

HIGH FIDELITY®

LAB TEST REPORTS
 Sansui's budget receiver
 Pioneer's medium-priced cassette deck
 Norelco's premium phono pickup

HFDBUCHHAZGREDZO K DEC 72
 MR DAVID BUCHANAN
 HAZEL GREEN ACADEMY
 HAZEL GREEN KY 41332

Channel Sound

convert your stereo tape recorder

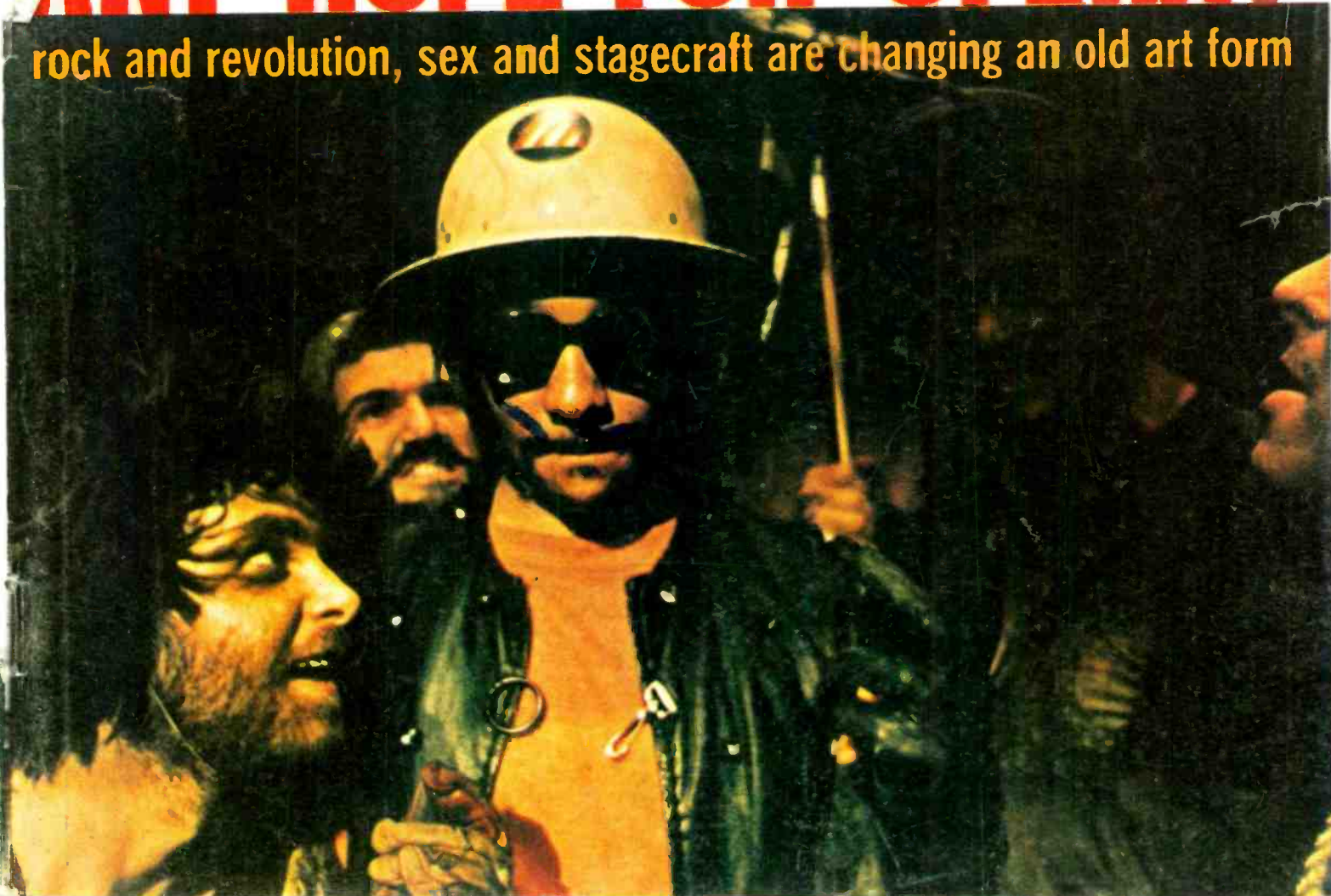
Records You "Can't Buy"

