Response: 22-20,000 Hz ± 1 db; $239.95. 99-01984WX*



LR-15000TA 240-WATT AM/FM STEREO RECEIVER
Features: "Acritune" for visual pinpoint tuning accuracy; Output Power: 240 watts ± 1 db; FM Sensitivity: 1.5 μV; Frequency Response: 20-20,000 Hz ± .75 db; $299.95. 99-01950WX*



LR-775 100-WATT AM/FM STEREO RECEIVER
Output Power: 100 watts ± 1 db; FM Sensitivity: 1.7 μV; Frequency Response: 20-20,000 Hz ± 1 db; Capture Ratio: 1.5 db; Automatic FM Stereo switching; $199.95. 99-02156WX*

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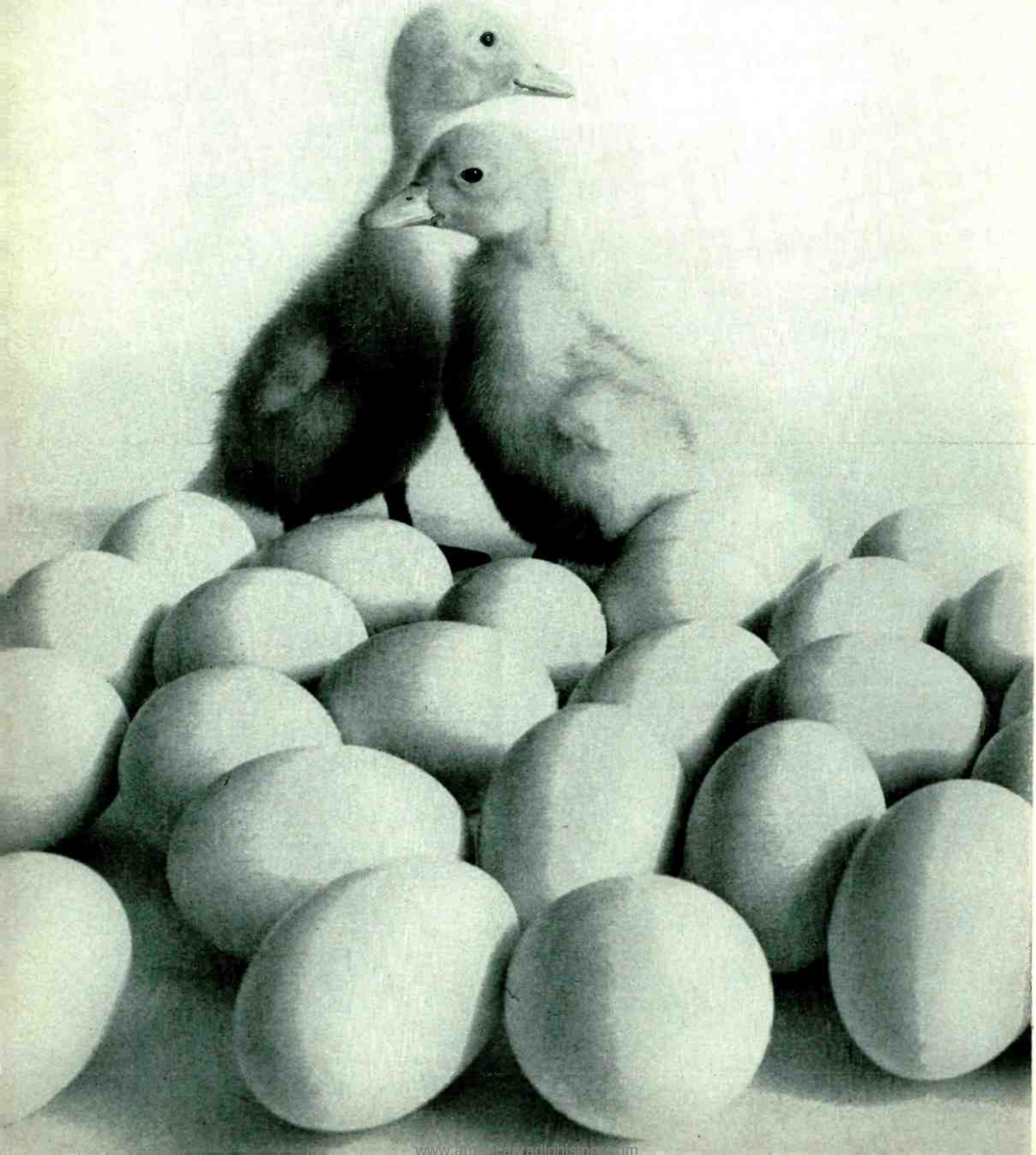
CIRCLE 40 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

The two that couldn't wait.



Every so often, an idea just won't wait until its time has come. So it arrives ahead of schedule. And begins a trend.

Take the new Sony 6065 receiver, for instance. It takes direct-coupled circuitry into a new dimension. Which means there is nothing to come between you and the sound — no coupling capacitors, no interstage transformers.

Those capacitors and transformers could cause phase shift or low-end roll-off, or diminish the damping factor at the low frequencies where you need it most.

So, instead we use Darlington-type coupling, a complimentary-symmetry driver stage, and an output stage that needs no coupling capacitor between itself and the speaker because it's supplied with both positive *and* negative voltages (not just positive and ground).

The results speak for themselves. The amplifier section puts out 255 watts* with less than 0.2% distortion, and a cleaner, purer sound than you've heard before in the 6065's price range (or, quite probably, above it).

And the FM section has not only high sensitivity and selectivity (2.2 uV IHF and 80dB respectively) but lower noise and better interference rejection, to help you discover stations that you've never heard before — re-discover stations that were barely listenable before.

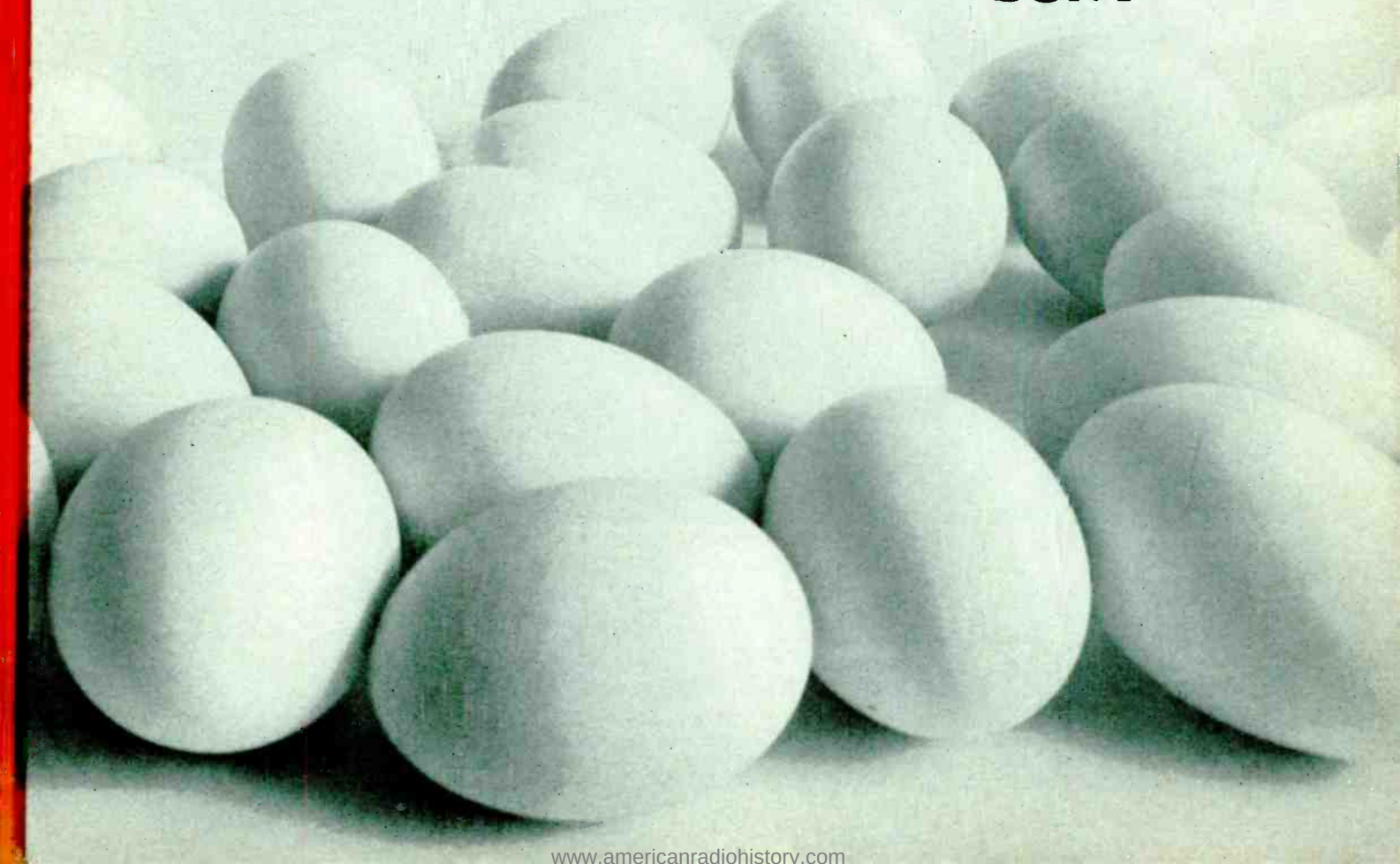
You'll discover new flexibility, too, in the control functions. Sony's famous two-way function selector lets you switch quickly to the most used sources — or dial conventionally to such extras as a front-panel AUX input jack, or a second phono input. There's a center channel output, too, to fill the hole-in-the-middle in large rooms, or feed mono signals to tape recorders or a remote sound system. The Sony 6065. $399.50**

Another "impatient" receiver also featuring the new Sony approach to direct coupling, the 6055 delivers 145 watts* Moderately priced, this receiver is a remarkable value at $299.50**

So, there they are, months ahead of schedule and way ahead of their time. Don't wait to enjoy them at your dealer. Sony Corporation of America, 47-47 Van Dam Street, Long Island City, N.Y. 11101.

*IHF Constant power supply method at 4 ohms. **Suggested list.

TWO NEW RECEIVERS FROM SONY.



Seiji Ozawa and other celebrated conductors* have chosen AR-3a systems for home use.

AR
Acoustic Research

Their familiarity with the actual sound of orchestral music makes conductors especially sensitive to aberrations in recording or reproduction which distort tonality or balance. The AR-3a is designed to reproduce the recorded or broadcast signal as accurately as is possible with present technology. Complete measured performance data for all AR speaker systems is available free of charge from Acoustic Research, 24 Thorndike Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02141.

**Some of the others: Erich Leinsdorf, Herbert von Karajan, Karl Böhm, Claudio Abbado.*

CIRCLE 1 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

new equipment reports THE CONSUMER'S GUIDE TO HIGH FIDELITY EQUIPMENT

TANDBERGS, PLAIN AND FANCY

THE EQUIPMENT: Tandberg 6000X, a stereo tape deck (transport plus record/playback preamps) available in two versions: quarter-track as Model 6041X; half-track as Model 6021X. Dimensions in walnut case supplied: 15½ by 6½ by 12⅜ inches. Price: $499. Tandberg 3000X, similar deck with fewer features available in two versions: quarter-track as Model 3041X; half-track as Model 3021X. Dimensions: same as 6000X series. Price: $299. Manufactured by Tandberg of Norway; U.S. branch, Tandberg of America, Inc., P.O. Box 171, 8 Third Ave., Pelham, N.Y. 10803.

COMMENT: The design problems posed by a high-quality tape deck for home use are exceedingly complex. Convenience, performance, cost, versatility, durability, and appearance all make stringent, and often mutually exclusive, demands. Want of careful planning on the part of the designer can result in a machine that functions admirably in some respects but lacks the concomitant features necessary for performance at a consistent level in related functions. At the other extreme are the relatively few machines that seem to be designed to a carefully thought-out chain of functional priorities, all geared to a certain spectrum of potential users.

The Tandberg 6000X is an example of the latter. Its priorities seem to have been thought out with unusual insight into the needs of home users who value versatility and sound quality above extreme convenience. Moreover it is a design one can grow into. While only the most casual of users should have any difficulty coping with its intricacies (and it contains some features that should be especially advantageous to those who are relatively inexperienced), it should also satisfy all but the audio perfectionist and the most special-interest oriented of advanced recordists.

A user who contemplates a great deal of tape editing, for example, might prefer a simpler head-cover design to facilitate marking the tape, though since tapes can be cued up easily on the 6000X it is more efficient for editing than most machines available to the consumer, including some models with features that purport to simplify tape editing. Likewise, the interconnections necessary for tape-echo effects take a little thought on the 6000X, though its system is basically simpler and more foolproof than the echo switching found on many home units, and it will produce the effect in stereo as well as mono recording, which many recorders with purely front-panel echo controls cannot. These (particularly the tape echo) are features that most users need only occasionally; quite properly they are subordinated to the unit's main business: basic recording and playback.

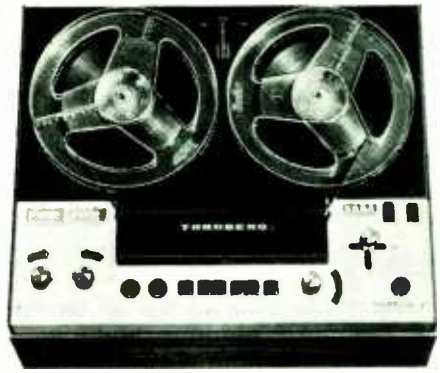
Tandberg uses a hysteresis motor drive and four heads: erase, record bias ("crossfield"), record, and playback. The unit meets within normal tolerances, or, in some instances, exceeds by a considerable margin the specifications published for it. The lab data shown here must be approached with care in making comparisons to competitive equipment, however, because of Tandberg's special meter circuitry—actually one of the 6000X's most desirable features for the amateur user.

A true VU meter must conform to a carefully circumscribed set of mechanical and electrical parameters—which most meters on home recorders do not. In professional work the engineer must be able to "read" the meters in the same way no matter what equipment he is working with. Since pointer action that follows precise instantaneous signal levels would move too fast for visible evaluation, some compromise is necessary; and that compromise must be identical from one meter to another if the engineer is to evaluate the signal. But such standard VU meters require considerable experience for accurate signal evaluation, and they are not cheap. For home use a meter of less desirable characteristics but much lower cost has become the common norm.

These so-*called* VU meters, however, are even more difficult to read accurately because of their uncertain ballistic characteristics. Moreover, there is no standardization among different models. The actual overload point (representing 3% harmonic distortion) can be anywhere from 3 to 15 dB above the 0-VU indication, and pointer response may either overshoot or fall short of actual values in response to sharp transients. Tandberg's solution to these problems is to build a meter that will respond to actual peak values within 50 milliseconds (gross distortion for shorter intervals generally is psychoacoustically imperceptible, according to Tandberg) and then linger at the peak

value long enough for the eye to read it. The object is to do away with the protective "headroom" and the attendant guesswork built into conventional metering systems. At the same time, the meter is connected into the circuit after the signal is equalized (that is, after it has received the treble pre-emphasis that tends to make high-frequency peaks overload more than low-frequency peaks of equal intensity), and its calibration is set so that the 0-VU point represents actual overload: approximately 3% harmonic distortion at any frequency.

The result is a metering system that, in our opinion, is unsurpassed in consumer tape equipment for simplicity and efficiency. If the user takes any care at all in the way he records his tapes, the metering should result in measurably, if not audibly, improved home-recorded tapes. Since a true standard 0-VU level reads −7 on the Tandberg meters, however, the process of measuring performance parameters in the 6000X is somewhat more complex than that for more conventional equipment. For this reason the resulting data are not strictly comparable in some respects. By way of generalized comparisons we would say that figures



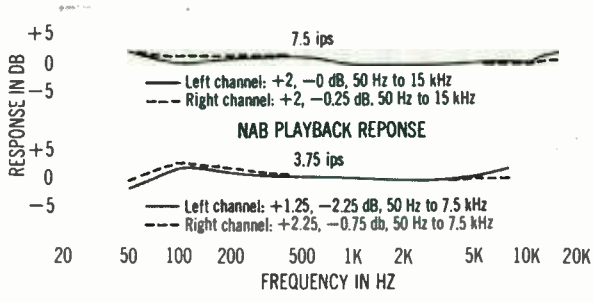
representing speed accuracy all are well within the pale for top-quality consumer equipment. While some imbalance between channels in the high-frequency end showed up during testing, it was not serious, and frequency response may be characterized as average to excellent. It is particularly good at the slower speeds, thanks presumably to the crossfield head. Noise and distortion are adequately low.

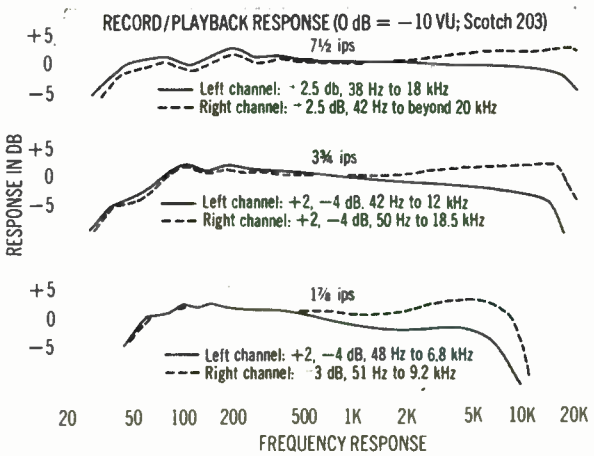
In addition to its metering system, the 6000X has a number of other unusual features: preamplified, equalized inputs for magnetic phono cartridges; inputs for ceramic cartridges; center-channel output; a really efficient "search" system; and a built-in limiter. The

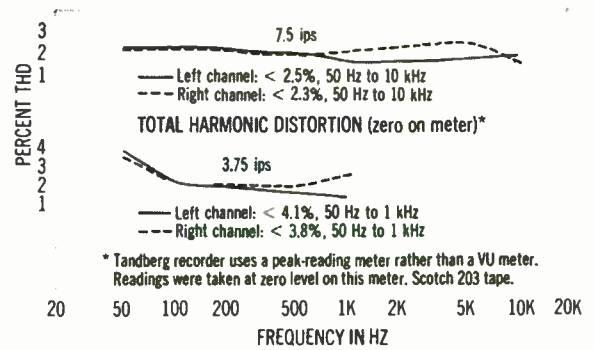
Tandberg 6000X — *Additional Data*

Speed accuracy, 7½ ips	105 VAC: 0.07% fast	
	120 VAC: 0.07% fast	
	127 VAC: 0.07% fast	
3¾ ips	105 VAC: 0.30% fast	
	120 VAC: 0.30% fast	
	127 VAC: 0.30% fast	
1⅞ ips	105 VAC: 0.60% fast	
	120 VAC: 0.60% fast	
	127 VAC: 0.60% fast	
Wow and flutter, 7½ ips	playback: 0.05%	
	record/playback: 0.07%	
3¾ ips	playback: 0.09%	
	record/playback: 0.12%	
1⅞ ips	record/playback: 0.19%	
Rewind time, 7-in., 1,800-ft. reel	2 min., 4 sec.	
Fast-forward time, same reel	2 min., 0 sec.	
S/N ratio (ref 0 VU, test tape) playback	l ch: 56 dB	r ch: 56 dB
record/playback	l ch: 40 dB	r ch: 36 dB
Erasure (400 Hz at normal level)	55 dB	
Crosstalk (400 Hz)		
record left, playback right	50 dB	
record right, playback left	55 dB	
Input sensitivity		
line, 0 VU record level	l ch: 2.0 mV	r ch: 2.1 mV
0 meter record level	l ch: 3.9 mV	r ch: 4.1 mV
mike, 0 VU	l ch: <0.1 mV	r ch: <0.1 mV
0 meter	l ch: 0.13 mV	r ch: 0.13 mV
magnetic phono, 0 VU	l ch: 0.47 mV	r ch: 0.49 mV
0 meter	l ch: 0.90 mV	r ch: 0.94 mV
ceramic phono, 0 VU	l ch: 3.3 mV	r ch: 3.6 mV
0 meter	l ch: 6.4 mV	r ch: 7.1 mV
Accuracy, built-in meters*	left: −7 (black)	
	right: −7 (black)	
IM distortion (record/play)		
7½ ips, −10 VU record level	l ch: 4.5%	r ch: 3.9%
3¾ ips, −10 VU	l ch: 9.0%	r ch: 10.2%
1⅞ ips, −10 VU	l ch: 12.0%	r ch: 10.0%
Maximum output, 0 VU	l ch: 0.8 V	r ch: 0.8 V
0 meter	l ch: 1.5 V	r ch: 1.5 V

*Meters designed to read signal peaks rather than absolute VU levels. See text.







* Tandberg recorder uses a peak-reading meter rather than a VU meter. Readings were taken at zero level on this meter. Scotch 203 tape.

phono inputs will appeal to users who mistrust extra connections and believe (justifiably) that every extra step in the path from disc pickup to tape record head can add noise or distortion to the dubbed signal. The center-channel output is intended primarily to add versatility to the possible monitoring connections. The search system permits audible output from the tape, even in the fast-wind modes, as an aid in locating a particular selection. Since it is spring-loaded, it returns automatically to silent fast-wind when not in use and discourages prolonged use (and the head magnetization that attends it).

The limiter struck us at first as an odd feature to include on a $500 recorder. Surely anyone interested in this class of equipment knows that a limiter inhibits over-all sonic quality as well as signal overloads. Tandberg feels, however, that an inexperienced recordist—particularly when faced with a recording chore that will not allow him to set levels carefully in advance —will get a better recording of demanding program material with the limiter than he will without it. And after trying it we must agree. In one test we walked toward the microphones, clapping our hands at approximately one-second intervals. With the limiter turned off, the nearby handclaps pegged the meters. With the limiter on, the handclaps registered about –2 on the meters and showed some audible evidence of limiting, while the ambient noise in the room could be heard popping back in as the limiter's decay time was reached following each peak. But the effect was considerably less pronounced than it would be on most automatic-gain-control systems and was virtually inaudible in all but this worst-possible-case test.

The 6000X is a complex piece of equipment, to be sure. But its controls are so well thought out that their use is more self-evident and easier to master than those of many recorders that seem simpler at first glance.

The 3000X series is indeed simpler than the 6000X series and costs $200 less. It is equipped with an induction (rather than hysteresis) motor, giving it somewhat less speed accuracy than the 6000X series; and inputs, controls, and outputs are all stripped down to straightforward basics. At the input end there is provision only for mike and line connections, and no mixing is possible in stereo. (Mike signals can be mixed with line or phono on the 6000X.) And the 3000X has no limiter circuitry. On the output end there is no metering, no center-channel output, and there are no level controls—which precludes sound-on-sound and tape-echo recording in stereo.

CIRCLE 145 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

A FINE-SOUNDING PICKUP FOR THE BUDGET-MINDED

THE EQUIPMENT: ADC 220X, a stereo phono cartridge with conical-tip (0.7-mil) stylus. Price: $20. Manufacturer: Audio Dynamics Corp., Pickett District Road, New Milford, Conn. 06776.

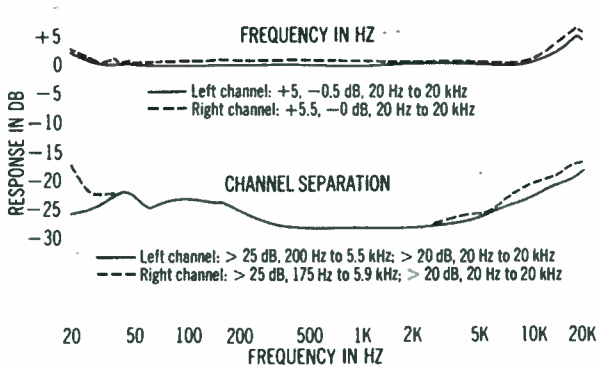
COMMENT: ADC's lowest-priced magnetic pickup offers a level of performance that suggests a higher-priced model. Response is smooth and well balanced across the audio band, channel separation is more than adequate for the stereo effect, and the over-all reaction expressed by all who've heard the 220X's playing of musical recordings is one of "excellent reproduction."

A possible clue to the high-quality performance of this low-cost pickup is its compliance, notably higher than one would expect at the price: the lab measured 25 (x 10^{-6} cm/dyne) laterally and 22 vertically. It would seem that this excellent measurement compensates for a higher-than-average distortion measurement, and possibly too for the fact that the vertical angle measures 21 degrees, which is of course 6 degrees over the nominal 15. Be that as it may, the ADC 220X "listens" like a pickup with very little distortion.

The 220X is designed for tracking at stylus forces of 1 to 2.5 grams in any type of tone arm, including those found on average-grade changers. Tested in the SME arm, adjusted for antiskating and so on, the lab found that it needed 1.1 grams to track the most demanding test passages on CBS STR 120 and the glide tones on STR 100. Measured output voltage was 5.3 millivolts left channel, 4.8 millivolts right channel. A 1-kHz square-wave test showed a slight spike and some ringing which became damped before the cycle ended. If these characteristics seem about "normal" for a low-priced cartridge, certainly the plotted frequency response and channel separation (in addition to the compliance mentioned before) are better than expected. As the accompanying graph shows, response is extremely linear and smooth from 30 Hz to 10 kHz, with a slight rise at the very low end (which, of course, reflects arm resonance as it does for any cartridge), and a more obvious peak near 20 kHz. This peak, often found in magnetic pickups, is "designed out" of the range more thoroughly only in the costliest of models; the fact that it doesn't appear more within the audible range in a unit priced at $20 is noteworthy. The stereo separation, which runs at about 30 dB across the midrange and never reaches less than 20 dB across the entire audio band, is distinctly characteristic of the costliest pickups.

We'd say that the ADC 220X would be an excellent choice for upgrading an older stereo system, especially one that uses an older model changer. At the same time, this pickup can be installed by the budget-minded with no apologies in a late-model automatic or manual player.

CIRCLE 143 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



A TOP SPEAKER FROM DALLAS

THE EQUIPMENT: Frazier Mediterranean (Model F12-8M), a full-range speaker system in enclosure. Dimensions: 27¼ inches wide, 30⅛ inches high, 16⅝ inches deep. Price: $295. Manufacturer: Frazier, Inc. 1930 Valley View Lane, Dallas, Tex. 75234.

COMMENT: Smoothness, musical balance, wide range, and a clean, open sound distinguish this top-of-the-line speaker system from Frazier. A floor-standing model, it is supplied in a dark oak cabinet fronted with a lattice grille and housing a 12-inch woofer, 8-inch midrange, and a pair of three-inch cone tweeters. (Alternatively, it may be ordered with a compression horn tweeter.) The internal three-way dividing network is provided with rear panel continuously variable controls for adjusting middles and highs. Nominal input impedance is 8 ohms. The low-end response is aided by a set of wooden passages which terminate at the rear of the enclosure.

The Mediterranean should satisfy the demands of critical enthusiasts. Tests made at CBS Labs tell a good part of the story and extensive listening sessions tell more of it. Measured impedance (at 100 Hz) was exactly 8 ohms and the impedance curve never dipped below 7 ohms across the audio range, which means of course that this speaker system is perfectly "safe" to use singly or in pairs on the same output taps of solid-state amplifiers or receivers. Efficiency is fairly high (2.2 watts input produced an output of 94 dB at 1 meter on axis). The Mediterranean also is robust enough to handle enormous amounts of amplifier power without distorting (with a steady-state signal of 100 watts driving it, the speaker did not buzz; it handled an average power of 225 watts without distorting, while producing the very high output of 120.5 dB peak sound level). The speaker, in short, will sound splendid when driven by just about any decent amplifier available, and when you crank up the gain you will hear bigger and louder—but not distorted—sound. This ability contributes to the speaker's dynamic range, which we regard as an important factor in realistic music reproduction. Low-frequency pulse tests at both normal and very high power levels revealed very faithful reproduction, with the output signals being virtually replicas of the input test signals. The high-frequency pulse tests revealed a small amount of ringing, itself typical of most of the speakers we've tested by this method and hardly a factor in normal listening.

Frequency response was found to depend significantly on how the speaker system's rear level controls were adjusted. When turned to their midrange rotation (the standard lab condition for all speaker tests), they produced the curves shown here, clocked as being within plus or minus 9.25 dB from below 25 Hz to 10 kHz. However, advancing the rear panel controls flattens out the response to within plus or minus 3 dB to 10 kHz, which is splendid. Response continues, of course, beyond the 10-kHz mark: tones as high as 12 kHz were heard well off axis of the system, and 14 kHz could be heard when listening on axis. From here the response slopes toward inaudibility. The low end is smooth and full; a 30-Hz tone was clearly audible, with no signs of doubling, at louder-than-normal listening levels.

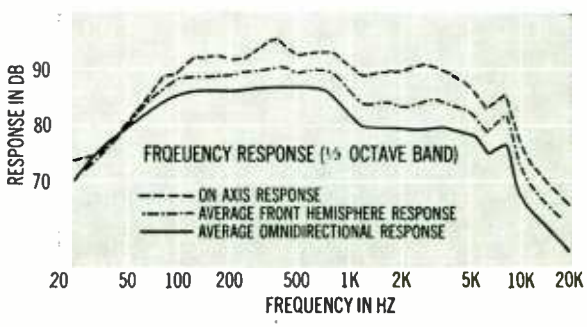
A pair of Mediterraneans can easily fill larger-than-average rooms with very clean, transparent, listenable sound and an excellent stereo image. Happily enough, they also are most accommodating in normal-size and slightly smaller-than-average rooms: their musical balance remains intact, there's no tonal dropout, and everything sounds eminently clear. The Mediterranean is the kind of speaker that reveals rather than obscures differences in recordings and in program material generally. It thus should interest the professional-monitor user as well as the serious music listener. At less than $300 apiece, that's filling a pretty big order—and the Mediterranean does it beautifully.

CIRCLE 142 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Frazier Mediterranean — *Harmonic Distortion**

Output Level dB	Frequency			
	80 Hz		300 Hz	
	% 2nd	% 3rd	% 2nd	% 3rd
70	0.9	0.8	0.6	0.48
75	0.72	0.5	0.58	0.52
80	0.8	0.45	0.67	0.6
85	0.88	0.4	0.66	0.62
90	0.92	0.5	0.68	0.52
95	1.0	1.2	0.72	0.62
100	1.6	1.8	0.9	0.64
105	—	—	1.0	0.4
110	—	—	2.3	0.3
114	—	—	2.5	0.3

* Distortion data on all tested speakers is taken until a level of 100 dB is reached, or distortion exceeds 10 per cent, or the speaker produces the spurious output known as buzzing.

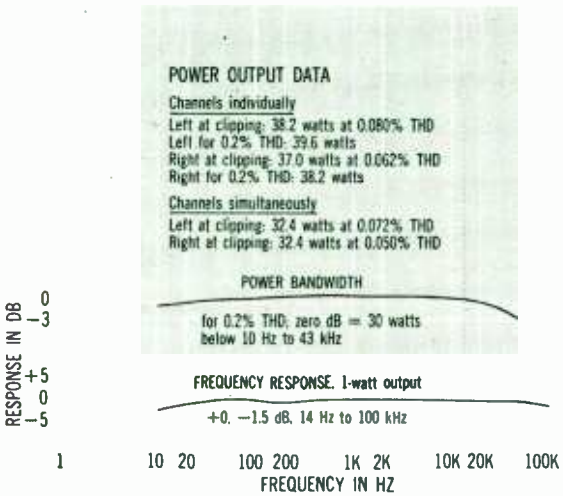


VERSATILE CONTROL AMPLIFIER FROM SONY

THE EQUIPMENT: Sony TA-1144, a stereo integrated amplifier. Dimensions: 16 9/16 by 5 5/16 by 11¼ inches. Price: $219.50. Manufacturer: Sony Corporation of America, 47-47 Van Dam St., Long Island City, N.Y. 11101.

COMMENT: Dimensionally and visually, the Sony TA-1144 amplifier is an obvious style-mate for the Sony basic tuner ST-5100 [see HF test report, September 1970], although it can of course serve as the control and power center for any stereo system. In view of its low distortion, excellent response, and numerous features, make that a "high-quality, extremely versatile stereo system."

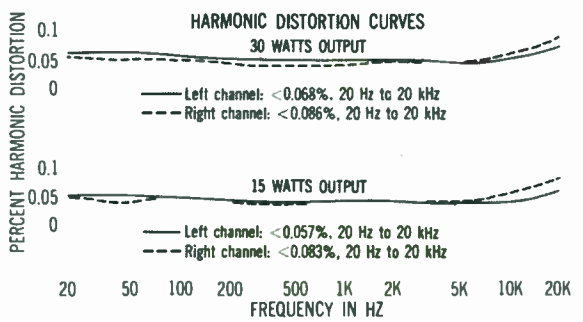
Although priced and designed for the home-music-system market, the TA-1144 boasts some studiolike options that should appeal to the audiophile or sound hobbyist. A run-through of its controls and features will explain why. The power off/on switch is a separate toggle switch under a green pilot lamp. Next to it is a mode knob with positions for normal stereo, reverse stereo, left-plus-right mono, left only, and right only. The darker center portion of the panel contains separate controls for bass and treble on each channel; these are slide switches that have separate steps calibrated in increments of 2 dB from zero to plus 10 and minus 10 for precise and repeatable settings. Centered below them is the large volume control. Directly below is a left-to-right slide for channel balance. The signal selector (called here a "function" control) is divided between a slide switch with three positions: top selects tuner, bottom selects phono 1, center selects whatever signal is chosen on an adjacent knob, itself marked for phono 2, aux 1, aux 2, and aux 3. The last-named input is a front-panel phone jack for quick and/or temporary connection of external sources; all other inputs are phono jacks on the rear. In addition, the front panel also contains a headphone jack, main and remote speaker selectors, a loudness off/on switch, low- and high-frequency filter switches, and a tape monitor switch. The headphone jack is live at all times regardless of the positions of the speaker selectors, which themselves permit you

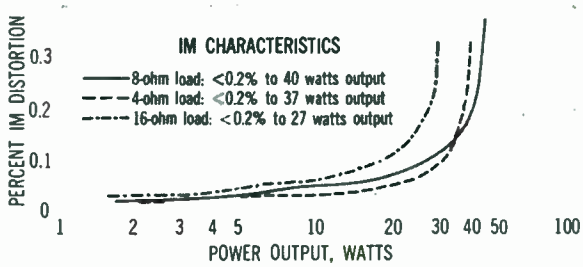


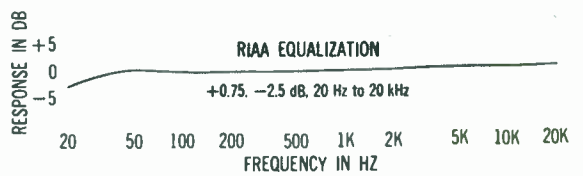
Sony TA-1144 *Additional Data*

Damping factor		72
Input	Sensitivity	S/N ratio
phono 1	0.88 mV	57 dB
phono 2	0.88 mV	57 dB
tuner	105 mV	91 dB
aux 1, 2, 3	105 mV	91 dB
tape	105 mV	91 dB

Square-wave response.







REPORTS IN PROGRESS

Ampex Micro 52 Cassette Recorder
Klipsch La Scala Speaker System

to choose either, both, or neither of the pairs of stereo speakers that may be connected at the rear.

In addition to the signal inputs and speaker outputs, the rear panel contains the tape monitor inputs and a pair of jacks for feeding signals to a tape recorder. There's also a DIN record/playback jack for use with foreign-made recorders. The two sets of phono inputs have identical input characteristics, which means you can leave two magnetic pickups permanently plugged in; then by flipping the front-panel selector lever you can make immediate A/B comparisons between the two if you so desire. Other rear-panel features include three AC outlets, one unswitched, a system grounding post, and the amplifier's power cord.

This amplifier also has a "circuit-interrupt" feature worked out in terms of a pair of preamp outputs and power amp inputs plus a "normal/separate" switch, that permits the user to electronically divide the unit into a stereo preamp and a stereo power amp. Thus it provides the option of patching in special devices, such as reverb units, or electronic crossovers, or one of the new "spectrum contouring" or "loudspeaker equalizing" devices. If an electronic crossover is used, part of its output can be returned to the TA-1144's own power amp section while the rest of the signal is fed to external power amps. The TA-1144 has no "center" channel output as such, but an interesting substitute is possible with the circuit-interrupt feature. If the switch is left in "normal" position, you can tap a stereo signal from the power amp *input* jacks and feed this to an external amplifier while the TA-1144's own power amp still operates normally. Then, by connecting additional speakers to that external amplifier, you can set up a third remote listening spot, or use them for center fill or surround effects.

Under test at CBS Labs, the TA-1144 easily met its published performance specifications and shaped up as a first-rate medium-powered amplifier. Power bandwidth, for a very low 0.2 per cent distortion, extends from below 10 Hz to 43 kHz; frequency response remains within 1.5 dB from 14 Hz out to 100 kHz. Both harmonic and IM distortion are nearly non-measurable up to rated power output; equalization, tone, and filter controls all show desirable and accurate characteristics. Excellent S/N ratios are evident through all inputs. Careful workmanship and attention to detailing are found throughout. And considering the functional options and features offered, the price seems very right too.

CIRCLE 141 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

HANDY CASSETTE SPLICING BLOCK

THE EQUIPMENT: Robins TS-215, tape splicing block. List price: $10.50. Manufacturer: Robins Industries Corp., 15-58 127th Street, Flushing, N.Y. 11356.

COMMENT: To the growing roster of accessories for tape cassette owners, Robins has added a splicing block which resembles a scaled-down version of the older, larger type familiar to many open-reel tape recordists. The new block comes packaged with a razor blade, supply of splicing patches, and a cotton-tipped stick in a packet that itself is of the same dimensions as a cassette. Instructions for using the Robins device are printed on the inside of the packet's lift-up lid.

The block has a groove running down its length into which you place the spooled-out tape from a cassette. A little pressure from the cotton-tipped stick gets it into place, where it is held securely. You then use the razor to make either a 45-degree cut or a 90-degree cut, following either of the two cutting guides on the block. The former cut suffices for most editing and repair of tapes; the latter cut is preferred for the most critical editing where you might have to splice a single note of music. Once the cut is made, you peel off an adhesive patch, press it into place over the cut, and remove the excess to make a permanent bond.

We found the TS-215 to be a handy gadget, easy to use, and quite effective for its intended purpose. The only "difficult" operation involved is peeling the backing off the adhesive patches which are small and delicate enough to require more care and patience to use than their larger open-reel ancestors did.

CIRCLE 144 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

1970 EQUIPMENT REPORTS

AMPLIFIERS (Basic)
Crown D-40 — July
Dynaco Stereo 80 — August
Harman-Kardon Citation XII — September
Quad 303 — March

AMPLIFIERS (Integrated)
Pioneer SA-900 — July
Sony TA-1144 — December

AMPLIFIERS (Preamp)
Quad 33 — March

CARTRIDGES
Audio Dynamics ADC 220X — December
Grado FTE — April
Shure V-15 Type II Improved — May

COMPACT SYSTEMS
Sony HP-465 — February

MICROPHONES
Altec Lansing 650A — July

RECEIVERS
Acoustic Research — November
Harman-Kardon 820 — May
Heathkit AR-29 — September
Radio Shack Realistic STA-120 — August
Scott 342C — February
Sherwood S-8900 — October

SPEAKER SYSTEMS
Acoustic Research AR-2ax — September
Advent — May
Audio Dynamics ADC 303 AX — March
Electro-Voice Aries — February
EMI 205 — April
Epicure EPI 100 — January
Frazier Mediterranean — December
IMF TLS Monitor Mk II — June
Infinity Systems Servo-Statik I — June
KLH Thirty-Three — August
Lafayette Criterion 200A — June
Leak Mk III — October
Marantz Imperial III — November
Radio Shack Minimus 0.5 — June

TAPE RECORDERS
Ampex 1467 — October
Astrocom Marlux 407 — May
Concord Mk III — July
Ferrograph 724 — January
Fisher RC-70 Cassette — February
Harman-Kardon CAD-4 Cassette — January
Tandberg 6000X — December
Teac A-6010U — April
Wollensak 4700 Cassette — March

TUNERS
Pioneer TX-900 — November
Sony ST-5100 — September

TURNTABLES AND CHANGERS
BSR McDonald 500T — March
Dual 1219 — January
Lesa PRF-6 — August
Sherwood SEL-100 — July

MISCELLANEOUS
Advent Frequency Balance Control — April
Beatty Stereo Dimension Control — November
Rabco 101 AR Adapter — May
Recoton 83TC Cassette Splicer — September
Robins TS-215 Cassette Splicer — December

Assignment: Spend a day in the park with a nervous Persian cat. Shoot her in every conceivable situation. Bring back the proofs to the agency for one to be selected for a cat food layout. Here is where the unique capabilities of the Mamiya/Sekor DTL can multiply your creative choices. Wherever that skittery cat goes you must follow the action. No time to guess about exposures or fiddle with hand-held meters. One moment she's back-lit, then she wheels around and the sun is in front. The Creative Switch on Mamiya/Sekor DTL allows you to use two separate exposure meter systems with the flick of a finger. One takes an averaged reading and is great for front lit pictures. The other takes a spot reading of only 6% of the area and gives you perfect exposures with back or side lit pictures where the light behind the cat would fool an averaging meter. Almost all fine 35mm SLR cameras have one of these exposure reading systems; only the Mamiya/Sekor DTL has both. Thirty-six exposures on the button--regardless of the source of the light! See the Mamiya/Sekor DTL at your dealer. Priced from less than $180, plus case. Or write for folder. **Ponder&Best**, Corporate Offices: 11201 West Pico Boulevard. Los Angeles, California 90064.

Only the Mamiya/Sekor DTL has it

The Creative Switch

Back lighting

Front lighting

CIRCLE 49 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Introducing Altec stereo components.

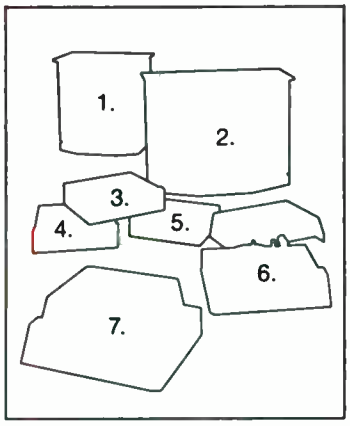
Built a little better.

ALTEC LANSING

HIGH FIDELITY

A QUALITY COMPANY OF LTV LING ALTEC, INC.

They're built a little better.



1. Altec's new 2875A Granada Bi-amp Speaker System incorporates the all-new 800 Hz Electronic Crossover Bi-amp which delivers 60 watts RMS to a new Dynamic Force · 15-inch woofer and 30 watts RMS to the high frequency driver.
2. Altec's new 2873A Barcelona Bi-amp Speaker System incorporates a 500 Hz Electronic Crossover Bi-amp and new 411-8A Dynamic Force woofer. Mids and highs are reproduced through a 25" sectoral horn and new Symbiotik Driver.
3. Altec's new 724A AM/FM Stereo Tuner Pre-Amplifier features the new Varitronik™ tuner with 4 FET's for the highest sensitivity and stability.
4. Altec's new 725A AM/FM Stereo Receiver is rated 60/60 watts RMS. It includes the new Varitronik FM Tuner with 4 FET's, a combination of Butterworth and crystal filters, all plug-in modular circuitry and 10 other performance features.
5. Altec's new 714A AM/FM Stereo Receiver delivers 44/44 watts RMS (180 watts IHF music power) and features 3 FET's, 2 crystal filters, plus a volume range switch, black-out dial and spring loaded terminals for speakers.
6. Altec's new 911A Stereo AM/FM Music Center has 44/44 watts RMS (180 watts IHF music power). Plus, it incorporates the most sophisticated components including an FM tuner section with 3 FET's, 2 crystal filters and IC's. Garrard's best automatic turntable and a Shure "High Track" cartridge.
7. Altec's new 912A Stereo AM/FM Cassette Music Center delivers 44/44 watts RMS (180 watts IHF music power)—more power than any other music center on the market. Plus, this model features a front-loading Staar cassette tape recorder for stereo playback and recording from any source.

Exclusive Dynamic Force Concept

Altec has developed a new type of low frequency speaker. It features a long voice coil with edge wound pre-flattened copper ribbon wire and a magnetic structure of extremely high flux field. (Note this unusually strong magnetic field controls the motion of the cone to an extent not normally found in infinite baffle systems.) This uniquely designed unit is capable of producing a Dynamic Force of up to 16 lbs. With this unusually large force capability, as much as twice the compression can be produced than is normal in acoustic suspension speakers. The result is greatly improved low frequency transient performance, better linearity, extended low frequency response and reduced distortion while maintaining medium efficiency.

Altec's 770A Electronic Crossover Bi-Amplifier

This highly sophisticated electronic component features a very fine bass amplifier rated at 60 watts RMS electronically crossed over at 800 Hz or 500 Hz to an equally fine high frequency amplifier rated at 30 watts RMS. The use of any passive crossover is eliminated and thus the damping effect of each amplifier is utilized to its utmost. The result is a much tighter transient response and an improved overall sound quality. Note also that with the 770A, IM distortion is inherently decreased to its lowest possible point—virtually unmeasurable under the normal IHF method.

Exclusive Varitronik Tuner

This new tuner uses 4 FET's (field effect transistors). Three of them provide amplification while the fourth operates as an oscillator. By using FET's, any cross modulation problems experienced with bi-polar transistors is eliminated. The exclusive Varitronik tuner also uses 4 double Varicaps instead of the conventional mechanical tuning capacitor to achieve a better balanced circuit performance. Mechanical to electronic conversion required for Varicap tuning is achieved by a specially designed potentiometer which provides linear tracking and accurate calibration of the FM scale. Low distortion, high stability and high sensitivity are also characteristic of this new tuner.

Altec Direct-Plug-in Modular Circuitry

The use of plug-in modular circuitry is incorporated into the design of each and every new Altec stereo component. In addition to the obvious benefits of simpler production and faster servicing, the maximum use of plug-in modular circuitry allows the highest possible degree of consistency and uniformity in performance from product to product. Maximum reliability is inherent in its design simplicity. And a new high in quality control is achieved.

The Altec Acousta-Voicette Stereo Equalizer

The new Altec Acousta-Voicette accurately "tunes" the frequency responses of your complete component system *and even your listening room* to a flat acoustical response at your ears. By utilizing 24 full-adjustable, critical bandwidth rejection filters per channel, it puts all frequencies into perfect balance. For the first time, you can hear the original acoustic environment of the recording hall—and not the acoustics of your listening room. Altec's new stereo components are especially designed to work with the new 729A Acousta-Voicette, and they're built with separate accessory jacks as shown to the left.