our guide to buried treasures

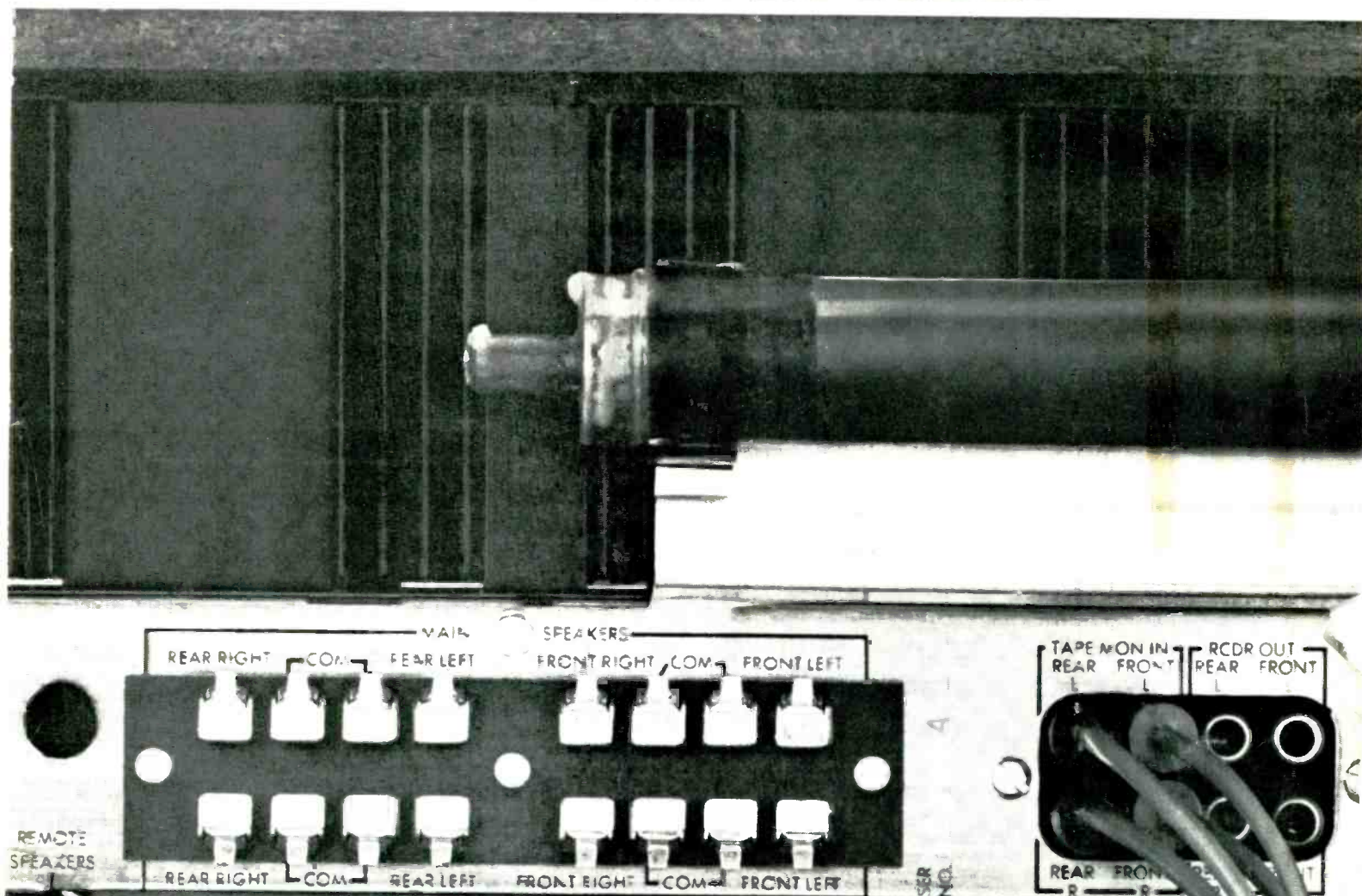


ANY HOPE FOR OPERA?

rock and revolution, sex and stagecraft are changing an old art form

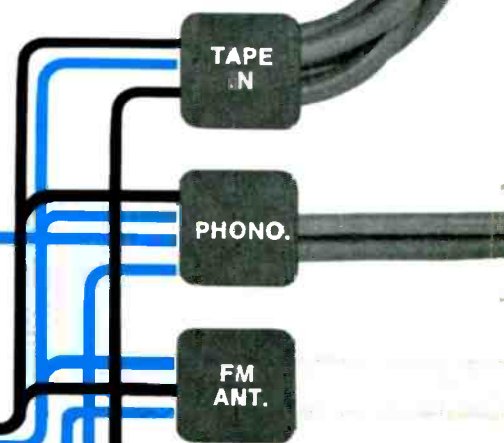


POSED: CAN HANDLE THEM ALL.