For a free copy of the new Altec catalog, write to Altec Lansing, 1515 S. Manchester Ave., Anaheim, CA 92803.

CIRCLE 2 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

speaking of records

The Best Records of the Year

The three albums shown here were selected by the jurors of the Montreux International Record Award as the best new recordings released between May 1, 1969 and April 30, 1970. In a break with precedent, the jurors voted to grant three first prizes instead of assigning first, second, and third places. Votes were based on a preselection list culled from individual "ten-best" lists submitted by both the jurors and preselection committee members.

Other Recommended Recordings

(*based on the Montreux International Record Award Preselection List)

**J. S. BACH: *Last Keyboard Works.* Charles Rosen. ODYSSEY 32 36 0020 (three discs).

BEETHOVEN: *Piano Sonatas (complete).* Daniel Barenboim. ANGEL S 3755 (fourteen discs).

BEETHOVEN: *Symphonies (complete).* Eugen Jochum. PHILIPS S-C71AX900 (nine discs).

BEETHOVEN: *The Late Quartets; Grosse Fuge.* Guarneri Quartet. RCA RED SEAL VCS 6418 (four discs).

BERLIOZ: *Te Deum.* Franco Tagliavini, Colin Davis. PHILIPS 839790.

**BILLINGS: *Music of William Billings.* Gregg Smith. COLUMBIA MS 7277.

BOULEZ: *Pli selon pli.* Pierre Boulez. COLUMBIA M 30296 (to be released next month).

BUSONI: *Doktor Faust.* Hildegard Hillebrecht, Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, Ferdinand Leitner. DGG 2709 032 (three discs).

BUXTEHUDE: *Organ Works (complete).* Marie-Claire Alain. MUSICAL HERITAGE SOCIETY OR 309/15 (seven discs).

**CARTER: *Sonata for Cello; Sonata for Flute, Oboe, Cello, Harpsichord.* Columbia Group for Contemporary Music. NONESUCH H 71234.

Continued on page 46

*This list of recommended recordings differs somewhat from that published by the Montreux Festival. Those albums prefixed by a single asterisk (*), while actually receiving as many preselection votes as (and in some cases even more than) other recordings on the official Montreux list, were pruned by the Montreux officials in order to achieve a more "balanced" list—between single records and multirecord sets, between operas and instrumental works, etc. We believe that our readers are more interested in those recordings that did receive the most nominations, rather than in the balanced list submitted to the jury. For the same reason, any recording on the official list that did not in fact receive the requisite number of nominations has been omitted here. In order to avoid a similar situation in the future, the Montreux officials have agreed to follow a suggestion from this year's jury to encourage future preselection committee members to submit their "ten-best" lists with no more than half the albums consisting of multirecord sets. The Montreux officials have also promised to send copies of all future preselection committee members' lists to HIGH FIDELITY for double checking, as had been the practice in each previous year with the exception of this one.

Those albums prefixed by two asterisks (**) are additional albums, chosen by our own reviewers, which we would also recommend as among "the year's best."

FIRST-PRIZE WINNERS

BERLIOZ: Les Troyens (Josephine Veasey, Jon Vickers, Berit Lindholm, Colin Davis) Philips 6709 002 (five discs).

SHOSTAKOVICH: Symphony No. 13, "Babi Yar" (Eugene Ormandy) RCA Red Seal LSC 3162.

SCHUBERT: Lieder, Vol. I (Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, Gerald Moore) DGG 2730 006 (twelve discs).

Jury

Michel Hofmann, *Diapason* and *Journal musical français*, France, President
Felix Aprahamian, *Sunday Times* and *Gramophone*, Great Britain
F. Granville Barker, *Music and Musicians*, Great Britain
Clément Dailly, *Radio-Télévision belge*, Belgium
Alberto E. Gimenez, *La Nacion*, Argentina
Pierre Hugli, *La Gazette de Lausanne*, Switzerland
Carl-Heinz Mann, *Fono Forum* and *Hamburger Abendblatt*, Germany
Leonard Marcus, HIGH FIDELITY, U.S.A.
Bengt Pleijel, *Musikrevy*, Sweden
Felix Schmidt, *Der Spiegel*, Germany
*Ivan Vojtech, *Hudebni Rozhledy*, Czechoslovakia
Edith Walter, *Harmonie*, France

* restricted by his government from attending

Preselection Committee

Gabriele de Agostini, *La Suisse*, Switzerland
William Anderson, *Stereo Review*, U.S.A.
Claude Bandieri, *Le Dauphiné libéré*, France
Luigi Bellingardi, *RAI*, Italy
Kurt Blaukopf, *Hi-Fi Stereophonie*, Austria
Jacques Bourgeois, *Elle*, France
Karl Breh, *Hi-Fi Stereophonie*, Germany
Jay Carr, *Detroit News*, U.S.A.
Georges Cherière, *Diapason*, France
Peter G. Davis, HIGH FIDELITY, U.S.A.
Marcel Doisy, *La Revue des Disques*, Belgium
Peter Gammond, *Audio Record Review*, Great Britain
Edward Greenfield, *The Guardian* and *Gramophone*, Great Britain
Ingo Harden, *Fono Forum*, Germany
Paul Hume, *Washington Post*, U.S.A.
Karl Löbl, *Express*, Austria
James Lyons, *American Record Guide*, U.S.A.
Ornella Zanuso Mauri, *Discoteca*, Italy
Philip Miller, former Chief, Music Division, New York Public Library, U.S.A.
Heuwell Tircuit, *San Francisco Chronicle*, U.S.A.

Taking the Vote: *Nicole Hirsch-Klopfenstein, secretary general of the awards, prepares to pass the hat to collect the jurors' votes as Mme. Carl Schuricht, who served as interpreter, looks on. The jurors, clockwise from front, are Messrs. Hofmann (back to camera), Hugli, Pleijel, Gimenez (partially hidden), Aprahamian, Schmidt, Mann, Dailly, Marcus, Mme. Walter (nearly hidden except for her shoes), and Mr. Granville Barker.*

BEST RECORDS

Continued from page 44

*DEBUSSY: *Images pour Orchestre; Danses sacrée et profane.* Pierre Boulez. COLUMBIA MS 7362.

*DVORAK: *Cello Concerto in B minor.* Mstislav Rostropovich, Herbert von Karajan. DGG 139044.

**DVORAK: *Requiem.* Pilar Lorengar, Erszébet Komlóssy, Robert Ilosfalvy, Tom Krause, István Kertesz. LONDON OSA 1281 (two discs).

HAYDN: *The Creation.* Gundula Janowitz, Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, Herbert von Karajan. DGG 2707 044 (two discs).

*HINDEMITH: *Cardillac.* Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, Elisabeth Söderström, Joseph Keilberth. DGG 2707 042 (two discs).

IVES: *Psalms.* Gregg Smith. COLUMBIA MS 7321.

MAHLER: *Des Knaben Wunderhorn.* Christa Ludwig, Walter Berry, Leonard Bernstein. COLUMBIA KS 7395 (two discs).

MAHLER: *Das klagende Lied.* Evelyn Lear, Elisabeth Söderström, Ernst Häfliger, Pierre Boulez. COLUMBIA M2 30061 (two discs).

MAHLER: *Symphony No. 6, in A minor.* Rafael Kubelik. DGG 2707 037 (two discs).

MASSENET: *Werther.* Victoria de Los Angeles, Nicolai Gedda, Georges Prêtre. ANGEL 3736 (three discs).

MONTEVERDI: *L'Orfeo.* Rotraud Hansmann, Max van Egmond, Nikolaus Harnoncourt. TELEFUNKEN SKH 21 (three discs).

MOZART: *Symphonies* (46). Karl Böhm. The Late Symphonies, Vol. I, DGG 2721 007 (seven discs); The Early Symphonies, Vol. II, DGG 2721 013 (eight discs).

MOZART: *Idomeneo.* Robert Tear, George Shirley, Colin Davis. PHILIPS 3747/9 (three discs).

**PROKOFIEV: *Violin Sonatas.* Itzhak Perlman, Vladimir Ashkenazy. RCA RED SEAL LSC 3118.

R. STRAUSS: *Der Rosenkavalier.* Régine Crespin, Helen Donath, Yvonne Minton, Manfred Jungwirth, Georg Solti. LONDON OSA 1435 (four discs).

R. STRAUSS: *Salome.* Montserrat Caballé, Regina Resnik, Richard Lewis, Erich Leinsdorf. RCA RED SEAL LSC 7053 (two discs).

*STRAVINSKY: *Le Sacre du printemps.* Pierre Boulez. COLUMBIA MS 7293.

VERDI: *La Forza del destino.* Martina Arroyo, Carlo Bergonzi, Piero Cappuccilli, Ruggero Raimondi, Lamberto Gardelli. ANGEL 3765 (four discs).

*VERDI: *La Traviata.* Pilar Lorengar, Giacomo Aragall, Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, Lorin Maazel. LONDON OSA 1279 (two discs).

WAGNER: *Siegfried.* Helga Dernesch, Jess Thomas, Thomas Stewart, Herbert von Karajan. DGG 2713 003 (five discs).

XENAKIS: *Works.* MUSICAL HERITAGE SOCIETY (partial release for early 1971).

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If you don't really need the ultimate precision of the Dual 1219, we recommend the slightly less eminent 1209.

CIRCLE 23 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Part VIII: The Symphonies

Beethoven on Records

Continuing High Fidelity's appraisal of all available recordings of the composer's music

by Paul Henry Lang

THOUGH THE COMPOSER of dozens of incomparable masterpieces in all genres of music, Beethoven's unexampled popularity rests mainly on his symphonies; he is *the* symphonist, who stands alone, without rivals, the most admired composer in the history of music. This statement is not intended to raise the old question of "Who is greater, Bach or Beethoven?" Only prize fighters can be ranked in this fashion. What made Beethoven so universally popular, transcending all national barriers, was his unexcelled directness and power of communication.

When Beethoven settled in Vienna in the last decade of the eighteenth century, the classical symphony was at its summit, with form and content in ideal balance. This symphonic ideal, especially Haydn's, based on thematic and tonal logic, he never questioned. Beethoven's musical ideas are not the first thoughts occurring to a romantic improviser, but thoughts ten stages removed from the first: they are generally closely packed and offer a microcosmic view of their own future development. The detail, no matter how interesting, is subordinated to the total formal concept. Berlioz correctly called these symphonies "marvels of *learning* and inspiration."

Beethoven's sketchbooks show that even the seemingly delirious unleashing of emotions is usually preceded by an agonizing struggle on note paper to get things organized. The logical and consequent manipulation of the thematic material was the classic symphonist's main creed. Beethoven took endless pains with his symphonic subjects, often carrying them in his sketchbooks for years before being satisfied that they would survive the vicissitudes of endless and close-hauled manipulation. The genuine symphonist of the classical persuasion extrudes rather than invents his thematic material; so created, it becomes a center that exerts a gravitational pull over a whole movement, as is most convincingly illustrated in the opening movement of the Fifth Symphony. So we can see that Beethoven did not depart from the classical symphonic ideal; he enlarged and intensified it beyond measure. With the increased dimensions and the widened modulatory scheme, all the constituent elements of form had to be extended and somewhat modified. The preparation of conflicts and climaxes is more elaborate than in the eighteenth-century symphony, and their resolution more powerful. Beethoven can lead up to his climaxes over an appreciably long span of time, and then the return of the tonic is stunning. This music has peristaltic motion even when it stands still.

The first two symphonies are usually regarded with patronizing good will, though both of these fine works are unmistakably Beethoven's own progeny. Mozart's *Jupiter* was obviously in Beethoven's mind when he planned the first movement of No. 1, but only so far as material and tone are concerned. The second movement has an intriguing meter—seven measures—and the fine sonata structure rises to truly Beethovenian grandeur. The Minuet is no longer a dance, nor is it yet a real scherzo: rather, it is an original and interesting transition form often misinterpreted by conductors, who play it as a full-fledged scherzo. Over the finale, based like the Minuet on the then popular "solmization jokes," hovers the spirit of Haydn's Symphony No. 88. The Second Symphony opens with one of Beethoven's most powerful and elaborate introductions, which has an unmistakable kinship with the Ninth. The first movement, with its theme groups, shows the typical Beethovenian advanced sonata construction; the second is a magnificently arching song; the fourth, a brilliant finale in the spirit of the eighteenth century; but the third movement is something new, a scherzo in place of a minuet. The Third Symphony, if I may be permitted to quote myself, represents "the greatest single step made by an individual composer in the history of music; it simply dwarfs everything in its boldness of conception, breadth of execution, and in its intensity and logic of construction." The first movement is a maelstromlike allegro; it permits only two furious chords to serve as an introduction. The second movement is a deeply felt threnody, the finale a set of variations, the theme

appropriately coming from *Prometheus*. The third movement requires special comment because it embodies Beethoven's first full-blown symphonic scherzos; it is swift, elemental, a little menacing, and irresistibly propulsive.

One still encounters the unjustified notion that (not counting the first two "inferior" ones) Beethoven's odd-numbered symphonies are the really great works. With Beethoven, the symphonies usually represent a process that begins with experimentation in the piano sonata, proceeds with further elaboration in chamber music, especially the string quartet, and finds summation in the symphony; hence every symphony is *sui generis*. The Fourth is one of Beethoven's loveliest works. The first movement allegro, plainly indebted to Haydn's No. 102, is a marvel of the constant flow of ideas in combination, with a unique reprise in which the tonic is reached well ahead of time. The second movement is one of the noblest adagios; the scherzo is wild and boisterous, though at the same time sophisticated, with its hidden contrast between 2/4 and 3/4. The finale is spirited, reverting, like the first allegro, to the tone of the eighteenth century. The Fifth occupied Beethoven for a long time. We can safely say that its first movement is the highest point ever reached in symphonic concentration, power, and affective communication. And there is another thing here: an entirely new concept that makes the finale the conclusion toward which all previous movements tend. The Sixth, one of the even-numbered unfortunates, offers a magnificent interlude between the terseness of utterance and concentration of the Fifth, and the orgiastic frenzy of the Seventh. It is not a program symphony—the storm, the little concert of the birds, and all the stories notwithstanding—but an expression of an intensely felt experience. Tempos and dynamics are crucial in this work, and few conductors can do justice to the small-jointed meter of the first movement, which requires the most delicate phrasing and dynamic nuances, for these little bits of themes are repeated dozens of times. In the second movement sheer poetry reigns. The scherzo is rough, delicate, and humorous at the same time. Nonetheless, it is a bona fide scherzo and must not be permitted to shed its symphonic élan. The "storm" is real, powerful, exciting, threatening, and remarkably pictorial-descriptive, but everything is strictly on symphonic terms; note how the "lightning" motif is developed. The final movement rises to a magnificent climax. Beethoven pushes to the base of the peak, but only on the third try does he scale it; this is an unforgettable moment. The introduction to the Seventh Symphony is as poetic and, yes, romantic, as anything Beethoven ever wrote. The vivace shows the kind of extreme thematic concentration we see in the Fifth, but this structure is larger, full of the most imaginative turns and modulations. The symphony is considered orgiastic, "the apotheosis of the dance," and it is; but we must not forget the pensive melancholy of the introduction, the quiet sorrow of the second movement, and the pleading trio in the scherzo. The Eighth is a delightful work that is only now coming into its own. Beethoven loved it ("it is better than the Seventh") and counted it among his best symphonies. The first movement is fresh and fine-toned, but also vigorous; the others are filled with humor, delicate in the second movement, drastic in the third, and Homeric in the finale. In the allegretto the utmost airiness is needed, while the staccatos in the woodwinds must be real droplets. The third movement is a take-off on old Vienna and its minuet; everything is deliberately clumsy (accents on the wrong beats), and the nostalgic trio uses all the trimmings of the previous century. If the conductor misreads Beethoven's designation he is lost, for the composer did not say "Minuet," but rather pointedly, "in the tempo of a minuet." The finale, one of Beethoven's longest symphonic movements, requires a virtuoso performance, for despite the lusty humor (that magnificently shocking C sharp in the midst of F major!), the movement is full of the most refined episodes.

The last symphony has become a symbol: "The Ninth" means only one thing in any language—Beethoven's with the choral finale. It is at once the most tremendous and the most problematic of his symphonies. The first movement, where from chaotic emptiness Beethoven puts together the trip-hammer theme right before our eyes, is overwhelming. At the recapitulation, the timpani rend the air for dozens of measures with a cataclysmic upheaval, but the movement ends on a deeply moving miniature funeral march over an ostinato. The scherzo is irresistible in its single-minded symphonic fervor, greatly admired not only by symphonists but by such composers as Rossini and Glinka. If the middle section, which takes the place of the customary trio, is taken too slowly (Beethoven's metronome was faulty) it is ruined. The third movement has the long period constructions typical of Beethoven's late works and calls for great sustaining power from conductor and players. This enormously large, transfigured movement is often callously divided on two sides of a disc. The finale has always been controversial; it has magnificent moments, but also naïve musical symbolism and ungainly vocal writing. Though perhaps less extensively than in the *Missa Solemnis*, Beethoven does apply here medieval, abstract "eye-music" symbols that are hardly reconcilable with symphonic procedures. Frequently when Beethoven resorts to them the result is a noble obfuscation; his natural musical language is inhibited, and his marvelous inventiveness and logical, beautifully articulated continuity are hobbled. This is a difficult movement to realize in sound, and few performances do justice to it. But if the rendition is good, it is deeply affecting, for this is Beethoven's impassioned view of the world.

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posers of their true qualities, a Beethoven symphony, if at all decently played, gives a good measure of satisfaction, for the inner buoyance of the music does not fail to assert itself, and the thematic snatches, constantly coming from all directions, keep alive the interplay of the parts. Therefore in the following evaluations, which naturally favor the superior performances, such decent but not particularly distinguished performances will simply be called "standard."

Many of the sets listed below are made up of recordings gathered from different stages of a conductor's active life. They are offered in the form of "complete editions," but are really anthologies put together (often even resurrected and electronically doctored) for the Beethoven bicentennial. Some are very old, some middle-aged, and some just far enough apart to present entirely different kinds of sound and recording technique. In the amiable way of the industry, such facts are often concealed (unless the recording is a venerable antique) and only the quality of the sound and an occasional giveaway on the jacket (reviews by newspapers defunct for years) warn the listener. This makes judicious reviewing difficult, but since these recordings are marketed as self-contained entities we must deal with them accordingly. Finally, a word about performance standards. Remember that in Beethoven even one pinched first-desk oboe or wobbly flute (and most European oboes do squeal) can hurt the entire orchestra. A first-class and well-balanced orchestra is of course a joy to hear. Unfortunately, some of the best handlers of orchestras are so eager to maintain an unfailingly precise and virtuoso ensemble that they neglect the music itself. On the other hand, great but ancient interpretations are difficult to enjoy because the best of intentions cannot triumph over poor sound and lack of presence.

Complete Sets

• *Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Ernest Ansermet, cond. Stereo Treasury STS BTH S 1, $19.92 (eight discs; Coriolan; Fidelio; Leonore No. 2; Prometheus); available separately as STS 15032 (Nos. 1, 8); STS 15068 (No. 2; Leonore No. 2); STS 15069 (No. 3); STS 15055 (No. 4; Coriolan); STS 15038 (No. 5; Egmont); STS 15064 (No. 6; Prometheus); STS 15067 (No. 7; Fidelio); STS 15089, No. 9. Joan Sutherland (s); Norma Procter (c); Anton Dermota (t); Arnold van Mill (bs); Chorale de Brassus; Choeur des Jeunes de l'Eglise Nationale Vaudoise. $2.49 each.*

• *New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein, cond. Columbia D8S 815, $35.88 (eight discs); available separately as MS 7084 (Nos. 1, 2); MS 6774 (No. 3); MS 7412 (Nos. 4, 8); MS 6468 (No. 5); MS 6549 (No. 6); MS 7414 (No. 7); $5.98 each; M2S 794, $11.96 (two discs; Choral Fantasia; No. 9). Martina Arroyo (s); Regina Sarfaty (ms); Nicholas Di-Virgilio (t); Norman Scott (bs); Juilliard Chorus.*

• *Concertgebouw Orchestra, Eugen Jochum, cond. Philips S C71 AX 900, $53.82 (nine discs; Fidelio; Leonore Nos. 1, 2, 3). Liselotte Rebmann (s); Anna Reynolds (ms); Anton de Ridder (t); Gerd Feldhoff (bs); Netherlands Radio Chorus.*

• *Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan, cond. Deutsche Grammophon 2721 001, $36.00 (eight discs); available separately as 138801 (Nos. 1, 2); 138802 (No. 3); 138803 (No. 4); 138804 (No. 5); 138805 (No. 6); 138806 (No. 7); 139015 (No. 8; Fidelio; Coriolan; Leonore No. 3); $5.98 each; 2707 013, $11.96 (two discs; Nos. 8, 9). Gundula Janowitz (s); Hilde Rössl-Majdan (c); Waldemar Kmentt (t); Walter Berry (bs); Vienna Singverein.*

• *Philharmonia Orchestra, Otto Klemperer, cond. Angel S 3619, $47.84 (eight discs; Coriolan; Prometheus; Consecration of the House; King Stephen; Egmont); available separately as S 35657 (Nos. 1, 8); S 35658 (No. 2; Coriolan; Prometheus); S 35853 (No. 3); S 35661 (No. 4; Consecration of the House); S 35843 (No. 5; King Stephen); S 35711 (No. 6); S 35945 (No. 7); $5.98 each; S 3577, $11.96 (two discs; Egmont; No. 9). Aase Nordmo-Lövberg (s); Christa Ludwig (ms); Waldemar Kmentt (t); Hans Hotter (bs); Philharmonia Chorus.*

• *Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, Paul Kletzki, cond. Orpheus B 165/71, $16.17 (seven discs). Available from Musical Heritage Society, 1991 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023. Available separately as B 165 (Nos. 1, 2); B 166 (No. 3); B 167 (Nos. 4, 5); B 168 (No. 6); B 169 (No. 7); $2.89 each; B 170/71, $5.78 (two discs; Nos. 8, 9). Ingeborg Wenglor (s); Annelies Burmeister (c); Martin Ritzmann (t); Rolf Kuehne (bs); Czech Singers Chorus.*

• *Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, Franz Konwitschny, cond. Wing SRW 19502, $11.34 (six discs). Ingeborg Wenglor (s); Ursula Zollenkopf (ms); Hans-Joachim Rotzsch (t); Theo Adam (bs); Leipzig Radio Chorus.*

• *London Symphony Orchestra, Josef Krips, cond. Everest 3065, $39.84 (eight discs; Egmont); available separately as 3089 (Nos. 1, 8); 3113 (Nos. 2, 4); 3087 (No. 3); 3086 (No. 5; Egmont); 3074 (No. 6); 3088 (No. 7); $4.98 each; S 3110, $9.96 (two discs; No. 9). Jennifer Vyvyan (s); Shirley Verrett (ms); Rudolf Petrak (t); Donald Bell (bs); BBC Chorus.*

• *Boston Symphony Orchestra, Erich Leinsdorf, cond. RCA Red Seal VCS 6903, $21.98 (seven discs); available separately as LSC 3098 (Nos. 1, 8); LSC 3032 (No. 2; Prometheus); LSC 2644 (No. 3); LSC 3006 (No. 4; Leonore No. 2); LSC 3074 (No. 6); LSC 2969 (No. 7; Coriolan); $5.98 each; LSC 7055, $11.96 (two discs; Schoenberg: A Survivor from Warsaw; Nos. 5, 9). Jane Marsh (s); Josephine Veasey (ms); Placido Domingo (t); Sherrill Milnes (b); Pro Musica Chorus; New England Conservatory Chorus.*

• *Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond. Columbia D7S 745, $28.70 (seven discs); partially available separately as MS 6266 (No. 3); MS 7444 (No. 6); MS 7016 (No. 9). Lucine Amara (s); Lili Chookasian (c); John Alexander (t); John Macurdy (bs); Mormon Tabernacle Choir; $5.98 each. M2S 738, $9.98 (two discs; No. 8; other orchestral works).*

• *Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt, cond. London CSP 1, $35.00 (seven discs); available separately as CS 6658 (Nos. 1, 2); CS 6483 (No. 3); CS 6512 (No. 4; Consecration of the House); CS 6619 (Nos. 5, 8); CS 6556 (No. 6; Egmont); CS 6668 (No. 7; Leonore No. 3); CSA 1159 (No. 9). Joan Sutherland (s); Marilyn Horne (ms); James King (t); Martti Talvela (bs); Vienna State Opera Chorus. $5.98 each.*

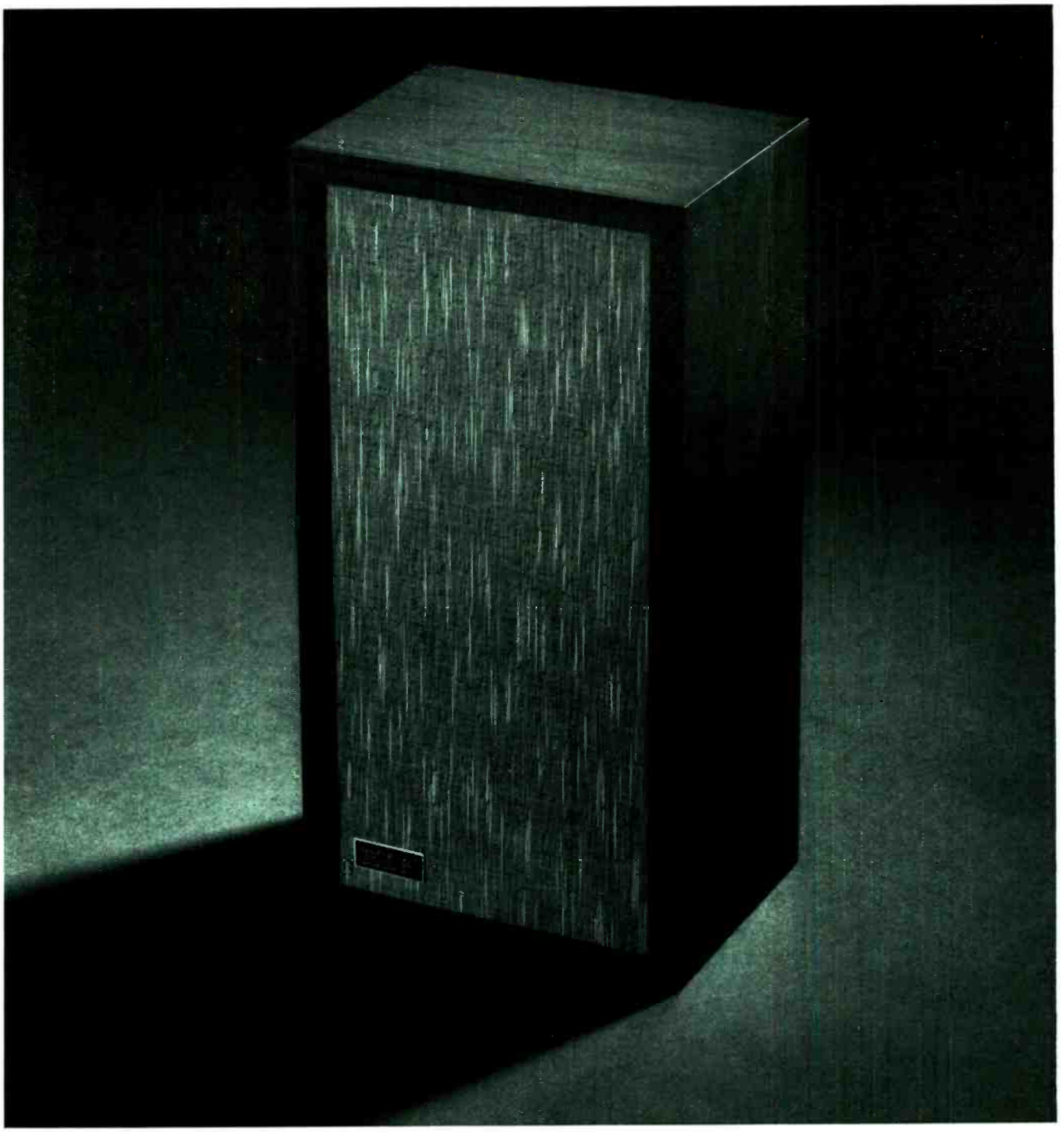
• *Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, William Steinberg, cond. Command S 18001, $47.84 (eight discs; Leonore No. 3); available separately as S 11024 (Nos. 1, 2); S 11019 (No. 3); S 11016 (No. 4; Leonore No. 3); S 11031 (No. 5); S 11033 (No. 6); S 11014 (No. 7); $5.98 each; S 12001, $11.96 (two discs; Nos. 8, 9). Ella Lee (s); Joanna Simon (ms); Richard Kness (t); Thomas Paul (bs); Pittsburgh Mendelssohn Choir.*

• *Cleveland Orchestra, George Szell, cond. Epic BSC 150, $23.19 (seven discs, deleted). Adele Addison (s); Jane Hobson (ms); Richard Lewis (t); Donald Bell (bs); Cleveland Chorus.*

• *NBC Symphony Orchestra, Arturo Toscanini, cond. RCA Victrola VIC 8000, $23.84 (eight discs, mono only; Coriolan; Consecration of the House; Prometheus; Egmont; String Quartet No. 16: Adagio and Scherzo; Septet for Strings and Winds). Eileen Farrell (s); Nan Merriman (ms); Jan Peerce (t) Norman Scott (bs); RCA Victor Chorale.*

• *Columbia Symphony Orchestra, Bruno Walter, cond. Odyssey Y7 30051, $20.98 (seven discs). Emilia Cundari (s); Nell Rankin (ms); Albert da Costa (t); William Wilderman (bs); Westminster Choir.*

• *New York Philharmonic, Bruno Walter, cond. Odyssey 32 66 0001, $17.88*



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(six discs, mono only); No. 9 also available separately as 32 16 0322, $2.98 (rechanneled stereo). Frances Yeend (s); Martha Lipton (ms); David Lloyd (t); Mack Harrell (b); Westminster Choir.

Ansermet's is an old set with variable but generally poor sound that ranges from faint to raucous. He was a solid musician, but of the old school that took Beethoven for a full-blooded romantic. These performances practice rubato and tempo changes on a large scale—some of Ansermet's proclivities in this direction—as in the Fifth Symphony—are really out of line. On the whole, his musicianship is sound, but these recordings, from the stereo bronze age, are too dated stylistically and sonically to be considered competitive.

Bernstein is conscientious—among the few who take all the repeats—but he is a romantic, not really at home in this style; there is considerable insecurity and variability in these performances. His ritards, pauses, overphrasing, and fussy dynamics can hurt a movement. When he does not "interpret" too much, however, he is very good, and his valiant orchestra follows him. The first movement of the *Eroica* has plenty of brio, the finale of No. 8 is excellent and full of verve—so are the first and last movements of No. 7 and the first of No. 9. On the other hand, some of the movements, like the first in No. 2, are taken so fast that the violin figures are blurred, and the reprise in the finale of No. 4 is really subliminal. Other passages—such as the introduction to the First Symphony—are dragged, there is more vigor than poetry in the Sixth, and so forth. Bernstein is not helped by the Columbia engineers. The sound is often good, but just as often somewhat raw, and the finale of the Fifth is an unholy mess. This is a spotty set which shows that Bernstein has more talent than taste.

Jochum's set was recently given a detailed review [HF, August 1970]; it is excellent. The orchestra is first-class and the conductor a fine, cultivated musician who knows the danger spots and tries to avoid them. The sound is mostly good but there is some echo. The First Symphony is held nicely within an eighteenth-century framework, the Second is excellent from the spacious introduction to the dashing finale, the *Eroica* though fine is a little old-fashioned, the Fourth amiable, and the Fifth pretty good, but a little genteel, and the ritards hurt. No. 6 is warm if perhaps a trifle sentimental, No. 7 magnificent in every respect. No. 8 is simple, unaffected, and healthy, though there is little humor in the middle movements. The first movement of the Ninth and the scherzo are impressive; the great adagio is beautifully held together. The finale is a little inflexible and crowded, the recitatives a bit square, though the variations go well, the chorus is good, the solo ensemble less so, but on the whole, this movement is fair.

Karajan refuses to serve up the glut of emotion many of his colleagues consider *de rigueur*, and he avoids the unrelenting scintillation of orchestral virtuosity which is also expected these days. His readings are straightforward, honest, and, on the whole, sound—though they lack illuminating flashes of poetic feeling and elation. He is somewhat handicapped by both his orchestra and his engineers. The strings are excellent, but the winds, notably solo flute and oboe, though precise, do not match this excellence. The First Symphony is simple, neither blown up nor scaled down. In No. 2 the violin figures rush by like the windows of a passing train. The scherzo is one of the best in all these recordings. The *Eroica* exhibits some mannerisms; the all-important sforzandos convey little conviction; the rhythms are good but not invigorating. In the scherzo the bows lie too long on the strings. In No. 4 the rhythm is better, but the bassoons are out of step in the first movement and the woodwind solos are pale; in the second movement the *pianos* have no body—surely the engineers' crime. In the final allegro, Karajan makes the usual mistake of disregarding Beethoven's warning ("non troppo"). No. 5 is good but fails to electrify, the finale being more ponderous than proclamative. The *Pastoral* is nicely played by the Berliners, but the poetry is often expressed in ritards, and the articulation is a bit monotonous, especially in the second movement. No. 7 is well played, particularly the scherzo and finale. No. 8 is uneven in sound. The first movement is hollow, the second brilliant—which only goes to show that when engineers have rapport with performers the results can be felicitous. The finale is all ablaze with virtuosity. The recording of the Ninth does not give a true picture of Karajan's capabilities—I have heard him do the work superbly with the New York Philharmonic. Only the third movement, warmly expansive and beautifully held together, recalls that performance. The rest is quite acceptable even though the poor tenor botches his solo and hurts the ensemble. The chorus is good.

Klemperer is one of the celebrated conductors of our time, but an enigma. A richly equipped technician who has absolute control over his orchestra, he is also a fine musician and an indefatigable student of the music he performs. Unfortunately his approach is not unlike the archaeologist's, who examines a freshly excavated statue inch by inch. He has the cataloguer's passion for detail, and if there is a choice between detail and the large line, he too often decides in favor of the former. He is full of indecisive elaboration, and quite apart from the problems of style, it may be questioned whether much of the detail he singles out justifies itself. Even his famous slow tempos are due to his tarrying over minutiae, for when he is not fussing with detail he can be very, very good and invigorating. He is not helped by his engineers, the sound often being flawed. The first two symphonies are well played. The introduction to the Second has power and depth. Both allegros are brisk, even exhilarating, the slow movements quiet and melodious, and both the minuet and the scherzo are judicious—a rare case. The *Eroica* is slow, and when Klemperer reaches the famous sforzandos every chord stands by itself. The second movement advances piecemeal, becoming toward the end almost treacly. The scherzo is a bit too controlled, hence there is a certain loss of propulsive force; once you can easily count the three beats in a measure, the essential Beethovenian character is missing. The pre-echo in the finale gives away the story: the variations are slow and pedantic. Again a fine introduction to No. 4, the allegro not very sprightly but well played. Klemperer is among the few who know how to interpret the unique recapitulation in the first movement. The adagio is ponderous, the scherzo good but not rugged, the trio fussy and slow, the ending elephantine. The finale is good. The first movement of the Fifth is slow, again ponderous, overphrased, mannered, and played with terrific ritards. The little oboe cadenza is a *preghiera*. In the second movement the phrasing is indistinct because of unlicensed portamentos, and the great melody is rubbery. In the scherzo the indicated ritards are magnified and there is no bite; the second part sounds like a string exercise in fugal playing. The ritards get bigger and bigger, and the jubilation in the finale is as tame as a ceremony for the award of good conduct medals. No. 6 is a little slow, but this is a good performance because Klemperer's passion for little things and dynamic subtleties is welcome in the first two movements; but the tempo in the scherzo is impossible—every note is separate. The raindrops could be counted at the beginning of the storm, but the rest is good, and so is the finale, which has an impressive climax. The first two movements of No. 7 are again fine, but the scherzo is slow, Klemperer does not take the repeats, and the sound is dull. The trio is completely out of shape, the finale is much too slow, and the rhythm is tame, as in a gavotte. No. 8 offers a standard first movement; in the second movement one can really hear the metronome ticking away and at an incorrect setting. The third movement is nicely clumsy—as it should be—and the finale excellent. In the Ninth, the first movement is well played but too deliberate, and the grand line is lost. There is a terrific ritard before the reprise, but the big bedlam is well sustained. The scherzo is good but slow and there is an unforgivable side break virtually in the middle of a sentence. The sound is shrill and lacking in body. The great adagio sings, but the individual sections do not flow naturally into one another. Everything is orderly in the finale, though not particularly exciting. The chorus is very good, but Klemperer is so busy with the little things in the woodwinds that he loses track of it. The solo ensemble is not well balanced, and the cymbals sound like pot lids. In general the sound gets worse as the finale unfolds.

In the case of Kletzki and his Prague orchestra, performances and recordings are of less than standard quality. The

conductor observes all indications in the score literally; the trouble is that he adds some of his own: pauses before chords, choppy tuttis, variable tempos, and monster rubatos. The end of the adagio in No. 4 is rather comatose; the scherzo in No. 5 is a caricature. Here and there one runs across a passably executed movement, but in addition to the poor sound, the orchestra has even poorer woodwinds; some of the oboe and clarinet solos are grotesque.

Konwitschny's set is also substandard. He has the same trouble with poor sound and poor woodwinds as does Kletzki. He too is literal and his sense of proper tempo is limited. The ritards are taken by the hatful, and Konwitschny never repeats anything. In No. 6 the scherzo is split between two sides! There is some fair playing, especially in No. 7, but this set isn't worth the import duties.

The First Symphony in the Krips collections is one of the better readings of this work. No. 2 is less impressive in sound and in interpretation. In No. 3 the sound improves, but the playing is somewhat metronomic and undramatic. The slow movement is too fast, though at least it is kept on one side, while the scherzo is a little comfortable, with a devastating echo at the end. The finale is not very graceful, but the end is fair. In No. 4, although the allegro is decent, there is a lot of rumble in the bass and the reprise is unimaginative. There is no real heartfelt song in the adagio but the finale is good—although the texture sounds clear only in the *piano* passages. No. 5 lacks brio in the first movement and lyricism in the second; the finale, however, is lively and sonorous. The close-miked woodwinds in No. 6 sound like harmonicas, the scherzo has little rustic quality, and the storm takes place in the next county. There are some good sections in No. 7—most of the finale—but the sound is dull and the wind choir not balanced. The Ninth is one of those one-disc jobs which of course entail inexcusable omission of repeats. The tempos are unconvincing and the side break in the slow movement is brutal. This is not an outstanding orchestra, and its lack of finesse shows particularly in No. 8; in addition, it is poorly served by the recording.

Leinsdorf is a distinguished conductor and here he presides over one of our best orchestras. Although he avoids all ostentation and exaggeration, his performances are too closely controlled for spontaneous enjoyment. He is not adept at those nearly imperceptible tempo and dynamic adjustments that give life to music, and when verve is called for he is inclined to drive his players. But the playing itself is never less than accomplished. The sound on these recordings varies from disc to disc; none of it is first-class and some of it is poor; at times the orchestra seems to be playing behind a scrim. The first two symphonies show fluency and virtuosity, but also a certain rigidity in the allegros. The *Eroica* is heavy-footed and slow. The adagio is a a bit sober, the scherzo is good, and the finale not bad but poorly recorded. In No. 4 the tempo is strictly enforced in the first movement, the adagio does not sing out, the scherzo is tidy rather than forceful, the finale good but not exhilarating. The poor sound contributes to all of this. No. 5 is slow and cautious. No. 6 uneven and unpoetic—though the playing is always good—while the fast movements in No. 7 are a bit too comfortable to be properly Dionysian. No. 8 is mostly well done. In the first movement of the Ninth, the maestoso is very un poco, though it is exceedingly well played. The scherzo is energetic albeit a little driven, the slow movement fine though somewhat mannered, the finale very good.

Ormandy's set is an anthology, as is clear from the varying sound. Could it be that the first two symphonies are the latest additions to the set? Even if at times a bit fast, these are fine performances, and the sound is first-class. The *Eroica* also sounds better than the subsequent symphonies; Ormandy starts with a good tempo and follows the score scrupulously. The slow movement is good if not dramatic enough; the scherzo is excellent; the trio a little mannered; the last movement is also good if you boost the treble. In the Fourth the sound begins to deteriorate alarmingly. The first movement is a little fast, the adagio fine, the scherzo fair. The finale is virtuosic, but its obvious brilliance is dampened by the recording. The Fifth is unattractive. In No. 6 the sound gets louder but also coarser; whether it is due to this or to Ormandy's concept (it is hard to tell which), the first movement sounds biggish. The second movement presents a too well-regulated brook. The scherzo is fine if a little inflexible, the storm real, and the last movement is excellent, with a grand climax. In No. 7, the fast movements are energetic though a little slow and without the abandon they call for; but the allegretto, which so many other conductors miss, is attractive. No. 8—with the exception of the third movement, which is perfunctory and fast—offers a highly commendable performance. In No. 9 the first movement is impressive because Ormandy carries out Beethoven's maestoso. The scherzo is also vigorous. The adagio is beautifully cantabile despite the awkward microphone placing. The recitatives in the finale are well articulated, the variations fine if a shade fast. The solo quartet is too close to the microphone, while the chorus is a little muffled, but on the whole, Ormandy copes with all these difficulties.

Schmidt-Isserstedt offers in the First

Ludwig van Beethoven
December 16, 1770—March 26, 1827

Symphony a stodgy introduction and allegro; the andante is fair but not light enough; the minuet goes at the correct tempo, permitting the trio to come into its own; the finale is good if not virtuosic. The sound is also good. In Symphony No. 2, on the reverse side, the quality of the sound suddenly changes as an acoustic scrim is lowered on the orchestra. The introduction is fair; the allegro a bit heavy-footed though the tempo is good; the larghetto decent, the scherzo pretty good, the trio sentimental, and the finale fair, but somehow there is a home-baked quality about the music-making. In the *Eroica* the allegro is tight and well proportioned; the second movement has good tempo and works up to a fine climax; the scherzo too is quite good. The variations in the finale are light and nicely played, only the slow episode is sentimental. The end, however, is more pompous than jubilant. There is nothing worthwhile to report on No. 4. It is plodding and pedestrian; not even the renowned London sound is up to par. In No. 5 we hear a standard allegro and andante, but the latter ends on a mammoth ritard; and in both movements the chords are sedentary. The scherzo is timid, but the finale gets up some steam. No. 6 is decent in the first two movements and the sound is good, but things are a bit demure. The scherzo is good if a shade slow. The storm too is well done, though no trees are felled. The final movement is placid—Schmidt-Isserstedt does not want his climaxes to shatter windows. In No. 7 the introduction is slow and unexciting, the chords are thumped, and the timpani seem to play on wood. The vivace is less than its name and even nods a little in the middle. The allegretto, although fair, is played a shade too slowly and expires rather than ends. The scherzo is good but the trio drags. There is orderly playing in the finale—Bacchus must have drunk ginger ale on this occasion. No. 8 opens with a standard allegro. The second movement, however, is surprisingly elegant and light. The third is properly humorous. The finale, if not brilliant, is solid. The Ninth sounds like an older recording, lacking London's typical brilliance. The allegro is satisfactory, the scherzo also quite good, though Schmidt-Isserstedt does not take the repeats, and there is more steel in his rhythm here than he usually exhibits. The adagio seems spacious and well planned, but the audio sounds filtered, which dampens the eloquence of the cantilena. There is the usual callous break in the middle. The finale, though not free of ritards strange to this style, is fairly good, except that the excitement is held down to a minimum. Both solo ensemble and chorus are more than adequate.

In Steinberg's set we have mostly excellent, wide-ranging sound, a very good orchestra, and a conductor who is literal and pedantic, but a fine craftsman. Unfortunately, he projects no personality. The First sounds like a little symphony played by a big band and with a little too much earnestness. Nevertheless, the playing is top quality. In No. 2 everything is taken too fast. Nonetheless I cannot withhold my admiration for the last movement, which, despite its exaggerated speed, is taken by this orchestra without a hitch. Though the sforzandos in the first movement of the *Eroica* make one sit up, the melodic element is neglected. The adagio is correct but uninspiring, and it has the usual bad break in the middle; the scherzo is not well done; in the finale, Steinberg is a real martinet. The two allegros in the Fourth are maddeningly fast, the Fifth is mostly coarse, the Sixth is metronomic and uneventful, well played as usual but with little sensitivity. No. 7, notably the finale, is well done. So are the first two movements of No. 8. The finale is taken at a simply incredible clip. The sound here is muddy, with a good deal of echo. The first movement of the Ninth is opaque both in concept and sound; in the scherzo the drums seem to be playing on cracked kettles or something. The violins in the adagio sound like the singer who has just a little breath left at the end of a long phrase; otherwise, the movement is not bad. The finale is marred by a poor solo quartet and a distant chorus. Neither seems able to follow Steinberg's tempo in the final stretto —but then, what group could?