2+2 stereo.
Ordinary 2-channel stereo material (records, tapes, FM) often contains hidden ambience information extractable with the 2+2 matrix decoder of the Fisher 601 and suitable for 4-channel playback.

Matrix 4-channel (SQ).
A sophisticated matrix system developed by CBS Laboratories for encoding four channels into an ordinary (compatible) record groove. The four channels can be decoded with a greater retention of separation and localization than with other techniques of matrixing.
Sources:
SC records
SC records on FM (both accepted by the Fisher 601 with future SQ adapter)



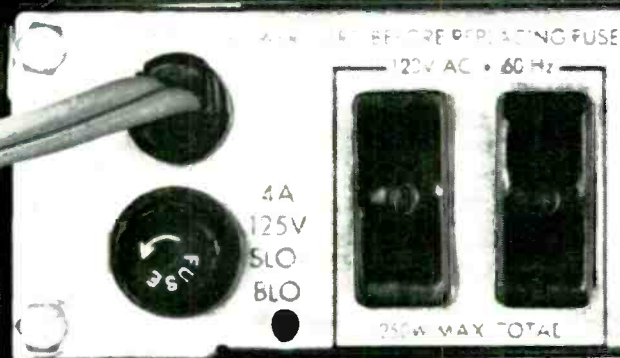
PLUS: Every type of playback available on any conventional stereo receiver of any design.

EXISTING OR PROPOSED THE FISHER 601 C



The Fisher 601 true 4-channel AM/FM stereo receiver.

Four separate control and power amp. channels. 200 watts. Dual slide volume controls. Drives 8 speaker systems (4 main plus 4 remote). Price \$599.95.



- Existing.
- Proposed.

Discrete 4-channel.

The four channels of information are processed to retain full separation throughout, from the microphones right up to your four speakers.

4-channel tape.

Four parallel tracks on the tape keep the four channels completely separate.

Sources:

4-channel reel-to-reel tapes
4-channel 8-track cartridges
4-channel cassettes
(all accepted by the Fisher 601 without extra accessories)

FM multiplex 4-channel.

The present stereo multiplex system can be extended to carry four (instead of two) channels of information, with full separation on playback. The system is under consideration by the FCC and will be reproducible on the Fisher 601 (with plug-in replacement circuit board to be furnished by Fisher).

4-channel LP record (JVC system).

A system somewhat similar to multiplexing makes possible four fully separated channels in a single record groove. (Reproducible on the Fisher 601 with external adapter.)

Matrix 4-

The standard two of carrying 4-channel information process (matrixing) recovers the 4-chi

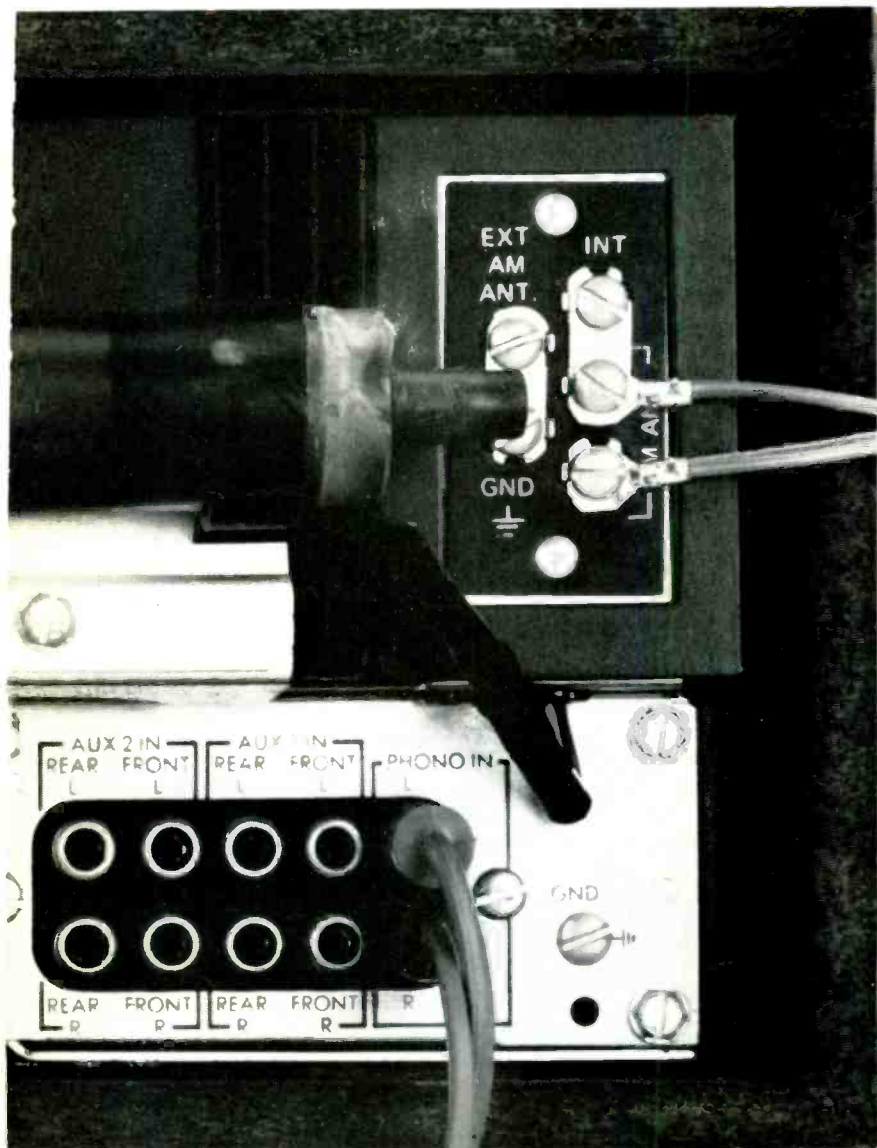
Pre-matrixed 4-channel.

Four original channels are encoded into two, with the intent on of 4-channel playback

Sources:

matrix 4-channel records
matrix 4-channel cassettes
matrix 4-channel reel-to-reel tapes
matrix 4-channel recordings on
(all accepted by the built-in 2+ decoder of the Fisher 601, with extra accessories)

**A SIMPLE
GUIDE TO ALL EXISTING
AND PROPOSED SYSTEMS
OF 4-CHANNEL
REPRODUCTION.**



Actual size.

Fisher Radio
 Dept. HF-11, P.O. Box 1367
 Long Island City, N.Y. 11101

- Please send me a copy of The Fisher Handbook, your fact-filled 72-page reference guide to hi-fi, stereo and 4-channel. I enclose 50¢ to cover first-class postage and handling.
- Please send me a free reprint of this advertisement.
- Please send me free literature on the Fisher 601.

Name _____

Address _____

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State _____

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0111711



Beware of Stylus Carnivorous, The Vinyl Cannibal.



Stylus Carnivorous may look cute, but he's a nasty little creature. He shows up when the stylus in your phonograph cartridge begins to wear. And when he shows up and starts grinding away — kiss your favorite record goodbye.

The diamond tip of a stylus has a tough time playing records month after month. Even with today's minimal tracking force, a diamond isn't forever. (At most, the best diamond stylus may last some 500 hours, or long enough to play

about 1100 record sides.)

How do you avoid Stylus Carnivorous? Very simple. Just take your cartridge to your high fidelity dealer for a check-up about every six months. Our Pickering dealers will be happy to do this for you—free.

If your cartridge is a Pickering (and it just might be, since manufacturers install more Pickerings on record players than any other cartridge) and if you need a new stylus, be sure to ask for the precise Pickering replacement. Ask for the one

that matches the stylus originally engineered for your equipment.

So if your stereo has been sounding strange, maybe it's not your stereo. Maybe it's old Stylus getting Carnivorous.

For our free brochure, "Questions and Answers About Cartridges and Styli" write to Pickering and Co., Inc., Plainview, N.Y.

11803.