Since in Szell we are dealing with one of the superstars of the game, it is regrettable that most, if not all, of the recordings in this set are relatively old as stereology goes, though on the whole, the Epic engineering must have been of top quality because by fiddling with the controls one can obtain a fairly live sound from most of them. Szell has a matchless orchestra, trained to the nth degree: the strings are keen and extremely mobile, the woodwinds the best of their kind, and the brasses smooth but assertive. Only Reiner and Toscanini match Szell in authority and orchestral technique, but Szell is more cultivated than either of them: his insight into classical, notably eighteenth-century, style is superior to anyone else's, and he has aristocratic taste. Szell is seldom guilty of those worst features of misguided taste —the ritards and especially the pauses inserted before climactic runs and chords. The *Luftpause*, as the Germans so graphically term the interpolated pause, was inherited from nineteenth-century church musicians and is a favorite trick of glee club directors. German conductors love it, but it has no place in this kind of music. The First Symphony offers a nice eighteenth-century performance; the phrasing and the airiness of the second movement are unexcelled. In Szell's staccatos there is always daylight between the notes, yet they are not robbed of their rhythmic value. The minuet is light, in just the right tempo and not dramatized; the wind chords in the trio could be balanced on jewelers' scales. The finale rolls with the effortless grace of a string quartet. The first movement of No. 2 is perhaps a little fast but well played, the second sings warmly, the scherzo is swift but without vehemence, the instruments gracefully carrying on the question-and-answer game. The finale is matchless in clarity and unostentatious virtuosity. The *Eroica* is an old recording by stereo standards, but it can take its place with the newest. From the crack of the first two chords it has brio to spare, the pacing is astringent, the rhythm cutting, and the sforzandos crisp. The adagio seems heroic rather than moving because it is a trifle fast, but then we are usually subjected to very slow tempos. The cellos are effusive and the winds splendid. When the triplets are reached, Szell's handling of the ensemble is the exact opposite of Klemperer's: the strings are given their head and the oboe dominates the scene. The timpani at the end are played with the lightest of hands. The scherzo is a whirlwind, the woodwinds' staccatos are needle pricks, and the horns in the trio glossy. The finale is again a little fast, but the Clevelanders carry it off. The variations are delectable, the slow episode eloquent, only the peroration with the horns is a little subdued. There is wonderful poise in the introduction to No. 4. The sound, however, is nowhere as good as it is in the *Eroica* and much is lost in the basses. As in Nos. 1 and 2, the first movement avoids bigness, the adagio is a little fast but its song is tesselated. Szell never permits the original rhythmic motif to disappear from the listener's consciousness; it pulsates through the entire movement in the most delicate dynamic shades. The scherzo is exceedingly well played but more refined than robust. In the finale Szell takes cognizance of Beethoven's injunction, "ma non troppo." Because of his correct tempo, every group of four notes appears as a recognizable motivic entity and the imitations and the delightful give-and-take are fully realized. The Fifth is energetic and aggressive—only one slight unnatural pause in the first movement. Here, the exposition is not repeated, which is a crime, especially in view of the tingling performance of the rest of the movement. The andante is expressive and well proportioned; those who accuse Szell of coldness should listen to the ending of this movement. The scherzo is fine, the bass runs splendid, and the transition to the finale is masterly, justifying the experience of the little boy who at a performance in the Gewandhaus cuddled up to Schumann saying, "I am afraid." No pussyfooting in the finale: all flags are waving and all clarions crying, and the final stretto is a marvel. No. 6 must be one of the more recent recordings because the sound quality is more up-to-date. In the allegro the many little repetitions are nicely varied; in the second movement the solo cellos are a little too prominent, but aside from that everything goes well, the wind solos are expressive, and the long trills in the violins phosphorescent. The scherzo is strikingly robust and alive yet "rural"; there is real lightning in the storm, which is topped by the splendor of the last movement. At the climactic point—and no other conductor makes this point so overwhelmingly—Szell almost ruins the

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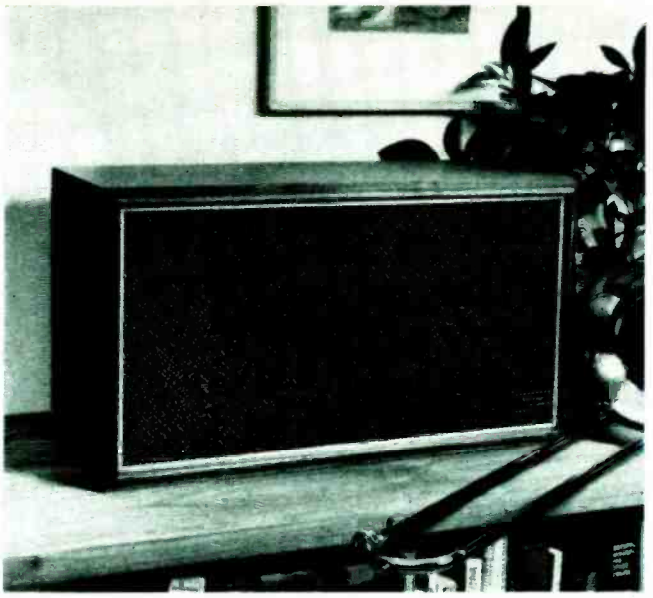

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effect with one of his infrequent lapses of judgment: the rising torrent of sound is suspended for a fraction of a second just before floodtide. The introduction to No. 7 is more powerful than poetic and there is a bad *Luftpause* in the theme as the vivace begins. That must have been Szell's quota for the day because afterward things go well even though this is not one of Szell's best performances and the sound is again less than first-class. The allegretto is too brisk; no matter how well played, at this tempo it loses a good deal of its sad dignity. The scherzo, however, is all that it should be, tearing along savagely but not roughly. The sound improves in the finale and the great orchestra comes fully into its own. The performance is vigorous, though only in the second half does the conductor loosen his tie and unbutton his collar. No. 8 opens with a fine movement, even if some of the chords are a little too *sec*. The second movement is just a little hasty, and while the staccatos are beautifully executed, some of the easy-going elegance is sacrificed. In the third movement we finally find someone who is not afraid to carry out Beethoven's droll scheme—the trumpets and drums lustily whack the wrong beats. The finale is a masterpiece of orchestral virtuosity, ensemble playing, and stylistic finesse. Too bad that the sound is not quite up to the performance. The first movement of the Ninth is tense and dramatic rather than maestoso. This is a highly personal concept carried out resolutely; it is very impressive even if one does not happen to agree with it. The playing is superb. The scherzo is sinister, devastating, relentless; the woodwinds are marvelous, but the timpani solos are too loud. The adagio is handsomely expansive, if perhaps a little fast; the supposed martinet is as outgoing here as any romantic could wish. In the finale the microphones must have been rearranged because everything is too forward; this, combined with a certain impatience on Szell's part—he pushes things a bit—makes the performance high-strung. The chorus is very good, the solo quartet too closely miked, but all unite in a rousing final stretto.

Toscanini is "the Maestro," a great artist whom legend has beatified—and rightfully so. This makes the critic's task difficult. And additionally, we are dealing here with a set of "historical performances" culled from recordings made at various places—one is even taken from a broadcast. Finally, we are up against the idea of "definitive" readings, a utopian concept that does not and could not exist in the performing arts. The booklet in the album, unaccountably chaste, says nothing about the processes of rejuvenation to which these recordings, from eighteen to twenty-three years old, have been subjected, but RCA surely deserves considerable credit for making them more acceptable than such antiques usually are. In the end, however, a critic must judge only what is before him.

Toscanini burst upon a musical scene dominated by sentimental German (and German-trained) conductors, more interested in "expressive interpretation" than in stylistic faithfulness, orchestral discipline, and precision. (There were of course a few exceptions.) Toscanini's verve, integrity, strict adherence to the score, and unparalleled demands on the orchestra established new standards for ensemble playing, dynamics, tempo, and so forth, which almost totally changed the art of orchestral playing. When Toscanini conducts, everything is fluid, living, and dynamic, but he has idiosyncrasies that can sometimes mar the finest performances. The unanimity he demands and gets from his players is awesome even though at times this takes the form of rattling drumfire precision; the vivacity of motion he obtains has never been equaled, but it can turn into ferocious convulsion; because of his impetuosity, he cannot attain the casual elegance needed in the classics—Beethoven included. He does not miss a single comma in a score, he scorns unauthorized pauses, and his crescendos are carried out with minute attention to dosage. On the other hand, his tempos are prevailingly too fast and he is prone to exaggerate distinction into antithesis, though it must be admitted that he maintains clarity of texture under almost all circumstances. All in all, I believe the world has not seen so formidable a personality at the head of an orchestra since Spontini stared down the Berlin orchestra into total submission.

The First Symphony has all the imprints of the Toscanini style: absolute control over the orchestra, utter precision, and incredible vitality. The allegro is fine, but the furious whiplash chords are too energetic for the eighteenth-century style. The second movement is superbly poised and the return of the theme is magisterial. The minuet, though well played, is a bit violent, the trio is too fast, the violins race, albeit cleanly. In the finale, again that all-conquering vitality; the fast *piano* passages in the strings are marvelous. The introduction to No. 2 is businesslike at the expense of poise, the hard-driven allegro makes the violin passages blur, and the classical flavor is lost. The larghetto is also a shade fast; even these excellent strings

have some trouble in carrying out the relay work without scratching. The finale is fast and energetic beyond words. Some of the delicate thematic convolutions, however, are lost in this magnificent tumult. One admires the intense energy that went into this performance, but the work can't take it. The *Eroica* starts with two pistol shots and proceeds heroically despite the very poor sound; the sforzandos must have been stunning in the live performance. Toscanini does slow down a little for the subsidiary subjects, but the movement ends in jubilation, which the recording only palely reproduces. The Funeral March is noble and dramatic; no indistinct slurs in the basses here, every note makes grave sense, and there is a blessed absence of sentimentality. The only slight contretemps is caused by a few triple-*sec* chords. Beethoven would have jumped for joy had he heard his scherzo performed with such cross-grained dash, but he would not have liked the variations in the finale, which are too fast and too muscular—some of them are even bedlamish. There is no elegance whatever in this concept—the flute almost chokes on its fast runs—but the slow episode is excellent and the final peroration is broad and triumphant. The pensive composure of the introduction to No. 4 is veiled by the dull sound, the allegro is a little fast, though spirit and execution are good, the "relief melodies" suave, the recapitulation obviously well planned, but its meaning is lost because the timpani roll, which defines the harmonic structure, is not heard (this symphony, more than any of the others except the Fifth, suffers from poor sound). The adagio is ample but the warmth of the cantilena can only be surmised, creating a feeling of monotony, and the delicate exchanges of the dotted motif are mostly inaudible. Except for the fast trio, the scherzo is very good though it sounds thin and subdued—which hardly befits Toscanini. In the finale, he changes Beethoven's "ma non troppo" to vivace; in actual performance this must have been a thrilling exposition of virtuosity. The Fifth, taken from the air, is an exceedingly poor recording; one must guess at most of it. Everything in the first movement is sharp and forward-pressing, but somehow its rather massive monumentality is not quite realized. For once the Maestro does slow down before the reprise and there is some imprecision in the playing. The second movement seems fine and well paced. The scherzo again lacks poise. It is too fast, the horns announce the famous repeated note motif as if they want to get it over with, and the runs in the strings are a wild melee. The transition is too rapid and without any mystery. The long crescendo leading to the finale is well managed. The finale sounds grand—from what we can make out of this recording. The opening of No. 6 is played with excellent tempo and phrasing, but it gets a little massive; this of course may not be Toscanini's fault. The second movement

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is too formal. There is little tenderness and elation, even some technical flaws. The scherzo is played too fast and too hard. There is nothing pastoral about it. The winds are whining; the sforzandos are greatly exaggerated. The storm is drastically clipped—the timpanist seems to be beating on plywood rather than calfskin. The last movement is the best in this recording, which has disagreeable sound throughout; the great climax, which Toscanini did so magnificently in the concert hall, does not come off.

The introduction to No. 7 is masterful: it has breadth and is full of suppressed drama. In the vivace, the old wizard is in his element; whatever he touches here emits sparks, the rhythm is explosive, the long crescendos rolling inexorably to their destination. No ritards for him, nothing to impede this rushing but minutely controlled torrent. The allegretto is taken in a peculiar portamento fashion which lessens its poignancy and the songful portions are somewhat mechanical, even hurried, though the playing is beautiful. The scherzo is launched with sweeping élan, but the trio is so fast that the hymnic quality is completely lost; at the return from trio to scherzo the horn plays the motif like a grumbling trill—the player has no time to articulate it. The finale is even more striking than the vivace, the ferocious energy reaching a bacchanalian wildness that leaves the listener limp. The sound is not too bad except for the harsh trumpets, but that may be the Maestro's doing. The Eighth is a very poor recording. The first movement is pleasant enough, but the chords are robbed of an appreciable portion of their rhythmic value for the sake of sharpness. The allegretto is a little fast. Toscanini takes it very seriously and refuses to smile; the sharp accentuation is out of place here. In the third movement, Toscanini is only too glad to follow Beethoven's instructions for exaggerated accents, but his tempo is excessive and the humor of the situation is missed. The cadence just before the trio is sharpened so grotesquely that no note values are left. The finale of this work is a piece that can absorb the Toscanini fury and come out unscathed, but again the Beethovenian humor is missing and what we get is pure energy translated into music. The shadowy tremolos at the beginning of the Ninth come out on this recording as an unpleasant rustle, but the great theme falls in mightily. Everything is highly pointed, and the required maestoso is missing because the tempo is nervous and impatient. Then, with the introduction of the rhythmic countertheme—which should be majestic—things get really out of hand and there ensues a scramble bereft of all dignity; the reprise, however, is impressive. The scherzo, in which all repeats are observed, shows Toscanini at his best: taut, vehement, untamable, and victorious despite the many flaws in the recording and some bloopers in the horns. In the adagio the conductor drops the whip and lets the music pour forth in a great stream of melody, the sections fused in one solid whole. The fanfares that introduce the finale are incredibly hasty and perfunctory and in the recitatives every chord is whittled to a fraction of its value. In the variations everything is kept moving briskly along. Here the excellent chorus as well as the accomplished solo quartet are able to cope with Toscanini's wishes. The "Turkish" music is a little coarse, but, oh, how the orchestra sails into the subsequent instrumental fugue! The following eruption of the chorus is memorable even though the pace must have been a little upsetting to them. The choral sound is much better on this ancient recording than in many a recent release, and the solo quartet, never batting an eye at the fast tempo, offers one of the best performances I have ever heard. Surely the conductor must have coached the chorus, which can be inferred from the curious phrasings. The final stretto—not too fast!—is bracing, and the movement ends in a blaze of glory.

Walter's first recordings are even older than Toscanini's—gaslight monos. The sound is poor and often only one's memory can complete the aural picture (Odyssey's forthcoming reissue of the conductor's later stereo versions will be a decided improvement, at least in this area). But the first two symphonies seem to be well done. The *Eroica* is also pretty good if a bit romanticized. The Fourth, though fast, is still well above average. However, the more he advances into the nineteenth century, the less Walter understands Beethoven. In No. 5 there are slowdowns and "highlightings." Walter does not take the repeats (nor does he take any elsewhere), the second movement is mannered, the scherzo slow, the trio almost a caricature—that pause *after* the upbeat is really upsetting, and the one before the finale is out of this world. No. 6, this time with the Philadelphia Orchestra, is completely misjudged. No. 7, sonically the poorest of the set, has a first movement that is too fast. The allegretto is played adagio and with misplaced accents, though scherzo and finale are not bad. The sound is again very poor in No. 8, and as usual, Walter ignores the repeat; the rest is passable. The maestoso is missing in No. 9, the chords are heavy, the basses play the great rhythmic countersubject almost legato, and there is a breathtaking pause before the reprise. The scherzo is taken at a good clip and I imagine the live performance must have been fine, but the movement is stunted by the omission of the repeats. The warmth of the adagio can be felt even through the wretched recording; the finale, aside from the ritards, goes well. Personally, I find it painful to listen to performances that are lost in a lot of indistinct noise, scratching, and tootling; music must be fully alive to be effective and old recordings cannot provide this life.

In sum, the reader will realize that a uniformly superb "complete set" is an impossibility; artists are not unfailingly superhuman, and fortunately so. A really excellent complete set will have to be put together by selecting individual recordings.

Individual Recordings

(other than those listed under "Complete Sets")

Symphony No. 1, in C, Op. 21 (1799–1800).

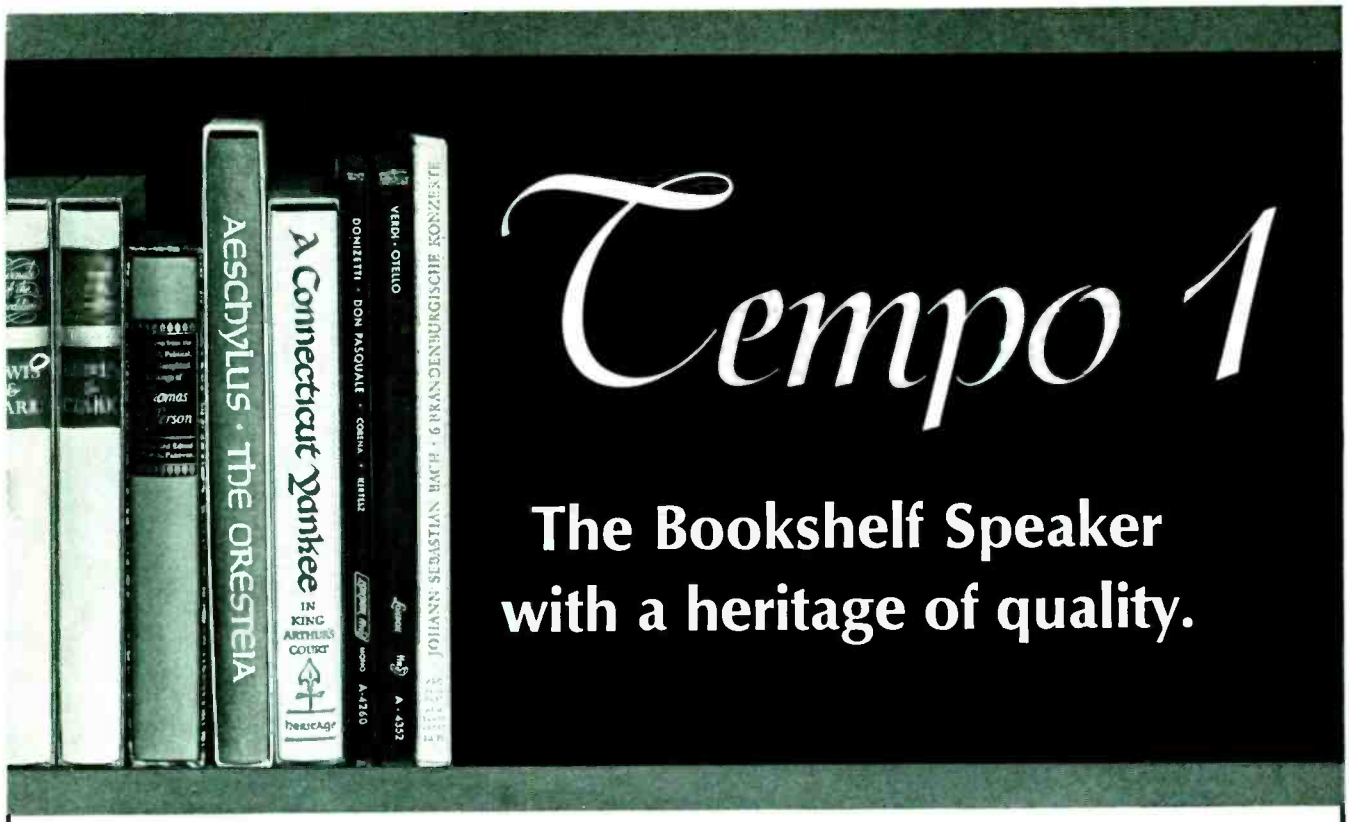
- *Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Paul Paray, cond. Wing SR 18062, $1.89 (No. 2).*
- *Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Fritz Reiner, cond. RCA Red Seal LSC 6096, $11.96 (two discs; No. 9).*
- *BBC Symphony Orchestra, Arturo Toscanini, cond. Seraphim IC 6015, $8.94 (three discs, mono only; Nos. 4, 6; Brahms: Tragic Overture; Mozart: Die Zauberflöte: Overture).*

Paray's introduction exhibits poor sound, poor tempo, and poor concept. The allegro will do; the larghetto seems fair; but the sound is so monotonous that all possible good features are scaled down. The finale, heard as through a cracked window, seems pretty good. With Reiner the playing is first-class and the concept fine. The sound is too thin and distant—this must be a relatively old stereo recording. Reiner's light hand is in evidence everywhere, most advantageously in the minuet, which is not played like a driven scherzo; the trio should be an object lesson to other conductors. The finale, with its easy virtuosity, is particularly attractive. This would be a gem if it were sonically up to date. Toscanini's recording originated in the early 1930s and is like a black-and-white reproduction of Titian. Yet it is an even better performance than the one in the complete set. The tempos are within reason, the articulation crystal clear, and so is the ensemble playing of the excellent BBC orchestra. Only the little minuet is hurt—it can't take violence. The sound is acceptable to cultists only.

Symphony No. 2, in D, Op. 36 (1802).

- *Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Sir Thomas Beecham, cond. Angel S 35509, $5.98 (Ruins of Athens).*
- *Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, Janos Ferencsik, cond. Parliament S 156, $2.98 (Consecration of the House).*
- *Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Paul Paray, cond. (see No. 1).*

Beecham's hurried introduction ignores Beethoven's adagio molto, and the allegro is so fast that the violin runs are just a blur. The second movement is good though a little minced—this is not rococo music. The final chords here are asthmatic. Both scherzo and finale are pretty good, but the sound is ancient. As I listen to Ferencsik's performance, I am again impressed by the crucial importance of the correct tempo in the allegros of this symphony: it must be gauged by the ability of the strings to negotiate the runs clearly. Ferencsik does not take this clue, yet the performance is other-



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wise not bad. The larghetto is better than standard and so is the scherzo, though it is considerably disturbed by echo. The finale also passes muster even with the slurring in the violins. Paray's introduction is literal and metronomic, the allegro a slurred mess, the larghetto—well, they are playing all the notes. The scherzo begins fairly well, but the strings cannot carry out the banter without hesitation. The finale is good. This is one of those hermaphrodite recordings ("also playable on mono") and there is little subtlety in the sound.

Symphony No. 3, in E flat, Op. 55 ("Eroica") (1803).

- *BBC Symphony Orchestra, Sir John Barbirolli, cond. Angel S 36461, $5.98.*
- *London Philharmonic Orchestra, Sir Adrian Boult, cond. Stereo Fidelity 15700, $1.89.*
- *Philharmonic Promenade Orchestra, Sir Adrian Boult, cond. Vanguard Everyman SRV 127, $2.98.*
- *Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra, Antal Dorati, cond. Wing SR 18047, $1.89.*
- *Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Wilhelm Furtwängler, cond. Turnabout TV 4343, $2.98 (mono only).*
- *Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Wilhelm Furtwängler, cond. Seraphim IC 6018, $8.94 (three discs, mono only; Nos. 5, 7).*
- *Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, Lovro von Matacic, cond. Parliament S 129, $2.98.*
- *Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Max Rudolf, cond. Decca DL 710148, $5.98.*
- *Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Georg Solti, cond. London CS 6145, $5.98.*
- *Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, William Steinberg, cond. Pickwick S 4036, $2.49.*

Barbirolli's allegro is somewhat lacking in the brio Beethoven explicitly demands. In the Funeral March, the basses are a little too sober while the woodwind solos tend toward the sentimental; the great threnody is too well-behaved. The scherzo is very good; the finale is well played but unexciting. Boult's old recording floats around in two versions. It is a decent but rather ordinary performance in which everything seems to be a bit too proper and well bred. I do not know where Wing picked up this Dorati, but they certainly give it back to us with bargain-basement sound. The allegro flows well until the subsidiary themes, which slow down too much. Dorati is obviously trying to emulate Toscanini's whiplash chords, which is not a good idea—besides, it can't be done. Otherwise this is a pretty good performance and could be even better were it not for the quality of the sound. The Funeral March is very good; the Minneapolis winds are first-class and the scherzo excellent. But in the finale, Dorati again follows the Maestro—it is too fast and at that pace elegance wanes.

Both of Furtwängler's recordings are a quarter of a century old and reflect dated recording techniques. The two versions are about the same. In both, Furtwängler proves to be a dyed-in-the-wool romantic, favoring arbitrary and highly subjective procedures in tempo, dynamics, and phrasing. The pace in the allegros is fair. Toward the middle, the conductor slows down and then has to find his way back to the proper tempo. The March is good, but quite romantic in articulation and with some heart-rending ritards. The sound is particularly bad in the animated portions of this movement. The scherzo is better on Turnabout, too genteel on Seraphim. The trio is very slow—the horns almost go to sleep. The finale is also slow and the end is pretty messy. These are recordings for collectors and historians, not for enjoyment. Matacic's allegro is standard grade but with nonstandard ritards that are certainly not *eroica*. The March would be quite good if the Prague solo winds were not so timid. There is the usual reprehensible break in the middle of the movement. The scherzo is fairly good, though the orchestra struggles a little with the fast exchanges—there is always a tiny interval between them. The finale is also standard if not overelegant. Expect some surface noise and echo. Rudolf offers a standard allegro, a fast and perfunctory March—it is so rapid that no break is needed in the middle—and fair complementary movements. Solti can fire the Vienna Philharmonic with much more zest than can other conductors—though he cannot change the tone of their first oboe. The allegro is fine, but there are some fluctuations in the tempo that go a little beyond the permissible. There is a very fine spot toward the reprise where the woodwinds play ravishingly. The Funeral March is beautifully phrased, the basses exceptionally well handled—none of the grumbling usually heard here; one immediately senses that an experienced opera hand is at work because the movement builds up to a magnificent dramatic climax. Too bad that this recording also makes the break in the middle of the movement, thus destroying the spell. The scherzo is taken at a frightening tempo, yet the usually placid Viennese follow Solti without dropping a clinker. There is, of course, a price to be paid for this exuberance: in order to save the horns from certain derailment, Solti must take the trio much more slowly. The variations in the finale are a little too fast and hence a bit confusing when the partwriting becomes elaborate, but the peroration is fine. The Steinberg on Pickwick S 4036 was not submitted in time for review.

Symphony No. 4, in B flat, Op. 60 (1806).

- *Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, Janos Ferencsik, cond. Parliament S 165, $2.98 (King Stephen).*
- *Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Wilhelm Furtwängler, cond. Heliodor 2548 704, $4.98 (rechanneled stereo; No. 5).*
- *Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra, Kiril Kondrashin, cond. Melodiya/Seraphim S 60061, $2.98 (Prometheus).*
- *BBC Symphony Orchestra, Arturo Toscanini, cond. (see No. 1).*

Ferencsik has no concept whatever of this work. The performance is very bad and the sound matches it. There is one interesting feature, though: the scherzo, which jogs along peacefully under a cloud of echo, is labeled "Menuetto"—what score d'ya read? From what one can hear of the introduction on Furtwängler's old mono set, it starts well. The ritard before the allegro is spectacular. The allegro also starts well until the second theme is reached, whereupon the orchestra goes into mourning. There is, of course, no repeat, and the sound is terrible. For the adagio, the listener needs a hearing aid and shots to prevent an asthmatic attack. The scherzo ambles docilely, the trio is even slower. The finale has life, but the sound is so poor it is hard to form any opinion. What one does notice is that this conductor's control of the orchestra is far from perfect. As for Kondrashin, this symphony is not his cup of tea; he is not attuned to its *joie de vivre*. Also, the sound is a little raw and there is plenty of echo. The allegro is fair, the adagio too fast, and the dotted rhythm snapped off. Little finesse is exhibited in this movement. The best playing is in the finale, where the Muscovites follow their leader bravely in good tempo. Toscanini's recording (different from the one in the complete set) is from about 1939. The introduction has immense poise, much better than in the other recording, and the same goes for the allegro. The Adagio though is very fast. The scherzo is energetic and buoyant, the finale is vivace rather than allegro non troppo, but it is well played. The sound is abominable.

Symphony No. 5, in C minor, Op. 67 (1805–7).

- *Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, Karel Ančerl, cond. Parliament 136, $1.98 (mono only).*
- *Philharmonic Promenade Orchestra, Sir Adrian Boult, cond. Vanguard Everyman SRV 190, $2.98 (Leonore No. 3).*
- *London Symphony Orchestra, Antal Dorati, cond. Mercury SR 90317, $5.98 (Egmont; Consecration of the House).*
- *Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra, Antal Dorati, cond. Wing SR 18016, $1.89 (Egmont; Coriolan; Leonore No. 3).*
- *Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Wilhelm Furtwängler, cond. (see No. 4).*
- *Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Wilhelm Furtwängler, cond. (see No. 3).*
- *Boston Symphony Orchestra, Charles Munch, cond. RCA Victrola VICS 1035, $2.98 (Schubert: Symphony No. 8).*
- *Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Artur*

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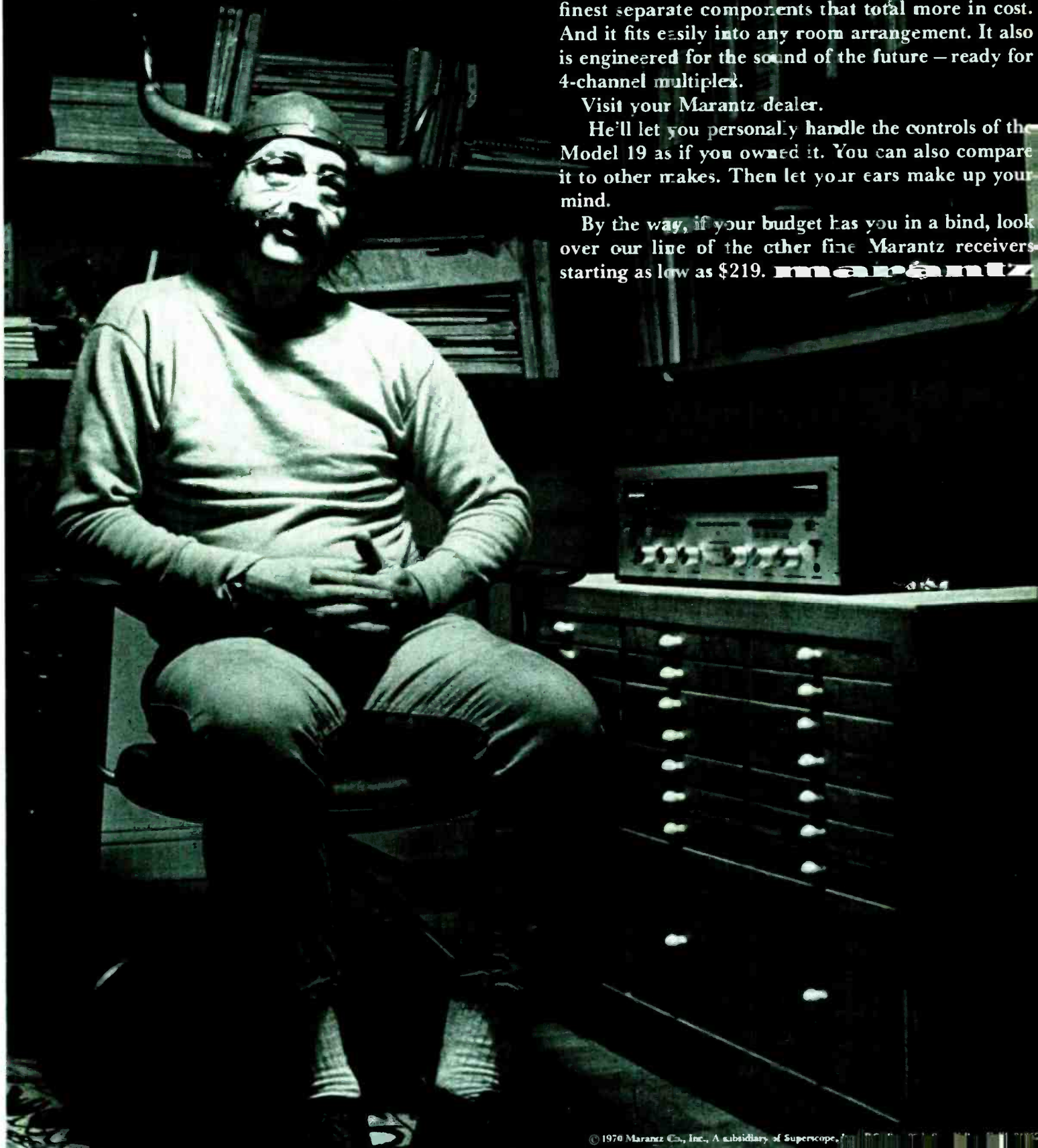

Nikisch, cond. Perennial 2002, $6.00 (Berlioz: Roman Carnaval; Liszt: Hungarian Rhapsody No. 1). Available from Perennial Records, Box 437, New York, N.Y. 10023.

- *Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Seiji Ozawa, cond. RCA Red Seal LSC 3132, $5.98 (Schubert: Symphony No. 8).*
- *Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Felix Prohaska, cond. Vanguard Everyman SRV 203, $2.98 (Schubert: Symphony No. 8).*
- *Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Fritz Reiner, cond. RCA Red Seal LSC 2343, $5.98 (Coriolan).*
- *London Philharmonic Orchestra, Artur Rodzinski, cond. Music Guild MS 173, $5.98 (Schubert: Symphony No. 8).*
- *Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Georg Solti, cond. London CS 6092, $5.98.*
- *London Philharmonic Orchestra, Horst Stein, cond. Stereo Fidelity 19400, $1.89.*
- *Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, William Steinberg, cond. Pickwick S 4021, $2.49 (No. 8).*
- *Concertgebouw Orchestra, George Szell, cond. Philips PHS 900169, $5.98 (Mozart: Symphony No. 34).*

Ančerl's old-fashioned interpretation is as passé as the hyperromantic notes that accompany it. In addition, the orchestra is not alert and there is little bite to their playing. Boult's Fifth, like his Third, is an old peregrinating item re-released under several labels. This able musician is not well represented by it. Of the two Dorati recordings, the Wing release (Minneapolis Orchestra) is an artificially inseminated mono which did not bring forth the expected stereo, though the result is not too bad when judged as a reprocessed old mono. The performance itself is good standard grade without any particular distinction or demerits; with better sound it would be quite acceptable. The Mercury release (London Symphony) has much better sound and the performance is also superior. The tempos are good, there are no shenanigans, and Dorati puts life into his playing. The first movement of the Seraphim Furtwängler offers the typical nineteenth-century concept: slow and mannered. In the development section, the tempo picks up but sags again before the reprise, which itself is very slow; there is a terrific ritard before the oboe cadenza. Furtwängler curiously favors the melodic element, which in this movement of terse propulsive power is minimal. The andante is nice, if a little measured. In the scherzo the indicated ritards are lengthened beyond reason, the horns just peck at their motif, and the ritards at the beginning of the transition to the finale must be heard to be believed. The finale is in slow motion—no wonder this performance requires two full sides. The Heliodor (nee DGG) disc, another old mono, sounds so miserable that it would discourage the most ardent aficionado. Munch's allegro just runs headlong nowhere, the haste being made even more glaring by the omission of the repeat. The andante is all right; there is little thrust in the scherzo, though trio and transition are fair; the finale is more good-natured than festive. The sound is not up to the best RCA standards.

We have had some "historical" recordings, but Nikisch's is prehistoric—from 1913. It is a fascinating bit of musical and acoustic paleontology, but strictly for the archives. I heard Nikisch in the flesh twice; he was warm and impressive in Brahms and Tchaikovsky. But his conducting here shows that like most of his colleagues of that era he could hear the classics only with romantic ears. The allegro is full of tempo changes and all kinds of devices that take away the movement's massive grandeur; the oboe cadenza would make the stones weep and is followed not by a pause but by an adjournment. Little if anything can be made out of the andante. The scherzo starts slowly, then speeds up to end in slow motion. The phrasing in the finale is quaint, the tempo changes even more so.

Ozawa's allegro is very good; the music is allowed to speak without any interference and at the right tempo. There are, however, a few instances of curious phrasing. In the andante the Japanese conductor gets a little precious, makes some elisions, and sharpens the dotting a bit too much—all of which changes the movement's nature. The scherzo is again very good, the transition ditto, and the finale among the best from anybody. Ozawa hits the opulent, triumphant tone and tempo unerringly, the Chicago trombones are magnificent, and the final stretto is electrifying. The sound matches the fine performance. Prohaska's is a very ordinary performance. His rhythm is unsure, his phrasing unimaginative—the conductor is a little too *gemütlich* throughout; only in the finale does he show a little temperament. Reiner's recording is more than a decade old and shows its age in the quality of the sound. The first movement is Toscanini-ish, wild and energetic, but well sustained, and the playing is superb. The ritards are few and moderate. The andante is also very good, if perhaps a little soulful, but most of the delicate detail is lost in the recording. The beginning of the scherzo is nearly inaudible. The rest has strength—musically, not sonically speaking. The ensemble is neatly homogeneous. The transition to the finale is masterly, but the listener must cup his hands behind his ears. The finale breaks in with éclat. With good sound, this would be one of the best renditions of the Fifth. Rodzinski's must be rechanneled stereo, for the sound is dull and lifeless. Rodzinski is a solid musician, but the recording defeats him.

Solti's allegro is becomingly rough and forward-pressing but a shade too fast, while the andante is a bit less than con moto, and as a result, the fanfares sound somewhat deliberate. The scherzo is excellent, the brasses robust but not noisy, the transition superb and full of suspense, the finale triumphant. In between the massive portions, there is a good deal of refined playing. The sound is excellent. Stein's performance is run-of-the-mill, and Steinberg's Pickwick disc was not available for review. Szell's performance with the Concertgebouw has all the qualities of the old Epic recording with Szell's own orchestra, but the latter strikes me as more convincingly taut and of one piece.

Symphony No. 6, in F, Op. 68 ("Pastoral") (1807–8).

- *Philharmonic Promenade Orchestra, Sir Adrian Boult, cond. Vanguard Everyman SRV 193, $2.98 (Fidelio).*
- *New Philharmonia Orchestra, Carlo Maria Giulini, cond. Angel S 36684, $5.98 (Egmont).*
- *Vienna Symphony, Otto Klemperer, cond. Vox STPL 56960, $1.98.*
- *Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Henry Lewis, cond. London Phase 4 SPC 21039, $5.98.*
- *Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Paul Paray, cond. Wing SR 18001, $1.89.*
- *Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Fritz Reiner, cond. RCA Red Seal LSC 2614, $5.98.*
- *Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, Karel Sejna, cond. Parliament S 105, $2.98.*
- *Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, William Steinberg, cond. Pickwick S 4009, $2.49.*
- *BBC Symphony Orchestra, Arturo Toscanini, cond. (see No. 1).*

Boult's old recording (but with passable sound) is a decent performance, though not refined in the pastoral movements, and with the ornamental notes not well integrated with the melody. The scherzo is fine, the storm a little sluggish, the fifth movement good. Giulini's demonstrates nice playing and fine sound, but the tempos are slow, the phrasing mannered, and the dynamic range narrow. Giulini prefers clear, quiet playing—a Watteau painting—to Beethoven's ardor. Klemperer is remarkably consistent, but then this conductor has a definite concept of the works he interprets. Musically, this performance is close to the one in the complete Angel set, but the latter has it all over the Vox disc in sound; therefore this single is superseded. Lewis' is a good, average performance, although a little cautious and restrained. The ornaments are a bit nervous and the strings uncomfortable when playing fast staccatos. The last movement has a well-built climax. Paray's altogether poor performance lacks the slightest feeling for tempo and mood. The first movement sounds like *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*. Reiner's recording of this symphony is only three or four years younger than his recording of the Fifth, but the sound is infinitely better. The allegro is atmospheric albeit a little slow; the dynamic shadings, however, are exquisite. The second movement is also a little slow and overexpressive (one cannot italicize Beethoven), but the two solo cellos are beautifully merged with the rest and the ensemble's balance is delectable. The main part of the scherzo is also a little slow, though not without strength; the village music is a fine

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vignette and for once the clarinet's runs are just right. The storm is tremendous, the final movement grand. Reiner manages a few bad ritards but he also rises to a splendid climax. Sejna's concept, performance, and sound are provincial. The woodwinds play hopscotch in the first movement—they are really funny. The second movement is fair, though the grace notes are slurred; the storm defies nature—this is the slowest lightning ever observed—and the finale lacks elation. Neither conductor nor players get any help from the engineers. Steinberg's Pickwick disc was not available for review.

Toscanini's recording is from about 1937 and since it represents telescoped 78s, it is really unfair to criticize the performance, especially since one of Toscanini's outstanding qualities—impeccable orchestral balance—is nullified here. Still, we can discern that on this occasion the great conductor was in a relaxed mood. The tempos are fine, the climaxes are mighty, and in general, this seems to be a more genial performance than the one in the complete set. The sound, however, is much worse and every forte chord is a trial to the ear.

Symphony No. 7, in A, Op. 92 (1812).

- *Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Claudio Abbado, cond. London CS 6510, $5.98 (Prometheus).*
- *New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein, cond. Columbia MS 6112, $5.98.*
- *Philharmonic Promenade Orchestra, Sir Adrian Boult, cond. Vanguard Everyman SRV 147, $2.98 (Egmont).*
- *Philharmonia Orchestra, Guido Cantelli, cond. Seraphim S 60038, $2.98.*
- *Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Wilhelm Furtwängler, cond. (see No. 3).*
- *Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan, cond. Stereo Treasury STS 15107, $249.*
- *Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Fritz Reiner, cond. RCA Red Seal LSC 1991, $5.98 (Fidelio).*
- *London Symphony Orchestra, Edouard van Remoortel, cond. Vox STPL 510970, $1.98 (No. 8).*
- *Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Hermann Scherchen, cond. Westminster WSM 1022, $9.98 (three discs, rechanneled stereo; Nos. 8, 9).*
- *Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Georg Solti, cond. London CS 6093, $5.98.*
- *Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, William Steinberg, cond. Pickwick S 4022, $2.49.*
- *New York Philharmonic, Arturo Toscanini, cond. RCA Victrola VIC 1502, $2.98 (mono only).*

Abbado's introduction is slow and with exaggerated dynamics, the vivace fair, as is the allegretto, though the phrasing is not impeccable; Abbado demands semilegatos where a clean break is called for. Both scherzo and finale are very good. On the whole, and with the above limitations, a good performance. Bernstein's recording is not identical with the one in the complete set but it has the same virtues and defects. The introduction is uneven, the strings straining in the rising scales, and Bernstein hesitates before the forte chords—a bad mannerism. The vivace rolls along well though the momentum is not always maintained. In the allegretto the first note of the theme gets a little extra weight each time, which becomes irritating after a while, and the long crescendo from strophe to strophe mounts a little too soon. The scherzo is exciting, with a tempo that few conductors would risk; with a less forward and harsh sound this would be a thriller. Bernstein is one of the very few who interpret the trio correctly. The finale is better than average.

Boult takes good tempos, but his rhythm is not sharp enough for this symphony and he is thwarted by a very poor recording. This is probably a semi-antique. Cantelli's, though an old disc, does not sound too bad. Cantelli's introduction is hurried; the same eagerness, however, is well applied to the vivace. Obviously the conductor, who died so tragically at an early age, listened carefully to his mentor. Toscanini, but he is his own master. The allegretto is nice, if perhaps somewhat lacking in poise, the scherzo good but a little formal, the finale robust and full of life.

Furtwängler's slight pauses before the chords are disturbing, especially at such a slow pace; the strings make their way painfully, then are speeded up, only to fall back to an adagissimo. The vivace is good but not impetuous, the subdued excitement missing in the *piano* passages. Toward the end the rhythm becomes as vivid as it should have been from the beginning. The allegretto is slow and heavy-footed; however, the sound is so bad that it is hard to judge the performance, though at this tempo it could hardly be good. The scherzo is excellent and for once full of verve, though Furtwängler's inability to keep to a steady tempo is in evidence. This is not always the result of deliberate intention; it is due rather to a certain lack of the sort of orchestral discipline we expect from our conductors. The trio is very slow and ends with a king-sized ritard. The finale fluctuates, but is well played. Karajan, this time with the Vienna Philharmonic, starts with a big dramatic introduction followed by a very good and energetic vivace; the rhythm is bracing, but there is a little clatter in the recording. The allegretto is played too portamento, which changes its character until the higher instruments are reached; there, the articulation is correct. The second part slows down perceptibly. Karajan does not have a firm concept of this movement. The scherzo is very good and the finale even better than the lively vivace. In the Reiner disc we are once more dealing with a recording at least a dozen years old, a circumstance which inevitably downgrades a fine performance by a superb orchestra. The introduction is impressive—what a difference it makes when the solo oboe is lustrous! Reiner makes a remarkable transition from the introduction to the vivace, but disappoints with one ungainly ritard just where it hurts most. The vivace is truly grand. Reiner was old enough to have consorted with the great old timers and some of their mannered tempo changes and ritards rubbed off on him. The soft passages are barely audible here, while the fortes are rude. The allegretto is beautifully phrased; the sound, unfortunately, does not do justice to the finely calibrated long crescendo. The scherzo is brilliant and the finale is one of the best. Remoortel: routine performance.

The Scherchen disc is part of a small set entitled "Beethoven's Last Symphonies," obviously an old doctored mono; one can even hear some of the splices. Now Scherchen did not belong to the old romantic school. On the contrary, he was a staunch friend of the avant-garde. But he was an unpredictable performer: when he hit it right he could be very good; when he miscalculated he did so by a country mile. In this performance all sorts of peculiar things can be heard: here a second oboe protrudes, there a horn, or the violas. But Scherchen's main weakness was his poor sense of tempo. The first movement just jogs along; the scherzo and finale, however, are on the dot. The allegretto once more fascinates with those unexplained popups. The sound is wretched.

Solti's vivace is alive and bursting with life. The allegretto, taken at a good tempo, attracts with glossy string sound and a handsomely graduated crescendo, while the scherzo, fast and scintillating, runs on jeweled machinery. The finale quivers with energy. A very distinguished performance. Toscanini's is the fifth edition of the 1936 recording and no amount of doctoring can hide its age. In the introduction, which is striking, the *piano* passages are evanescent—though pace and phrasing are immacuate—although the sforzandos are a bit hard. The vivace is equally accomplished, but one can only guess the splendor of the performance. Yet the music is still more alive than in many a modern recording, the propulsive force is infectious, and the crescendos build up radiantly. In the allegretto the portamentos in the theme are unusual, and the movement gradually picks up a speed which diminishes its majesty. The fugato is a tidy vignette. The scherzo is truly Beethovenian, though the trio is much too fast. This fine old Austrian pilgrims' hymn sounds perfunctory, even grotesque, with Toscanini's violent rhythm. The finale is just as invigorating as the vivace, even though in the soft passages the violins cannot fully carry out the Maestro's oversharpened rhythm. Steinberg's Pickwick disc was not available for review.

Symphony No. 8, in F, Op. 93 (1812).

- *Antwerp Philharmonic Orchestra, Joey Alfidi, cond. Jubilee 3000-2, $9.96 (two discs, mono only; Piano Concerto No. 3; Alfidi: Piano Concerto No. 2; Rachmaninoff: Prelude, Op. 3, No. 2).*
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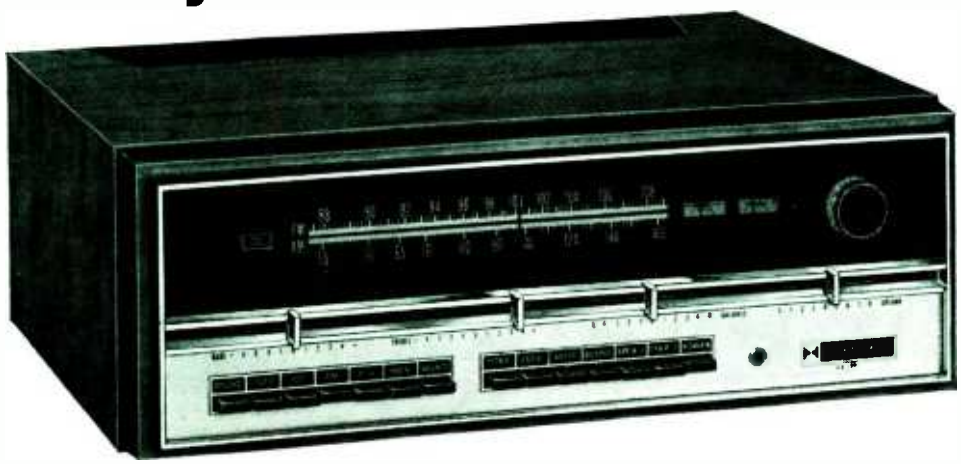

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sals, cond. Columbia MS 6931, $5.98 (Mendelssohn: Symphony No. 4).
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- *Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, William Steinberg, cond. (see No. 5).*

Alfidi's is pretty good—for a kid of Joey's age—but the sound is poor and the accompanying literature calls for bicarbonate of soda. Casals' control of the ad hoc orchestra (a very good one) is remarkable, and he enforces his violent concept. Scherchen's first movement is choppy, his second like looking into musical binoculars through the wrong end, his "minuet" too brisk and humorless, and his finale a hopeless steeplechase without any recognizable features.

Symphony No. 9, in D minor, Op. 125 ("Choral") (1817–23).

- *Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, André Cluytens, cond. Seraphim S 60079, $2.98. Gré Brouwenstijn (s); Kerstin Meyer (ms); Nicolai Gedda (t); Frederick Guthrie (bs); St. Hedwig's Cathedral Choir.*
- *Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Wilhelm Furtwängler, cond. Turnabout TV 4346/7, $5.96 (two discs, mono only; Brahms: Haydn Variations); Everest S 3241, $4.98 (rechanneled stereo). Tilla Briem (s); Elisabeth Höngen (ms); Peter Anders (t); Rudolf Watzke (bs); Bruno Kittel Choir.*
- *Vienna Pro Musica, Jascha Horenstein, cond. Vox STPL 510000, $1.98. Wilma Lipp (s); Elisabeth Höngen (ms); Julius Patzak (t); Otto Wiener (bs); Vienna Friends of Music.*
- *Lamoureux Orchestra, Igor Markevitch, cond. Wing SR 18050, $1.89. Hilde Gueden (s); Aafje Heynis (c); Fritz Uhl (t); Heinz Rehfuss (bs); Karlsruhe Oratorio Chorus.*
- *Boston Symphony Orchestra, Charles Munch, cond. RCA Victrola VICS 6003, $5.96 (two discs; Coriolan; Fidelio; Leonore No. 3). Leontyne Price (s); Maureen Forrester (c); David Poleri (t); Giorgio Tozzi (bs); New England Conservatory Chorus.*
- *Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Fritz Reiner, cond. RCA Red Seal LSC 6096, $11.96 (two discs; No. 1). Phyllis Curtin (s); Florence Kopleff (c); John McCollum (t); Donald Gramm (bs); Chicago Symphony Chorus.*
- *Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Hermann Scherchen, cond. Westminster WMS 1022, $9.98 (three discs; rechanneled stereo; Nos. 7, 8). Magda László (s); Hilde Rössl-Majdan (c); Petre Munteanu (t); Richard Standen (bs); Vienna Singakademie.*
- *London Symphony Orchestra, Leopold Stokowski, cond. London Phase 4 SPC 21043, $5.98. Heather Harper (s); Helen Watts (c); Alexander Young (t); Donald McIntyre (bs); London Symphony Chorus.*

Cluytens' allegro is slow and heavy-set, the sentences lengthened, commas and semicolons everywhere. The scherzo is fair, but the repeats are omitted; the adagio is dragged and one can feel that the orchestra obeys the conductor reluctantly. The fanfares in the finale would not alert firemen on the ready, the bass recitatives are totally undramatic—in sum, this is a timid concept gone to seed. Furtwängler's Everest 3241 is not only a reprocessed old mono but was apparently taken at a concert performance; the sound is of course terrible. The allegro is played at constantly variable speed; the scherzo, believe it or not, is too fast, but the trio is nice and at the correct tempo. The adagio is so slow that it turns into aspic. The bass recitatives in the finale are like Liszt rhapsodies, and the time lag between the chords of the accompagnato suggests there may be a third shoe to be dropped. The "Turkish" music with the tenor solo just flips along, the fugue is fantastically fast and inarticulate, the choral portions get by. Turnabout 4346/7 is identical with Everest 3241 except that in the former the excellent vocal participants are named. The imported Odeon Ninth (SMVP 8051/2) is a German stereo "reconstruction also playable on mono," but does not make any difference how you play it. This recording, with the Bayreuth Festspielhaus forces, is something of a treasured antique, though I can't see the reasons for the admiration. The performance is somewhat better than on the Turnabout discs: in the allegro the tempo does not fluctuate so much, the scherzo is not so hard-driven, the adagio is less agonizing, and the finale is much more reasonable in tempo and articulation. But Furtwängler insists on giant fermatas, and the pauses after them are so long that the unwary may think that the end of the side has been reached. Horenstein's, another old mono "remastered" for stereo, is thus defeated before it starts. I am sorry for this, because Horenstein shows good qualities even through the sonic haze. Markevitch's "electronically reprocessed" oldster demonstrates that electronics is a wonderful technological achievement, but it cannot improve what was wrong in the first place. Markevitch's fermatas rouse anxiety for the players' and singers' lungs. Munch misses Beethoven's maestoso by a wide mark; the allegro is driven. The scherzo has bite, but the trumpets are harsh, the woodwinds inelegant, and the timpani noisy. The adagio is not held together in a secure concept and there is little dynamic variety. In the finale the variations are breathless, the instrumental fugue is a blur, the stretto is good, and the rest is passable. Both solo quartet and chorus are fine.

Reiner: again a relatively early stereo with variably unsatisfactory sound. The allegro is spacious and grand at the beginning but the ridiculous ritards in the middle badly hurt an otherwise good performance. The scherzo would be masterful were it not for the nondescript sound, the adagio ditto if the cantilena's warmth could shine through the lusterless exterior. The bass recitatives in the finale are impressive—at least the ones we can hear—the variations exquisitely shaped, but all *pianos* nearly inaudible. Though there are some ritards here too, this could easily have been one of the really excellent performances of the finale, even of the whole symphony, but the poor sound negates the good qualities. Scherchen articulates the main theme poorly; otherwise the allegro is well conceived. The scherzo just strolls in a leisurely manner. The winds seem to play behind a curtain. The sound is awful and there is much surface noise. One hears some gurgling in the background that must be the horns, but when the timpani go into action everything else is blotted out. The sound in the adagio wobbles piteously, destroying the continuity. The finale is unsteady and the strings sound like the popular comb-and-tissue-paper instrument; the chorus sings vocal exercises with a hearty kick on every strong beat, while the stretto is a bedlam in which only the cymbals and the choral trebles are recognizable elements. There is no point in offering such hapless relics to today's public.

Stokowski may take the allegro a little hurriedly, but the playing is excellent, full of life and good rhythm. The sound is first-class. There is a Furtwänglerian ritard before the reprise, but the reprise itself is impressive and the fast runs in the violins are among the best in any recording; there is absolutely no slurring. Curiously enough, Stokowski is strictly metronomic where small changes are called for, but circumspect where he should not be; yet, all told, this is a very good performance. I particularly like the ostinato dirge at the end, which has tremendous affective and dramatic intensity. The scherzo is fine, but the repeats should have been made. This able conductor has remarkable control over the orchestra and knows a good deal about recording techniques; his timpani, notoriously poor in other recordings, sound like the musical instruments they are. The pause between scherzo and adagio is minuscule, but even that does not prevent the unfortunate side break in the middle of the slow movement. The adagio sings in long-breathed melodies, the clarinet is gorgeous, the pianissimos in the timpani delectable, and the bass pizzicatos are musical sounds rather than muffled cannon shots. The phrasing is free of all sentimentality. In the finale the recitatives are imaginative, the variations excellent except for a few ritards that are overdone, the fugue is crisp, and all the choral portions, while perhaps a little slow, are good. The recording in this movement is a little cautious; obviously, engineers and conductor, aware of the usual distortion in choral fortes, tried to avoid them by scaling down the sonority, but where they are sure of the sound, things go well. While the performance has certain flaws, this is one of the better Ninths—and there are very few of them.

Next month, Part IX: Piano Variations and Miscellaneous Works. This concludes High Fidelity's appraisal of all available recordings of Beethoven's music.

AR speaker systems were designed for home use, but they are often chosen for professional applications because of their accuracy.

The Auditorium Acoustics Simulator designed and built by Bolt Beranek and Newman Inc. is a recent example.

Bill Watters and Tom Horrall listening to a comparison of two, four and twelve channel playback of an orchestral recording. The system they are shown using is described in "Auditorium Acoustics Simulator," by T.R. Horrall, B.E. Blanchard and B.G. Watters, paper F-6 presented at the 79th meeting of the Acoustical Society of America, April, 1970.

From its beginning as an acoustics consulting firm in 1948, Bolt Beranek and Newman Inc. has broadened the scope of its activities to include consulting research and development in architectural technologies, physical and behavioral sciences, computer science and computer systems development, as well as related industrial activities such as the TELCOMP time-shared computer service.

The firm's original partners, still actively engaged in its activities, are Richard Bolt, formerly Director of the Acoustics Laboratory at M.I.T. and an advisor to government on numerous matters related to science education and research planning; Leo Beranek, an internationally recognized authority on acoustics who has made major contributions in many areas of acoustics and noise control; and Robert Newman, an architecture professor at M.I.T., also widely known as a lecturer and writer on acoustics.

As part of a program to study the reactions of listeners to concert halls with differing acoustic properties, a twelve-channel electronic auditorium simulation system has been designed and built at BB&N. When a music recording with little or no reverberant sound is introduced to the system, numerous echoes as well as diffuse reverberant sound are generated electrically; the form and pattern of these effects can be precisely controlled and distributed to the twelve channels to synthesize the acoustical environment which the system is to simulate. The simulator may help to increase the reliability of acoustic design, to demonstrate expected results before a hall is constructed, and to provide better understanding of acoustical qualities in both existing and proposed auditoriums.

AR-4x speaker systems were chosen for the simulator because of their high accuracy and convenient size, after testing speaker systems of several kinds. Extreme low bass is provided by AR-1W systems.

AR

Acoustic Research, Inc.
24 Thorndike Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02141

CIRCLE 1 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

by George Movshon

Peg Board: Meet Jack Field

The expenditure of $25 and a few hours with solder gun and wire stripper can straighten up your audio way of life, save you from uncomfortable expeditions to the rear panels of components . . . and start you out on some new and versatile ways of using your sound system.

"It's WHAT's up front that counts!" cries the advertisement. Maybe so, but every audio activist knows that what's down back of his components can be pretty important too—and far more heavily trafficked than equipment makers seem to realize. Designers have learned to please wives by keeping wires away from the fronts of units, decorating the façade with metal trim, a twinkling dial, and a knob or two. Banished to the rear is that long, apparently unsightly, double row of receptacles necessary for interconnections with other units.

Fair enough. There is not space enough for everything up front; as the poet says, when two men ride of a horse one of them must needs ride behind. But which of us has not groaned—or even cursed—at the necessity of plunging head and hands into the deeply recessed maw of closet, cabinet, or console, there to unsnarl cables and wrestle with plugs or jacks to remove some connection no longer needed and install another? Which of us has not screwed his eyes in the dark, calling for mirror and flashlight to make sure that the third receptacle from the left is indeed the one marked ОИОНЧ and not ИОМ or ЯЭИUT ΜΓ? And who among us has not now and then withdrawn a knuckle blistered by a hot tube, or a finger bloodied by the burr of an unseen chassis edge?

"Enough!" cried your frustrated and wounded correspondent upon one such day, and set about there and then to build himself a jack field. A patch panel. A switchboard, so to speak. Every studio and radio station has its master control panel where sound sources may be coupled into consoles, and consoles to transmitters. But most professionals have to work over relatively long distances and so they must do this sort of thing expensively, with low-impedance lines and low-loss wiring and hardware. We, confronted with distances of a mere six or eight feet, can win the trick with ordinary shielded audio cable and hardware items that cost a few dimes apiece.

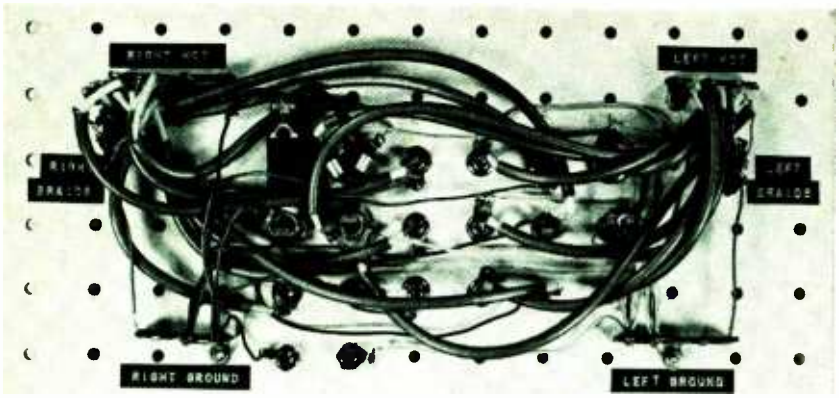
Anyway, there the thing sits. And it works. What's more, it has opened up all kinds of dazzling possibilities to combine audio units in previously untried ways —ways that were always possible but too awkward to bother with. Example: have you ever wanted to make an off-the-air stereo tape on one machine and simultaneously perserve some immortal bit of TV audio on the other recorder, while listening all the while to a stereo record on the main system? You haven't? Well anyway, it can be done, and easily, with the help of the jack field pictured here. Tune in the FM cleanly, connect the two outputs at H to the inputs at E. Set the tape-deck input levels for the two channels; engage the recorder and let it spin silently away. Next, connect television audio output M to either of the inputs F on the second tape deck; set levels for recording, and start the deck on its course. Turn your preamp input selector to "Phono" and start enjoying your record. If you are the nervous type and want an occasional check on how your two tape decks are faring, patch their outputs (J and K) into the preamp monitor inputs at C and D; a flip of the preamp tape monitor switch, and you'll hear—off the tape—both FM and TV simultaneously. You only want one at a time? Then kill the playback volume control on the machine you don't want to hear. All okay? Then back to the record.

That sort of thing. There are all manner of adventures that become possible merely by plugging the jumper wires—patch cords—into the right jacks. What we are doing in essence is bringing those concealed rows of receptacles up front by extending lines out of them and terminating them on our panel with female pin jacks of the kind once called RCA-type, now standard on most components.

Once there, we can interconnect them with one standard type of jumper cable, hereinafter called the patch cord. This is a 12- or 18-inch length of shielded audio cable with a standard phono plug at each end—Switchcraft type 25AC25 (92¢) or equivalent. If you have mastered the touchy art of soldering RCA-type phono plugs, you can make up your own patch cords for half the cost. You'll need ten or twelve of them.

For full flexibility and versatility you will want to have space on the board for *all* the units you might conceivably wish to interconnect: tuner, tape deck, cassette unit, preamp (high-level inputs and record output only—not the magnetic cartridge input, the tape *head* input, or the power amplifier outputs: the reasons for this will soon appear). You might find some limitations of versatility if you own a receiver rather than separates, but there is generally a way to work things out.

My own system consists of a separate preamp/control unit and power amplifier, FM multiplex tuner, two stereo tape decks, and the audio feed from a television set. (Some late-model television sets offer a low-impedance headphone jack that yields a tolerable signal for a preamp or tape-deck unit. There are other ways of getting fairly clean sound from a television receiver—one of them is tapping across the volume control—but unless you know your way around a television chassis and how to discharge the high voltage, which can deliver a nasty shock,



Behind the peg board, short lengths of shielded cable connect the signal receptacles. The basic plan can be modified to suit individual needs.

this had better be left to a serviceman. He might even be able to locate a better take-off point for the audio connection.) Each of the *equalized* outputs from these units has been wired to the panel: similarly, the inputs have been connected to another group of receptacles. Since in most equipment these days output impedance is kept fairly low and input impedance fairly high, and since all our signals are about or below 2 volts rms, any input on this panel can be connected to any output.

The sources you cannot satisfactorily interconnect should be left off the panel. These include the *unequalized* signals from magnetic phono cartridges and directly from tape heads. Leave these tied into their existing preamplifiers and use the outputs of those preamps for interconnection. Nor should you try to mix the output of a power amplifier with 2-volt inputs. If you need to distribute sound from an amplifier to various speakers around the house, use a separate switch or panel for that function.

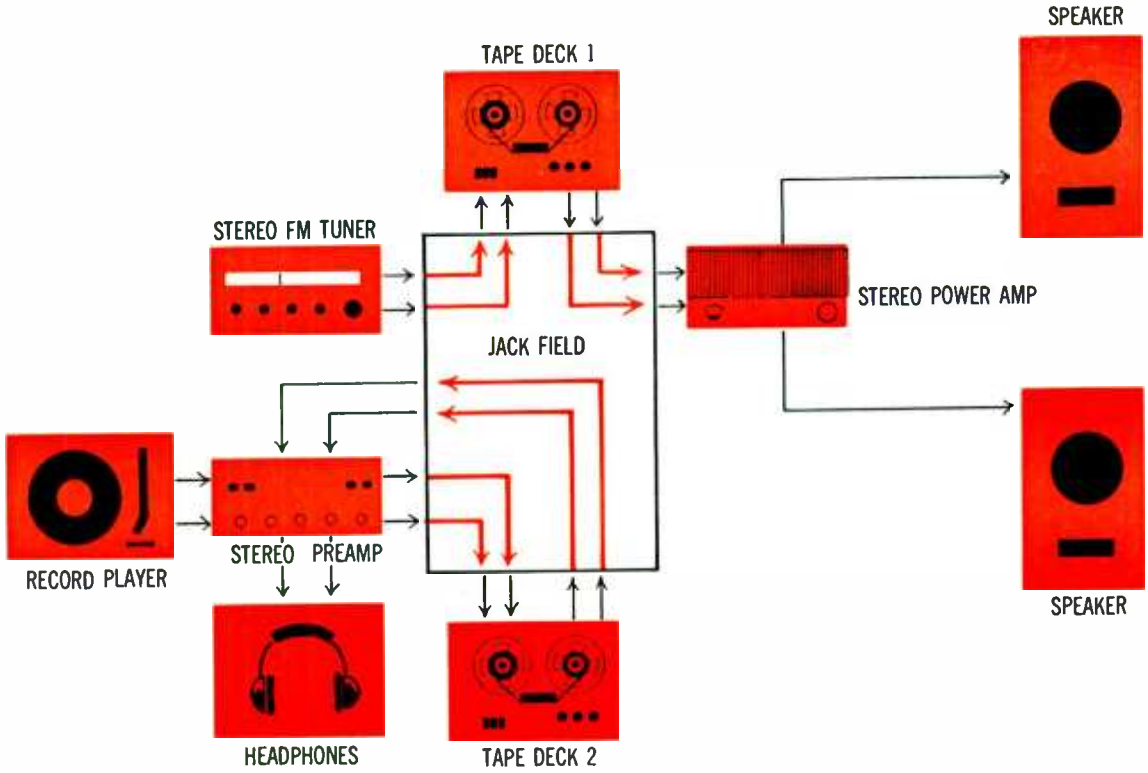
Where you have a choice, use whenever possible a sound source that *bypasses* or *overrides* volume controls unless you have a specific reason for doing otherwise. Some tuners, for instance, have two pairs of outputs, one pair volume-controlled, the other not. Use the "not" unless the tuner's output level is so high that it won't match other signal levels without that volume control.

All the other "ins" and "outs" are fair game, however. You will bring them up to the panel by the neatest and shortest route, keeping cable length (and danger of hum) down to a convenient minimum—no more than six or eight feet—unless the outputs are of the emitter- or cathode-follower type, which will handle the longer distances. Input lines that are too long sometimes cause a roll-off of treble, but this is usually slight and also linear, which means that any loss can easily be restored by a small adjustment of the treble control. Unless your lines are too long, however, you are not likely to have such problems.

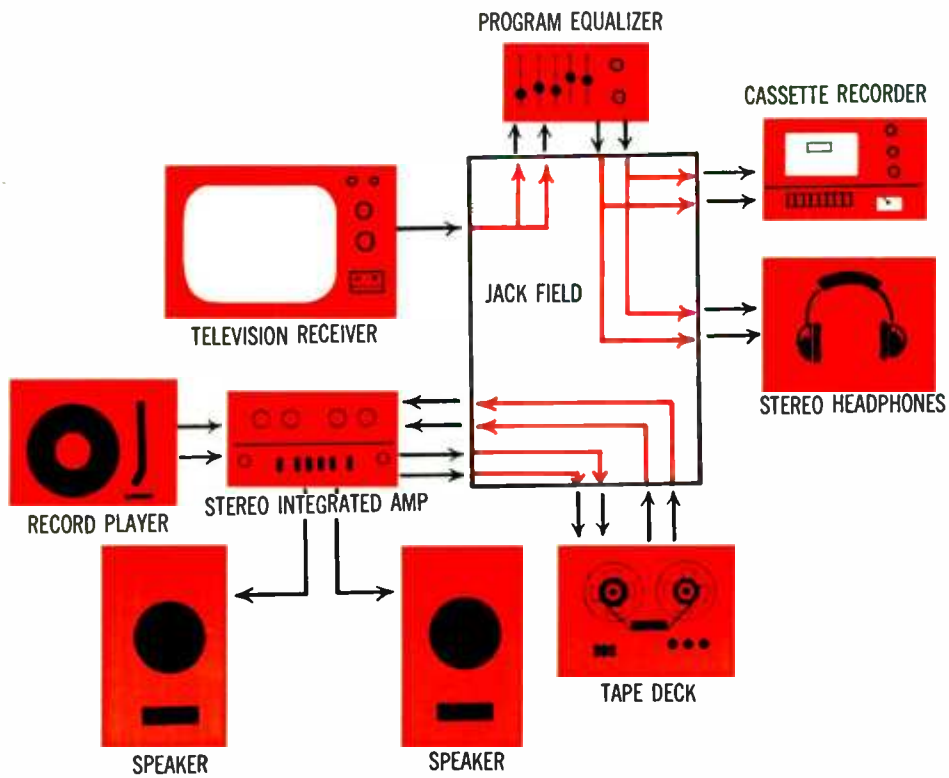
The "adapter-and-converter" section of the panel is an optional extra, so to speak; something technicians call a junction box (or more usually a *thingamajig*). It converts a wide variety of hardware for easy, temporary use with your high fidelity components. The layout pictured here represents my needs in this department, which may not be yours; you may, for example, have some continental equipment with DIN-type connectors and will want to add that facility. Anything goes, as long as the principle is observed that all left-channel hot leads are in parallel, and grounds too. The same goes for right-channel hot leads and grounds. (On most tube equipment it is safe to combine left and right grounds to a single common path; but with some transistorized circuits it is not recommended. That is why there is a separate switch on the panel governing the tip-ring-sleeve receptacle, which uses a common ground: if unswitched it would automatically bring all left and right grounds together.)

As an example of the versatility conferred by this adapter-and-converter section of the panel, consider another way-out situation: you want, for some reason, to tape something off a transistor radio and have it available on *both* tracks of *both* tape recorders. The radio comes with one of those connector cords that has a miniature male plug at each end. Okay. You plug one end of that cord into the radio, the other into the left-hand miniature jack at P. Next you use a patch cord to parallel both channels by connecting the left receptacle at R to the adjoining right-hand one. Now you have the radio's signal available at four jacks—both at S and both at T. Patch two of these to the tape deck No. 1 inputs at E, and the other two into the second tape deck at F. For monitoring off the tape, make four further patch cord connections: J to C and K to D (both left and right channels each time). Now, by manipulating the playback volume controls on the tape decks, you can hear any one track or all four together.

Or again: you are recording a stereo signal on tape deck No. 1 and the main loudspeakers, for some reason, are unavailable. Connect the tape deck outputs (J) to the receptacles at R and plug headphones into the appropriate left and right receptacles anywhere in the section (most low-impedance phones will work, though high-impedance ones are better); or, if you don't have headphones you can even plug two



These diagrams illustrate just two of the endless interconnection possibilities available. In each case shown here, two operations are occurring simultaneously: above, a stereo broadcast is being recorded on one tape deck and monitored on the loudspeakers, a record is being taped on a second deck and monitored via headphones. Below, TV sound is fed through an equalizer to improve tonal balance and then recorded on a cassette deck with a headphone monitor connected in parallel, while a disc can be played over the loudspeakers and even taped at the same time. As the diagrams suggest, almost any combination of components can be used; and with any given collection of components the pattern of interconnection (indicated by the colored arrows) can be varied at will.



transistor radio earphones into P and Q and get stereo! And so on.

How to Build It

Choose a suitable location for the panel and calculate the approximate total of cable length you will need. Decide what material you will use for the board. Anything suitably stiff but not too thick will do: plywood, masonite, rigid plastic, even metal—if you have the tools and skill to work it. I found peg board almost ideal: you can enlarge the holes to the right diameter by merely twisting a screwdriver around in them, though of course a drill does the job more neatly.

Then make a shopping list. My setup needed twenty phono plugs (male) for use at the component end of the cables: it is neat to use red-handled plugs for the left-hand circuits (a natural mnemonic) and black for the right channel: Switchcraft 3508-1 and 3508-2, respectively, 15¢ each. On the panel itself, I used twenty-eight phono jacks (female), Switchcraft 3501 FP, 21¢ each. The hardware for adapter and converter costs about $3.00. Four spools, 25-foot length, of one-conductor spiral-shielded audio cable (Belden 8421, $1.71 per spool) brought the project in under its $25 budget—and this included ten patch cords at 92¢ each.

Measure and cut the cables for connection to your components—being careful not to make them too short—and solder the plugs on one end of each cable length. For this activity, a small vise is invaluable: tape a scrap of cardboard to each inner face of the vise to prevent heat dissipation. Use a soldering gun if you have it, rather than the pencils needed for more delicate objects like circuit boards. And a wire stripper will save a lot of time. If you want to avoid this operation altogether, you can buy molded cables of various lengths with one unterminated end and a male phono plug at the other (Switchcraft series 25A-84) or buy cables with male connectors at both ends and cut them in half.

When all the cables are ready, prepare the other end of each cable for attachment to the rear of the panel—by unspiraling an inch or so of the braid and baring a quarter inch of the main conductor. Then plug each cable into the component end and lay out its course to the panel—trying to avoid proximity to heavy transformers or other makers of hum. Tag each cable at the panel end with a scrap of masking tape on which you have indicated its function: "Tape deck No. 1, LH Input," and so on.

Now attach the hardware to the panel, using whatever logical layout of functions suits you: the picture herewith is only a suggestion, though it makes a lot of sense to segregate inputs from outputs. This is also the time to identify each receptacle on the panel with whatever symbols you prefer. Adhesive-backed plastic labeling tape for use with embossing machines comes in many colors, and you can devise a logical and decorative system to suit your needs.

This is the right time to wire up the adapter-and-converter section, which needs a little more hum-prevention care than the rest of the system. Establish, first of all, four terminal points: one each for left and right hot leads, one each for their grounds. Wire each receptacle ground individually to its terminal point so that there is only one path for the ground return of a signal from any position. (Multiple ground paths make hum.) In the unit shown here, this would mean nine connections to the left-hand ground bus in all: three from the phono jacks, one each from miniature, subminiature, phone jack, left banana and (via a SPDT switch) from the tip-ring-sleeve receptacle. These connections can be made with ordinary hookup wire, as can the equivalent right-hand ground connections to the other bus. At each bus the nine wires should be crimped to a terminal strip and soldered.

It is recommended that the hot lead connections be made with shielded wire, with one end only of the braid connected to the ground bus. This entails cutting nine suitable lengths of shielded cable (one per channel) and stripping away the braid at one end of each so that a small part (⅛ inch) of the inner insulation is revealed, in addition to the ¼ inch of bared main conductor. This conductor wire should be soldered to the center pin of the receptacle—the hot pin in each case. At the other end of the cable length, the inner conductor should be soldered to the common hot terminal and the braids should be extended so they can be soldered to the ground bus. This is not as complicated as it sounds and may not in every case be necessary—but it is a sensible precaution against hum.

With the adapter-and-converter section all wired up, you are ready to connect the component cables to their appropriate jacks at the rear of the panel. The center conductor (hot lead) goes in each case to the inner terminal of any jack, and therefore the braid must be connected to the outer, or ground terminal: in the case of a phono jack, this takes the form of an elongated washer which is held in place by the nut. This washer has a hook or hole for the braid and can be bent away from the panel's rear surface for easier access. It is a good idea to mark each receptacle's function clearly on the rear surface, and to match up each one in turn with the cable ends you have previously tagged. Making a wrong connection is a very easy and human error in these circumstances; and gnashing of teeth may be avoided by care and double-checking every time.

Well, there it is. All complete and in place, and looking rather professional, even if I say so myself.

Peg Board, meet Jack Field. You two are going to have a great time together.

King of Turntables

The only record playback system engineered for stereo cartridges that can track as low as 0.1 gram.

New Troubador Model 598

HERE is a turntable system designed exclusively for the new low tracking force cartridges—the long players that won't wear out your records. This unbelievable record playback device exceeds every broadcast specification for professional playback equipment.

Driven by the world's finest turntable motor (hysteresis synchronous type) the system reaches full speed in less than ⅓ of a revolution, locks in on A.C. line frequency and maintains speed accuracy with zero error, (built in strobe disc and pitch control provided).

The 12 inch turntable platter and massive balanced drive fly-wheel are both coupled to the drive motor by a precision ground flexible belt.

Empire's exclusive pneumatic suspension combines pistons and stretched springs. You can dance, jump or rock without bouncing the stylus off the record. The Troubador will track the world's finest cartridges as low as 0.1 gram.

With dead center cueing control the tone arm floats down or lifts up from a record surface bathed in light. Pick out the exact selection you want—even in a darkened room.

The extraordinary Troubador system features the Empire 990—the world's most perfect playback arm. This fully balanced tone arm uses sealed instrument ball bearings for horizontal as well as vertical motion. Arm friction measures a minute 1 miligram. Stylus force is dialed with a calibrated clock mainspring, (more accurate than any commercially available pressure gage). Calibrated anti-skating for conical or elliptical stylii. Exclusive Dyna Lift automatically lifts the arm off the record at the end of the music. With the arm resonance at an inaudible 6 Hz, it is virtually impossible to induce acoustic feedback in the system even when you turn up the gain and bass.

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS 3 speeds—33-1/3, 45, 78 rpm • Push-button power control • Built-in 45 rpm spindle • Rumble—90 dB (RRLL) • Wow and flutter .09% • Overall Dimensions (with base and dust cover): 17-1/2" W. x 15-1/8" D. x 8" H. • Dimensions (without base and dust cover): Width 16", Depth 13-1/2". Height above mounting surface: 3-1/4" • Depth required below base plate 3-1/2" • Swiss ground gold finish.

Troubador 598 playback system, $199.95 less base and dust cover. Satin walnut base and plexiglas cover combination $34.95. The 990 playback arm also available separately, $74.95

For your free "1971 Guide to Sound Design", write: Empire Scientific Corp., 1055 Stewart Ave., Garden City, N.Y. 11530

EMPIRE

INSTITUTE OF HIGH FIDELITY INC.

CIRCLE NO. 97 ON READER SERVICE CARD

Empire long playing stereo

Color	Technical specifications	List price	Model
	1000ZE/X TRACKS AS LOW AS 0.1 GRAM IN LABORATORY PLAYBACK ARMS. Each 1000ZE/X and 999VE/X cartridge is individually adjusted to have a flat frequency response within ± 1 dB from 20-20,000 Hz. Stereo separation is better than 35 dB at 1 KHZ and remains 25 dB or better all the way out to 20,000 Hz. Overall frequency response a phenomenal 4-40,000 Hz. There are no electrical or mechanical peaks and total IM distortion at the standard 3.54 cm/sec groove velocity does not exceed .05% at any frequency within the full spectrum. Uses a .2 x .7 hand polished miniature diamond for exceptionally low mass. 999VE/X RECOMMENDED TRACKING FORCE ¾ to 1¼ GRAMS.	$99.95	Measurement Standard 1000ZE/X
		$79.95	Professional 999VE/X
	Surpassed in overall quality only by the 999VE/X and the 1000ZE/X, this cartridge combines high compliance with low tip mass for excellent tracking between ½ and 1½ grams. Full frequency response is 6-36 KHz, Separation 35 dB, .2 x .7 mil bi-radial hand polished elliptical diamond. Recommended for high performance turntables and changers.	$64.95	Deluxe 999TE/X
	Delivers a fine frequency response of 8-32,000 Hz in top quality manual and automatic turntables and tone arms tracking at 1½ grams or less, .2 x .7 mil bi-radial hand polished elliptical diamond stylus.	$49.95	Deluxe 999SE/X
	A tracking range of ¾ to 2 grams, coupled to a .3 x .7 mil bi-radial hand polished elliptical diamond stylus, makes this an outstanding cartridge for high quality playback systems. Frequency response 8-32,000 Hz.	$44.95	Deluxe 999PE/X
	Designed to track from ¾ to 2 grams in many of today's better changers. Will faithfully reproduce frequencies between 10-30,000 Hz while maintaining 35 dB of channel separation. .3 x .7 mil bi-radial hand polished elliptical diamond stylus.	$39.95	Deluxe 999E/X
	For changers capable of tracking at less than 3 grams. Frequency response 10-30,000 Hz. The hand polished spherical diamond has a tip radius of .7 mil.	$34.95	Deluxe 999/X
	Perfect cartridge for popular automatic record players. Tracks 1 to 4 grams. A fine .4 x .7 mil bi-radial elliptical diamond stylus, frequency response 12-25,000 Hz.	$29.95	Popular 909E/X
	A frequency response of 15-25,000 Hz. Tracked properly by record changers requiring up to 4 grams. .7 mil radius spherical diamond stylus.	$24.95	Popular 909/X
	With 1½ to 4 gram tracking this economy elliptical produces a frequency response from 15-25,000 Hz. .4 x .7 mil bi-radial elliptical diamond. Great value for changers.	$24.95	Economy 90EE/X

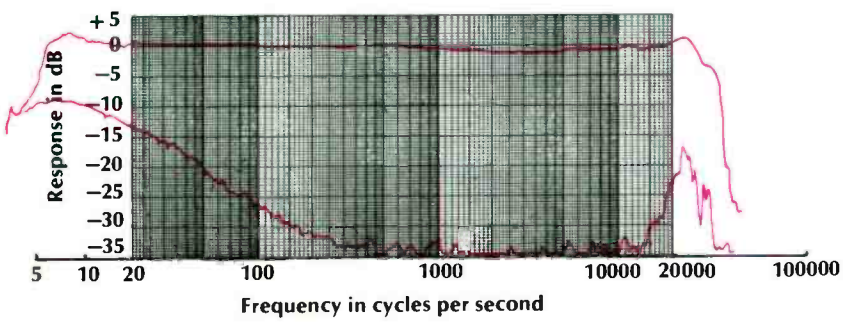
X DESIGNATES NEWEST IMPROVED VERSION.

Life Test Data • 999VE/X and 1000ZE/X

New 5,000 play tests prove these are the longest playing cartridges. No one ever dared to challenge stereo cartridges the way we did. But then no one ever created anything like the 1000ZE/X or the 999VE/X before. We designed these cartridges to give superb playback at all frequencies, at any groove velocity, at tracking forces so low that records sound brand new even after 5,000 plays. We cycled the 1000ZE/X and the 999VE/X through 5,000 complete plays on a test pressing, more than 50 times the ordinary life usage of a record. Through the entire low and middle spectrum there was no audible of measurable wear or distortion, while at the high frequencies the loss was less than 3 dB at 20,000 Hz. . . . after a full 5,000 plays.

Similar life tests conducted on both the 1000ZE/X measurement standard and professional model 999VE/X.

Model 1000ZE/X Frequency Response



1000ZE/X Measurement Standard

cartridge identification chart

Which Empire cartridge should you choose for these turntables and record changers?

AR	BSR		Dual			Empire			Garrard				Miracord		PE
XA	610	510	1219	1209	1009	598	498A	398A	SL95B	SL75B	SL65B	SL55B	50H	770H	2020
			●			●	●	●	●				●	●	
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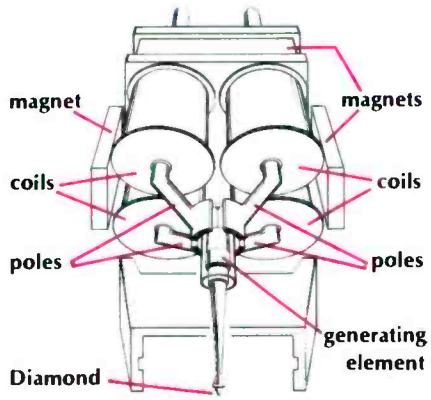
The Empire Cartridge — How it Works



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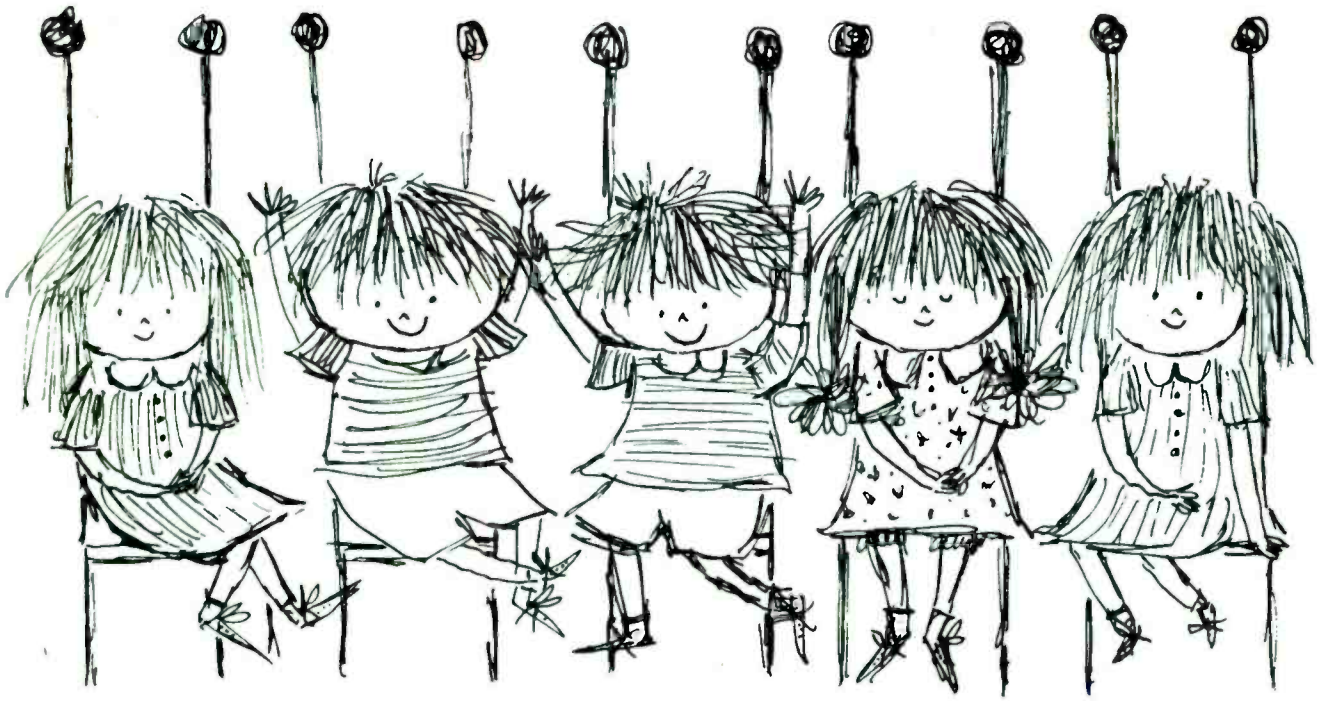
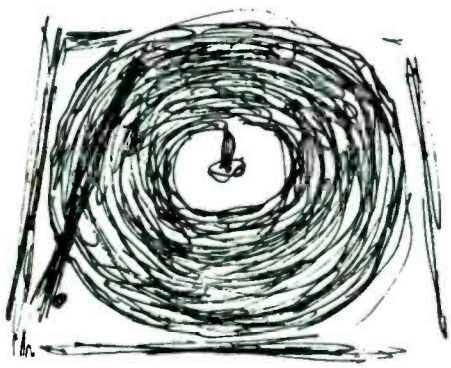
CIRCLE NO. 99 ON READER SERVICE CARD

What Records Should You Give to Children?





by Eleanor Kulleseid

THIRTY YEARS AGO, my record listening diet consisted of songs from the soundtrack of Walt Disney's *Pinocchio* and an album of the *Nutcracker Suite* adapted by the Freddy Martin swing band. Today my seven-year-old daughter has the eclectic tastes of any contemporary child, and dotes on the Beatles, Anne Pellowski's folk tale records, Pete Seeger, Judy Collins, and Misterogers. When not being observed, she will perform an abandoned scarf dance to the rondo movement of the *Haffner* Serenade.

One ten-year-old I know has a penchant for hard rock and Bartók (no pun intended) and is devoted to Beethoven's Fifth played at full volume, heavy on the bass, obviously in conscious mimicry of Schroeder, one of the characters of the Peanuts epic. He still enjoys his old "baby records" but is ready to sit (or read, or run) through *Also sprach Zarathustra*. The film *2001: A Space Odyssey*, with its superb soundtrack, has unintentionally done for the new generation what Disney's *Fantasia* did for us old folks.

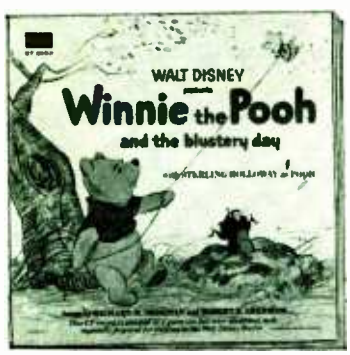
And so it goes. Children are exposed to an incredible variety of sounds and styles in their everyday lives. TV, films, and radio are repositories of musical and sound clichés from every historical period. Background noise can be heard on the street, in elevators, at the beach, even in the swimming pool. But the accessibility of so many and such varied stimuli has its price. We all suffer from overexposure, and noise pollution is a well-documented environmental problem. Children often need to screen out much of this overwhelming and often spurious sensory information. But in the process, they can screen out a good deal of the relevant and enjoyable. It would be well therefore to make sure that the record you buy as a Christmas present for a child is both interesting in content and well performed. Clear and expressive textual declamation is important in sung and spoken performances. Good diction and tonal balance will enable the young listener to concentrate on the total experience without having to struggle to make out the words. For the child who can read, printed texts and good program notes are also valuable aids.

Sensuous appeal too is an important ingredient. Both children and adults respond strongly to rhythmic patterns and to timbre, the "color" of musical sound and of the human voice. The younger child often exhibits a physical empathy—he "listens" with his body as much as his ears. His kinetic response and participation can enrich the listening experience;

Mrs. Kulleseid is a School Services librarian at the Bank Street College of Education in New York City.

The Aristocats, $3.98. LP and 12 page full color book. Disneyland Storyteller ST-STER 3995.

Goldilocks, $3.98. LP and 12 page full color book. Disneyland Storyteller ST-3998.



Winnie the Pooh and The Blustery Day. LP and 12 page full color book. Disneyland Storyteller ST-3953, $3.98.

Nutcracker Suite/Dance of the Hours. LP and 12 page full color book. Disneyland Record ST-STER 3990, $3.98.

through it he can absorb and express musical or verbal content in a natural and congenial manner. The older child, with his increased powers of conceptualization, internalizes more and responds to the listening experience on many levels, including the recognition of structural features, expressive devices, et cetera.

Finally, the length and variety of moods or meters established in a performance are important to the selection of records for various age levels. Different ages have different listening capacities and requirements. Generally speaking, the younger the child, the shorter will be the time span desired, and the more contrasts needed. For example, a five-year-old might enjoy listening and moving to the first piece on a record devoted to Indonesian gamelan music, and then wander away, finding the repetitive and unfamiliar idiom dreary. The same child might cheerfully listen to a half hour of folksongs or stories. On the other hand, a twelve-year-old who is studying the Far East in school might very well become interested in gamelan music and the culture it represents. Records with such special repertories must be selected with a child's particular interests in mind.

Producers of records for children have always aimed at two markets: the educational and the commercial. After Sputnik turned national attention to the quality of American education, federal funds poured into schools and the growing importance accorded to the audio-visual media as instructional aids resulted in an unprecedented demand, to which producers quickly responded. Record companies have had their own population explosion—reproducing, merging, generating new affiliates dedicated to education. Thus we have albums on every conceivable subject from Middle English literature to Swahili, from politics to wrestling, and so on *ad absurdum*. Needless to say, the quality of the output varies widely. Half the titles listed in the "Children's" section of the Schwann supplementary catalogue range from mediocre to dreadful. Fortunately, other sections contain titles appropriate for children. "Spoken and Miscellaneous" contains everything from bird songs to sounds of the junk yard and includes humor, documentary material, poetry, and prose, which will yield many good title possibilities, particularly for the older child.

"Non-Current Popular" covers a multitude of styles: folk, rock, country, and western, and Guy Lombardo. In fact, our much-discussed generation gap is nowhere better reflected than on one Schwann page that contains discographies of Roy Rogers, the Rolling Stones, and David Rose.

The "International Pop and Folk Music" section is a rich source of music from other countries, and contains some excellent titles.

A perusal of the main "Composer" listing in the monthly catalogue can provide excellent and more authentic access to the world of classical music than many of those music appreciation records intended for "kiddies," not people. To illustrate, if you want a recording of Prokofiev's well-known *Peter and the Wolf*, the "Children's" section in the supplementary catalogue carries some eight title listings on labels specializing in kiddie records. Many of these are tasteless adaptations with relatively mediocre musical performances. If you choose from this list, you may cheat yourself and the child. However, under Prokofiev in the "Composer" listing of the monthly guide, there are some seventeen other performances from major labels, many of which feature first-rate orchestras and excellent narrators. In addition, there are good choices for companion works on the second sides. My personal favorite is the old Stokowski recording (Columbia CL 671) with Basil Rathbone narrating and Victor Jory reading *Tubby the Tuba* on the flip side.

I have divided the available repertory into three broad categories: song collections of various kinds, narrative records with a story line, and instrumental music collections. Musical categories feature a potpourri of classical, contemporary, pop, folk, and miscellaneous styles reflecting the vigor of the Sixties.