 **PICKERING**

"for those who can hear the difference"

November 1971

Vol. 21

No. 11

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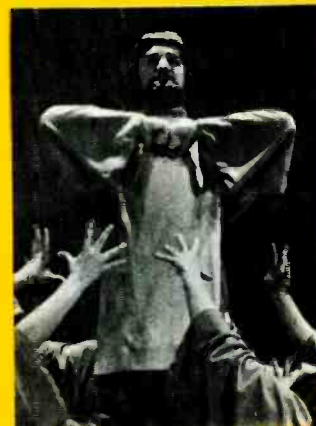
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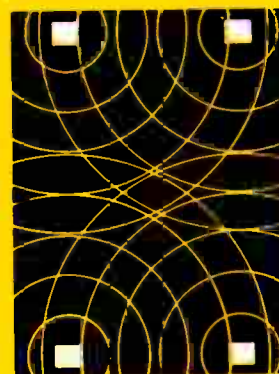
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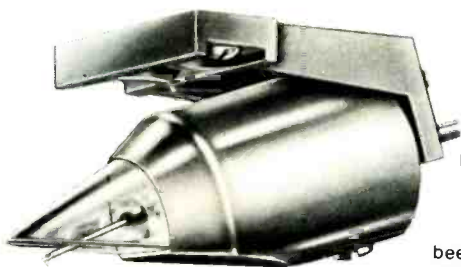


Adding channels. See page 78.

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We asked 30 F.M. station engineers* what they thought of the Bang & Olufsen SP-12 cartridge

Here's what they said:



WVCG/WYOR
Coral Gables, Fla.

... this excellent cartridge is ideally suited for professional applications. SP-12 would be a good choice for the new quad-4 channel-stereo discs.

K-BUC
San Antonio, Texas

The cartridge is without a doubt the "Rolls Royce" of the broadcasting industry!

KRBE
Houston, Texas

Low's and Hi's came through very impressively over entire audio range. The SP-12 is an excellent cartridge surpassing both the Shure V-15 and the Stanton 681EE in all respects in my tests.

*Write for a report of
FM Station Engineer
Evaluation

WKJF-FM
Pittsburgh, Pa.

Tracking so far, has been excellent. SP-12 has been used "on air" 7 hours a day since received and not stuck or skipped yet.

KBAY
San Jose, Cal.

Up 'til now the Shure V-15 type II has been our favorite for critical listening. After installing the B & O cartridge in the shell the Shure cartridge was in, we've left it there. It sounds great!

Exceptionally clean, undistorted, pure sound. One London Phase Four recording in particular has always broken up during a highly modulated passage, we assumed the record was over-modulated, until we played it using the B & O cartridge.

KMND
Mesa, Ariz.

If there could be any comment at all, it would have to be that the cartridge seemed to display a very smooth and pleasing sound. The very flat and very clean, clear and brilliant response. The separation is very good and both channels are quite consistent on response.

WEMP
Milwaukee, Wis.

We appreciate the wide-range response without the harsh "edge" that so many cartridges add to the sound.

KDIG
La Jolla, Calif.

An excellent cartridge, none better on the market today.

SP-12 Cartridge
\$69.95



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UNANIMOUS ACCLAIM!

First test reports on the Zero 100 by the industry's leading reviewers

Brief excerpts reprinted below. Let us send you the full reports.

HIGH FIDELITY Sept. 1971

Altogether, this new arm strikes us as an excellent piece of engineering; it probably is the best arm yet offered as an integral part of an automatic player. □ Operation is simple, quiet, and reliable. □ All told, we feel that Garrard has come up with a real winner in the Zero 100. Even without the tangent-tracking feature of the arm, this would be an excellent machine at a competitive price. With the novel (and effective) arm, the Zero 100 becomes a very desirable "superchanger" with, of course, manual options.

The GRAMOPHONE August, 1971

Reproduction quality was excellent with no detectable wow, flutter or rumble under stringent listening conditions. End of side distortion, which is always a possibility with pivoted arms, was virtually absent, due no doubt to the tangential tracking arm.

AUDIO July, 1971

The Zero-100 performed just about as we expected after reading the specifications. Wow measured .08 per cent—that is in the band from 0.5 to 6 Hz. Flutter, in the band from 6 to 250 Hz, measured .03 per cent, both of which are excellent. □ Thus, the Garrard Zero 100 is certainly the finest in a long line of automatic turntables which have been around for over 50 years. □ We think you will like it.