An excellent source for selection is a list put out by the New York Library Association, entitled *Recordings for Children*, currently under revision. It may be purchased from the New York Library Association, Box 521, Woodside, New York 11377. Acknowledgment is hereby made to the Children's Library of the Library and Museum of the Performing Arts at Lincoln Center, from whose collection I borrowed extensively in preparing this survey.

Song Collections

A substantial part of the repertory may be placed under this heading, which includes folksongs, game and action songs, traditional children's songs, pop and rock collections, songs from films and musicals, classical solo and choral collections. Folk music from various regions, nations, and ethnic groups is well represented in authentic and excellent performances. For the younger child, Pete Seeger's classic "Birds, Beasts, Bugs, and Little Fishes" (Folkways 7011) or "Whosoever Shall Have Some Peanuts" (Folkways 7530) performed with humor and finesse by Sam Hinton, are good collections performed by seasoned professionals. The Riverside/Wonderland label has also issued a number of inexpensive anthologies which feature well-known artists performing a wide variety of folksongs. Their titles include: "A Child's Introduction to Folk Music" (1436), "Folk Songs for Little Cowboys" (1423), and "Folk Songs from the Children's Zoo" (1425). For the older child, Elektra "Folk Samplers" (SMP 2, SMP 3, SMP 5, SMP 6) are good introductions to a more international repertory with a broad range of styles from calypso to catch.

Two of the most beautiful English

folksong collections are "The Three Ravens, Songs of Folk and Minstrelsy Out of Elizabethan England" (Vanguard VRS 479) and "Western Wind and Other English Folk Songs and Ballads" (Vanguard 730059) sung impeccably by Alfred Deller. His thin, disembodied countertenor may put off an occasional child, but the performances will draw him in. Kathleen Ferrier's exquisite recital of Northumbrian, Elizabethan, and Irish folksongs (London 5411) is also a fine gift for the older child, as is Benjamin Britten's folksong collection (London 25327) sung by tenor Peter Pears.

Many well-known performers are composer-bailadeers and they have created a repertory of contemporary songs that are often topical and musically derived from the traditional folk idiom. Much of their work is adult-oriented, but young people from eight on up are very much tuned in. Arlo Guthrie's *Alice's Restaurant* is a hit with fifth graders, and the children I work with are conscious of the irony as well as the humor. You might consider presenting (and surprising) an older child with albums featuring adult songs by Pete Seeger ("God Bless the Grass," Columbia 9232), Woody Guthrie ("Dust Bowl Ballads," Folkways 5212), Arlo Guthrie ("Arlo," Reprise S 6299), Joan Baez ("Joan Baez," Vanguard 2077), Buffy Sainte-Marie ("Little Wheel Spin and Spin," Vanguard 79211), Leadbelly ("Take This Hammer," Folkways 31019), and Tom Paxton ("Ain't That News!," Elektra 7298), to name a few. Check the "Current" and "Non-Current Popular" sections of Schwann for other more recent titles by these artists.

The repertories of other famous singers and groups include a number of folksong arrangements suitable for children, and many have recorded discs specifically for the juvenile market. The ubiquitous Pete Seeger has a huge discography both under "Children's" and "Popular"; Theodore Bikel ("Folksinger's Choice," Elektra 7250); Burl Ives ("Wayfaring Stranger," Columbia CS 9041); Richard Dyer-Bennet ("Of Ships and Seafaring Men," Dyer-Bennet 12); Martha Schlamme ("Folk Songs," Vanguard 9011); The Weavers ("Reunion at Carnegie Hall," Vanguard 9130); Peter, Paul and Mary ("Peter, Paul, and Mommy," Warner Bros./7 Arts 1785); Harry Belafonte ("Swing Dat Hammer," Victor LSP 2194); Judy Collins ("Fifth Album," Elektra 7300); Oscar Brand ("Laughing America," Tradition 1014). One can't begin to name them all.

Song collections which encourage participation through singing, clapping out rhythms, games, or dance are of course geared to very young children, as are many traditional songs. Folkways Records has a number of such recordings: Ella Jenkins' "Adventures in Rhythm" (8273) and "Rhythms of Childhood" (7653); Charity Bailey's "Music Time" (7307) and "Seasons for Singing" (7656). "Jean Ritchie Sings Children's Songs and Games from the Southern Mountains" (7054) brings a fresh, more spontaneous approach with less didactic purpose, as does the album "American Game and Activity Songs" (7604). John Langstaff's "Songs for Singing Children," with children's chorus, is a delightful and, unfortunately, hard to get imported recording (Odeon PCLP 1604), which includes folksongs, rhymes, and singing games.

Nursery rhymes and Mother Goose are also given their due on a couple of Folkways homespun classics: Cisco Houston's "Nursery Rhymes, Games, and Folk Songs" (7006) and Woody Guthrie's "Songs to Grow On, Vol. 1" (31502). Christopher Casson reads and sings a "Treasury of Nursery Rhymes" (Spoken Arts 857 and 885) in an interesting performance that stresses expressive declamation. Cyril Ritchard, Celeste Holm, and Boris Karloff give us a fresh and rollicking "Mother Goose" (Caedmon TC 1091), with a musical score by Hershey Kay. "Children's Songs of Shakespeare's Time" (Counterpoint 5540) presents more sophisticated part-song settings of popular tunes, rhymes, and rounds of the time.

Songs from films and musicals are often worthwhile purchases, especially if the child has seen the show. One particular favorite of my children is "The Yellow Submarine" (Apple SW 153) from the soundtrack of the Beatles' animated film extravaganza. And if you don't mind a little sugar, "Mary Poppins" (Buena Vista S 4026) has its pleasant moments. Then there are the unmemorable but agreeable arrangements for the off-Broadway show, "You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown" (M-G-M S 1E9), and the nostalgia of "The Wizard of Oz" (M-G-M 3996) and its annual TV revivals.

The classical song repertory yields quite a harvest for the precocious adolescent ready to explore more sophisticated idioms. Recordings, if not in English, should have serviceable English translations or paraphrases on the jackets. One lovely anthology features Janet Baker in "A Treasury of English Songs, 1597–1961" (Angel S 36456). Two exquisite pieces found on one disc are Berlioz' *Nuits d'été* and Barber's *Knoxville, Summer of 1915* (Columbia ML 5843). Even Mahler's *Songs of a Wayfarer* (Angel 35522) and other song-symphonies can feed the developmental *Weltschmerz* of the emerging adolescent. Then there's Russell Oberlin's performance of Seymour Barab's sensitive settings of Stevenson's "A Child's Garden of Verses" (Counterpoint 5539), a good record for all ages. The songs of Charles Ives, sung by tenor Ted Puffer (Folkways 3344/5, two discs) are also an excellent purchase.

The human voice as instrument can be thrilling in albums like Joan Sutherland's "Art of the Prima Donna" (London OSA 1214, two discs), and "The Age of Bel Canto" (London OSA 1257, two discs). Also vocal recitals by such fine singers as Victoria de los Angeles in a "World of Song" (Angel S 35775), Marian Anderson ("He's Got the Whole World," RCA Victor LSC 2592), Hermann Prey (London 26055), and others.

Story Collections

A selection from this category will be difficult for the buyer. Some are unaltered readings from classic children's literature by famous actors, storytellers, and authors. Many are stories adapted or dramatized and usually embellished with musical accompaniment or songs. In the "Children's" section of Schwann we have Walt Disney's *Cinderella*, along with a number of others. One well-known version is by Charles Perrault, which can be heard in a good English translation and fine re-telling by Anne Pellowski in "The Seventh Princess" (CMS 502). Yet another musical version is Richard Rodgers' score for the CBS-TV special (Columbia OS 2730), or we can turn to Rossini's *La Cenerentola* (excerpted on London 26026). In any case, it is worth your while to check different versions before making a selection—an attractive cover doesn't always make for a great performance, especially in adaptations.

Very often books are sold with records. Children never stop asking to be read to, and a good storytelling performance, well recorded, can inspire more reading aloud in the home. Perhaps the best standard for such reading is set by "Let's Listen Stories" (Caedmon TC 1182) with Julie Harris and Boris Karloff. Many performances have pedagogical overtones and the effort to introduce zip and variety often lends a patronizing tone to the proceedings. The Weston Woods' Picture Book Parade series sometimes takes a similar approach. The book choices are excellent, musical accompaniments are adequate, but the narrations by Owen Jorden are, to my mind, stiff and lifeless. Two of their better anthologies include *Madeleine's Rescue* and other stories (PBP 108) and *Whistle for Willie* and other stories (PBP 116). These records are available direct from Weston Woods Studios, Weston, Connecticut 06880.

Young People's Records, a budget label, uses decent performers and fairly good adaptations, with excerpts from the classical music repertory performed on

the reverse sides of their story records. For example, *The Carrot Seed*, a delightful child's reading of the Ruth Krauss classic, with two other stories, is backed by selections from Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker Suite*. *Building a City* (10014) and other stories told and sung by Tom Glazer is backed by the *Saltarello* movement from Mendelssohn's *Italian Symphony* and selections from Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake*. There are many more titles that are suitable for children—from nursery age to seven or eight. Our favorite is *Noah's Ark*, *A Walk in the Forest*, and *How the Singing Water Got to the Tub* (10013) together with Romany gypsy dances.

Folk and fairy tales, originally intended for adult ears, have become the property of children of all ages, but are more appropriate for children seven and up. A number of fine spoken recordings are available on such labels as Caedmon, CMS, Spoken Arts, and Pathways of Sound. For the smallest, Boris Karloff's superb reading of *The Three Little Pigs* and other well-known folk tales (Caedmon 1129) is a perfect gift. "European Folk and Fairy Tales" (CMS 548) and "African Folk Tales," Vols. 1 and 2 (CMS 547 and 550) are two of the many fine international folk-tale anthologies available on this label. The brown-earth voice of Ruth Sawyer can be heard on "Ruth Sawyer, Storyteller" (Weston Woods 701 and 702), in which she talks about and demonstrates the art of which she is undisputed mistress. Joseph Schildkraut's exquisite sense of timing is evident in "Grimm's Fairy Tales" (Caedmon 1062), while Zia Mohyeddin brings a careful and sensitive tone to "Fables From India" (Caedmon 1168). And there are many others, including Folkways Records' albums of Harold Courlander reading selections from his folk tale collections in "Ashanti Folk Tales From Ghana" (7110) and Folk Tales From West Africa" (7103).

For the Christmas holidays, try Michael Redgrave's splendid reading of "The Tales of Hans Christian Andersen" (Caedmon TC 1073) or the same author's "The Little Match Girl and Other Tales" (Caedmon TC 1117), read by Boris Karloff. Ruth Sawyer narrates four Christmas legends in "Joy To The World" (Weston Woods WW 707). For lovers of Dickens, Sir Ralph Richardson and Paul Scofield star in a first-rate dramatization of *A Christmas Carol* (Caedmon S 1135), and if you would prefer a more abbreviated adaptation, there is Ronald Colman's reading of *A Christmas Carol*, paired with Charles Laughton's *Mr. Pickwick's Christmas* (Decca DLP 8010).

A good deal of literature has been written for the middle-grade child who has mastered the art of reading. Newberry Award Records has issued dramatizations of award-winning juvenile books picked annually by the American Library Association for "the most distinguished contribution to American literature for children." *The Matchlock Gun*, by Walter D. Edmonds, and Meindert DeJong's *The Wheel on the Chimney* are two of the series currently under way. The tasteful adaptations retain the basic spirit of the books, although the characterizations by some of the child actors leave much to be desired; all in all, a worthwhile purchase. If you don't mind depriving yourself of the pleasure of reading *The Thirteen Clocks* to your child, give him Lauren Bacall's black-humor reading of the Thurber classic (Pathways of Sound 1039/40, two discs). Then there is Carl Sandburg reading some of his own mad middle-American *Rootabaga Stories* (Caedmon 1089, 1159, and 1306) with warmth, humor, *and* good diction. Mark Twain, Poe, Hawthorne, Saki, Conan Doyle, Bret Harte, and a host of others are also available on the above-mentioned labels.

If your grammar-school child likes myths, he will enjoy Padraic Colum's version of *The Twelve Labors of Heracles* and other stories (Caedmon RC 1256) narrated by Anthony Quayle. Nathaniel Hawthorne's versions of the myths, despite their nineteenth-century moralizing, are still good literature ("Tanglewood Tales; the Story of Theseus," Caedmon TC 1291), while the older child may enjoy one of a six-disc series on "Heroes, Gods and Monsters of the Greek Myths," as read by Julie Harris and Richard Kiley (Spoken Arts GM 6).

A collection of recorded poetry is a good present for youthful lovers of words. Many poets read from their own works. Vol. 1 of "Dylan Thomas Reading" (Caedmon TC 1002) contains some of his best poems and a tender reading of *A Child's Christmas in Wales*. John Ciardi reads his poetry on "I Met a Man" (Pathways of Sound 1031), and shares the limelight with his children on "You Read to Me, I'll Read to You" (Spoken Arts 835). We have "Robert Frost Reading His Poetry" (Caedmon 1060), and "Robert Frost Reads His Own Works" (Decca 9127). Gwendolyn Brooks reads her poetry on Caedmon TC 1244, while Langston Hughes's autobiographical commentary adds an intimate note to his readings of "The Dream Keeper and Other Poems" (Folkways 7104). J. R. R. Tolkien performs "Poems and Songs of Middle Earth" (Caedmon TC 1231) for Hobbit-lovers and those who wish to brush up on their Elvish. In the humorous vein, older children will relish Joyce Grenfell and Stanley Holloway romping through "Bab Ballads and Cautionary Tales" (Caedmon TC 1104) by W. S. Gilbert and Hilaire Belloc, respectively, while grammar-school children will also take to the "Nonsense Verse" of Carroll and Lear (Caedmon TC 1078). T. S. Eliot's droll delivery of "Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats" (Spoken Arts 758) is a comic delight.

Spoken drama and opera can be thrilling experiences for the older child. Good abbreviated versions of Shakespeare's plays are available on Spoken Arts and Caedmon labels. And the right adolescent will love Verdi's *Otello* (excerpts RCA Victor LSC 2844) or Berlioz' *Roméo et Juliette* (Music Guild S 6206). Operatic settings of traditional stories are also available: Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel* sung in English by the Sadler's Wells company (Capitol SGBO 7256, two discs) is a well-known favorite.

Malcolm Williamson has provided a modern setting for Oscar Wilde's *Happy Prince* (Argo 2NF 5), and Douglas Moore has done justice to Stephen Vincent Benét's *The Devil and Daniel Webster* (Desto 6450). Jack Beeson brings his own brand of musical Americana to *Hello Out There* (Desto 6451). Lukas Foss has made good fun in his setting of Mark Twain's *Jumping Frog of Calaveras County* (Lyrichord 11), and George Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess* is still one of the greats (excerpts on RCA Victor LSC 2679 and Decca 79024). Menotti's Christmas classic, *Amahl and the Night Visitors* (RCA Victor LSC 2762) is another good seasonal choice as is *The Medium* (Columbia MS 7387).

Offenbach has opened the gates of classical music for many adolescents with *The Tales of Hoffmann* (excerpts in French on Angel S 36413; complete in English on London 4302, three discs). Mozart's *The Magic Flute* is available on two budget labels (Richmond 63507, three discs; Turnabout 4111/3, three discs). Excerpts are also available on a fine DGG recording (136440). Britten's chilling setting of Henry James's *Turn of the Screw* (London 4219, two discs) could well please the horror-tale aficionado, while his *Noye's Fludde* is a delight for all ages. Gilbert and Sullivan are, of course, a stylistic gold mine for musical enjoyment. Their incredible parodies of Western music from madrigal to mad scene present the child with a compendium of musical clichés embellished with textual spoofs and linked by marvelous plots. *Pirates, Pinafore,* and *Mikado* run high on the list. I prefer the better-projected and less musically polished performances of the D'Oyly Carte versions on the London and Richmond labels.

Music appreciation has a legitimate role in story records. And since grammar-school children are great biography fans, recordings of composers' biographies might make effective introductions to a musical style or historical period. Vox's "Music Masters Series" covers the most historical territory, including Corelli as well as Wagner. Period has a "Composers Life and Time Series," as does Everest in a ten-disc set (3200).

Instrumental Music Collections

This category includes folk and ballet music, dances and suites, band, chamber and solo, orchestral, and experimental contemporary music. There is no age limit here—even infants rock in time to a fourteenth-century Italian dance, a Haydn symphony, or a Stravinsky suite. Important here is the selection of pieces or movements of moderate duration with contrasts of harmonic color, timbre, and rhythm. In selecting titles for which many performances are available, pick those you feel are musically valid. Avoid the overblown interpretations which distort the music. On the other hand, don't buy your child an "authentic" performance which doesn't communicate well. Since many recordings feature more than one work, select the one with the best overall program.

A number of good orchestral anthologies are available. "Leonard Bernstein Conducts For the Young" (Columbia D3S 785, three discs) is a compendium of orchestral gems from his Young People's Concerts. Another Bernstein collection is "The Joy of Music" (Columbia M2Y 795, two discs). Columbia has also recently issued a series of samplers by various artists: "The Music of Mozart" (MS 7507), "The Music of Beethoven" (MS 7504), and other major composers.

Band collections can also make good gifts for children who play a band instrument especially when performed by such fine groups as the Eastman Wind Ensemble, conducted by Frederic Fennell ("American Concert Band Masterpieces," Mercury MG 50079) or by the Goldman Band ("Greatest Band in the Land!," Capitol P 8631).

One could compile an endless list of appropriate title suggestions from the classical repertory. In fact when the beleagured parent or relative enters his local department store or record shop with Christmas list in hand, he will find a staggering array of records with subject matter and styles varied enough to please any taste and age group—provided he remembers that in addition to "children's records," there are records for children in the classical, pop, folk, and theater repertories.

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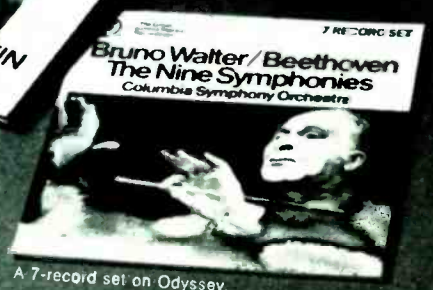

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by David Hamilton

The first recordings in a promising new collaboration.

IN THE MORE than fifty years since Karl Muck led the Boston Symphony Orchestra's first recordings, the name of that celebrated institution has only once before appeared on anything other than an RCA label (the exception was Roy Harris' *Symphony 1933*, recorded at a public concert in 1934, issued by Columbia—and, oddly enough, still in the current catalogues). From now on, however, we shall have to become accustomed to seeing the words "Boston Symphony Orchestra" on the characteristic yellow labels of Deutsche Grammophon. Nor is label color the only change, for the first DGG releases from Boston bring us two conductors who have never before recorded with the orchestra, and also what is perhaps the most intelligently planned record to date from the BSO Chamber Players: instead of the three-disc hodgepodge collections that RCA has offered, the obvious but nevertheless uncommon coupling of all three Debussy sonatas, plus the lovely *Syrinx* for flute solo.

At the same time, these records do not represent a complete break with Boston traditions. For example, the Second Suite from Ravel's *Daphnis et Chloé* has long been a Boston specialty under Koussevitzky and Munch, a showpiece that each of those conductors recorded twice (Munch as part of the complete ballet). For sheer musicality and expertise, I don't believe that the first Koussevitzky version has ever been surpassed, although it hardly offers sound quality in the climaxes to compare with more recent recordings. Munch's performances were much more vigorous and heavily accentuated, and although in his later Boston years he tended to become careless of detail, the 1955 recording (reissued on Victrola VICS 1271) is a very striking one, with a beautifully played flute solo and remarkably detailed stereo sound.

How does the fifth BSO version stack up against its formidable predecessors? Well, the orchestra plays with great expertise, but the sound pickup seems distant and somewhat diffuse in the less heavily scored passages. Perhaps some of this may be attributed to the performance—at the start of the flute solo, for instance, where the accompaniment rhythms are so subdued as to be almost inaudible. (Note, however, that this is one of the rare recordings of the Suite to employ the specified chorus.)

The Debussy *Nocturnes* on the reverse side can be faulted somewhat along the same lines, and here there is more evidence that the deficiency results from conductorial choice. *Nuages*, in particular, seems to me an underarticulated reading, with too much focus on a single thread at a time; this isn't exactly a complex polyphonic score, but the consistent quarter-note motion just meanders along in the background without much tautness of phrasing, and when the pizzicato offbeat

figure begins (one measure after No. 4 in the score) it is nearly imperceptible. In *Fêtes* one can point to similar details—which are not "mere" details, because texture is the very stuff and substance of these pieces—and there are some decided peculiarities of articulation as well. *Sirènes*, on the other hand, comes off rather attractively, with an uncommon sense of forward motion. And the filler, Ravel's *Pavane*, with its more straightforward reliance on harmonic and part-writing factors, is the most successful item on the disc.

Another Boston tradition, especially in the days of Koussevitzky, was the support of American music, and the other DGG-BSO orchestral disc is, quite fittingly, devoted to two major American orchestral works. To be sure, these scores are not exactly representative of the styles of American music that Koussevitzky favored, nor are they first recordings, but they are welcome as improvements on what has been previously available and also as an introduction to the work of one of the most talented of our younger conductors, Michael Tilson Thomas.

The question of the ultimate status of Charles Ives's music (as distinct from his unquestioned importance as a historical and symbolic figure in the development of American composition) is a complex one, but there can be little doubt that *Three Places in New England* is his most completely successful orchestral score, the one in which intentions and achievements are most closely matched, the musical purpose most clearly in focus. Until now, Ormandy's recording (available in a variety of couplings) has been the standard, but I find the leaner, more sharply detailed, less indulgent Thomas performance still more convincing, even though the sheer recorded sound is less conspicuously spectacular. And the stark, almost oppressively single-minded Ruggles work is played here with a sense of line that was not nearly as effectively sustained in the earlier Rozsnyai reading on Columbia. I'm not sure that the DGG producers (Karl Faust was the major *Ton-Dirigent* for the BSO sessions last winter) have yet taken the full measure of Symphony Hall, for none of these discs has quite the sonic impact of the best DGG European work (as in the Karajan-Berlin recordings) or of the best pre-Dynagroove RCA sound. But it is more than good enough to convey the quality of the music and of these very impressive performances by young Mr. Thomas.

The chamber disc is, as I have mentioned, an extremely intelligent coupling, with the strongest playing in the Violin Sonata. Mr. Thomas is equally impressive in the Cello Sonata, but here I can't shake off aural memories of the Rostropovich-Britten reading, a much more equally matched combination. The fascinating timbral punning of the trio sonata is handled with varying degrees of success; at times the effects are just as uncanny as Debussy could have desired, but on some occasions, absolute unanimity of ensemble eludes the players. Mrs. Dwyer plays *Syrinx* quite as beautifully as one had always expected she would.

In general, then, we have a promising start to a new collaboration, including one record that should be an absolute must for anyone seriously interested in the serious music of American composers.

DEBUSSY: Nocturnes. RAVEL: Daphnis et Chloé, Suite No. 2; Pavane. New England Conservatory Chorus; Boston Symphony Orchestra, Claudio Abbado, cond. Deutsche Grammophon 2530 038, $5.98. Tape: ●● L 3038, 7½ ips, $7.95.

IVES: Three Places in New England. RUGGLES: Sun-Treader. Boston Symphony Orchestra, Michael Tilson Thomas, cond. Deutsche Grammophon 2530 048, $5.98. Tape: ●● L 3048, 7½ ips, $7.95.

DEBUSSY: Sonata for Violin and Piano; Sonata for Cello and Piano; Sonata for Flute, Viola, and Harp; Syrinx for Flute Solo. Boston Symphony Chamber Players: Joseph Silverstein, violin; Michael Tilson Thomas, piano; Jules Eskin, cello; Doriot Anthony Dwyer, flute; Burton Fine, viola; Ann Hobson, harp. Deutsche Grammophon 2530 049, $5.98.

The producer stars in DGG's first Boston Pops recording.

by R. D. Darrell

THE THRILLING GONG crash that opens this disc and a symphonic epiphany of *Hair* signalizes a momentous Changing of the Guard as Arthur Fiedler and the Boston Pops debut on DGG's Polydor label. Since his first session on July 1, 1935, for what was then the RCA Victor Company, Fiedler's recordings with the Boston Pops Orchestra have written phonographic history, both commercially and influentially as they molded the musical experience of two or three generations of the mass public. Their enormous repertory has ranged from standard and light classics to current pop and rock favorites; and some of the most widely relished works have been the big Strauss/Ravel-like symphonic apotheoses of Broadway and Hollywood musical successes. Indeed this genre has become so

William Shi...

Arthur Fiedler with producer Thomas Mowrey.

well known that there's nothing really new to say about the ingeniously idiomatic scorings or authentically idiomatic performances of the three latest examples, all arranged by Richard Hayman, and a re-recording of Jack Mason's *Fiddler on the Roof* medley, first offered in the 1965 "Evening at the Pops" program for RCA. Nothing, that is, except to note that the playing is more expertly controlled than ever and that while Fiedler himself has lost none of his distinctive ebullience and irresistibly infectious rhythmic lilt, he has unmistakably mellowed in his treatment of the more romantic lyrical moments. Compare, for example, this reading of the *Fiddler* medley with the earlier one and you can't miss the enhanced expressive warmth of the new version.

But Fiedler fans will take both program materials and performances for granted. What audiophiles will want to know is just how a European company competes with the often superlatively brilliant technical achievements that RCA engineers have chalked up over the past thirty-five years. Well, while the present audio engineers, Günter Hermanns and Joachim Niss, are indeed as German as their names would indicate, the producer is the gifted young American, Thomas Mowrey. And there's nothing tentative about their first cooperative job. The kind of sound they have captured here is exactly what one might have expected both from the "natural," unsensational characteristics of the best Deutsche Grammophon symphonic recordings in recent years and from the honest, ungimmicked characteristics of Mowrey's Turnabout recordings of Donald Johanos and the Dallas Symphony Orchestra a few years ago.

Since practically all "big" sessions nowadays are made with half an eye directed toward a quadriphonic future, I'm sure that these Boston sessions have involved multichannel master tapes (Mowrey himself has pioneered in experimental quadriphonic technology) and, in all probability, a multiplicity of microphones. Yet the results have none of the unnaturally spotlighted woodwind and percussion passages, none of the artificially boosted glass-shattering highs, and none of the grotesquely bigger-than-life-size "presence" heard so often in recent years. To find a happy medium between oppressive closeness and lonely remoteness is no longer any miracle perhaps, but what *is* miraculous here is the capturing of not only impressively "big" orchestral sound and auditorium ambience but what are unmistakably the sound and ambience of the Boston Pops Orchestra in Boston's Symphony Hall.

It's only fair that I confess to some bias, since I first heard a symphony orchestra in Symphony Hall and I'd still rather hear a concert there than in any other auditorium I know of (except, perhaps, Sanders Theater in Memorial Hall, Cambridge, which is undoubtedly far too live for recording use). And much as I have admired many subsequent recordings made in Symphony Hall, none has quite so successfully established the persuasive illusion that I am listening to Fiedler and the Bostonians on their home ground. I can hardly expect all other listeners to share that illusion. Quite possibly some will object to the amount of reverberation evident here and some may crave more spectacular italicizations and capitalizations of certain score details. But for me this disc immediately joins my most treasured examples of recorded symphonic sonics at their best.

ARTHUR FIEDLER: "Fabulous Broadway." Orchestral Medleys from "Hair"; "Company"; and "Man of La Mancha" (arr. Hayman); "Fiddler on the Roof" (arr. Mason). Boston Pops Orchestra, Arthur Fiedler, cond. Polydor 24-5003, $5.98. Tape: ●● L 5003, 7½ ips, $7.95.

Liszt's Lament? Beethoven's Bagatelle? Or Rosemary's Babies?

A humble British housewife "transcribes" compositions from dead composers.

by Glenn Gould

MUCH AS I HATE to admit it, this disc is a bit of a letdown. Years before the sari-set mobilized a conviction about extrasensory perception as yet another weapon in its continuing skirmish with the linear persuasion of the "straight" world, I was already a more or less convinced parapsychology buff. Indeed, back in the days when the "Aquarian" generation was still being dubbed a "subculture" by its wishful-thought-prone elders, when Philips Records would scarcely have endowed an undertaking of this kind with two lavishly produced promotional brochures (forty-odd pages of essays and photos, most of them hokey, inclusive), when even the farsighted editors of this publication would surely have consigned it for review purposes to the relative obscurity of "Recitals and Miscellany," I would have been willing, even eager, to defend Rosemary Brown's right to commune with the musical departed of her choice and to

Medium Rosemary Brown on a shopping tour.

issue the more promising results of that communion as a commercial release.

As far as I'm concerned, then, and despite the condescension displayed by certain members of the critical fraternity in Britain toward this disc, there's simply no hint of fraud about Mrs. Brown's undertaking. But neither, on the other hand, with one conspicuous exception, do any of the seventeen *pièces de salon* listed below demand or encourage second hearings. In my view, the disc is clearly a labor of love for a sensitive, sincere, and in one way or another, "gifted" lady. As one who would like to believe that such visions and fantasies as haunt Mrs. Brown could be rendered explicit and meaningful to others, I regretfully report that the musical results are rather less persuasive than the descriptions and implications of the methodology involved.

Rosemary Brown, in case you haven't guessed, is a medium. For four or five years now she's been keeping close tabs on a black-caped apparition named Franz Liszt and, using his calling card, has also made contact with such considerable talents as Chopin, Debussy, Grieg, Rachmaninoff, and Schubert. Other distinguished visitors have graced her suburban-London living room as well, but in certain cases, notably that of J.S. Bach, the results, however socially diverting, have been less than felicitous musically. Mrs. Brown candidly confesses in one of the many jacket notes that since (prior to the intercession of the aforementioned Mr. Liszt) she had no professional experience of music, Bach's works are, to her at least, rather heavy going and it's to his credit, I think, that thus far, Johann Sebastian has taken this disclosure in good grace. Beethoven, similarly, is represented in this disc only by a bagatelle—well, for that matter, most of the compositions included in the package are bagatelle-like in their brevity and ternary persuasion, but we're assured that the master is presently at work on a Symphony No. 10, which—shades of Rimsky-Korsakov—is expected to materialize in the key of C sharp minor and, to this end, Mrs. Brown is currently swotting over orchestration.

Just how such academic disciplines are expected to assist—transposable horns and Beethovenian deafness notwithstanding—is never made quite clear and it is, I think, one of the weaker links in the armor of argument with which Mrs. Brown's proponents cloak her efforts. Yet a good deal of space in both elaborate brochures, when not engaged in that substantiation of musical illiteracy upon which, inevitably, her case must rest, is, ironically, given over to her current and future tutorial plans. At the present time, for instance—presumably as a response to Mrs. Brown's keyboard efforts on one side of the disc, which are confined to the less demanding of the works represented (Peter Katin is the expert pianist who tackles the more problematic pieces on the flip side)—Rachmaninoff is attempting to pass on some tricks of the pianistic trade to Mrs. Brown and, if all goes well, we can assume that Mr. Katin will be banished from the sequel, if there is one.

A good deal of the evidence cited on behalf of Mrs. Brown's blissful ignorance is supported by the testimony of artists with impeccable credentials. Richard Rodney Bennett, Humphrey Searle, and Hephzibah Menuhin have, at one time or another, taken an interest in the case and, like many of their colleagues, are convinced both by Mrs. Brown's prescience and integrity. The most revealing comment on her extramusical ability, however, is not offered by any of these contemporary spokesmen but, rather, by a gentleman who departed from this vale of tears some thirty years ago. In a jacket note dictated on New Year's Day, 1970, the incomparable musicologist Sir Donald Francis Tovey reaches out from the beyond to assure us that "the possibility that composers of the past are still alive in different dimensions from yours, and endeavoring to communicate, should not be dismissed too perfunctorily."

Needless to say, Sir Donald's essay is subjected to almost as much analytic scrutiny as the phenomenon of Mrs. Bown herself. Philips' literary editor A. David Hogarth, who suggested to Mrs. Brown that Sir Donald's approbation might be extremely helpful and who is himself a former Tovey student, has compared and contrasted the ratio of Greek versus Roman derivations, adverbial positionings, conceits of punctuation, with a similar selection from Sir Donald's nontechnical prose. Even more remarkable than the statistical evidence of Mr. Hogarth's literary nose-count, however, is the presence in this program note of that quality of gentle humor disciplined by charity, for which, among its many other virtues, Sir Donald's prose was justly renowned.

Musically, the exception to that rule of improvisatory sobriety which appears to govern most of Mrs. Brown's intuitions is an item called *Grübelei*, attributed to Liszt, and which, as Humphrey Searle points out, is, on its own merits and by any criterion, an altogether remarkable piece. It was dictated to Mrs. Brown at an audition attended by officials of the BBC, and in a spoken preface (band one, Side 2), she recalls her consternation when, instead of the expected virtuosic rabble rouser, her resident muse offered a strange, rhythmically eccentric (5/4 against 3/2 is the prevailing superposition) mood piece. "I think," said Liszt, who obviously has BBC officialdom psyched out, "the music I am giving you will be far more impressive to them than a Hungarian Rhapsody."

Impressive as it is, *Grübelei* suffers, in common with

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That's how Raymond Ericson described Martina Arroyo's voice in *The New York Times*, in a review of our uncut version of *La Forza del Destino*. Ann Sperber, in *The American Record Guide*, called this production, "An important and vocally thrilling performance – with the finest Leonora since the glorious heyday of Milanov and Tebaldi." *The San Francisco Sunday Examiner & Chronicle* wrote, "Arroyo and Bergonzi are a superb pair and the Royal Philharmonic has not played this well on disc since the death of Sir Thomas Beecham." *The Gramophone* concluded, "... to someone who asks: 'Which *Forza* shall I buy?' my answer is this new one."

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"Clearly the *Onegin* to have."

"The focus of Melodiya's new recording is on Rostropovich in his recorded debut as a conductor.

Savored a 'chapter' at a time, this is a sumptuous reading. The Bolshoi orchestra is one of the great opera ensembles and the instrumental playing is consistently smooth, with a luscious bloom in all departments. Unquestionably the vocal star here is young Yuri Mazurok as Onegin, a cultivated baritone who can spin out Tchaikovsky's ariosos with ease and elegance. Clearly this is the *Onegin* recording to have. The magnificently spacious reproduction projects the composer's juicy scoring with admirable fidelity..." Peter G. Davis, *High Fidelity*.

SRCL-4115

"What a stupendous, bewitching Carmen."

"I've done *Carmen* more than 125 times," Grace Bumbry remarked, "and this version puts a little more life in it." She was speaking of her mini-skirted performance in Rome last March. But her comments could apply as well to this Angel Paris Opera production, with Jon Vickers and Mirella Freni. (It is the first major recording of the Opéra-Comique version, with dialogue.) Critics raved. "What a stupendous, bewitching Carmen." And, "Let us frankly say that we never dared hope to see or hear a Carmen like Grace Bumbry's." Our recording cannot give you the joy of seeing her. But you may well agree with *Newsweek* that "there's nothing she can't do with that lustrous, sable-colored voice."

On record and cassette.

SCL-3767

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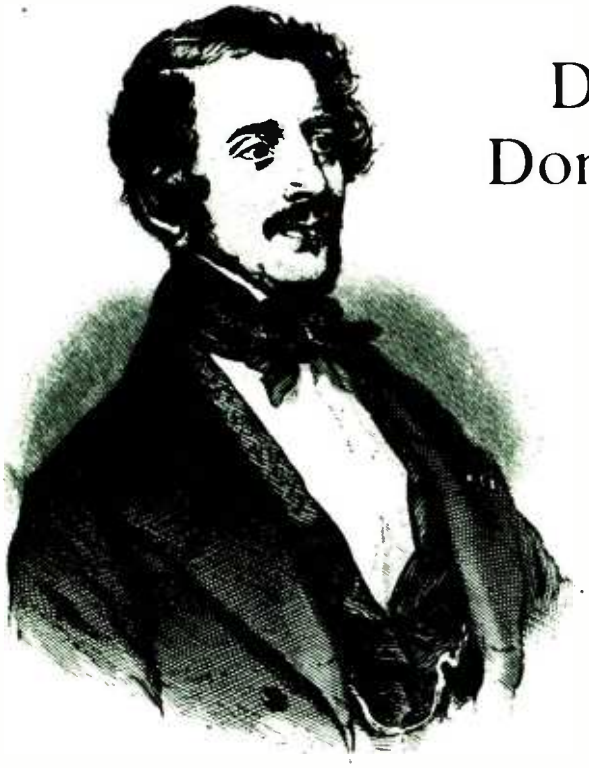
its companion pieces, from one lapse which, though it fails to compromise my faith in Mrs. Brown's veracity, does minimize the effectiveness of much of her work. Many of the compositions display an inordinate inclination to settle most roulades and all real linear invention within the territory appropriated by the right hand—the left, even when co-ordinated by the proficient Mr. Katin, is rarely accorded its due share of the action. It is, of course, by no means surprising that on her side of the disc, Mrs. Brown's keyboard address, like that of most nonprofessionals, displays precisely that problem of digital unanimity which benefits from such preferential status, but it is disconcerting to discover that this purely physical impediment is permitted to compromise the quality of her intermediation.

I'm not suggesting that Mrs. Brown's receptivity is unworthy of her sponsors' claims—*Grübelei* and the Tovey paragraphs, however they may have been arrived at, are genuine achievements—but simply that a gift of ESP is, like faith, constantly in jeopardy from the accumulation of physical impressions to which all of us are heir. And while I wouldn't for a moment question the value of Rachmaninoff's instruction or even, for that matter, of orchestration lessons, I suspect that the success of Mrs. Brown's future efforts will depend on her ability to segregate those spiritual perceptions which brought *Grübelei* alive from the tactile and physical memories that made it less than a total success.

ROSEMARY BROWN: "A Musical Seance." BEETHOVEN: Bagatelle. SCHUBERT: Moment Musicale. CHOPIN: Ballade; Impromptu in F minor; Impromptu in E flat. LISZT: Jesus Walking on the Water; Grübelei; Valse Brillante; Consolation; Swan at Twilight; Rêve en bateau; Lament; Jesus at Prayer. DEBUSSY: Danse exotique. BRAHMS: Waltz. GRIEG: Shepherd Piping. SCHUMANN: Longing. Rosemary Brown and Peter Katin, pianos. Philips PHS 900256, $5.98. Tape: PCR4 900 256, $5.98.



Two contrasting prima donnas: Souliotis as Anna Bolena and Caballé in a collection of rarities.

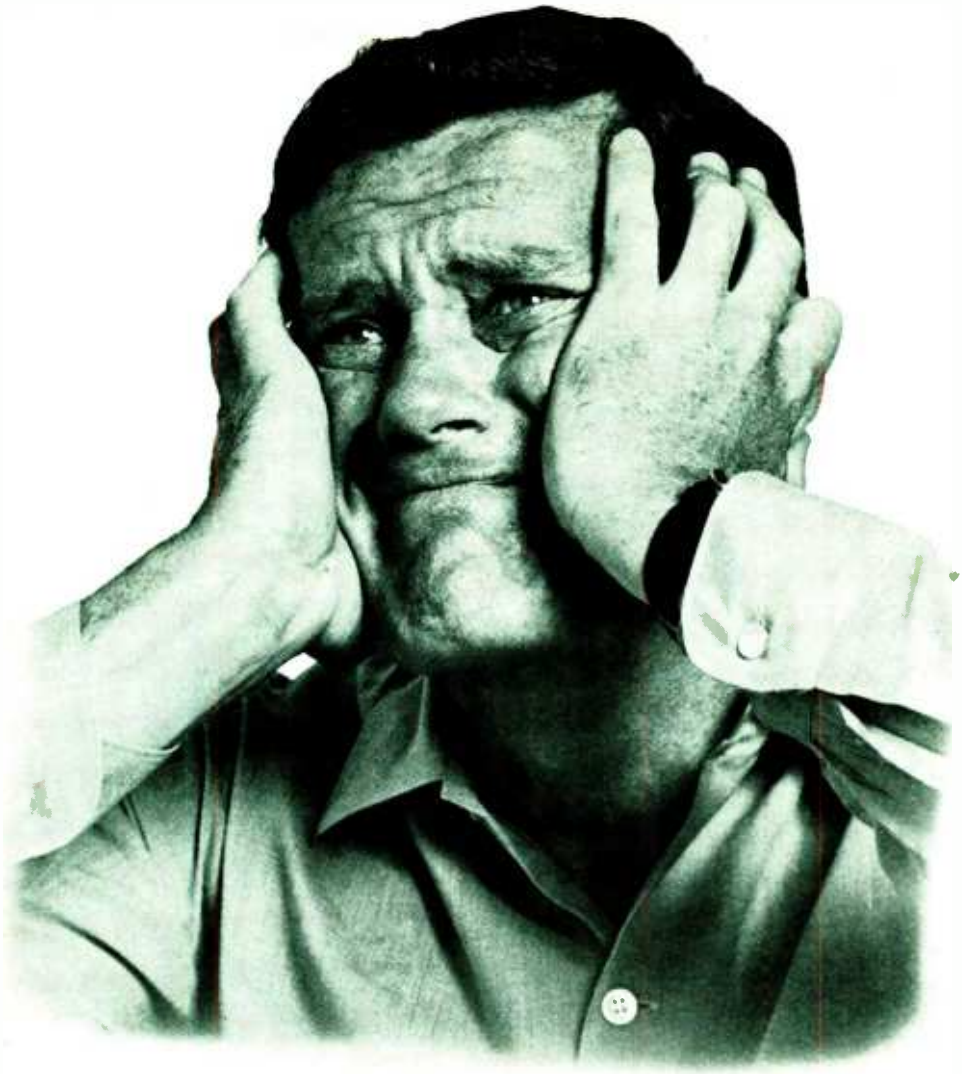
Double-Barreled Donizetti

by George Movshon

THERE WAS A stage play off Broadway a decade ago (by Giraudoux, I think; the title stubbornly refuses to come to mind) about two lovers who never met: a man and a woman absolutely made for each other, two compatible and complementary souls who would have formed a perfect union—but for the irony that they never got to know each other. They came within inches or seconds at several points in the drama—but no closer.

If you ask what all this has to do with the present pair of Donizetti releases, the answer is that here is a comparable case: two projects that cry out for each other and, ironically, never meet. RCA's Miss Caballé needs what London has: the dignity and dimension of a full production, with talented associates. And London certainly needs Miss Caballé: the reason for that judgment will emerge soon enough.

Though operagoers still argue about how good a composer Gaetano Donizetti was, the annals of today's opera houses reflect growing interest in his work. Before the last war you could expect to hear (outside of Italy) only two or three of his sixty-four completed operas. *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *L'Elisir d'amore*, and *Don Pasquale* remain staples today, and another half-dozen titles are revived with fair frequency: *La Fille du régiment*, *La Favorita*, *Lucrezia Borgia*, and *Il Duca d'Alba* are not the rarities they were a generation ago. On records, there are now nine complete Donizetti operas listed in Schwann, while the catalogue of imports will yield three or four more. Some say he was a hack, churning out acres of operatic wallpaper in bolts indistinguishable from each other; and some again hold him to be an authentic link in the Rossini-to-Verdi chain, a melodist and craftsman of high attainment. This division is not new. Opinions of his work varied widely in



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his own day: Mendelssohn scorned him; Berlioz praised his skill.

An event decisive to the present valuation of Donizetti took place in Milan in 1957, when La Scala presented a fresh production of *Anna Bolena*, unheard for decades, with Maria Callas as the Queen. The production opened the eyes and ears of critics to the existence of a powerful, viable, and long overlooked masterwork. Desmond Shawe-Taylor found only minor weaknesses in the plot and described the score as "a stream of thoroughly effective and often very beautiful music, modeled in the first place on Haydn and early Beethoven, though with features that recall Rossini and something too of the tender and flexible *cantilena* of Bellini." (A fair statement, but one which tends to deny the opera's distinction in suggesting that it is a collage, which it isn't.)

Donizetti's librettist was Felice Romani (who produced that same winter the text of *Sonnambula* for Bellini), indispensable partner of almost every major Italian composer of the time, author of more than one hundred operatic librettos. Romani put together a sensible, credible plot, based only very lightly upon the actual confession and execution of the second wife of Henry VIII, and ignoring such issues as the Protestant Reformation and the position of the Pope on divorce—factors central to the historical record. But he supplied his main characters with firm motivation, failing only to fill out clearly the figure of Percy, Anne's lover. And he shaped the action with high skill, building tension from the start and welding a series of dramatically apt confrontations between Henry and Jane Seymour (the queen-to-be) and between the two women. A trial of the queen for treason and adultery is followed by the best action in the opera: the Tower of London scene, where the condemned Anne breaks down, then recovers her dignity and goes to the execution block—while bells and bands outside proclaim Henry's marriage to Jane.

Anna Bolena was first done in Milan in 1830, when the composer was thirty-three years old. It was his first success, making his reputation in most of the great opera houses of Europe. In the 1880s the opera unaccountably faded from sight—and remained in obscurity (save for rare Italian provincial revivals) until the La Scala/Callas production of 1957.

And now here it is, in a new stereo recording made in Vienna with an international cast of high renown, engineered with the customary subtlety and skill of London's engineers, backed by an excellent orchestra in the knowing control of Silvio Varviso, as effective a conductor for this work as I can think of. Marilyn Horne offers singing of the utmost succulence and plangency. Nicolai Ghiaurov could not possibly be bettered as the ruthless, venal monarch; his tone is a constant salve to the ear, a rich, resonant timbre guided by high intelligence. There is also the elegantly tailored tenor voice of John Alexander as Percy, a model of security and style. The role of Smeaton (a trouser part) is given to a fresh-sounding mezzo new to my acquaintance, Janet Coster—and very promising she is. Other roles are handled in a fully satisfactory manner, and the chorus is proficient. All this is important, but not decisive. What counts above all in *Anna Bolena* is the casting of the title role. And here comes the trouble. The whole project crumbles, for the lady singing Anna is a disaster.

Elena Souliotis (the transliteration is new: she was formerly spelled Suliotis) was born in Athens of a Greek father and a Russian mother. She grew up in Argentina and began making a name during the early Sixties, when barely twenty years old. Three or four years ago she sang at the Chicago Opera and then (on a famous night) tried on for size the role of Bellini's Norma at a concert performance in Carnegie Hall. Norma proved several sizes too large, but this and other appearances left the impression of a powerful, almost steely dramatic soprano voice, contained in the frame of a most attractive blonde lady who clearly needed more singing lessons and voice-placement guidance.

Well, here she is as Anna Bolena, and it becomes clear from the first scene (and remains crystal thoughout the four-disc recording) that she has no business whatever to be in this company. The voice itself is metallic, quite a lot like the Callas sort of sound. But there the resemblance ends. It is a stiff, unformed, unschooled technique that is on these records, with only the most primitive comprehension of style or shape. Scene after scene shows a pitiful effort to get through the music and keep on pitch; and in scene after scene the effort fails, often with a flat squawk or a daggerlike sharp note. The Greek lady's sounds are thrown into even bolder relief because she is surrounded by professionals: Horne and Ghiaurov need no enhancement, heaven knows, from the deficiencies of colleagues; but Miss Souliotis' juxtaposition makes them sound like immortals.

The best things in the set are the Horne/Ghiaurov duets in the first scene of Act I and the second scene of Act II. But you will not be likely to invest in a four-disc album for such consolations. If you want to hear how the great closing scene of this opera *should* sound, get hold of Angel S 35764, where Maria Callas does a great chunk of it. There exists also an "unofficial" (i.e., pirated) version of the 1957 La Scala production, very adequate in sound quality and containing not only the definitive Anna of Callas but also the superb Jane Seymour of Giulietta Simionato, as well as adequate performances from Gianni Raimondi and Rossi-Lemeni as Percy and Henry respectively (though neither of these comes close to the quality of their rivals in the new set). If you know how to obtain this set, do not hesitate; it lacks one-third of the score contained in the (complete) London version, but it has head, heart, and style.

What was Montserrat Caballé doing while this project was being undertaken? She was in England recording some more Donizetti arias, making another fine recital disc to put alongside her first Donizetti/Bellini album (RCA LSC 2862). The new record sounds just dandy. That sinuously attractive, clear, and free soprano does exactly what she wants it to do—and what she wants is a splendid Donizetti style.

Someone found her some *really* obscure Donizetti scores (*Belisario* and *Parisina* have been revived recently, but the other two have not been played in this century), and in them, sure enough, were four fine extended scenes for soprano. RCA hired the LSO, provided a chorus and some comprimarios, and the results are excellent. I cannot honestly claim that these arias are very much different from those previously recorded. They are much the same and share an over-all Donizetti character and shape. They are well-turned and very listenable. So is Miss Caballé.

DONIZETTI: Anna Bolena. Elena Souliotis (s), Anne Boleyn; Marilyn Horne (ms), Jane Seymour; Janet Coster (ms), Smeaton; John Alexander (t), Lord Richard Percy; Piero de Palma (t), Harvey; Nicolai Ghiaurov (bs), King Henry VIII; Stafford Dean (bs), Lord Rochford; Chorus and Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera, Silvio Varviso, cond. London OSA 1436, $23.92 (four discs).

DONIZETTI: Torquato Tasso: Fatal Goffredo! . . . Trono e corona; Gemma di Vergy: Lascia, Guido, ch'io possa vendicare . . . Una voce al cor . . . Egli riede?; Belisario: Plauso! Voce di gioia . . . Sin la tomba è a me negata!; Parisina: No, più salir non ponno . . . Ciel, sei tu che in tal momento . . . Ugo è spento. Montserrat Caballé, soprano; Ambrosian Opera Chorus; London Symphony Orchestra, Carlo Felice Cillario, cond. RCA Red Seal LSC 3164, $5.98.

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BACH, J. C.: Concerto for Oboe and Orchestra, in F. FIALA: Concerto for English Horn and Orchestra, in E flat. HUMMEL: Adagio: Theme and Variations for Oboe and Orchestra, in F minor/major. Heinz Holliger, oboe and English horn; English Chamber Orchestra, Raymond Leppard, cond. Philips 839756, $5.98.

As a successor to Holliger's recent recording of the Mozart oboe concerto (DGG), this release might well have been titled "Heinz Holliger Plays the Music of Mozart's Friends," since each of the composers represented here was associated with him. Mozart was always fond of Johann Christian Bach (the youngest son of the Leipzig cantor) and wrote to his father upon hearing of his death in 1782: "You have probably heard that the English Bach is dead. What a loss to the musical world!" Josef Fiala (1748–1816), a composer and bandsman in the Munich and Salzburg orchestras, was a close friend of the Mozart family. Hummel's strongest connections are with a later generation (his pupils included Czerny, Thalberg, and Henselt), but he was himself a pupil of Mozart for two years before appearing at the age of nine as a keyboard prodigy.

Now while it is true that Mozart put most of his contemporaries into the shade (Haydn, of course, excepted), it is also true that a musician of Holliger's caliber can cause us to forget momentarily the relatively unsubstantial music—we are caught up in the artistry of the performance, the sweet and agile tone, and the utter tastefulness of his playing. In all fairness, though, the Bach has its share of tuneful and elegant melodies, especially in the delicious larghetto. The Fiala justifies itself by giving us the rare opportunity of hearing an English horn richly and beautifully played. The Hummel, a later piece than the other two, is full of highly stylized, heavily melodramatic posturing.

Leppard's wide-awake and enthusiastic accompaniments provide a perfect complement to Holliger's readings, and Philips' imported disc features warm and resonant acoustics and a flawless surface. C.F.G.

BEETHOVEN: Quartet for Strings, in C sharp minor, Op. 131. Quartetto Italiano. Philips 802915, $5.98.
BEETHOVEN: Quartet for Strings, in C sharp minor, Op. 131. Yale Quartet. Cardinal VCS 10062, $3.98.

The Quartetto Italiano has now completed all five of the late quartets (plus the *Grosse Fuge*), while the Yale group now has three to its credit (Op. 127 and Op. 132 are already available). The two performances make an interesting comparison, as they reveal widely differing approaches to the music. The essential difference can perhaps best be described as a concentration on detail in the case of the Quartetto Italiano as opposed to a concentration on large-scale structure in the Yale.

Both performances have much to recommend them, but for me the Yale comes out an easy winner. The Quartetto Italiano, undoubtedly as a result of their attention to surface nuance, tends to take slower tempos, and in some cases this results in a loss of continuity. For example, the fugal first movement moves so slowly that the listener is apt to lose his way in the labyrinth of contrapuntal activity. Similarly, the presto movement (number five) lacks the necessary vitality due to its plodding tempo; and the allegretto variation of the fourth movement is taken as an adagio, with the result that the felt pulse (which is the eighth note at this speed) becomes the same as the quarter note of the following adagio —the essential contrast between the two variations is completely lost.

The Yale Quartet, on the other hand, turns in a magnificent performance. This may well be *the* quartet for playing late Beethoven among those presently active. Everything is beautifully thought out and clearly articulated. Their rich sound is a joy to listen to, and the sense of give-and-take among the four instruments is simply marvelous. Lest one think that their stress on structure as opposed to surface implies a haphazard approach to details, let me emphasize that their respect for the particulars of the score is everywhere apparent; but the momentary effect is considered not so much on its own terms as in its relation to the whole. For example: the very important, and also very tricky, dynamics of the second movement are handled with complete mastery. My only possible reservation—and it is a small one—is that they take the fifth movement at such a furious pace that it almost gets away from them. But ultimately, I think the sense of forward thrust (to say nothing of sheer excitement) is worth it. The whole disc in fact is a rare treat. R.P.M.

BOULEZ: Improvisation No. 2. DALLAPICCOLA: Parole di San Paolo; Concerto per la notte di Natale dell'anno 1956. POUSSEUR: Trois chants sacrées. Valerie Lamoree, soprano (in the Boulez, Pousseur, and Dallapiccola Concerto); Benita Valente, soprano (in the Parole); Philadelphia Composers' Forum, Joel Thome, cond. Candide CE 31021, $3.98.

These four works, each scored for voice with chamber ensemble, are all new additions to the catalogue. They are particularly welcome since they are important works by three major contemporary com-

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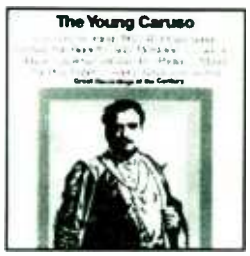

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posers, none of whom is well represented on disc. Certainly the most striking of the four is the Boulez, the middle of three *Improvisations sur Mallarmé*, which collectively form the central portion of a larger work entitled *pli Selon Pli* (Columbia's recording under the composer's direction has just been released here and will be reviewed in a future issue). The "improvised" aspect can be found both in the general character of Boulez' comment on the Mallarmé poem ("*Une dentelle s'abolit*") and in such specific aspects of the score as the use of variable rhythmic values. The work catches the character of controlled spontaneity in a most convincing way, and creates a unique and fascinating sonic effect through its employment of various instruments with sharp attack characteristics and strong sustaining qualities (piano, vibraphone, bells, etc.). The listener is confronted with a constant play between short, clearly defined attacks and the resonances which accumulate from their residue. This is mirrored in the vocal line by the contrast between long sustained tones, quite lyrical in quality, and numerous short grace notes which surround them. The work is a small masterpiece and one which makes this listener most anxious to hear it again in the context of the larger composition.

Of the two Dallapiccola pieces, the *Concerto per la notte di Natale dell'anno 1956* is the more ambitious and impressive. It is in five sections, consisting of two settings of texts by Jacopone da Toda surrounded by an instrumental prologue, intermezzo, and an epilogue. The work is quite dramatic in nature, a fact which distinguishes it from the essentially lyrical *Parole di San Paolo*, a delicate setting of passages from the First Epistle to the Corinthians. Both works illustrate Dallapiccola's remarkable ability to write idiomatically for the voice in an uncompromisingly "contemporary" style. (Inexplicably, the liner notes refer to Dallapiccola's ability to "stretch the delicate 'Webern' fabric." How can a texture which depends so completely on the use of "internal pedals" for its effect possibly be thought of as Webernesque?)

Least impressive of the works is the set of three short sacred songs by Henri Pousseur, which fails to establish a convincing musical character of its own. In listening to Pousseur's music I am always disappointed: he is one of the most articulate exponents of recent compositional developments, and I am always struck by the fact that his music never sounds as well as his articles read.

The performances are notable mainly for the beautiful singing of soprano Valerie Lamoree, particularly in the Boulez and the Dallapiccola *Concerto*. She captures the quality of the music extremely well, and she also sings accurately—a tough combination to beat. The more tentative vocal sound of Benita Valente in the *Parole di San Paolo* is not without effect in such delicate surroundings, but her reading is marred by an occasional tendency to go sharp.

As for the accompaniments, there is no question that conductor Joel Thome has a clear conception of the music, but there are some ensemble problems, especially in the two Dallapiccola works, whose highly flexible rhythmic character is achieved within a complex but clearly defined metrical framework. This creates formidable problems, particularly due to the large number of simultaneous attacks.

Texts and translations are not provided, a great loss for a disc containing exclusively non-English vocal music. Even more amazingly, the notes do not bother to identify text or poet except in the case of the Boulez/Mallarmé. R.P.M.

DALLAPICCOLA: Parole di San Paolo; Concerto per la notte di Natale dell'anno 1956—See Boulez: Improvisation No. 2.

DEBUSSY: Nocturnes. RAVEL: Daphnis et Chloé, Suite No. 2; Pavane. New England Conservatory Chorus; Boston Symphony Orchestra, Claudio Abbado, cond. For a feature review of this disc and other Boston Symphony Orchestra recordings, see page 85.

DEBUSSY: Sonata for Violin and Piano; Sonata for Cello and Piano; Sonata for Flute, Viola, and Harp; Syrinx for Flute Solo. Boston Symphony Chamber Players. For a feature review of this recording, see page 85.

DONIZETTI: Anna Bolena. Elena Souliotis (s), Marilyn Horne (ms), John Alexander (t), Nicolai Ghiaurov (bs), et al.; Chorus and Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera, Silvio Varviso, cond.
DONIZETTI: "Operatic Scenes." Arias from Torquato Tasso, Gemma di Vergy, Belisario, Parisina. Montserrat Caballé; Ambrosian Opera Chorus; London Symphony Orchestra, Carlo Felice Cillario, cond. For a feature review of these recordings, see page 90.

ELLINGTON: Harlem; New World A'Coming; The Golden Broom and the Green Apple. Duke Ellington, piano; Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Erich Kunzel, cond. Decca DL 710176, $5.98.

The three Ellington works on this disc cover a period of more than twenty-five years—one of his earliest extended compositions. *New World A'Coming* written in 1943; *Harlem*, composed for the NBC Symphony in 1950; and his 1965 *The Golden Broom and the Green Apple*, which is recorded here for the first time. It is probably coincidental that the interest of the three pieces lies in direct relationship to their age—the older the better. A more telling qualifying factor is the extent to which Ellington the pianist and the distinguishing Ellington touch as composer are evident in the works.

These personal traits are least apparent in *The Golden Broom and the Green Apple*, a rather bland, attenuated work with a steady concentration on strings and only the most fleeting glimpse of the Ducal piano, which drifts through the end of the first section and gives the final section a firm, idiomatic start. On the whole, though, the piece is uncharacteristically placid and lacks even the Duke's usual melodic charm.

New World A'Coming, on the other hand, is practically a piano concerto, filled with recognizable Ellingtonian figures and built on a lovely and characteristic Ellington theme. The Cincinnati Orchestra rises to this occasion, and even creates an ensemble that swings easily and naturally. The orchestra is asked to carry much more of *Harlem* and does not do quite as well. This is a lively and varied work, but it is more reportage than imaginative composition as the Duke outlines the various aspects of Harlem.

The Duke's very personal way with words—a wry, tongue-in-cheek elegance that he sometimes uses to excellent effect for a serious statement—is offered as a bonus on a supplementary seven-inch disc on which Ellington reads his witty program annotation for each of the three compositions. This is unquestionably the proper way to offer his annotation because his delivery is an essential part of his use of words.

J.S.W.

FIALA: Concerto for English Horn and Orchestra, in E flat—See J. C. Bach: Concerto for Oboe and Orchestra, in F.

FRANCK: Symphony in D minor. Orchestre de Paris, Herbert von Karajan, cond. Angel S 36729, $5.98.

The liner notes for this album contain a rather ambiguous statement to the effect that this is Karajan's recording debut with the new French orchestra as well as "the first time he has been represented in the American catalogue conducting Franck's Symphony in D minor." To the best of my knowledge, this Maestro has *never* before recorded the work in question.

When reviewing Angel's Klemperer edition of the Franck recently, I commented on its wholesome, clean-cut sobriety and lamented the absence of tonal magic. Needless to say, you don't find that problem with Karajan, whose penchant for tonal glamour is celebrated, and sometimes reviled. His is an extremely lush, self-indulgent reading, with multihued organ registrations and all the stops out. The tempo too tends to be pulled about like taffy, and the whole treatment is somewhat akin to the one Leopold Stokowski drew from his Philadelphians in the days of 78s. I do not actually mind such a treatment per se, but here it must be noted that the Orchestre de Paris is no match for the Philadelphia. The recently organized and still-developing Parisian ensemble is certainly a respectable outfit but they are not yet fully equipped to give Karajan everything that he asks for here. The basses have a heavy, sluggish response,

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the instrumental solos are unpolished, and choirs just do not fuse or balance with true virtuoso sheen. For a reading of the score that demanded less in the way of tonal beauty, the playing might be perfectly acceptable (indeed, the slightly murky "Parisian subway" tonal effect is even, in a sense, "idiomatic"), but it is mismatched to the present conductor's approach. Angel's reproduction is of the cathedral type sometimes deemed appropriate for this quasi-religious score: in more atheistic terminology, messy and overreverberant. RCA's Monteux/Chicago edition, though similarly blasty in its stereo format (the discontinued mono version was better), is still, for my money, the finest available recording of this work. H.G.

GRIEG: Sonata for Piano, in E minor, Op. 7; Nocturne, Op. 54, No. 4. MENDELSSOHN: Capriccio, Op. 33, No. 1; Variations Sérieuses, Op. 54. Alicia de Larrocha, piano. London CS 6676, $5.98.

Alicia de Larrocha's appearance on yet another label (she recorded for DGG/Decca before switching to Hispavox/Epic/Columbia) finally gives this formidable pianist the opportunity to perform some non-Iberian fare (though I understand that her last disc for Columbia—which will be along shortly—offers her reading of Ravel's *Gaspard de la Nuit*). The performances are quite typical of the Spanish artist's recent work: extremely brilliant in articulation, full of volatile bursts of energy, and occasionally extravagantly affetuoso. Grieg and Mendelssohn can absorb such an approach, even though some might look for more simplicity and rhythmic steadiness. The two Grieg pieces are particularly welcome, since nobody seems to play them much these days. (An old Menahem Pressler version of the sonata, for M-G-M, offered a rather similar kind of performance if I recall correctly; but it vanished from the catalogue years ago.) Of the several extant versions of the Mendelssohn variations, De Larrocha gets her most serious competition from Horowitz (RCA) and Richter (an interesting bootleg issue that also contains the greatest performance ever of the Liszt sonata). As intimated, she puts all sorts of little caesuras in the theme to point up the unexpected harmonic turns, and offers a great deal of wide tempo variation in her treatment of the elaborations. Since all of this music is highly romantic anyway, few could claim that the lady's extreme flexibility and nonstructured brilliance are objectionable.

What *is* objectionable though—at least to my ears—is the prevailing clatter of the recorded sound whenever the music goes above mezzo forte: I suspect that it's a combination of a hugely reverberant empty studio, an excessively "toppy" and brilliant instrument, and Mme. De Larrocha's penchant for secco, bitingly distinct "wrist" playing. If your rig can muzzle the barking sound, this record is a useful addition to the catalogue. H.G.

HAYDN, J.: Concerto for Organ and Orchestra, No. 1, in C—See Haydn, M.: Duo concertante for Viola, Organ, and String Orchestra, in C.

HAYDN: Trios for Strings, Op. 53: No. 1, in G; No. 2, in B flat; No. 3, in D. SCHUBERT: Trios for Strings: in B flat, D. 581; in B flat, D. 471. Grumiaux Trio. Philips 802905, $5.98.

The string trio—possibly because of the potential monotony of its texture—is a little-cultivated medium, as any violin/viola/cello team will tell you. Haydn adapted the three recorded here from piano sonatas (Nos. 40–42), and Schubert abandoned his first try, D. 471, after a single movement, plus a bit of a second movement. A year later, at the age of twenty, he carried through on D. 581, a full four-movement work.

Despite the apparent wariness of composers toward this combination of instruments, the pieces gathered here should find a place in the heart of any lover of chamber music in its lighter moments.

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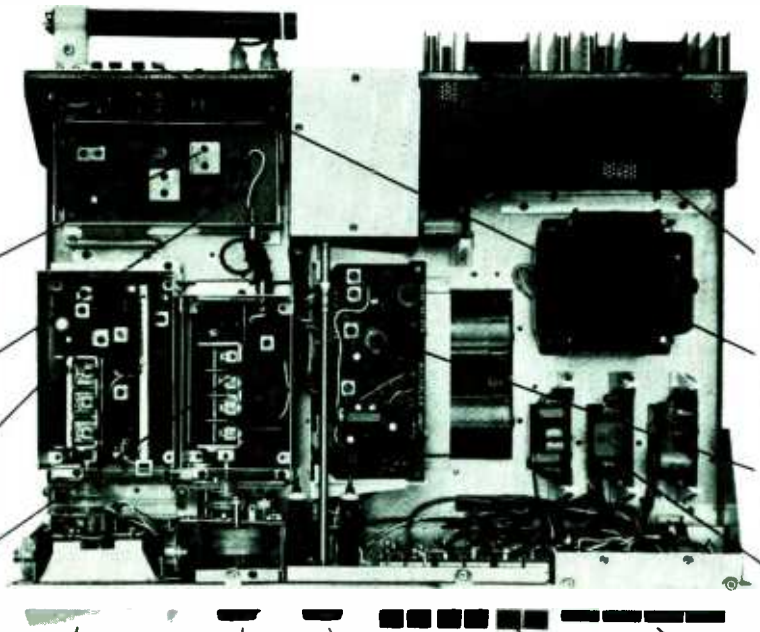

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Haydn's are relatively simple creations, each work of two movements only. But he ranges from a rather charming singsong (first movement of the G major) to a quite expressive and prepossessing essay in the first movement of the D major. The violin is the dominant character throughout, and all the finales are little sparklers. Schubert's D. 581 is a happy inspiration, and contents itself with skating merrily across the surface of things—none of the composer's darker thoughts here, but a gentle *Gemütlichkeit*, a pleasant warmth, a flirtation with the Viennese waltz, and a merry romp at the end with some fancy figurework for the violin. The single movement of D. 471 heads into more tempestuous waters, and one regrets that Schubert failed to go on with it.

Arthur Grumiaux and his colleagues (Georges Janzer, viola; Eva Czako, cello) handle everything splendidly, with clarity, finesse, a fine elasticity of dynamics, and a sympathetic spirit. They take a more compassionate attitude toward the Schubert D. 581 than do Heifetz, Primrose, and Piatigorsky, who drive into the work with more intensity and zip, but less friendliness. A delightful disc. S.F.

HAYDN, M.: Duo concertante for Viola, Organ, and String Orchestra, in C. HAYDN, J.: Concerto for Organ and Orchestra, No. 1, in C. Simon Preston, organ; Stephen Shingles, viola (in the M. Haydn); Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, Neville Marriner, dir. Argo ZRG 631, $5.95.

Musical Heritage lists two recordings of the Michael Haydn Duo concertante. Like the Argo disc under review, MHS 674 couples the work with J. Haydn's Organ Concerto No. 1, but there are some ridiculous cuts in the finale of the Michael Haydn and also a violist who plays badly out of tune. A more serious rival is MHS 720, which contains two additional Michael Haydn works: the trumpet concerto, fabulously performed by Maurice André, and the horn concerto in D, also very well played by Georges Barboteu. The organ "Positiv" used in this recording of the Duo concertante is much superior to the instrument used by Argo's Simon Preston, and MHS's organist, Marie-Claire Alain, registers more in the eighteenth-century tradition. Mr. Preston changes far too much, introducing registers that sound more Victorian than *settecento*. The MHS recording is preferable, despite the beautiful playing of the Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, which I consider the finest chamber orchestra in existence. The viola playing of Mr. Shingles is very good, especially his careful pitch: he is always dead in tune.

The Joseph Haydn concerto, not a very interesting work but a popular one nonetheless, has several rivals. Personally, I prefer the version by E. Power Biggs, recorded on the wonderful old organ at the Stadtpfarrkirche at Eisenstadt; this Columbia record also includes the other two organ concertos by Haydn and is a must for every Haydn collector. Mr. Preston, excellent technician though he is, once again changes registers far too often, but the orchestra is, as always, beautifully managed. If you can afford to do so, I would suggest buying both Musical Heritage 720 and the Columbia record for these two works.

The notes to the new Argo record contain a whole series of inanities including the statement that Joseph Haydn's organ concerto is scored for two clarinets and timpani. "Clarinets" is a mistranslation of the Italian word *clarini*, or high trumpets; but the trumpets and timpani belong to Haydn's Organ Concerto No. 2, not No. 1, which includes two oboes. The sound of the Argo record, however, is excellent. H.C.R.L.

HUMMEL: Adagio: Theme and Variations for Oboe and Orchestra, in F minor/major—See Bach, J.C.: Concerto for Oboe and Orchestra, in F.

IVES: Three Places in New England. RUGGLES: Sun-Treader. Boston Symphony Orchestra, Michael Tilson Thomas, cond. For a feature review of this recording, see page 85.

LUTYENS: Quincunx—See Maw: Scenes and Arias.

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MAHLER: Das klagende Lied; Symphony No. 10: Adagio. Evelyn Lear, soprano; Elisabeth Söderström, soprano; Grace Hoffman, mezzo; Ernst Häfliger and Stuart Burrows, tenors; Gerd Nienstedt, baritone; London Symphony Chorus and Orchestra, Pierre Boulez, cond. Columbia M2 30061, $11.96 (two discs).

Anyone who respects, studies, or simply enjoys the music of Mahler could go on about this album at great length; but its effect on me is the totally disarming realization that whatever I write will have a very slight effect compared to the impact of the music itself once the reader has an opportunity to listen to it. A two-word review, "get it," may be all that is really necessary.

Permit me, however, to offer some background information. *Das klagende Lied* is a dramatic cantata. (Schoenberg's *Gurrelieder* is a kindred work in many ways—both emerge from the same social and artistic context.) Mahler wrote the poem (it is in three parts) while in his late teens and completed the music in his early twenties. It is the first real demonstration of his extraordinary powers and is filled with anticipation of greatness to come (as well as a few familiar sounds that turn up again in later scores). Like most of his works, it was revised more than once and the entire first part of the poem was omitted when Mahler finally published the score in 1899 and directed the first performance the following season. The deservedly admired Wyn Morris recording presents the work as it has been generally known to date—the version that represents the composer's views at forty.

Boulez adds the long-missing part, one which was preserved by Mahler's nephew, Alfred Rosé. The union of material from 1880 to the 1899 text is easily achieved since Mahler scholars (such as Donald Mitchell) are convinced that the later revisions were slight and that the work retained in publication its original character. One may speculate why Mahler shortened the work by a third. I do not rule out the possibility that he may have concluded that it simply was too long for the best dramatic effect, that the big, festive scene at the start of the final section and the ensuing denouement should not be prefaced by two fairly quiet, preparatory sections. If you agree and want the traditional, published version, all you have to do is start playing this album on Side 2.

But the first part, never before recorded, contains some lovely *Waldmusik*, and the Boulez performance as a whole is so sensitively achieved in every way that it would appear to take immediate precedence over the other versions. For a quick and telling comparison, play the off-stage music at the start of Side 3 against the same passage on Side 2 of the Morris edition. The passage (a marvel of inspired orchestration which troubled Mahler briefly as he later reconsidered the score but which he finally restored to its original state of pure, flaming invention) makes its points on the Boulez disc as it does nowhere else. And on every other page there are equally effective touches of Boulez' miraculous hand guiding skilled musicians to do their best.

The Boulez performance of the adagio from the uncompleted Symphony No. 10 is so fine that even those with limited interest in *Das klagende Lied* ought to acquire this album for this purely instrumental triumph. Sensitivity is again a key word, but more important is the clarity of musical thought (and musical execution) which eliminates all doubts about this music as a fragment of an unfinished score. The composer Boulez here is so closely linked with the conductor that the sense of fulfillment and resolution is overwhelming. While the orchestra plays and the spell lasts, you feel the adagio is indeed complete and revealed with a quiet intensity Mahler could not have surpassed. R.C.M.

MAW: Scenes and Arias. LUTYENS: Quincunx. Jane Manning, soprano; Anne Howells, mezzo; Norma Procter, contralto (in the Maw); Josephine Nendick, soprano; John Shirley-Quirk, baritone (in the Lutyens); BBC Symphony Orchestra, Norman Del Mar, cond. Argo ZRG 622, $5.95.

This disc contains two recent pieces representing two generations of present-day English composers. Elizabeth Lutyens,

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born in 1906, was one of the earliest native English twelve-tone composers. I strongly suspect, however, that the present work is not serial; the musical language seems more akin to pre-serial Schoenberg, and in particular *Ewartung*. Like that work, *Quincunx* (written in 1960) has a highly emotional, almost improvisatory quality—a kind of musical stream of consciousness. (I was interested to find this impression supported by a fact mentioned in the liner notes—namely, that the piece was written over a very short period of time.) The over-all shape of the work is interesting: five tutti sections interspersed with four sections in which the scoring is limited to winds, strings, percussion, and brass respectively. The third tutti, which itself contains a soprano obbligato sung without text, is preceded by an unaccompanied baritone solo. This is set to words by Sir Thomas Browne beginning: "But the quincunx of heaven runs low, and 'tis time to close the five parts of knowledge," from which the work derives not only its title but its principal structural idea. This is a strong work; and although the improvisatory nature is revealed through a certain sense of discontinuity (particularly in the section for percussion, which begins most effectively in a scherzolike atmosphere only to disintegrate before the point can be made), it has a direct and immediate appeal which is impressive.

The *Scenes and Arias* of Nicholas Maw (born 1935) is a setting of a multilingual fourteenth-century anonymous poem for three female voices and orchestra. Written in 1962, it is more conservative than the Lutyens, the musical language being perhaps most clearly related to that of Britten. But here this language is couched in an impassioned, post-romantic style characterized by rhapsodic vocal lines and lush orchestral textures. There is no doubt that Maw handles his material well and effectively controls the flow of the whole, yet the work has a self-indulgent quality which I find most annoying. It is as if a great deal is being made over something which is in actuality very little. I am also bothered by what seems to me a complete absence of relationship between the style of the music and that of the poem. The latter would lend itself much more readily to, say, the terseness of recent Stravinsky than to the excesses it suffers here.

The performances by the BBC Orchestra under Del Mar and the soloists are good, if not exceptional. A text (untranslated) is included for the anonymous poem but not, unfortunately, for the Browne. R.P.M.

MENDELSSOHN: Capriccio, Op. 33, No. 1; Variations Sérieuses, Op. 54—See Grieg: Sonata for Piano, in E minor, Op. 7.

MOZART: Concertos for Piano and Orchestra: No. 2, in B flat, K. 39; No. 9, in E flat, K. 271. Geza Anda, piano; Camerata Academica of the Salzburg Mozarteum. Deutsche Grammophon 139453, $5.98.

Anda could not have selected a more interestingly contrasted pair of works. In one of them the child composer is learning how to put together a concerto; in the other the young master is before us in his full glory. K. 39 belongs in the group of early study pieces in which the eleven-year-old Mozart, under his father's guidance, tried his hand at the concerto. What he did was to take piano sonatas by Raupach (first and third movements) and Schobert (the andante)—two esteemed friends from his Paris visit—and by equipping them with orchestral accompaniment and the required tuttis, convert them into concertos. But the conversion is not a simple literal job; Mozart picks and chooses among the themes, groups them differently from the originals, and in general shows an inventiveness that could not be ascribed to Leopold alone, whose handwriting is copiously present in the manuscript.

The jump from K. 39 to K. 271 is an enormous one, for the E flat concerto is a genuine masterpiece. The piano concerto became Mozart's most intimate, fantastic, and unconventional vehicle, and this concerto already has a full measure of these qualities. The old blueprint of four tuttis and three lengthy solo portions in the first movement is still observed, but the relationship between solo and orchestra is much more organic than

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ever before: the dialogues are sharp—often one party does not wait for the other to finish. Anda is his own conductor, and in the little pasticcio concerto he gets by nicely. It is in the tight dialogues of the later concerto that the lack of an active conductor is at times evident. Curiously, it is not the orchestra that falls behind, but the soloist who almost gets away from them. This is not to say that the performance is not good, but Anda exhibits a certain nervous impatience. When he takes over from the orchestra he accelerates just enough to give the impression of a different articulation, and his trills are a bit wayward. The magnificent second movement is well dramatized, but since the members of the orchestra are largely left to their own judgment as to rhythm, the chords are at times a little fuzzy. The finale is also well played, though the reintroduction of the rondo theme lacks finesse. Both concertos have an overabundance of cadenzas: some by Mozart, some by Anda, and one by both—Anda dolling up Mozart's own. P.H.L.

MOZART: Eine kleine Nachtmusik, K. 525; Serenade for Two Oboes, Two Clarinets, Two Bassoons, and Two Horns, K. 388. Marlboro Festival Orchestra, Pablo Casals, cond. (in the Nachtmusik); Alexander Schneider, cond. (in the Serenade). Columbia MS 7446, $5.98.

Though the occasion for which the *Kleine Nachtmusik* was composed is not known, it was undoubtedly a *pièce d'occasion*, a true serenade—but what a serenade! The work does not probe into deep regions, but every measure is pure gold, exquisitely chiseled and enameled. The first three movements are well played, and while some of it is perhaps a little muscular, there is also elegance, and the mood is nicely realized. The distinguished maestro takes all the repeats, the tempos are excellent, and the little orchestra plays with a skill and unanimity that belie its summer-school status. But the finale is more vivace than allegro. The valiant orchestra follows the incredible verve of their nonagenarian conductor without a hitch; still, at this pace it is difficult to maintain clear articulation.

The earlier serenade, K. 388, is the opposite of the Apollonian Night Music: Mozart breaks violently through the accustomed serenade style and creates a dark, powerful, and dramatic piece of symphonic proportions and qualities. Just how Mozart's audience took this work is hard to imagine; they were used to light and entertaining pieces—no one had ever heard of dinner music in the minor key. Even the minuet is dark and in a complicated double canon. Mozart must have realized that this tremendous piece was much more than a serenade and reworked it for string quintet, but the transcription is only a pale replica of the original.

The octet is made up of first-class instrumentalists who play impeccably, and the sound is warm and full. The only complaint I have is the occasional preciosity and romanticizing, i.e., the shaping of the first appearance of the magnificent romanza theme. Schneider is an experienced and devoted chamber musician, but evidently has a loving romantic streak in his makeup. While the slight tempo changes and esoteric phrasing do sap some of the strength of this severe work, this is still a fine performance, and excellently recorded. P.H.L.

POUSSEUR: Trois chants sacrées—See Boulez: Improvisation No. 2.

PRAETORIUS: "Polychoral Christmas Music." Puer natus in Bethlehem; Vom Himmel hoch; Omnis mundus jocundatur; Als der gütige Gott. Herrad Wehrung, Hedy Graf, Gundula Bernàt-Klein and Herta Flebbe, sopranos; Frauke Haasemann, alto; Johannes Hoefflin and Hans-Dieter Ellenbeck, tenors; Wilhelm Pommerien, bass; Westphalian Choral Ensemble; instrumentalists, Wilhelm Ehmann, cond. Nonesuch H 71242, $2.98.

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writing is perfect for the holiday season. Taken from a collection with the tongue-twisting title *Polyhymnia caduceatrix et pangyrica*, these works by Michael Praetorius (1571–1621) are actually early concertos for voices and instruments that pit groups of soloists against choral ensembles, choruses against instruments, and instrumental ensembles against one another, all with breathtaking virtuosity.

As far as I know, nothing from this extraordinary collection has ever been recorded before. Nonesuch is to be congratulated for unearthing this gold mine which seems to have been waiting for 350 years to shine in all its stereophonic glory. Praetorius might be a modern-day electronic composer—his ear for spatial effect is keen. The music is a natural for twentieth-century recording techniques: the subtle use of parts of ensembles combine to produce a totally different effect from the same notes emanating from a single chorus.

Of the gay Christmas tunes on which the works themselves are based, only *Vom Himmel hoch* is likely to be familiar, but the spirit behind them all is that of the most cheerful of carols. In two of these motets, *Puer natus* and *Vom Himmel hoch*, Praetorius has expanded his earlier compositions on these chorales from his collection *Musae Sionae* (1607–10). Impressive as these concertos are, the freely composed *Omnis mundus jocundatur* and *Als der gütige Gott* are even more imaginative and free-wheeling in their design, the latter alternating soloistic dialogue for the characters in the Christmas drama with ripieno choruses which lend a sturdy musical and dramatic frame for the scene.

Wilhelm Ehmann provides spirited direction for the multiple forces under his baton. This is a co-operative venture; none of the many vocal and instrumental soloists stands out from the others, but all deserve praise and thanks for their contribution in producing a record I plan to enjoy not only at Christmas but all year round. S.T.S.

SCHUBERT: Symphony No. 9, in C, D. 944. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan, cond. Deutsche Grammophon 139043, $5.98.

The "traditional" approach to this noble symphony emphasizes the lyrical aspects to the complete detriment of logic and energy. Frankly, I am weary of conductors who engage in quixotic, irrational, and structurally detrimental fluctuations of tempo. Granted, an imaginative interpreter can reveal all sorts of magical colors and tonal beauties, and of course a totally metronomic approach will strait-jacket the poetical impulses of this or any musical work. Still, I feel that the legendary portrait of Schubert as a benign, sweet thing whose greatest vice was having a beer with some fellow schoolboys has been sorely exaggerated. Many works, particularly those from the last years of his short life, are fraught with grim sentiment, grizzly harmonic and tonal effects (the trombone sonorities in the final two symphonies were not the result of accident or inept scoring!), a biting rhythmic persistence, and, in general, a toughness of mind absolutely comparable with Schubert's idol, Beethoven. The "Great" C major, the E flat piano trio, the C minor posthumous sonata, and the *Winterreise* are not exactly works to hearten the spirit and soothe the ear. All are knotted, and all possess an element of fierceness behind the deceptive gentility. These masterpieces must not be allowed to go soft in performance.

The unpredictable Karajan, I am happy to say, shares my views on the subject. Indeed, he has turned in one of the greatest performances of his career. For one thing, he sees the work absolutely whole—with severity, rhythmic poise, and superb intellectuality. With one or two differences in detail (e.g., a very slight acceleration into the first movement's main allegro in the very last measures of the introduction), this performance has the thrust and staggering authority that no other conductor but Toscanini has quite achieved. The Toscanini analogy is a fair one here, since Karajan's way with the music bears a striking resemblance to the late maestro's. The first movement is taut and firm, a bit on the emphatic side; the second is a truly sinister march, swiftly paced, tonally tough, and with an absolutely staggering

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climax. The scherzo is full of bite and attack, and the finale has whirling impetus and even sounds a bit raucous and astringent. I note with due appreciation the very praiseworthy efforts of Skrowaczewski (World Series, a similarly taut, cohesive performance), Menuhin and Szell (both on Angel), the 1953 Toscanini/NBC (RCA, deleted, but probably slated for reissue on Victrola), and even the misguided but nevertheless inspired Furtwängler (Heliodor). But I would say that this new Karajan version—an immeasurable improvement over his earlier Columbia version with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra—is one of the glories of recent phonographic history and fully equal in stature to Toscanini's magnificent 1941 Philadelphia Orchestra performance (still listed as RCA Victor LD 2663). DGG's sound is suitably compact.
H.G.

SCHUBERT: Trios for Strings: in B flat, D. 581; in B flat, D 471—See Haydn: Trios for Strings; Op. 53: No. 1, in G; No. 2, in B flat; No. 3, in D.

SCHUMANN: Symphony No. 3, in E flat, Op. 97 ("Rhenish"); Faust: Overture. New Philharmonia Orchestra, Otto Klemperer, cond. Angel S 36689, $5.98.

The present disc completes Klemperer's survey of the four Schumann symphonies, and I am happy to report that this account of the *Rhenish* shows the veteran conductor in rather good form. To be sure, the tempos are on the staid side (even in the central, lighter-weight movements), and romanticism is severely held in check. The orchestral work, though, is clear and impeccable, with fine brass playing and none of those late entrances and lagging bass lines that blemished the recent version of the Second Symphony and *Genovera* overture. If you like a leisurely, philosophical, beery expansiveness in this symphony (by no means an unreasonable view of the work), the salty octogenarian provides just such an approach. I myself prefer the more impetuous Kubelik version on DGG or the one by Toscanini, which shares Klemperer's broad view in the outer movements but has a rather more galvanic rhythmic impulse throughout. I would also like to put in a good word for the excellent coupling of the *Rhenish* and Fourth Symphony under Günther Wand's leadership on an inexpensive Vanguard Everyman disc.

The *Faust* Overture—which Angel states is a first recording—is a complex, brooding example of "D-minor" Schumann. It is a very late period work and not very accessible on first, or even second, hearing. I suspect, though, that a more headlong, insistent, and brilliant sounding statement (interpretively, that is, not sonically: Angel's recording is fine) would make a distinctly less disjunct impression.
H.G.

SIBELIUS: Symphony No. 2, in D, Op. 43. Boston Symphony Orchestra, Serge

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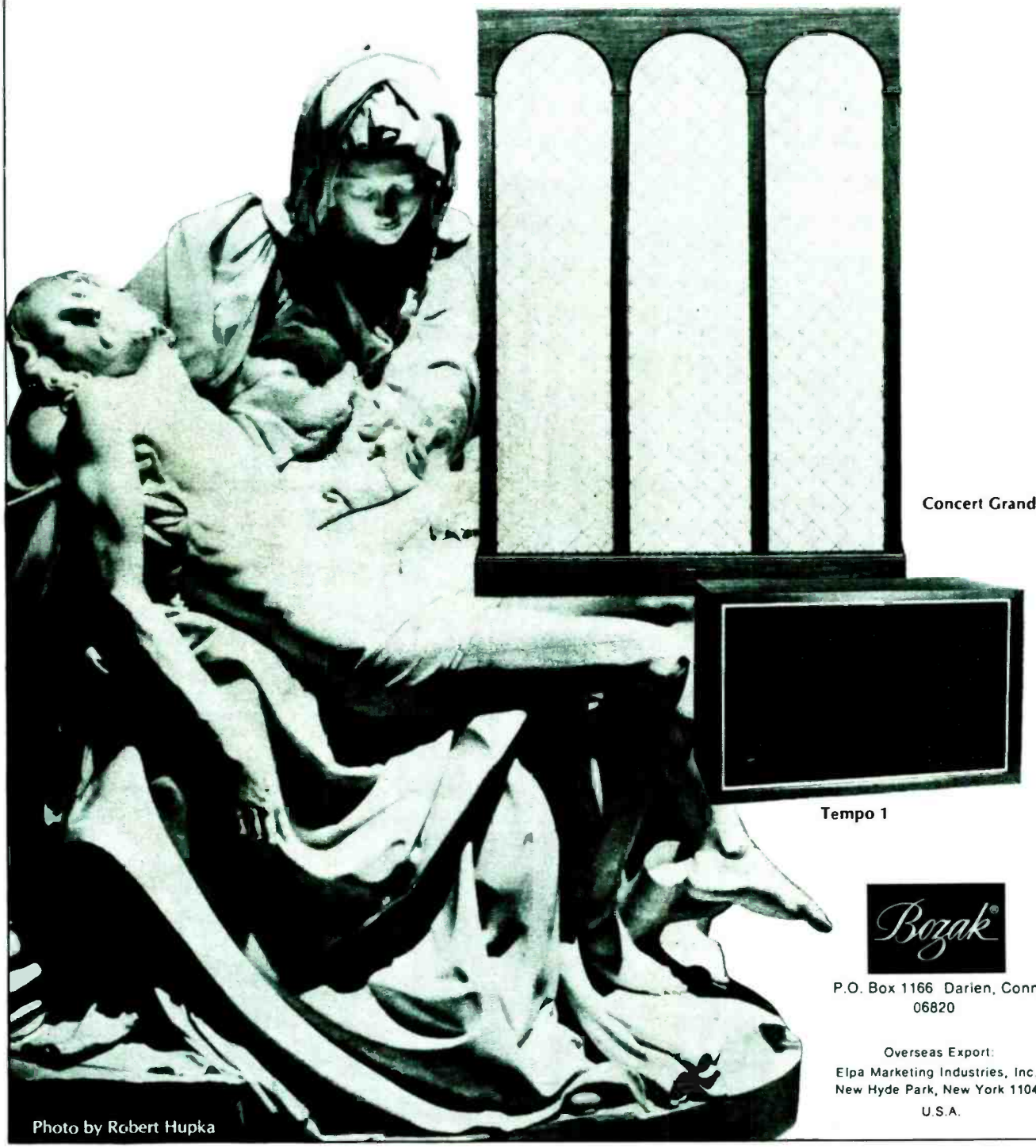

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Koussevitzky, cond. RCA Victrola VIC 1510, $2.98 (mono only).

The Sibelius Second was one of Koussevitzky's house specialties. He recorded it early in the Thirties on RCA 78s (M 272), and that famous performance was later reissued pseudonymously on a Camden LP (CAL 108, played by the "Centennial Symphony Orchestra"). The present reprint is a posthumous product of the Koussevitzky/Boston association made at a time when the conductor was no longer affiliated with the ensemble (it dates from November 29, 1950, a few months prior to Koussevitzky's death, and was in fact initially issued on RCA LM 1172 as a memorial tribute). As with other similar collaborations (e.g., the Stokowski/Philadelphia Columbia LPs, the Munch/BSO Debussy collection on RCA LSC 2668, the Monteux/San Francisco Strauss-Wagner record on Victrola VICS 1457, and the January 13, 1945 Toscanini/New York Philharmonic Pension Fund concert—hopefully to be issued in the future), one hears an orchestra already altered in personnel and leadership responding wholeheartedly to an esteemed former maestro. Though purists might scoff at the authenticity of this performance, to my ears the dark, creamy sound of the BSO and its general massive style come across as authentic Koussevitzky trademarks. The disc is still a fine-sounding specimen of the recording art: the sonics are forward and suave, with ample resonance and yet plenty of biting highs to clarify detail.

When I wrote my Sibelius Symphony discography [May 1969], several readers took issue with me for denigrating the Koussevitzky Sibelius tradition indirectly; in other words, they chided me for faulting his influence on the performances of his pupil—Bernstein—while the authentic documents were unobtainable. Upon rehearing the original, I freely admit that there is a finesse and authority in the mentor's work that places it considerably ahead of the disciple's. Nevertheless, I will stick to my guns and reassert my contention that the basic *style*—broad, smoothed-over, and very lyrical—has set an unfortunate precedent for Tchaikovskian performances of this music. I prefer the craggier, more uncompromising outlooks of Szell, Toscanini, Hannikainen, Monteux (now transferred to London's Stereo Treasury label), Beecham, Dorati, and Okko Kamu (a brilliant newcomer on DGG).

Still, Koussevitzky's *is* a great performance in its way. If you want a souvenir of his work, this is one of the best—and best recorded—you will ever find. The reinstatement of this valuable historical document at an economy price is decidedly welcome. H.G.

XENAKIS: Concret P-H II; Diamorphoses II; Orient-Occident III; Bohor I. Nonesuch H 71246, $2.98.

Xenakis has composed relatively little electronic music, and the four works presented here have not been previously issued on discs, at least in this country. Two of them are masterpieces of the electronic idiom; one of them indeed, it seems to me, should be placed among the major milestones of modern music, regardless of category.

There are two good reasons for the incredible splendor of the music presented here. One is that the electronic medium is particularly well suited to Xenakis' favorite structural device, which James Mansback Brody describes in his jacket notes as "gradual transformation within a cloud of events." He quotes Xenakis himself as follows: "You start with a sound made up of many particles, then see how you can make it change imperceptibly, growing, changing, and developing, until an entirely new sound results." While Xenakis does this magnificently in his instrumental works, the expressive idiom involved is especially successful in electronic terms.