Popular Electronics August, 1971

Our lab measurements essentially confirmed the claims made by Garrard for the Zero 100. We used a special protractor with an angular resolution of about 0.5°, and the observed tracking error was always less than this detectable amount. The tracking force calibration was accurate, within 0.1 gram over its full range. □ The Garrard Zero 100 operated smoothly and without any mechanical "bugs."

Stereo Review July, 1971

Indeed, everything worked smoothly, quietly, and just as it was meant to. If there were any "bugs" in the Zero 100, we didn't find them. □ Garrard's Zero 100, in basic performance, easily ranks with the finest automatic turntables on the market. Its novel arm—which really works as claimed—and its other unique design features suggest that a great deal of development time, plus sheer imagination, went into its creation. In our view, the results were well worth the effort.

ROLLING STONE Sept. 16, 1971

This unit has every imaginable gadget and gewgaw one might possibly desire, and it works. And considering how much it does, and how well it does it, at 190 bucks it doesn't even seem expensive. The changer has so much in it that an analysis of its innards is almost a case study in record player design.

HIFI Fall, 1971

One could go on cataloguing the virtues of the Zero 100 indefinitely.



For 8-page test reports booklet and a 12-page brochure on the Zero 100 and the entire Garrard series mail to British Industries Company, Dept. K 21, Westbury, N. Y. 11590.

Name _____
Address _____
City _____
State _____ Zip _____



A genuine step upward in automatic turntables

GARRARD ZERO 100

The only automatic turntable with Zero Tracking Error

\$189.50

less base and cartridge

In 1968 almost every stereo enthusiast knew:

1

You couldn't reproduce bass notes through small speakers.

2

All the sound should come from the front of the speaker and none should be directed rearward toward the wall.

3

A speaker should never have associated electronics such as an active equalizer.

4

All good speakers should have crossovers, woofers and tweeters.

5

All speakers should be designed to give flat frequency response on axis.

By 1971 almost every stereo enthusiast has heard the BOSE 901.

A speaker which violates every one of the concepts above. Born out of 12 years of university research,* the 901 has become *the most highly reviewed speaker, regardless of size or price.*

Today we have a theoretical basis that explains why these concepts limit the performance of conventional speakers. But no theory can tell you how much better a new design will sound. To appreciate this, ask your dealer for an A-B comparison of the BOSE 901 with the largest and most expensive speakers he carries.

*For those interested in the 12 years of research that led to the design of the 901, copies of the Audio Engineering Society paper "ON THE DESIGN, MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION OF LOUDSPEAKERS," by Dr. A. G. Bose, are available from BOSE Corporation for fifty cents.



Pedestal bases and walnut facings optional extra.

Covered by patent rights issued and pending.

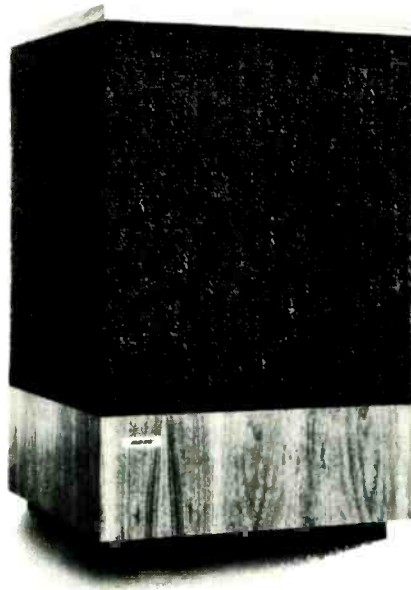
You can hear the difference now.

BOSE

Natick, Mass. 01760

BOSE 901 DIRECT/REFLECTING® Speaker System—\$476 the Stereo pair, including Active Equalizer. Slightly higher south and west.

CIRCLE 5 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



Ask your franchised dealer* to A-B the BOSE 501 with any speaker he carries that uses woofers, tweeters and crossovers.

There is an important reason why we ask you to make this test. There are inherent limitations of performance in the use of a woofer, a tweeter and a crossover—limitations covered in detail in earlier issues. The bypassing of these limitations played a large part in the advances which have made the BOSE 901 the most highly reviewed speaker, regardless of size or price.