The second reason for the great quality of this music is that, in the composer's words, "There is usually no electronic alteration of the original sound. . . . The basic manipulators I employ in electro-acoustic music are tape-speed change, mixing, and splicing." As a result of this technique, the sound material of all four works has a marvelous freshness, richness, and depth of resonance;

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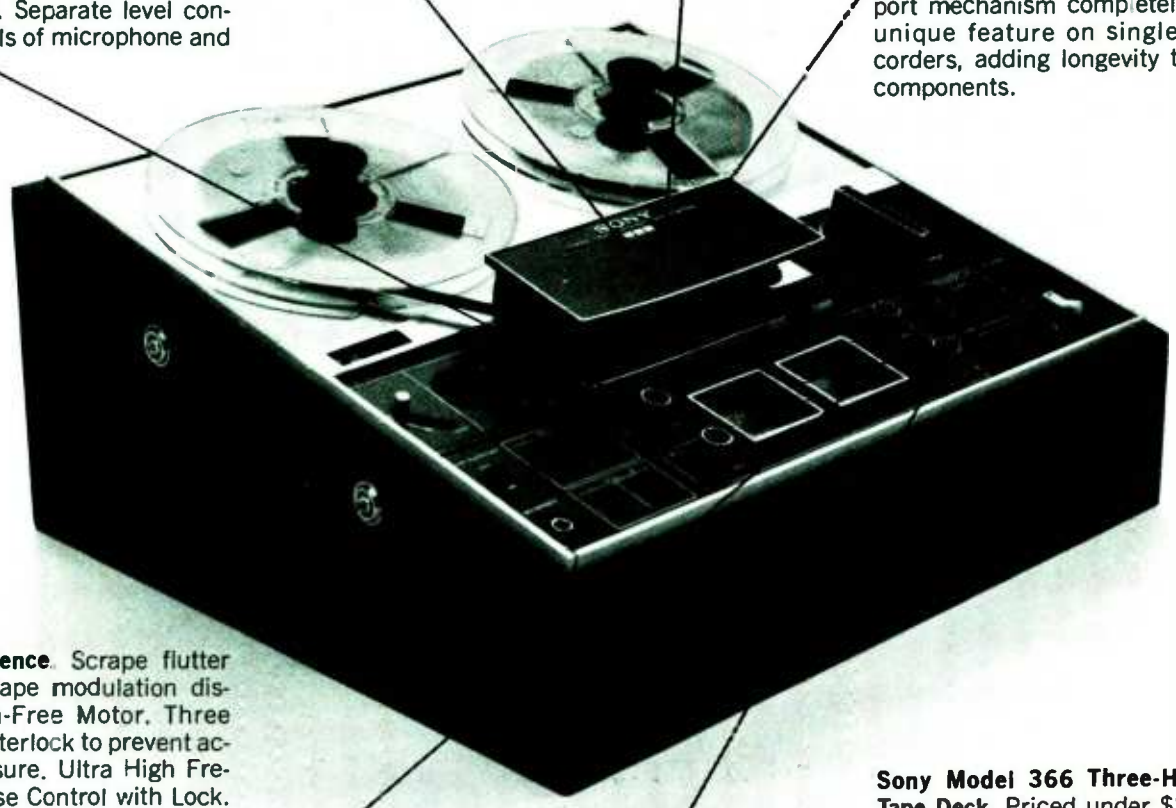

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the bloops, bangs, chimes, and similar clichés of your academic tape composer are entirely avoided.

The numerals after each piece refer to the version; Xenakis rewrites a lot, depending on the circumstances. *Concret P-H II*, for example, was written for the famous Philips Pavilion at the Brussels Fair of 1958; it took account of special sound equipment and the special conditions of the building, and so it has been reworked for this recording. It is a good swarm-of-sound piece and so is *Diamorphoses II*, which is based on more dramatic material. But *Orient-Occident III*, composed as background score for a film about the visual arts of ancient world cultures, is one of the very great color pieces of modern times, and *Bohor I* is the above-mentioned major milestone.

Bohor I (named after one of the knights of the Round Table) has in general more variety, color, formal ingenuity, and genius behind it than practically all the other electronic works on record put together. Its ending, with the most relentless, sustained, eighty-six-ply climax in the history of the recording industry, will get you put out of your apartment building if you live in one, but it's worth it.

Put this work alongside *Pelléas*, the *Sacre*, *Pierrot Lunaire*; it's one of the scores whereby the music of our century will be measured. A.F.

Beethoven by the Bushel from DGG

THE BEETHOVEN bicentenary comes to a gala conclusion this month (or does it?) as Ludwig officially attains the age of 200 on December 16. And by the time these words appear, Deutsche Grammophon will have released all twelve volumes of its $299.50 birthday package: every major work and then some, recorded complete on seventy-six discs. There have been library editions on an impressive scale before, but DGG's immense offering dwarfs them all both in scope and in the over-all excellent performances.

What do you get for your $300? The complete symphonies and overtures (Karajan), piano concertos and sonatas (Kempff), string quartets (Amadeus), violin sonatas (Menuhin/Kempff), cello sonatas (Fournier/Kempff), songs for male voice (Fischer-Dieskau), *Missa Solemnis* (Karajan), *Fidelio* (Böhm), piano trios (Szeryng/Fournier/Kempff), plus miscellaneous chamber works for winds and strings, choral music, piano pieces, and a representative selection from the Scottish-Irish-Welsh folksong arrangements—every performance, needless to say, in impeccably engineered and processed stereo in accordance with DGG's usual high standards. A generous assortment, no doubt, although there are a few striking omissions: *Wellington's Victory* and the marches for wind band (available separately on DGG 139045), numerous variations and short piano pieces, as well as all the incidental stage music save for *Egmont*.

A detailed review of so huge a package would require several issues of this magazine. For specifics on the previously released material, readers are referred to HIGH FIDELITY's continuing discography which will be concluded next month; the new recordings will be considered in forthcoming issues. One can generalize to this extent, however: while not every individual performance can possibly cater to all tastes, the general level of accomplishment is extraordinary—each participating musician is a Beethovenian of stature with valid and positive statements to make. Those who take the plunge and order the complete series will probably never regret it, for the musical riches contained on these discs will be a source of pleasure and enlightenment for years to come. (Less ambitious collectors may want to investigate Time-Life's offer of fifty discs drawn from DGG's Beethoven Edition. This selection includes most of the popular works, which are contained in ten five-record albums and priced at $14.95 each; available from Time-Life Records, Time-Life Building, Chicago, Ill. 60611.)

DGG is releasing each volume in its series separately, but the total package must be specially ordered through your dealer. When bought en masse, DGG (and Time-Life) offers an especially attractive bonus in the form of a $25, 275-page art book discussing Beethoven and his music in luxurious detail. The profuse color reproductions are breathtaking and the text is a model of fastidious scholarship—a treasure of fascinating and enlightening factual material.

Taken all in all, Deutsche Grammophon has served Germany's most famous musical son with an abundance of taste, talent, and technical expertise. P.G.D.

recitals & miscellany

ROSEMARY BROWN: "A Musical Seance." Music dictated to Rosemary Brown by Beethoven, Schubert, Chopin, Liszt, Debussy, Brahms, Grieg, and Schumann. Rosemary Brown and Peter Katin, pianos. For a feature review of this recording, see page 87.

"NEW MUSIC FOR PIANO." XENAKIS: Herma. TAKAHASHI: Metatheses. REYNOLDS: Fantasy for Pianist. BROWN, E.: Corroboree. Yuji Takahashi, piano. Mainstream MS 5000, $4.98.

The writer of these lines has repeatedly expressed himself as favoring a law whereby composition for the piano would be totally banned forever. Unfortunately the world's governments have proved unresponsive to this idea, and one must admit that two of the four composers represented here indicate that the notion is a little harsh.

The Xenakis and Takahashi are further examples of the piano idiom—rumble-rumble, crash-crash, tiddly-hoop—that we have been hearing at avant-garde concerts for the past fifty years, each time illustrating a totally new departure in compositional technique. *Plus ça change, plus c'est la même old chose.* But Roger Reynolds and Earl Brown have something.

The Reynolds is really a color piece exploiting the sensitive values of the piano in almost Debussyan style; it adds a discreetly plucked or brushed effect here and there, but it is no assault on the instrument in the manner of Henry Cowell.

The Brown is perfectly described by its title; a corroboree is a hell of a good time; it comes from an Australian aboriginal word for a festival, and there is something aboriginal about Mr. Brown's grandly sonorous and savage score. The recording of the three piano parts by one instrumentalist and then superimposed may help to account for the integrity and solid interior power of this remarkable work. A.F.

LEONTYNE PRICE: "Prima Donna, Vol. 3." GLUCK: Alceste: Divinités du Styx. MOZART: Don Giovanni: Non mi dir. VERDI: I Lombardi: Se vano è il pregare; Simone Boccanegra: Come in quest'ora bruna. FLOTOW: Martha: The Last Rose of Summer. OFFENBACH: La Périchole: Tu n'es pas beau. WAGNER: Die Walküre: Du bist der Lenz. BIZET: Carmen: Je dis que rien. MASSENET: Thaïs: Dis-moi que je suis belle. PUCCINI: Gianni Schicchi: O mio babbino caro. POULENC: Les Dialogues des Carmélites: Mes filles, voilà que s'achève. Leontyne Price, soprano; London Symphony Orchestra, Edward Downes, cond. RCA Red Seal LSC 3163, $5.98.

The third of Miss Price's stately operatic recitals gives a lot less pleasure than the earlier pair. Her voice remains a thrilling instrument, the tone gleaming and refulgent; but this material is less aptly chosen for her temperament and suffers from a generally slow range of tempos: it all has the attributes of an institutional, Great-Diva-under-Glass presentation, an impression the *art nouveau* album-cover portrait does little to dispel.

The best items here (and they are very good) are the Mozart, Flotow, and Verdi (*Boccanegra*) arias; this is her home ground, stylistically and vocally. But she treads heavily upon Périchole's artless cadences, turning a soufflé into a dumpling. *Du bist der Lenz* is treated in precisely the same way as *Divinités du Styx*—as a classically detached piece of musical statuary—but Sieglinde's love song is nothing at all without its element of impulsiveness, its headlong rush to her lover's arms. That's the trouble, I guess, with performances directed at microphones rather than live audiences.

It would be a strange operatic management that cast Leontyne Price as Micaela; they might regret the step, for she no longer has the youthful innocence of Don José's girl-next-door. The producer starts off this take by placing the soprano at a far perspective—we barely hear the voice in the opening measures—and moving her closer as the aria builds. But with the climax comes a degree of

stridency, and the aria closes awkwardly. Miss Price is a Carmen, not a Micaela.

Very impressive is the closing cut, the Mother Superior's farewell from Poulenc's *Carmélites;* and though the artist is not always scrupulous with her French diction, she invests the scene with wisdom and majesty. She also puts much art into the mirror-mirror-on-the-wall soliloquy from *Thaïs;* but here also things get squally at the close. Of the Verdi pair, Amelia comes off far better than Giselda, the even phrases of middle-period Verdi proving more amenable to her manner than Strepponi-influenced dynamics. *The Last Rose of Summer* finds her at her best: majestically in command of proportions and tone.

A mixed bag then, with uniformly good stereo quality and smooth playing from the LSO. Mr. Downes conforms throughout to Miss Price's convenience—but at some cost in dramatic tension.

G.M.

"SACRED SONGS AND INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC OF LUTHER'S TIME." ALDER: Da Jakob nu das Kleid ansach. HOFHAIMER: Carmen. HELLINCK: Capitan herrgot. ISAAC: Carmen in G; Carmen in F; Süsser Vatter. KUNGSBERGER: Urbs beata. SCHLICK: Maria zart. VON BRUCK: Aus tiefer Not. KOTTER: Aus tiefer Not. SENFL: Christ ist erstanden; O du armer Judas; Da Jesus an dem Kreutze hing. ANON.: Pro oemium; Urbs beata/In dedicatone; Gelassen had eyn sustergen; Mit got so wöln wirs heben an; O Jesu Christ. Early Music Quartet; Grayston Burgess, countertenor; Nigel Rogers and Kurth Rieth, tenors; Karl-Heinz Klein, baritone; Don Smithers, cornetto; Johannes Fink, viola da gamba; Franz Eder, trombone; Victor Lucas, organ. Telefunken SAWT 9532, $5.95.

Judging from its popularity on discs, one would assume that the heavy-handed German music of Luther's age still has an enthusiastic audience. I suspect, however, that the proliferation of these works is due more to industrious German scholarship, which has produced a great variety of good performing editions of this music, and German publishing, which makes them easily available. The Early Music Quartet has come up with some familiar works and some unusual fare in this selection of music from the early sixteenth century. The tenor Lied was obviously a popular form, albeit one whose square awkwardnesses I find singularly unappealing. Admirers of the form, however, may want to own this disc which includes four examples, each performed in multiple verses. I favor the melodic elaborations of the upper-voice characteristic of much German organ music. Arnolt Schlick's *Maria zart* is a particularly beautiful example, but the Hofhaimer *Carmen* and the anonymous *Pro oemium* are also pleasant. The gem of the recording, however, is the hauntingly lovely song, *Gelassen had eyn sustergen* sung without accompaniment. A real folk melody, it is performed with the utmost simplicity and at the same time with the regard for subtle detail which the best folk music demands.

The Early Music Quartet has made their mark reinterpreting medieval music in the light of popular local traditions. Their acerbic style is not unsuitable for this later music since it too is provincial in its way. The choice of instruments underlines this rustic quality; even Josquin's rival, Heinrich Isaac, sounds like an amateur when his music is played on three or four crumhorns. The packaging—sound, notes, etc.—is in the elegant tradition of luxury we have come to expect from Telefunken.

S.T.S.

JOAN SUTHERLAND: "French Opera Gala." AUBER: Fra Diavolo: Non temete, milord . . . Or son sola; Manon Lescaut: C'est l'histoire amoureuse. BIZET: Les Pêcheurs de perles: Me voilà seule . . . Comme autrefois; Vasco de Gama: La marguerite a fermé . . . Ouvre ton coeur. CHARPENTIER: Louise: Depuis le jour. GOUNOD: Faust: Si le bonheur; Mireille: O légère hirondelle; Le Tribut de Zamora: Ce Sarrasin disait. LECOCQ: Le Coeur et la Main: Un soir Pérez le capitaine. MASSE: Les Noces de Jeannette: Au bord du chemin qui passe à ma porte. MASSENET: Cendrillon: Ah que mes soeurs sont

Continued on page 135

This Christmas Shopping Guide is designed to make your Holiday gift buying easy . . . use it to make your gift selections. You will find something for each and every music listener on your Christmas list. Your favorite high fidelity or record shop is the best place for filling every Christmas stocking.

HIGH FIDELITY CHRISTMAS SHOPPING GUIDE

Fisher 701—250 Watt, 4 Channel Stereo AM/FM Receiver, the most advanced receiver developed by Fisher. Fully compatible 4 channel receiver; extra channels add a new exciting dimension to sound. 3 tuning methods: Autoscan, Remote control and Manual. Features FET's and IC's. FISHER RADIO

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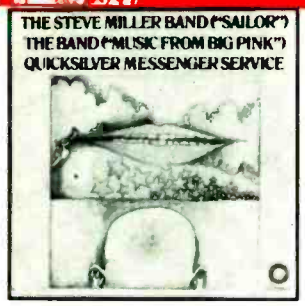
Watts Record Care Kit contains: Parastat—heavy duty record cleaner; Stylus Cleaner—removes dirt; Humid Mop—prevents reintroduction of dirt; Anti-Static Fluid—removes static charge; Record Care Book—24 pages of hints and tips. $19.95. Elpa Marketing Industries, New Hyde Park, N.Y. 11040



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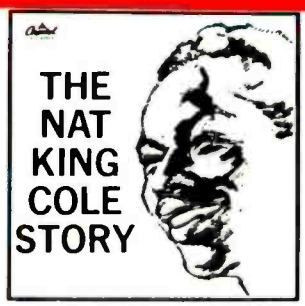

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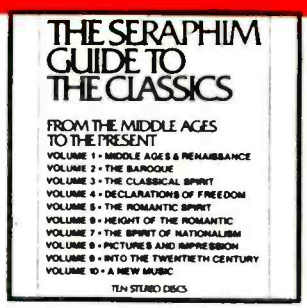

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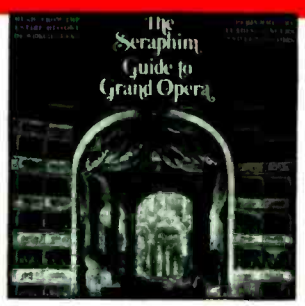

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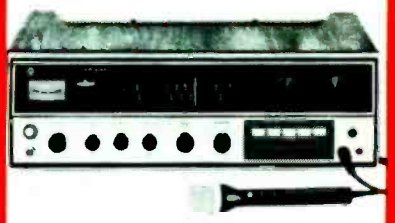

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Pioneer SX-990 AM-FM Stereo Receiver. 130 watts. FM sensitivity 1.7μV. Versatile with connections for 2 sets of speakers, 2 phono, tape monitor, microphone, headset, aux. and main amps. Walnut cabinet included. $299.95. Pioneer Electronics, 178 Commerce Rd., Carlstadt, N.J. 07083

Pioneer SE-50 2-Way Stereo Headset. Separate tone & volume controls for each earpiece provide perfect balance, distortion-free sound. Featherweight, vinyl ear cushions & other comfort features. Carrying case included. $49.95. Pioneer Electronics, 178 Commerce Rd., Carlstadt, N.J. 07083

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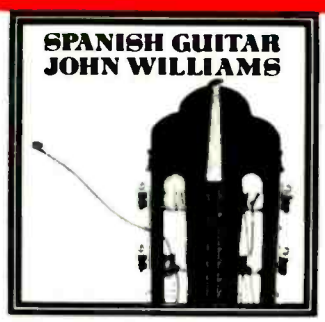

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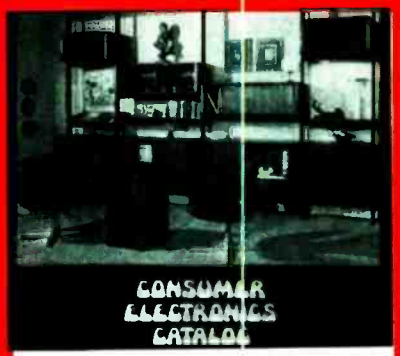

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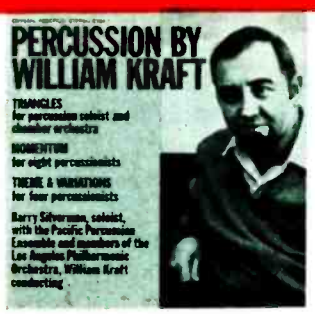

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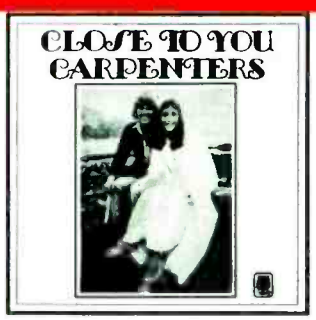

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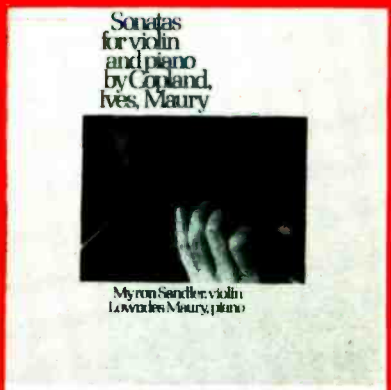

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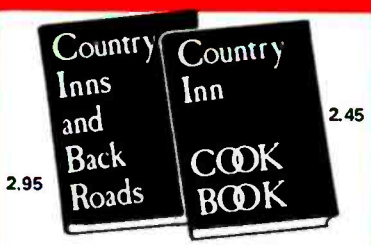

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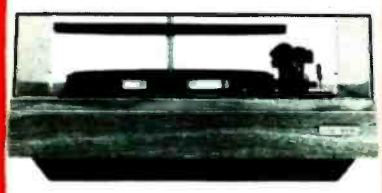

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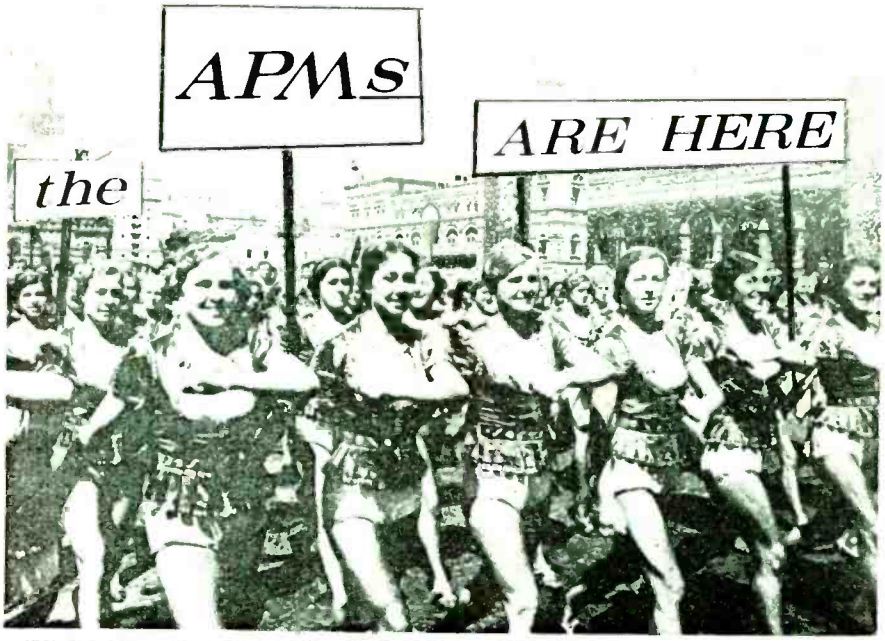

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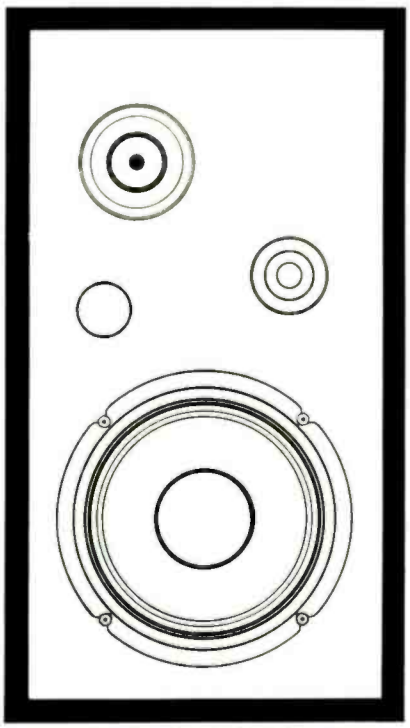
A nonconformist approach to crossover design is largely responsible for the superior time delay characteristics of the **Rectilinear XII.** The 10-inch high-excursion woofer is crossed over to the "fast," low-inertia 5-inch midrange driver at 350 Hz, a much lower frequency than is conventional in three-way bookshelf systems; the 3-inch tweeter takes over at 4000 Hz. To compound the unorthodoxy, we abandoned the customary parallel-type crossover network in favor of a very elegant series configuration, which gave us vastly improved phase response.



Finally, as our ultimate defiance of tradition, we listened objectively to our own speaker. Did it really sound as different as we had set out to make it? To our ears (which, after all, have a good track record), it did. The **Rectilinear XII** seems to reproduce music with a clarity and authority that few speakers, at any price, can even approximate. And certainly none at $139.

But this is something that each prospective buyer must decide for himself. So, if you're shopping in this price range, listen carefully to the **Rectilinear XII.** And, please, be cynical, jaded and hard to please.

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(For more information, including detailed literature, see your audio dealer or write to Rectilinear Research Corp., 107 Bruckner Blvd., Bronx, N.Y. 10454. Canada: H. Roy Gray Co. Ltd., Markham, Ont. Overseas: Royal Sound Co., 409 N. Main St., Freeport, N.Y. 11520.)

Rectilinear XII

CIRCLE 53 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

in brief

ASIOLI: Sonatas for Piano, Op. 8: No. 1, in G, No. 2, in C. Vladimir Pleshakov, piano. Orion 7026, $5.98.

If you are not put off by the fatuous liner notes on this album, which assure us in manic tones that we will find Asioli's music "utterly hilarious" and "a riot," you may move on to discover that these two sonatas are indeed rather entertaining examples of early virtuosic piano fare. Asioli's pieces abound in fountains of arpeggios, cascades of runs, intricate ornamentation, crossing of hands, and elaborately festooned variation movements dear to the heart of the nineteenth-century keyboard practitioner. Bonifacio Asioli (1769–1832) was in fact known primarily as a theorist and composer, but he must have commanded a fairly dazzling piano technique as well. Certainly Vladimir Pleshakov does, for he turns these works out with panache on a restored 1795 Broadwood grand piano that is slightly thunky, slightly buzzy, and presumably historically authentic. S.F.

BARTOK: Music for String Instruments, Percussion, and Celesta; Divertimento. Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, Neville Marriner, cond. Argo ZRG 657, $5.95.

The usually excellent Academy sounds a little less than its best in these two often-recorded works, although the solo work is excellent and the high percussion is very clearly and cleanly recorded in the *Music*. On the debit side is the rather lumpy piano sound, which also extends to the slightly-too-distant timpani. If you need this particular coupling, you could do worse (with Wand on Counterpoint), but there are no special flashes of illumination here. D.H.

BRUCH: Symphony No. 2, in F minor, Op. 36. REITZ: Concert Overture, Op. 7. Louisville Orchestra, Jorge Mester, cond. Louisville LS 703, $5.98.

If you have ever wondered why Max Bruch is today best remembered for three or four works for solo strings and orchestra, here at least is partial enlightenment. The symphony, which at times seems to paraphrase the finale of the Brahms First, emerges from the same historical and cultural milieu as that work, but Brahms wrote more tightly, more imaginatively, and to considerably better effect. This is a pleasant museum piece to hear once or twice, but it shows no signs of resurrection even when played as eloquently as it is here. The Reitz could easily be taken for a lesser effort of Schumann, and being a shorter score, it might be heard more often if the interest in forgotten (or nearly forgotten) romantic music continues to grow. Again the performance is a good one, but in neither case is the recording better than average. R.C.M.

DVORAK: Symphony No. 9, in E minor, Op. 95 ("New World"); Carnival Overture, Op. 92. Boston Symphony Orchestra, Arthur Fiedler, cond. RCA Red Seal LSC 3134, $5.98. Tape R8S 1160, $6.95; RK 1160, $6.95.

Fiedler is an experienced pro and the orchestral performance here is as capable as one would expect from so august an aggregation as the BSO. The first movement (done with exposition repeat—an increasingly common practice these days) comes off especially well: it is direct, massive, and vigorous in concept. Fiedler evokes an imposing ensemble heft and brings it off with fine control and bold, unpretentious ideas. The remainder of the performance, however, does not quite sustain the initial promise. Though the basic playing remains excellent, I am bothered by a rather generalized treatment of rhythm and detail, by a disinclination (strings especially) to play really softly, and by certain gimmicky tonal balances that sound as if the engineers were having a field day. Lusty recorded sound—a trifle spongy and overripe. H.G.

HANDEL: Six Trio Sonatas for Two Oboes and Continuo: No. 1, in B; No. 2, in D minor; No. 3, in E flat; No. 4, in F; No. 5, in G; No. 6, in D. Michel Piquet and Heinrich Haas, oboes; Walter Stiftner, bassoon; Eduard Müller, harpsichord. Archive 2533 045, $5.98.

Out of the mouths of babes. If *Grove's* is to be believed, these trio sonatas were written when Handel was eleven. They are completely mature pieces, lively and inventive—the two oboes vary their generally canonic relationship with forays into looser dialogue; the continuo bassoon occasionally makes decisive contributions to the conversation; several of the slow movements are notably affecting, while the fast ones seldom seem to generate their propulsion by mere perfunctory note-spinning. The performances, beautifully paced and phrased, gain additional interest because the two baroque oboes differ just enough in tone to maintain their individuality. S.F.

HOLST: The Planets, Op. 32. London Philharmonic Orchestra and Chorus, Bernard Herrmann, cond. London Phase 4 SPC 21049, $5.98.

It's good to see film composer Bernard Herrmann launching himself on yet another career. Unfortunately, his debut release is handicapped by comparison with Sir Adrian Boult's well-nigh ideal 1967 Angel version of *The Planets*. Herrmann's overly earnest reading is lacking in verve and infectious enthusiasm, and while the Phase 4 stereoism is formidably powerful and weighty, the tuttis lack lucidity and in lighter passages there are some unnatural close-ups or spotlightings of solo woodwinds. R.D.D.

JOHN WILLIAMS: "Spanish Guitar Music." ALBENIZ, I. Asturias; Tango; Córdoba. SANZ: Canarios. RODRIGO: Fandango. TORROBA: Nocturno; Madronos. GRANADOS: Valses Poéticos; La Maja de Goya. ALBENIZ, M: Sonata in D. FALLA: Danse du Corregidor: Fisherman's Song; Miller's Dance. TRAD.: La Nit de Nadal, El Noy de la Mare. John Williams, guitar, Columbia M 30057, $5.98.

John Williams, in case any fancier of guitar music does not know it by now, is that native Australian who plays Spanish music like a son of Andalusia. This new recital is a spellbinder, for it shows off all of Williams' talents—the wonderful range of tone, which creates a sense of shape and of spatial depth in everything he plays, the extraordinary sense of rubato, the unerring rhythm, the magically deft right hand. The recital is enticingly varied in mood. There is the lazy twilight drift of Albéniz' Tango, the acrobatics of Rodrigo's Fandango, the rhapsodic introspection of Torroba's Nocturno, the little play-within-a-play of Granados' *Valses Poéticos*—four short pieces which set up their own scheme of color and tension. And there is also the two-fisted drama of Falla's *Miller's Dance*, balanced by the beautifully simple traditional Catalan folk tunes, the first of which provides a beguiling example of Williams' easy give-and-take rhythm—so notable a characteristic of his art. But don't let me tell the whole story. Get the record. S.F.

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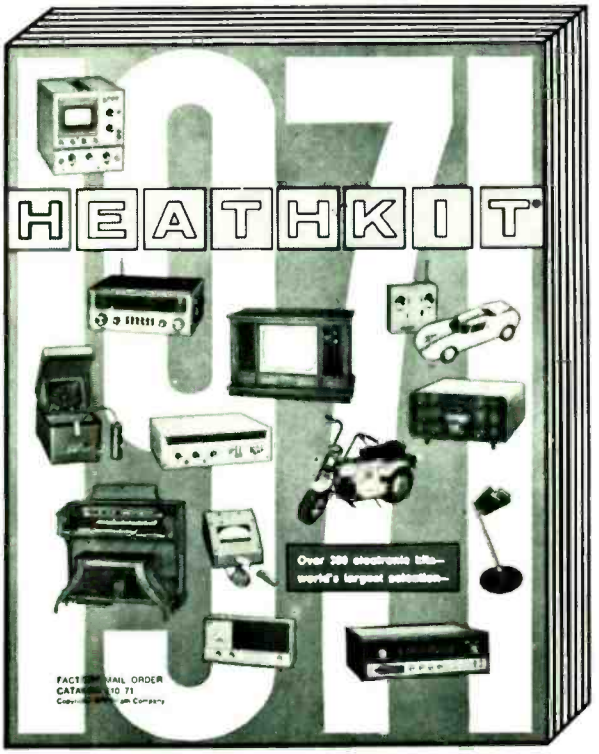

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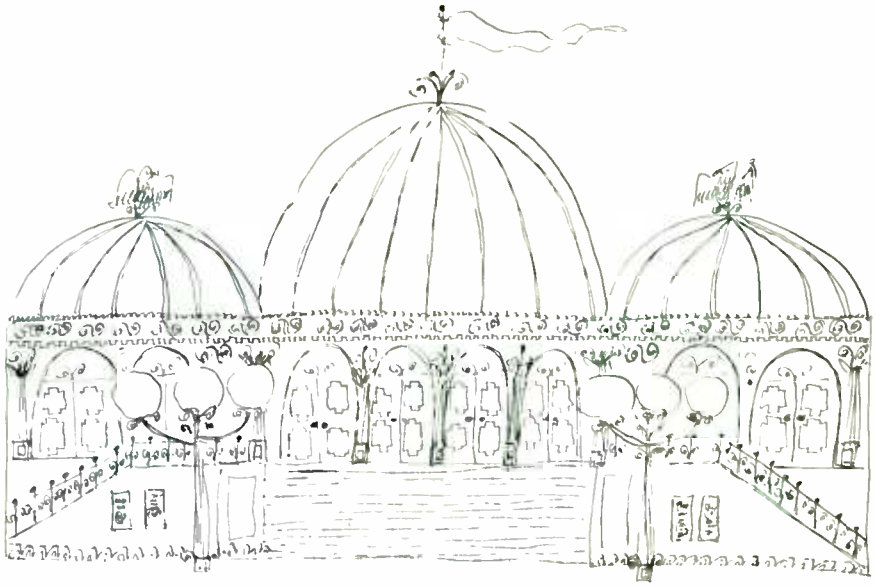

The Vienna Opera — Intrigues and Vocal Discoveries

THE STORY OF the Vienna State Opera over the past 100 years is perhaps the most picturesque of all the great contemporary opera houses—other companies have probably had an equal share of great nights, but for colorful personalities, blistering intrigue, and sheer anecdotage, Vienna must surely stand unchallenged. Should anyone care to doubt this statement, proof is now at hand in words and music: a lavishly produced book chronicling the history of the city's operatic activities from 1810 to the present by Marcel Prawy (*The Vienna Opera*, Praeger, $25) and a five-disc album featuring the leading singers from 1902 to 1937 (*"Von der Hofoper zur Staatsoper,"* Preiser LV 500, $29.90).

This twin release, timed to celebrate the State Opera's 1969 centenary (a year late—how appropriately Viennese), is particularly valuable for American operagoers who had comparatively little direct exposure to Vienna's major artists before World War II. True, many Staatsoper singers appeared in this country—Lehmann, Jeritza, Slezak, Schorr, Thorborg, Kipnis, to name only a few—but some of the company's brightest lights never set foot on the Met stage. One reason for this lies in the Met's traditional orientation as an "Italian" house, a pattern established by Gatti-Casazza in the Twenties and Thirties and continued by his successors. Another, perhaps even more compelling, factor was Vienna's famed ensemble spirit which was born partly from necessity (a general manager had iron control over his singers in those days and there were no jet airplanes) and partly from the security and pride one earned as an honored member of a solid artistic community—a great many Viennese singers simply had no desire to "conquer the world."

Certainly one gets this feeling from Prawy's lively and entertaining series of anecdotes—the Vienna State Opera has been his "family" ever since his standee days in 1924. This is far from an objective history on the level of, say, Irving Kolodin's story of the Metropolitan; Prawy is a dyed-in-the-wool idolater and he communicates his prejudices in fan-magazine language (to wit: "No wonder, when I arrived back in Vienna [after World War II], that I was a bundle of inferiority complexes, because I couldn't even recognize the new stars on the street!"). After adjusting to his airy, bent-wrist delivery, one can follow the fortunes of the State Opera with a kind of awed fascination as each intendant follows the prescribed Vienna pattern: grandiose plans, huge successes, growing opposition within the ranks, personality conflicts, elaborate intrigues, and eventual downfall. Prawy is at his best in the early years when his writing is not colored by personal recollections. One of the most illuminating chapters is devoted to the amazing Jauner era (1875–1880) which brought Verdi to Vienna to conduct *Aida* and the Requiem; the first successful performance of *Carmen* outside France; and most of the Wagner operas including the *Ring* (Jauner's dealings with Wagner are particularly amusing—the impresario proved to be a better con artist than the master himself).

The text becomes rather slushy later on ("Jeritza—Prima Donna of the Century!") but the author dishes up a barrelful of good stories and the valuable illustrations of artists, productions, documents, posters, etc., will keep opera fans

browsing for hours. What's really needed, though, is an official documentation of the Vienna Opera with complete annals, casts, and hard facts similar to those already available on the Met and La Scala.

The Preiser records actually bring us the singers themselves—over seventy artists in seventy-seven selections ranging over a thirty-five-year period. Each disc roughly parallels the era of one intendant: Mahler, Weingartner, Strauss, Schalk, and Krauss (all of them, interestingly enough, conductors of the first rank). Of particular interest is the first record, which includes many singers chosen personally by Mahler for his legendary Vienna productions. Prawy states that Mahler preferred steely voices of great power and one can see what he meant from the gleaming shaft of Anna Bahr-Mildenburg's icy soprano in the first part of *"Ozean, du Ungeheuer"* and the two hefty Wagnerian tenors Hermann Winkelmann (the first Parsifal) and Erik Schmedes. Other items of interest here are a *"Leise, leise"* sung by Lucie Weidt, a soprano with an especially powerful lower register (she later created the part of Die Amme in *Die Frau ohne Schatten*); young (1903) Leo Slezak's gorgeous head tones in an aria from Boieldieu's *La Dame blanche*; an equally youthful (1905) Richard Mayr in the Landgraf's Address from *Tannhäuser*; and Marie Gutheil-Schoder's pointedly sexy, almost cabaret-style delivery of Carmen's *Seguidilla*.

It would be impossible to detail everything in this extensive survey. Much of it is strictly for home consumption—not every singer who recorded before 1940 was golden-era material and it seems to me that only the most sentimental *Wiener* could treasure such variable personalities as Karl Aagaard Oestvig, Margit Angerer, Josef von Manowarda, and Alfred Piccaver (a Viennese institution for years but a boring singer nonetheless). But there will be exciting discoveries for many collectors—Felicie Hüni-Mihacsek, Hans Hermann Nissen, Adele Kern, Rose Pauly, and Joseph Schwarz are major artists by anyone's standards. Of course the more familiar names are here too and often in some extremely rare material: Lotte Lehmann sings an extraordinarily affecting version of Mignon's soliloquy by the lake, while Maria Jeritza offers one of "Frau Dot's" sprightly arias from Goldmark's *Cricket on the Hearth*. One could go on and on, but why bother—I can't imagine anyone interested in the operatic past not acquiring this fascinating set of records. The Preiser catalogue now contains seventy-five single discs in its valuable *Lebendige Vergangenheit* series in addition to the album at hand; the transfers, as has been pointed out in these columns, are superb. At present, Preiser records may be difficult to locate outside of New York City, but inquiries may be addressed to any of the following dealers: Darton Records, 160 West 56th St., New York, N.Y. 10019; King Karol, Dept. HF-10, P.O. Box 629, Times Square Station, New York, N.Y. 10036; H. Mielke Co., 242 East 86th St., New York, N.Y. 10028.

CLASSICAL REVIEWS

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heureuses. MEYERBEER: Dinorah: Bellah! ma chèvre chérie! . . . Dors, petite; L'Etoile du Nord: C'est bien lui . . . Là, là là, air chéri; Veille sur eux . . . Vaisseau que le flot balance; Robert le Diable: En vain j'espère . . .Idole de ma vie. OFFENBACH: Les Contes d'Hoffmann: Les oiseaux dans la charmille; La Grande-Duchesse de Gérolstein: Dites-lui qu'on l'a remarqué; Vous aimez le danger . . . Ah, que j'aime les militaires!, Robinson Crusoé: Conduisez-moi vers celui qui j'adore. Joan Sutherland, soprano; Members of the Grand Theater Chorus, Geneva; Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Richard Bonynge, cond. London OSA-1286, $11.96 (two discs). Tape: ●● K 70174, 7½ ips, $11.95.

If your mind can take a quick boggle or two, please consider some of the dramatic situations that crop up in this delectable bag of excerpts from French nineteenth-century operas (mostly rare), and few of which we are ever likely to see on stage.

Girl friend of Robinson Crusoe tracks him to his island, wades ashore, persuades Friday to take her to his leader. On the way, she conjures up the vision of a splendid ballroom, where she waltzes in Crusoe's arms (Offenbach).

Peter the Great, Czar of all the Russias, visits Finland, falls in love, plays flute to restore sanity of beloved (Meyerbeer).

Girl in mountain loses goat, serenades goat, gets goat, sings goat to sleep with lullaby (more Meyerbeer).

Small Spanish town, compelled by Moorish overlords to yield annual tribute of one hundred virgins, finally produces maiden who declares she prefers her Spanish boy friend (Gounod).

Young officer ("with the gift of a soprano voice") sings Bolero to shipmates aboard Vasco de Gama's galleon while becalmed en route to India (Bizet).

And that's not all. But it is enough perhaps to pique your curiosity about the textual wonders of the last century on France's lyric stage, and the contexts in which Miss Sutherland's latest recital is enfolded; these and other marvels are conveyed in the richly informative booklet that accompanies the discs, the fruits of (conductor/husband) Richard Bonynge's research into obscure and half-forgotten operas and their performance traditions.

The music that goes along with these remarkable situations is sprightly, tuneful, engaging, sometimes charming—but only rarely does it draw deeply from the emotional wells that fed Mozart, Verdi, and Wagner. That is why so many of these operas lie buried in libraries, the pages yellow and crumbling—to be rescued only when a singer comes along who can breathe new life into them. Miss

Sutherland is such an artist. She makes these "dotty old dames" spin and shine, using her glistening and infinitely pliable voice to instruct, entertain, and delight.

Not all of the numbers are obscure. The *Louise* soliloquy is a standard test for legato, the song of the wind-up doll in *Hoffmann* a coloratura staple, and Siebel's second aria from *Faust*, though often cut in repertory performance, is familiar enough—though we generally hear it in a mezzo register. Other songs from this list were popular on phonograph records a generation ago and more. If you are over forty, chances are you know them, even if their titles mean little to your eyes: the Laughing Song from Auber's (yes, Auber's) *Manon Lescaut*, the *Mireille* Waltz, and the duet for soprano and flute from Massé's *Jeannette*.

There is little to be gained by treating each item separately. Miss Sutherland's virtues and vices are well known and the results here are what you might expect: impeccable intonation, rhythmic sureness, a bold and free way with decoration, stunning technique—all these qualities are in plentiful supply here, and examples abound. The superb trilled descant over the close of Meyerbeer's *Robert* ensemble for soprano and women's chorus; the supremely wrought tracery with flute in the *Etoile* mad scene; the subtle meters of Bizet's *Bolero*—these all bespeak prime Sutherland, than which one could ask no more.

The catch is what the catch has always been: enunciation. This matters in French music, for the speech habits of that nation differ from our own. Words are formed further forward in the mouth, and they are meant to be heard and understood. The trouble is compounded when a light orchestral background coincides with direct miking and we hear, for an instant, the words clearly. That is when we also hear the deficiencies of her French accent. Frying pan or fire, which to choose?

The way out for all of us not born to the French tongue is to follow the text on paper and to bathe in the coruscating shower of notes she delivers, taking the available pleasures and not worrying too much about what might have been. Bonynge conducts very crisply, keeping close company with his busy mate; but the Swiss orchestra sounds like a third-rate pickup group, rather than the prestigious ensemble Ansermet used to lead. The horns are watery and off pitch, the strings ragged. André Pepin does the solo flute work—and there's a lot of it—with adequate proficiency.

G.M.

JOHN WILLIAMS & WILFRED BROWN: "Music for Tenor and Guitar." BRITTEN: Songs from the Chinese. DODGSON: Four Songs of John Clare. DOWLAND: I care not for these ladies; Fantasie No. 7; Melancholy galliard; My Lady Hunsdon's Puffe. ANON.: The Willow Song. ROSSETER: When Laura smiles. BARTLET: Of all the birds that I do know. JONES: Go to Bed, sweet muse. PILKINGTON: Diaphenia. Wilfred Brown, tenor; John Williams, guitar. Odyssey 32 15 0398, $2.98.

Brave indeed are the men who would risk competing with the authoritative Pears/Bream recording of Britten's aphoristic *Songs from the Chinese* (RCA LSC 2718), and I am constrained to report that Brown and Williams fail to make as much of the rhythmic and coloristic invention in these pieces as do the dedicatees. Part of this is a function of the recording, which keeps Williams insufficiently prominent, but it is mainly a matter of rhythmic forcefulness and limited vocal color. Here and elsewhere in this recital, Brown's nasal, limited voice suffers from intonation problems.

The Dowland lute solos are played with considerable flair, although these are not the most interesting choices possible from that rich repertory. Stephen Dodgson's songs—a first recording—are quite brilliantly written for the guitar (I note that his other listings in Schwann are all for guitar works), but since the texts are not well projected here, one is reluctant to make any definitive comment. I'd say this record is more for guitar enthusiasts than vocal collectors, who are referred to Pears in this literature.

D.H.

repeat performance

A SELECTIVE GUIDE TO THE MONTH'S REISSUES

BEETHOVEN: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in D, Op. 61. Zino Francescatti, violin; Columbia Symphony Orchestra, Bruno Walter, cond. Odyssey Y 30042, $2.98 [from Columbia MS 6263, 1961].

Walter and Francescatti are congenial collaborators for the Beethoven concerto: this is a warmly lyrical yet classically oriented approach—rather small-scaled perhaps but a lovingly prepared statement and superbly executed on all counts. The violinist's tone is, as usual, suave, beautifully rounded, and impeccably centered, while Walter's support is accurately judged and balanced in every department. All this ingratiating bonhomie is framed by glowing, spacious reproduction.

IBERT: Divertissement. SAINT-SAENS: Danse macabre, Op. 40; Le Rouet d'Omphale, Op. 31. BIZET: Jeux d'enfants, Op 22. Paris Conservatory Orchestra, Jean Martinon, cond. Stereo Treasury STS 15093, $2.98 [from London CS 6200, 1961].

Martinon is very much at home in this racy collection of French pop-concert staples. Ibert's sassy music-hall *Divertissement*, Bizet's touching quintet of *enfantines*, and Saint-Saëns's succinct little tone poems are all played with appropriate dashes of paprika, hair-trigger virtuosity, and tasteful sentiment. Brilliantly airy reproduction frames these champagne-dry and neatly executed performances.

MAHLER: Symphony No. 1, in D. Columbia Symphony Orchestra, Bruno Walter, cond. Odyssey Y 30047, $2.98 [from Columbia MS 6394, 1963].
MAHLER: Das Lied von der Erde. Mildred Miller, mezzo; Ernst Häfliger, tenor; New York Philharmonic, Bruno Walter, cond. Odyssey Y 30043, $2.98 [from Columbia MS 6426, 1960].

Fortunately, Bruno Walter lived well into the stereo era and left us a number of sonically outstanding Mahler recordings. The First Symphony and *Das Lied* are certainly among the best—apart from any technical considerations I feel that they are the conductor's finest versions of these particular works. Walter always stressed Mahler's roots in the traditional Central European symphonic mainstream rather than the ultrapersonal effects that so many contemporary Mahler interpreters disproportionately italicize. These are beautifully poised performances, musically and emotionally, and full of expressive warmth.

Häfliger is an ideal tenor soloist for *Das Lied* and Mildred Miller quite outdoes herself in the long final song—her voice is lighter and brighter than one usually hears, but the intensity of her declamation is altogether extraordinary. Only two small drawbacks mar these exceptional reissues: the third movement of the symphony is interrupted for a side break and the promised texts for *Das Lied* were not included.

MOZART: Concertos for Flute and Orchestra: No. 1, in G, K. 313; No. 2, in D, K. 314; Andante for Flute and Orchestra, in C, K. 315. Elaine Shaffer, flute; Philharmonia Orchestra, Efrem Kurtz, cond. Seraphim S 60123, $2.98 [from Capitol SG 7135, 1959].

No problems here. Elaine Shaffer's limpid tone is wholly beguiling in these two pleasant time-passers, while her technical agility and musical sensitivity do full justice to the material. Kurtz's affectionate accompaniments are elegant and suitably vivacious, and the reproduction keeps everything at a clearly proportioned distance. The little Andante is a substitute slow movement for K. 313 and adds a graceful fillip to a charming record.

RAVEL: Introduction and Allegro. DEBUSSY: Danses sacrée et profane. GRANDJANY: The Children's Hour; Rhapsodie pour la harpe. ROGER-DUCASSE: Barcarolle. Marcel Grandjany, harp; Arthur Gleghorn, flute; Hugo Raimondi, clarinet; Hollywood String Quartet (in the Ravel); Concert Arts Orchestra, Felix Slatkin, cond. (in the Debussy). Seraphim S 6142, $2.98 [from Capitol SP 8492, 1959].

Marcel Grandjany has been playing the harp for over sixty years, and his personal associations with Ravel and Debussy give these performances an added touch of authenticity. Even without his historical connections Grandjany's readings would command respect for their delicate poise and innate musicality as well as the superb support offered by a band of fine Hollywood musicians. As a composer the harpist is a lightweight, but the solo items on Side 2 have a wispy charm all their own and sound marvelously well on the instrument. Crystalline sound.

REGER: Variations and Fugue on a Theme by Mozart, Op. 132; Ballet Suite for Orchestra, Op. 130. Bamberg Symphony Orchestra, Joseph Keilberth, cond. Telefunken SLT 43067, $5.95 [from Telefunken SLT 43067, 1962].

Both these orchestral works were written during Reger's final years and the composer seemed to think of them as some sort of an apotheosis of his instrumental style. "Full of grace, free of all earthly

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REPEAT PERFORMANCE

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weight, completely pure, without any outbursts whatsoever" (the *Mozart* Variations); "infinitely graceful, something uniquely fine in its sound, delicate in its music, and as fine as a spider's web in its orchestration" (the Ballet Suite). Regerphobes are likely to find the mixture here about as ponderous as in the early works, despite the inspiration drawn from a dainty Mozart theme (the opening movement of the K. 331 piano sonata) and from the *commedia dell'arte* programmatic titles of the suite's six movements. Even so, Reger shows considerable ingenuity in developing Mozart's chaste rococo-flavored tune into a series of lush, ripe, late-Romantic gestures and a massive, sprawling fugue. There's some enjoyment here if you're in the mood but both works ultimately seem rather vacant and overwritten. Keilberth plays them splendidly and the sound, unlike the conductor's earlier disc of the *Hiller* Variations, is in true stereo.

VERDI: Rigoletto. Roberta Peters (s), Anna-Maria Rota (ms), Jussi Bjoerling (t), Robert Merrill (b), Giorgio Tozzi (bs), et al.; Chorus and Orchestra of the Rome Opera, Jonel Perlea, cond. RCA Victrola VIC 6041, $5.96 (mono only, two discs) [from RCA Victor LM 6051, 1957].

It's good to see many of RCA's pre-stereo operas from the mid-Fifties coming back on Victrola—the binaural explosion in 1958 edged them out of the catalogue far sooner than was necessary. Candidly, though, this 1957 *Rigoletto* was not one of the better entries in the series: a typical sort of performance one could catch at the Met during those days, with all the traditional cuts and interpolated high notes, a chirpy Gilda, a blandly vocalized jester, and well-schooled but routine conducting.

Merrill's fat, round baritone sounds marvelous of course; if his impersonation of the title role never goes beyond the notes, it is at least preferable to the embarrassing stagey histrionics of his later recording. Peters picks at Gilda's music with mechanical birdlike efficiency, and even Bjoerling seems off his form, although he is far and away the most stylish member of the cast. Perlea has a few impressive moments—the unusual accompaniment to the Rigoletto/Sparafucile interview is one of them—but the ensemble is often lax and earthbound. The mono sound is exceptionally fine.

Progress note: devotees of opera mistranslations will be saddened to see that RCA herewith remedies what has been called "the greatest single line in all translated opera"—Sparafucile's *"A voi presente un nom di spada* [sword] *sta,"* rendered for twenty years in RCA librettos as "You see before you a man with a spade." Victrola rearms Sparafucile with his sword, thereby correcting the impression that the assassin does in Gilda by bashing her with a garden shovel.

PETER G. DAVIS

the lighter side

reviewed by

MORGAN AMES

R. D. DARRELL

JOHN GABREE

JOHN S. WILSON

✻ symbol denotes an exceptional recording

✻

CARPENTERS: Close to You. Karen Carpenter, vocals and drums; Richard Carpenter, vocals, piano, and arr. (Help; Mr. Guder; Baby It's You; nine more.) A & M SP 4271, $4.98. Tape 8T 4271, $6.98; CS 4271, $6.98.

The Carpenters (brother and sister) recently had the kind of hit that everyone in music lusts for. It went across the boards, from rock radio stations to easy listening and back. The tune, *Close to You*, was early Bacharach-David (Dionne Warwick included it in an album years ago and nothing happened). The Carpenters' first album also contained a hit number—Lennon-McCartney's *Ticket to Ride*. I remember the record well because this was one of the few discs about which I have made an accurate prediction of success. But *Ticket to Ride* was not nearly the monster that *Close to You* turned out to be.

The combined talents of the Carpenters are irresistible. Richard is the axis; from the sound of things he works ferociously—hundreds of hours must have gone into this album. With lyricist John Bettis he wrote four of the songs. While the lyrics do not strike me as particularly noteworthy, Richard's melodies are just that, and his piano playing is not only skilled but beautifully placed within the orchestral texture. His twelve arrangements produce music that is smooth, melodious, and natural, both orchestrally and vocally. The real achievement is in the concept—each tune is meticulously planned and worked out and emerges with its own personality. Considering his youth (he's about twenty), Richard Carpenter has an alarming number of bases covered.

The other part of this winning combination is Karen Carpenter's voice, warmly innocent, full and dark and deep. She never has to reach for a note because Richard knows exactly how to write for her. Rumor has it that Karen's first love is drums, which is too bad. For while she is competent and interesting in live performances, her drumming on recordings is not of a high enough quality (especially for this album). Her singing, however, is superb in any setting. As a matter of fact, she has several distinct voices—one is the now familiar solo voice, the others are used to create layers of vocal chorus. Richard is also a fine group singer himself. Sparked by his gorgeous vocal arrangements, together the two create a texture of pure velvet.

There are few albums that are easier to listen to than this one. If you liked *Close to You*, this follow-up disc won't disappoint you.

Whoever took the picture of the Carpenters on the album cover ought to be shot. M.A.

✻

ROBERTA FLACK: Chapter Two. Roberta Flack, vocals and piano; Eumir Deodato, arr. and cond. (Reverend Lee; Gone Away; Let It Be Me; five more.) Atlantic SD 1569, $4.98.

There are singers who work from the outside in as if to say, "This is what I have to do in order to make them feel this or that feeling." Their work is often dazzling. Roberta Flack works from the inside out and the result is that she can make you cry.

Miss Flack received an early boost from pianist/singer Les McCann, who heard her in a club in Washington, D.C. and introduced her to Atlantic, who signed her. Her first album was somewhat successful, the best tune being *Compared to What*. Later she appeared on a Bill Cosby TV special as the only guest artist, and on other shows.

This is Miss Flack's second album and it's lovely. Her voice is clear, deep, rich, and instantly recognizable. Her style is simple. No frills, no r & b note twists, no blues-rock shouts. She simply opens her throat and out pours feeling. Miss Flack's piano playing is much like her singing—not elaborate but powerfully to the point.

I suspect that when Miss Flack is left alone, she zeroes right in on proper material. Included in that department are Jim Webb's little-known *Do What You Gotta Do* (I first heard her sing it on NET; I cried), Bob Dylan's *Just Like a Woman*, and *Gone Away*. Miss Flack has a unique dramatic sense—each song emerges as an earthy, total experience. Other selections puzzle me. *The Impossible Dream* is what it always was: a man's song. *Until It's Time For You to Go* is so highly singable that it's been sung to death; it wasn't needed here. For you message fans, the track to note is *Business Goes On As Usual* by Fred Hellerman and Frank Minkhoff. It's about war and it's strong.

Roberta Flack casts a spell. If I must listen to *The Impossible Dream* again, I choose to hear this version for her stark involvement and beautiful voice.

This is a biased review; a rave review. In all honesty this lady can do very little wrong, for my taste. You might like her very much too. M.A.

BUSKERS. Various artists. (My Daddy Is a Millionaire; Nina; I Belong to Glasgow; Blue Suede Shoes; Je suis tous les fenêtres; Music, Music, Music; six more.) RCA Victor LSP 4426, $4.98.

MUNGO JERRY. Jug band music, sans jug. (In the Summertime; Johnny B. Badde; San Francisco Bay Blues; Maggie; See Me; Movin' On; six more.) Janus JXS 7000, $4.98.

SHIVA'S HEADBAND: Take Me to the Mountains. Good-timey rock sextet. (My Baby; Homesick Armadillo Blues; Ripple; Song For Peace; Ebeneezer; five more.) Capitol ST 538, $4.98.

As the New Fifties progress, I suspect we will witness another big folk revival,

including, as the last one did, a lot of jug band music. These three LPs are among the first of what will undoubtedly be a flood. Of the three, Buskers' is the best, possibly because it is the most carefully constructed. Although the performances are alleged to be taken directly from itinerant musicians in the streets of London, the record gives every appearance of having been studio-prepared (the producer is Simon Napier-Bell who tried to foist "Borstal rock" on us a few months back). The dozen tunes run from parodies of rock and French cabaret music to Tin Pan Alley and the blues. There is a lot of charming fun and there are no really bad cuts; there is a lot of irreverence, but the musicianship is generally of high order and the material, especially, is well chosen.

So much for the good news. Mungo Jerry, who have already had a hit single with *In The Summertime* and seem destined for more are, quite simply, incompetent. Their thing seems to be to create sides giving the impression that they were recorded on 78s by musical illiterates. No charm here, merely unpleasantness.

Shiva's Headband is the closest to what we will most often get in these coming months. They are a competent enough rock band playing in a particularly silly style. Although the tunes are originals, most of them sound vaguely familiar and in fact a *déjà vu* quality pervades the record. Capitol seems to think that Shiva's Headband will be their next big act. I hope this is a misapprehension.

J.G.

ARTHUR FIEDLER: "Fabulous Broadway." Orchestral Medleys: "Hair"; "Company"; "Man of La Mancha"; "Fiddler on the Roof." Boston Pops Orchestra, Arthur Fiedler, cond. For a feature review of this recording, see page 86.

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SKEETER DAVIS: It's Hard to Be a Woman. Skeeter Davis, vocals; instrumental accompaniment. (Down From Dover; I'm Only a Woman; Bridge Over Troubled Water; I'm Your Woman; We Need a Lot More of Jesus; five more.) RCA Victor LSP 4382, $4.98.

NAT STUCKEY: Country Fever. Nat Stuckey, vocals; instrumental accompaniment. (Whiskey, Whiskey; Soul Fever; My Protest Song; Sweet Thang and Cisco; Cullman, Alabama; five more.) RCA Victor LSP 4389, $4.98.

Nat Stuckey has been around for three or four years. Skeeter Davis goes all the way back to the early '60s. By now they are both old hands in the record business and can be counted on to come up with exciting new albums every six months or so. Their new releases are almost studies in what is happening, good and bad, in modern c & w.

The good: both Stuckey and Davis are talented vocalists and both of them are very careful in the material they select. There is one poorly chosen song on the Stuckey album, none on the Davis. Stuckey has a nice mixture of ballads and up-tempo numbers, using his rich baritone to better advantage than on any record he's made so far. But Skeeter's album is truly brilliant. Her little-girl voice gives new drama and reality to the tales of female oppression that make up most of the songs, but it is her readings of *Bridge Over Troubled Water* (the Simon & Garfunkel hit that has become a big favorite with country performers) and *We Need a Lot More Of Jesus* (the old gospel tune) that clinch the album. Also, the sidemen (unidentified, alas) offer the best accompaniment enjoyed by a Nashville performer in months. Even the drumming, often the most predictable element on Nashville releases, is effective, especially on the tragic *Down From Dover*.

Neither performer shies away from social commentary. Stuckey sings *My Protest Song*, a remarkably straightforward statement of the middle American's dilemma: "I just want someone to notice that I'm here." Davis asks you-know-who *When You Gonna Bring Our Soldiers Home?* ("You promised that you would/ now don't you think you should?"). Victor is really missing the boat in not releasing both these cuts as singles (backed by Davis' *Troubled Water* and Stuckey's *Rainy Night in Georgia* or *Whiskey, Whiskey*) and promoting the hell out of them. Which brings us to. . .

The bad: RCA almost never seems to let its country artists make a record without hoking it up somehow. It is to Skeeter Davis' considerable credit that *It's Hard To Be A Woman* appears to be an accurate reflection of her work. Although not as mishandled as some of Victor's other artists (Jerry Reed, for example), Stuckey is saddled here with an annoyingly distracting chorus. Both albums carry only ten cuts, with the sides running 14:10 and 14:01 on the Davis and a miserable 13:15 and 12:35 on the Stuckey. I realize that music is not hamburger, to be bought by the pound. But the public is being shortchanged when LPs are only half full. Skeeter Davis' LP is exceptional and therefore should be an exception, but in general I think we should boycott pop albums that are shorter than eighteen minutes to a side.

One thing: RCA is also trying to save itself money by releasing records that contain about half the plastic they used to. On the equipment I have used, the new discs, which are paper thin and very pliable, have tended to skip on the first cut of each side. You should try to borrow a disc to test on your equipment before buying any of the new kind. J.G.

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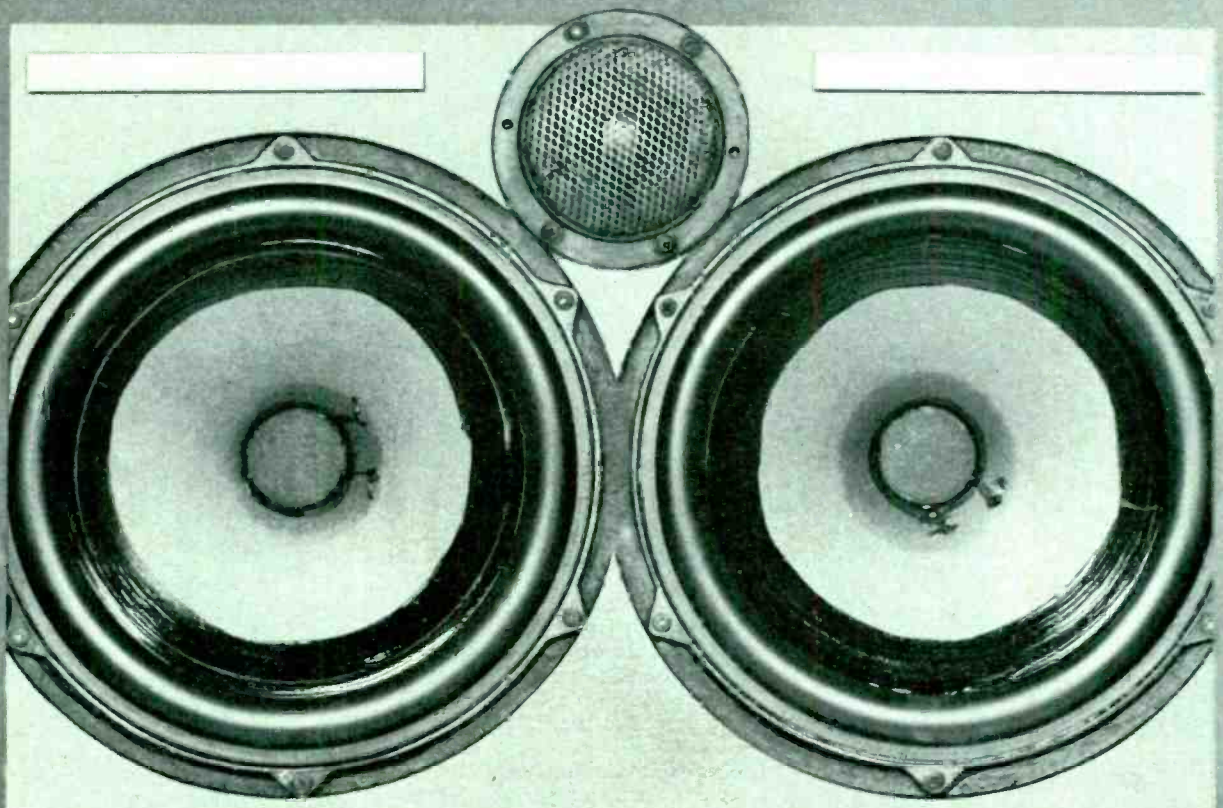
TIMBER: Part of How You Live Is Part of What You Hear. Timber, vocals and instrumentals. (Go On Alone; A Sad Song; Good Intentions; eight more.) Kapp KS 3633, $4.98.

Henry Lewy is a staff engineer at A & M Studios in Los Angeles. He's so good that

WHY SPEND $100 MORE?



Here is the new Dynaco A-50 Aperiodic loudspeaker which costs $100 more than the popular A-25 loudspeaker.

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IN EUROPE WRITE: DYNACO A/S, HUMLUM, STRUER, DENMARK

some artists, including Joni Mitchell, won't work without him. This group is Henry's prize. Certainly it is one of the best rock records of the year.

Timber's approach to music is similar to Crosby, Stills, Nash, and Young's, though the two groups do not sound like each other. The Timber sound is highly musical, complex without being intellectual. They nod to country music and blues as well as to rock. But the sound is personal and distinctive.

Some of their lyrics are fine; others (*Tip Top*, for instance) take off in several directions and never come to rest. Musically, however, every single selection is dynamite. The group's playing is excellent and versatile. In the sense that good rock swings, Timber swings hard. Judy Elliott, the group's one girl member, adds a beautiful color to the top of the voice blend. Vocal arrangements sound organic, as if they emerge directly out of the music, intricately planned and superbly executed.

One track on the album should have been a hit single: *In It*. In fact, the album should be a hit and probably won't be. But the underground will pick it up as it did with James Taylor's first album. Timber is together and too good to stay submerged for long. Watch for them and listen to this album. M.A.

JIMMY BUFFETT: Down to Earth. Jimmy Buffett, vocals; rhythm accompaniment. (The Christian?; Ellis Dee; Captain America; Ain't He a Genius; Truckstop Salvation; five more.) Barnaby Z 30093, $4.98.

DENNIS LINDE: Linde Manor. Dennis Linde, vocals; instrumental accompaniment. (On the Run; Call Me, Honey; Horned Toad; Rockin' Days; Kitty Starr; Stormy Weather Girl; five more.) Intrepid IT 74004, $4.98.

JUDY MAYHAN: Moments. Judy Mayhan, vocals; instrumental accompaniment. (Walk Right In; Old Man at the Fair; Shinin'; You Are My Sunshine; Begin Again; four more.) Atco SD 33-319, $4.98. Tape: ▣ M 8319, $6.95; ▣▣ M 5319, $6.95.

CAT STEVENS: Mona Bone Jakon. Cat Stevens, vocals; instrumental accompaniment. (Lady D'Arbanville; Pop Star; Trouble; Katmandu; Time; Lilywhite; five more.) A & M SP 4260, $4.98. Tape: ▣ 8T 4260, $6.98; ▣▣ CS 4260, $6.98.

In August I received eighty-six rock-and-roll albums. That is only the number sent to me for review, of course, and does not include *all* the rock records released last month, a "slow" summer month to boot. Nor does it include the new jazz, folk, blues, and country LPs. Just rock. Eighty-six albums.

I offer this in the hope that it will give you more perspective on what you read here and in other industry publications. It is impossible for any of us who review records to give more than a cursory listen to most of the albums that come our way. Some reviewers I know never listen to more than a dozen or so releases a month. This has an advantage in that they can really concentrate on those albums. But it also means that the reviewer is selecting his albums on the basis of such nonmusical considerations as the reputation of the record company, the attractiveness of the cover, the performer's previous work or reputation, and the amount of hype the record is getting. This leads inevitably to a situation in which the same artists are reviewed month after month, a somewhat silly circumstance when you consider that a reader who knows the work of a performer from previous outings can make up his own mind about buying the new record. Where he needs help, however, is with the literally thousands of new records by people he has never heard of. So here are four artists of whom you have probably never heard.

Jimmy Buffett is a singer/songwriter in the country tradition, making his pitch to the broad pop audience. Both as a performer and a writer he reminds me of a cross between Billy Edd Wheeler and John Stewart. His songs are among the best I have heard lately—clever, tuneful, ironic. He has the ability to catch events, ideas, and people from odd angles. His is a name to add to the list of singer/songwriters (Kristofferson, Stewart, Hall, Newbury) who are creating a valid pop folk music, such as rhythm and blues, for white people.

Dennis Linde is also country-based, but he is heavily influenced by rock, especially of the Fifties. He ranges further in his material, into blues, fantasy ballads, old fashioned rock. Mercury's producer Jerry Kennedy, who keeps coming up with these minor masterpieces, provides excellent support from studio regulars such as Wayne Moss. Don't be put off by the cover; part of Mercury's charm (also Decca's and M-G-M's) comes from having the ugliest and most irrelevant covers in the game.

Few women ever get the chance to develop their talents fully enough to make a successful go of a recording career, especially in the particularly sexist world of pop music. So it is a coup for Judy Mayhan that she has gotten as far as recording "Moments," even if it isn't entirely successful. As a performer she has a warm, vigorous style that is especially effective on tunes that demand strength, like Tom T. Hall's *I Washed My Face In the Morning Dew*. But she can also be tender, as she is on Jim Webb's *Old Man at the Fair* or her own *Shinin'*. Producer Ahmet Ertegun has assembled excellent support from Atlantic stalwarts Andrew Love, Wayne Jackson, Eddie Hinton, Duane Allman, Roger Hawkins, etc. Mayhan's voice resembles Judy Collins', although I think it has more life. As a writer, she is less well developed, but the ability is there; it needs only to be explored. I hope that Atlantic has the sense to stand by her, whatever the popularity of this debut LP. Potentially they have a major talent on their hands. And with folk music apparently about to make a big comeback, the demand for her style of singing will increase. A nice change of pace.

Cat Stevens released a very odd LP a couple of years ago on Epic to the

resounding indifference of just about everybody. Now he is back on an A & M album that is every bit as weird but which the pop audience is infinitely better equipped to accept. He isn't much of a singer really, having a thin, reedy voice better suited to Philbert Desenex than to a would-be pop star. But Stevens is a good if eccentric songwriter —and he is unafraid of giving his songs their logical settings, however counter to pop conventions they may be. I think "Mona Bone Jakon" will bear repeated listenings and there aren't too many pop records about which that can be said.

I remain convinced that the best hopes of pop music lie not in the groups but in the individual singer/songwriters (especially those who favor folk or country conventions). This batch of four merely scratches the surface of one month's releases. I wish there were the time and space to tell you about J. D. Blackfoot, Mylon LeFevre, Dick Holler, Todd Rundgren, Andrew Leigh, and Loudon Wainwright III, who are some among the others who deserved attention this month. Perhaps another time. J.G.

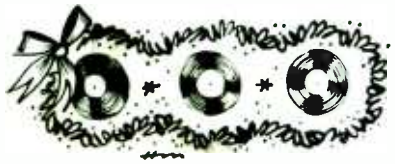
STRAWBERRY STATEMENT. Music from the soundtrack of the film. Composed and conducted by Ian Freebairn-Smith. Records by Crosby, Stills, Nash, and Young; Neil Young; Buffy Sainte-Marie, others. M-G-M 2SE 14ST, $9.50 (two discs).

This album reflects a current trend in filmscoring, wherein the score is made up of pop records. Somewhere along the way, a composer is brought in. It is his job to make the records work as a score and to compose additional music where needed. Without such a composer, the score is simply a series of jukebox selections (as in *Easy Rider*).

In this case, the composer is Ian Freebairn-Smith, and one wishes he'd had more to do. His gentle love theme is sandwiched in from time to time between records (*Cyclatron; Market Basket; Coit Tower; Pocket Band*). There's just enough of his music to get you interested—and then it's back to another disc that you probably already own.

While this method of scoring has proven successful in relation to the film itself, one must question albums emerging from such projects. What rock fan does not already own the Crosby-Stills-Nash-Young album, as well as Neil Young's? Buffy Sainte-Marie's version of *Circle Game* is not nearly as good as composer Joni Mitchell's. At any rate, all were previously available.

As far as Ian Freebairn-Smith's music is concerned, it is better to have some than none. But it is to be hoped that next time out the producers allow him to give more of himself. M.A.



jazz

*

GARY BURTON: Good Vibes. Gary Burton, vibes, electric vibes, piano, and organ; Sam Brown, Jerry Hahn, and Eric Gale, guitars; Richard Tee, piano and organ; Steve Swallow, bass and electric bass; Chuck Rainey, electric bass; Bill Lavorgna and Pretty Purdie, drums. (Pain in My Heart; I Never Loved a Man; Vibrafinger; three more.) Atlantic 1560, $5.98. Tape: M 81560, $6.95; M 51560, $6.95.

Record by record, as he headed groups that have gone through relatively subtle changes, Gary Burton has rapidly made his way from an early status as a technically brilliant if somewhat unexciting *Wunderkind* vibraharpist to a position of one of the more imaginative leaders in contemporary jazz. With this disc he moves from the subtle areas in which he has been working to an overtly exciting kind of performance—a mixture of blues, gospel, and urgent, driving jazz-rock—that still has a place for his distinctively thoughtful use of the vibes.

The music he produces here is electric jazz somewhat in the Miles Davis manner but filled with more shading and colors than Davis has gotten so far. The support of his three-man guitar team provides a bright electric twang, sometimes taking the lead, sometimes blending with the very complementary sound of Burton's vibes. On *Vibrafinger* and other pieces, Burton abandons his regular vibes and adds the electronic sound with electric piano or organ or electric vibes. Yet even in these surroundings where the beat becomes intense, the atmosphere running a gamut from funky to raunchy to high-powered steam, Burton's vibes are always in character both personally and in relation to the over-all effect.

This could be a landmark record in bringing jazz into the musical atmosphere of the Seventies with validity, without gimmicks, and with the strong sense of roots that Burton's varied experiences have given him. J.S.W.

REX STEWART: Memorial Album. Rex Stewart, cornet, kazoo, and vocals; John Dengler, bass saxophone, washboard, and kazoo; Wilbert Kirk, harmonica and tambourine; Jerome Darr, amplified guitar; Chauncey Westbrook, guitar; Bennie Moten, bass; Charles Lampkin, drums. (Red Ribbon; If I Could Be With You; Four or Five Times; seven more.) Prestige 7728, $4.98.

This is an odd collection—Rex Stewart involved with such skiffling paraphernalia as kazoos, washboards, harmonica, and tambourine. Not the kind of surroundings you'd expect for a jazz musician of his capability. Yet, despite Johnny Dengler's dismal kazooing and a resolutely umpchunk rhythm section, Stewart and associates manage to turn this into an often delightful and unusual potpourri that is considerably more jazz than junk. Stewart's cornet is full of his jabbing, burry punch, Dengler redeems himself on his bass saxophone passages; and Wilbert Kirk contributes some lyrical harmonica solos. Stewart sings in an Armstrong-derived manner that suggests this was a talent that might have had more use made of it.

Recorded in 1960, seven years before Stewart's death, these performances, originally issued on Swingville 2006, may not be the most compelling memorial to Stewart. But they're fun, have a lot of exuberance, and show that Stewart's bright, distinctive qualities as a cornetist could not be diminished by any circumstances. J.S.W.

*

THE WORLD'S GREATEST JAZZ BAND OF YANK LAWSON AND BOB HAGGART: Live at the Roosevelt Grill. Yank Lawson and Billy Butterfield, trumpets; Lou McGarity and Vic Dickenson, trombones; Bud Freeman, tenor saxophone; Bob Wilber, clarinet and soprano saxophone; Ralph Sutton, piano; Bob Haggart, bass; Gus Johnson, drums. (The Jazz Me Blues; New Orleans; Constantly; eight more.) Atlantic 1570 $5.98.

With this disc the World's Greatest Jazz Band begins to live up to the pretensions of its title. Its two previous releases (on Project 3) were made up of clean, polished, highly professional performances, but they smelled of the studio—stiff and prim, scarcely what one would expect of such an experienced line-up of musicians. For this collection, the studio was abandoned and the band was recorded in the familiar surroundings of the Roosevelt Grill in New York where it spent most of the winter of 1969–70.

In programming, none of the band's spotlight solo specialties (soloist with rhythm section) has been used. The solos show up where they properly belong in a jazz band, emerging from a full ensemble performance (for example, Yank Lawson's brilliant old Bob Crosby tune *Fire Point Blues*). And (another happy omission) there are none of the halfhearted attempts to do something with current pop hits that had weakened the earlier discs. There *is* new material, all contributed by members of the band —Bud Freeman's delightfully jaunty riff, *That D Minor Thing*, a dreamy, softlights melody by drummer Gus Johnson, and a piece by Vic Dickenson that quite logically is ideal fodder for his roguish trombone. Otherwise there are tunes from the rich repertory of unhackneyed standards—*Black and Blue; Come Back, Sweet Papa; My Honey's Lovin' Arms.* Even the apparently obligatory chestnuts such as *That's a Plenty* and *Royal Garden Blues* come out with verve and enthusiasm.

The band, man for man, is up on its toes—superb performances by Lawson, Freeman, Dickenson, Billy Butterfield, Ralph Sutton, and Bob Wilber (who instead of shining in almost solitary glory as he has sometimes done in the past, takes his proper place alongside a solid line of great performances). A key factor in this recording is the superb sound balance that Atlantic has produced—better sound than I have ever heard in any concert hall or club where this band has played. J.S.W.

ERNIE AND EMILIO CACERES. Ernie Caceres, clarinet and baritone saxophone; Emilio Caceres, violin; Cliff Gillette, piano; Curly Williams, guitar; George Pryor, bass; Joe Cortez, Jr., drums. (Jigin G; Sweet Lorraine; Estrellita; seven more.) Audiophile 101, $5.95 (Audiophile Records, P.O. Box 66, San Antonio, Tex. 78206).

In the late '30s and '40s, Ernie Caceres was one of the standout sidemen in the big swing bands, playing his baritone saxophone and doubling on clarinet for three years with Glenn Miller, and later with Benny Goodman, Tommy Dorsey, and Woody Herman. In 1957 he was a spark plug in a marvelous band that Bobby Hackett led for a few brief months at the Henry Hudson Hotel in New York. In 1962 he went home to San Antonio to join his older brother, Emilio, a violinist who had come to New York with Ernie in the mid-Thirties but had returned to San Antonio after some radio

appearances with Benny Goodman and one recording session for Victor. Largely because of a dearth of his records and his relative isolation in San Antonio, Emilio Caceres' name is not often included when the small list of jazz fiddlers is mentioned. But he deserves a place on that list, even at this late date.

In this excellent set, in which the brothers are backed by a four-piece rhythm section, Emilio shows a suave, swinging touch that relates to the style of Stephane Grappelly more than it does to such down-in-the-alley fiddlers as Stuff Smith. He has Grappelly's grace and tone on ballads but he also summons a lean, driving attack combined with a cogent sense of phrasing when the tempos pick up. Ernie's clarinet, with its echoes of Benny Goodman, is a fine complement to Emilio's violin. But Ernie is at his best on baritone sax, which he plays with a swaggering bumptiousness and a big, fat tone that come straight from Adrian Rollini's use of the bass saxophone.

The two brothers produce a kind of unpretentious but beautifully executed chamber swing (note their *Body and Soul* in particular) that has practically disappeared nowadays—although, considering the rarity of the conjunction of violin and baritone saxophone, that swing was never exactly ubiquitous. J.S.W.

GEORGE LEWIS: Memorial Album. Kid Howard, trumpet; Jim Robinson, trombone; George Lewis, clarinet; Alton Purnell, piano; Lawrence Marero and Slow Drag Pavageau, banjos; Joe Watkins, vocals and drums. (Jerusalem Blues; Careless Love; Tin Roof Blues, three more.) Delmark 203, $5.98.

These recordings, made in 1953 and originally released on 10-inch LPs on the Antone label, were packaged as "The Singing Clarinet" on a 12-inch Delmar disc in 1958. Twelve years later, after being out of print for a long time, Delmark (the label has added a "k" to its name in the intervening years) has reissued the set, including with it a flyer in which I found that, at the time of the 1958 release, I said that it "offers Lewis' remarkable ensemble at its best. His clarinet, mellow yet acidulous, surges warmly, . . . The expressive dynamic sense of the Lewis band has rarely been caught on records as consistently as it is in these pieces. An essential for collectors of traditional jazz." Hearing the record once again confirms my original reaction. I would only add that their performance of *Dallas Blues*, one of the tunes in their repertory that has not been recorded repeatedly, is an unusually beautiful, haunting treatment of a number that is usually more apt to be played with slam-bang brashness. It is typical of the warmth and the lyrical richness that the band brought to almost everything it played in its peak years in the early Fifties. J.S.W.

in brief

OTIS REDDING/JIMI HENDRIX EXPERIENCE. Reprise 2029, $4.98.
Historic recordings made at the fabled Monterey Pop Festival, June 1967 and a must for Hendrix fans. Redding is better remembered in other albums. Released, incidentally, before Hendrix's death in London, but a fitting memorial nonetheless. J.G.

JOHNNY WINTER: And. Columbia C 30221, $4.98.
Johnny Winter, with new sidemen, finally decides to become a contemporary rock performer. Too late. J.G.

JOE COCKER: Mad Dogs & Englishmen. A & M SP 6002, $4.98 (two discs). Tape: 8T 6002, $6.98; CS 6002, $6.98.
The inimitable Joe Cocker, live on the stage of Fillmore East, with a lot of expert help, especially from Leon Russell. A few of the cuts are superb, but some of the arrangements are ill-conceived and a lot of the playing is sloppy. Edited down to two sides, this would have made a much better album. J.G.

FRED NEIL: Little Bit of Rain. Elektra EKS 74073, $4.98.
Fred Neil was one of the founders of modern rock-and-roll. These are the highlights of the early part of his career.

FAIRPORT CONVENTION: Full House. A & M SP 4205, $4.98. Tape: 8T 4205, $6.98; CS 4205, $6.98.
Fairport Convention, one of Britain's finest new groups, bows with another first-rate album. This time the emphasis is even folkier than usual. J.G.

SIR DOUGLAS QUINTET: 1+1+1=4. Philips PHS 600 344, $4.98.
Anyone aware of my somewhat uncritical affection for the Sir Douglas Quintet will be suspicious of yet another rave. But dagnab if they haven't done it again. And a nice cover to boot. Heartily recommended. J.G.

JOHN DENVER: Whose Garden Was This. RCA Victor LSP 4414, $4.98.
Each John Denver LP has been a little less interesting than the one before. Here the performance picks up a bit and there are a few interesting songs, but the whole thing is ruined by a lot of material (*Mr. Bojangles, Eleanor Rigby, Old Folks, Jingle Bells*) that is either clichéd, cutesy, or both. J.G.

BRIAN AUGER & THE TRINITY: Befour. RCA Victor LSP 4372, $4.98. Tape: P8S 1600, $6.95; PK 1600, $6.95.
This is a British jazz-oriented rock group led by organist Auger. When they're good, they're smashing. But this set sounds hastily planned and ponderously played. For example, *Listen Here* and *Just You, Just Me* are built upon practically the same riff. Stick with their other albums, or wait for the next one. M.A.

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the tape deck

BY R.D. DARRELL

Musicassettes Come of Age. . .well, almost! I can't honestly claim full technological maturity for the cassette, which still awaits chromium dioxide tape coating and/or Type-B Dolbyization. But like today's youngsters subject to the draft and clamoring for the right to vote at eighteen, recorded cassettes are already technically as well as artistically *responsible* and worthy of a vote of confidence.

Not that one can point to a recent sensational engineering breakthrough—no one manufacturer or any single sonic-spectacular release has yet converted the skeptics among open-reel connoisseurs. Nevertheless, I still note impressive growth on the basis of many current cassettes which have succeeded in passing a simple yet rigorous listening test. As veteran Tape Deck readers may remember, my original musicassette evaluations frankly relied on a "double standard." While their technical limitations were made cruelly obvious when played through large stereo systems, even the earliest musicassettes revealed novel and persuasive compensating attractions in mono alfresco playback, where they could be compared favorably with portable radio and phonograph reproduction. But the rate of technical progress has been so unexpectedly rapid that lately I've been encouraged to shift from informal battery-operated mono playback to big-speaker stereo—at first, only for an occasional outstanding release (like the London/Ampex *Rosenkavalier* of last August), but more recently for almost everything.

In direct A/B listening comparisons between a first-rate current musicassette and its disc (or open-reel) equivalent, the former inarguably loses out in signal-to-noise ratings—although even here surface noise has been markedly reduced. But in regard to frequency and dynamic ranges, breadth, and impact, the gap between the two formats has been astonishingly reduced, not infrequently to the point where the match is—audibly at least—essentially exact. This is particularly true, of course, when the musical program makes no extreme audio demands or when the recording itself dates back a number of years. But many musicassette editions of even the most brilliant, large-scale new recordings now can transcend their original limitations in every respect save that of virtually noiseless backgrounds.

Little Giant Beethoven Ninth. To test these comments for yourself, compare Stokowski's highly acclaimed new Beethoven Ninth in its 7½-ips and cassette editions (London/Ampex EX+ L 75043, $7.95, and M 94043, $6.95, respectively). Here the superb sonic solidity of the Phase 4 lows is just as impressive in cassette playback, while the cassette highs are—believe it or not—actually brighter. That's exceptional, I hasten to add: probably the result of some over-eager high-end boosting in the cassette editing or processing, and it involves an aurally less appealing, less "natural" spectrum balance. But the significant revelation of such a test is that even this demanding work can be reproduced in cassette format with its grandeur intact and with lucid inner-voice score details. And once again I find it astonishing that the wall- and roof-bursting climaxes here can possibly emanate from a small cassette and its equally compact stereo playback deck (in my case, the tiny Ampex Model Micro-5).

Fortunately, this is only one, if perhaps the most startling, example of the musicassettes' coming-of-age. I've A/B'd the disc and cassette editions of recent Ormandy/Philadelphia and Baudo/Orchestre de Paris programs, and the Stereo 8 and cassette edition of Rubinstein's newly released Schumann recital—all with similar results. Most impressive perhaps is how bravely the cassette "Bolero" (Ravel/Massenet/Falla) program (Columbia 16 11 0172, $6.98) copes with the expansive sonics of one of Ormandy's last recording sessions for Columbia. Serge Baudo's Mussorgsky-Ravel *Pictures at an Exhibition* and Ravel *Mother Goose* Suite are less successful technically and interpretatively, but the cassette edition (Angel 4XS 36683, $6.98) demonstrates, as does the disc, a contrast between some sonic opacity on Side 1 and the notably superior lucidity on Side 2. Similarly, Rubinstein's Schumann program in both its musicassette and 8-track cartridge editions (RCA Red Seal RK 1153 and R8S 1153, $6.95 each) reveals the same fine distinction between the piano's slightly drier and less lustrous tonal qualities in the great *Kreisleriana*, Op. 16 (recorded in 1964 at Carnegie Hall), and the brighter, warmer timbres of the delectable encore pieces, *The Prophet Bird* and *Arabesque* recorded last year in the RCA Italiana Studios).

Variegated Space and Time Capsules. In the long run, it will be the blend of attractive (not necessarily spectacular) sound with diversified and substantially rewarding *music* that will make musicassettes essential to every serious home listener's library. For pertinent current examples:

- One of Offenbach's most intoxicating cocktails: the one-act *chinoiserie Ba-ta-clan* in a sparkling performance conducted by Marcel Couraud and recorded with vivid theatrical presence (Musical Heritage Society, 1991 Broadway, New York 10023, MHC 2002, $6.95; libretto on request). But why wasn't it edited to avoid the present needlessly disproportionate side lengths?
- Two fascinating encounters with the wry wit and fantasy of Erik Satie: Vol. 2 of Aldo Ciccolini's deft traversal of the piano works, and Louis Auriacombe's authoritative Paris Conservatory Orchestra versions of the rowdy *Parade* and *Relâche* ballets contrasting with the medievalist *Gymnopédies* in Debussy's orchestrations (Angel 4XS 36459 and 4XS 36486, $6.98 each).
- Bernstein's long admired *Applachian Spring* and *El Salón México*, plus the composer's own *Billy the Kid* and *Rodeo* excerpts (Columbia 16 11 0138, $6.98—"Greatest Hits" series).
- Fischer-Dieskau's latest Bach performances, with the Munich Bach Choir and Orchestra under Karl Richter: luminous recordings of Cantatas 56 and 82, and 1 and 4 (Archive 924 024 and 924 025, $6.95 each).
- A Beethoven song recital by Fischer-Dieskau with pianist Jörg Demus including the incomparable *An die ferne Geliebte* cycle, *Adelaide*, seven other German Lieder, *In questa tomba oscura*, and six other Italian songs (DGG 923 124, $6.95).

Old Masters Never Die—nor Fade Away. While cassette qualities are heatedly argued, 8-track cartridge tapes calmly continue their stratospheric sales climb—a commercial success due largely, I'm convinced, to word-of-mouth promotion by everyone who has discovered the pleasures of driving to the music one likes best. This month I'm happy to call attention once again to further Toscanini and Reiner Stereo 8 revivals on the bargain-priced Victrola label. From Toscanini we have the 1941 *Walküre* Act I, Scene 3, with Traubel and Melchior; plus the even more memorable 1951 *Siegfried Forest Murmers*, and 1952 *Walküre Ride of the Valkyries and Siegfried's Death and Funeral Music* from *Götterdämmerung* (Victrola V8S 1023, $4.95).

The Reiner revival is his kaleidoscopic 1959 "Festival of Russian Music": Glinka's *Ruslan and Ludmilla* Overture, Mussorgsky's *Night on Bald Mountain*, Tchaikovsky's *Marche slave* and *Marche miniature*, Kabalevsky's *Colas Breugnon* Overture, and the *Polovtsi March* from Borodin's *Prince Igor* (Victrola V8S 1025, $4.98).

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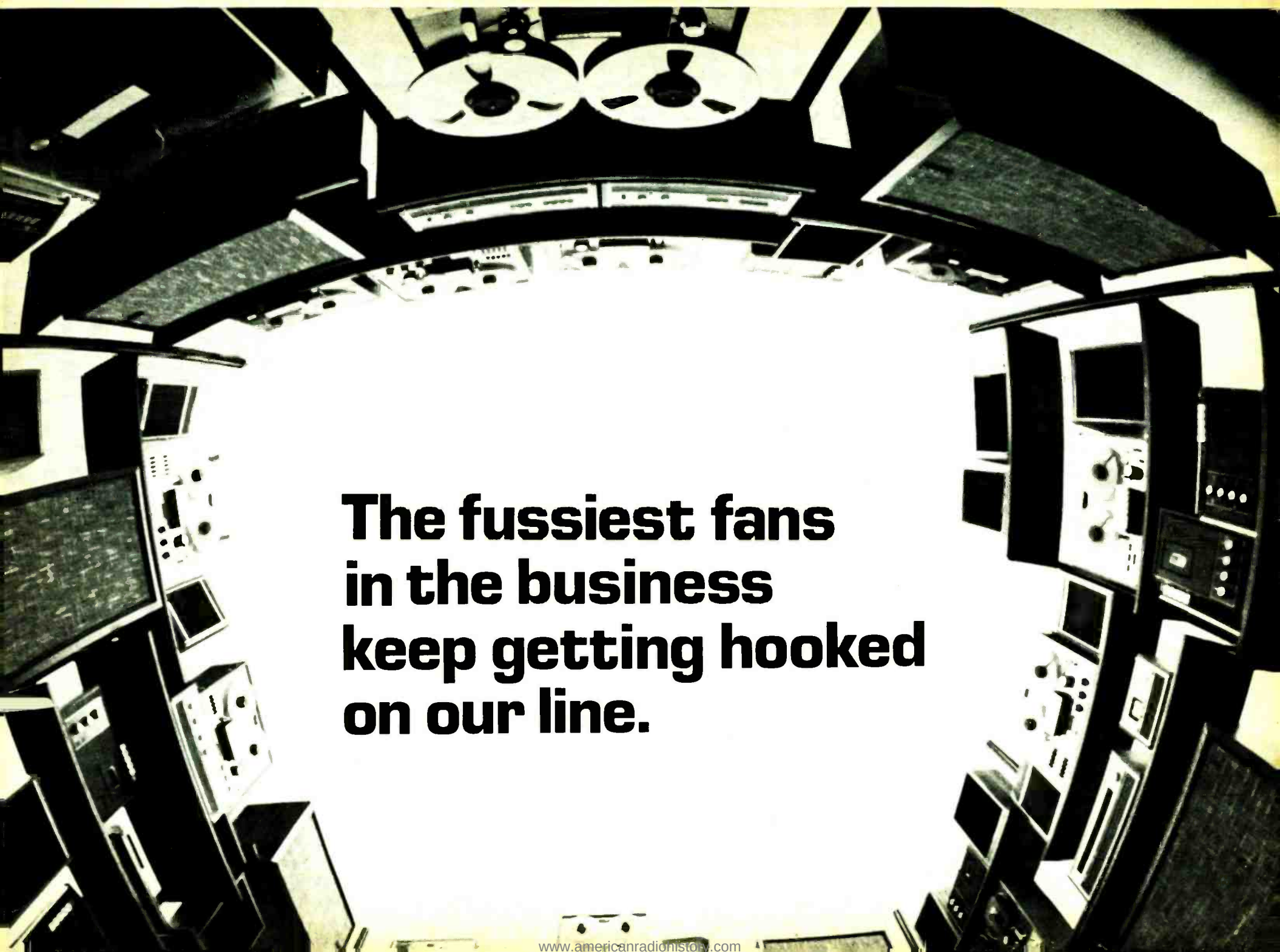

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