We set out to design a lower priced speaker which would preserve as much as possible of the performance of the 901. Most important, we were able to design into the 501 much of the 901's great advance in spatial properties. The BOSE 501 is the second DIRECT/REFLECTING® speaker system.

But it became evident that there was no way to keep the advantages of multiple small full-range drivers and equalization. The cost problem was too great. We were forced to accept the woofer-tweeter-crossover combination as the only feasible compromise and set out to achieve the fullest possible realization of this design approach.

Our engineers designed a unique woofer with an unusually long voice coil which provides tight control of bass transients. They developed a new and different approach to crossing over the outputs of the woofer and the two tweeters. In the process they became convinced that \$125 is about the limiting price for improving the performance of a speaker containing woofers, tweeters and crossovers.

The design goal of the 501 was to outperform any other woofer-tweeter-crossover speaker. You be the judge. If we have succeeded, the results will be obvious to you when you make the comparison.

*Literature sent in answer to your request will include a list of franchised BOSE dealers in your area who are capable of demonstrating BOSE speakers to their full performance.

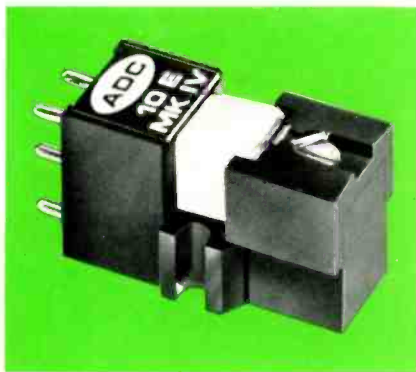
BOSE 501 DIRECT/REFLECTING® Speaker System
\$124.80 ea. Patents applied for.

NATICK, MA. 01760

BOSE®

You can hear the difference now.

NOW— THE ADC 10E MK IV



The latest version of the famous ADC 10E is better than ever, for it incorporates many of the refinements found in the acclaimed ADC 25 and 26. It takes full advantage of ADC's unique induced magnet system, where the heavy moving magnet found in most other high fidelity cartridges is replaced by a hollow tube weighing at least 60% less.

This arrangement also allows the generating system to be placed close to the stylus tip, thus virtually eliminating losses and resonances introduced by a long cantilever.

Coupled with the economies inherent in Audio Dynamics' latest manufacturing techniques, these features make the new 10E MK IV probably the finest value in high performance cartridges available today.

10E MK IV SPECIFICATIONS

Type . . . Induced Magnet
Sensitivity . . . 4 mv at 5.5 cms./sec.
recorded velocity
Tracking Force . . . 0.7 grams
Frequency
Response . . . 10 Hz to 20 kHz \pm 2 db
Channel
Separation . . . 30 db from 50 Hz to 12 kHz
Compliance . . . 35×10^{-6} cms./dyne
Vertical Tracking
Angle . . . 15 degrees
Recommended Load
Impedance . . . 47,000 ohms (nominal)
Suggested Retail Price . . . \$50.00



AUDIO FOR AUDIOPHILES

CIRCLE 12 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

letters

FIND

The plan for FIND as outlined in Leonard Marcus' editorial ["FIND—A Radical Solution," August 1971] is a stroke of genius which serves a grave need in the declining classical record business. Establishing a centrally located warehouse that will stock all available discs for participating dealers seems a scheme that can work. My congratulations to the moving spirits behind this service.

A radical solution? I find it most logical!
Edward Cole
University of Illinois
Urbana, Ill.

Hooray! I have just read your editorial announcing FIND. Before opening Caveat Emptor, our record store, in June we searched a four-hundred-mile radius for a distributor who actually carried classical records in the flesh—Chicago, Indianapolis, Detroit, Cincinnati, Columbus, Cleveland, and Louisville. As they used to say in the Fifties, "Man, like we got Nowheresville."

It turned out that the only remote possibility of actually finding someone who dealt with classical records was to work through five different "prime" distributors in Chicago and a sixth in Detroit. The thought of the paperwork was awesome enough, but the final blow came when we found that the first prime distributor we approached didn't even carry a complete classical line of the labels he represented. When the rest of the prime distributors pooped out, we eventually went back to a regular one-stop with our collective tails between our legs.

At this point we decided that we would perform a sort of search-and-destroy tactic to get classical records for our customers. So far we have searched and been destroyed. For instance, after searching through the *Billboard Buyer's Guide*, making three long-distance phone calls to New York, and writing several frustrating letters, we have yet to find anyone who even claims to know the distributor—or lack of one—for one of France's largest labels, Erato.

After all this, here you are in our backyard—Terre Haute. Put us down as a FIND dealer, send us a catalogue, and get ready for some orders!

I have just two questions: 1) When you say FIND will stock "virtually all" records and tapes, do you mean pop, jazz, folk, etc. as well as classical records? 2) Do you plan to include foreign labels that are virtually impossible to get anywhere else?

In any case you have just won, hands down, the Caveat Emptor "Good Egg of the Year" award.

James A. Rock, Mgr.
Caveat Emptor
Bloomington, Ind.

Yes, FIND will carry pop, jazz, folk, etc., as well as classical records. Some foreign labels, such as Qualiton and Supraphon, are already in FIND's stock and others are on the way. Erato, however, has never been distributed in

this country although many Erato recordings are pressed here by the Musical Heritage Society.

Congratulations and thanks for the establishment of FIND!

William B. DeMond, M.D.
Portland, Ore.

Bravo to you and good luck to FIND! But why can't you make the service directly available to the consumer? Out here in the boon-docks it's unlikely that we will have the services of a FIND dealer.

Arthur Reimann
Wellfleet, Mass.

It is not our purpose to compete with or destroy the existing patterns of record distribution, but merely to supplement them. We have no intention of taking business away from dealers or from their traditional distributors, and in fact, since our original announcement we have decided to charge FIND dealers a bit more for the records they get from us than they might ordinarily pay their regular suppliers, in order to insure that the dealer think of his distributor first.

I think your idea of the FIND catalogue is excellent. However, what guarantee is there that enough dealers will be willing to participate? To many large, mostly pop-oriented stores, this will probably be regarded as more of a nuisance than anything else.

Joseph Kreines
St. Petersburg, Fla.

Within a month after the FIND announcement, some 2,000 dealers had applied to participate and 1,000 have already been accepted. The vast majority are "pop-oriented stores."

Rock vs. Classical

I am writing regarding Mr. Chuck Petzel's letter in your August 1971 issue. Mr. Petzel seems to be a member of that ever-increasing clique known as the Rock Snobs, people who defend the rock faith against the irrelevant claims and encroachments of so-called classical music, both past and present. Their simplistic arguments are unable to hide the fact that these Rock Snobs are defensive about classical music only because they simply are unable to understand it.

Now admittedly I am a staunch fan of classical music, but I am equally as devoted to rock, and I don't feel that respect for one style of music should negate the possibility of respect for the other. Let's fact it—rock music and classical music are on two different wave lengths, without one wave length being higher or more noble than the other. But I believe it does require two separate pairs of ears to listen to the two musics intelligently.

Mr. Petzel, you no doubt do not find my argument cogent, so I shall discontinue this line of reasoning and simply correct a few of your informational inaccuracies. First of all, I object to your labeling the works of Beethoven and Mozart as "dainty chamber

The Longines Symphonette Presents...

ORSON WELLES' "WAR OF THE WORLDS"

The Original Broadcast That Terrified A Nation



A huge flaming object fell on a farm in New Jersey ... Explosions of hydrogen gas on Mars were moving toward the earth with enormous velocity—red discs swimming in a blue sea! And so as millions tuned in a little late, the most famous radio drama of all time was unfolding, but so realistic was its production that throughout the United States the "end of the world" on radio was too real for tens of thousands of listeners!

Where were you when 32 million people heard the most thrilling drama ever broadcast? Where were you when thousands panicked, fleeing their homes and falling to their knees in prayer as "deadly poisonous dark clouds drifted toward New York from New Jersey?"

Now You Can Own The Original "WAR OF THE WORLDS" Broadcast For The Most Memorable Addition Your Record Library Ever Had! Every Word Is There Just As It Was Then—And The Chills Are, Too!

WAR of the WORLDS PLUS 3 extra albums of history-making broadcasts



The Golden Days of Radio

Two full long-play records narrated by Jack Benny and Frank Knight. Thrill to the stars of yesterday. George Burns and Gracie Allen ... Fred Allen ... Bob Hope! Remember

the tribulations and adventures of "Helen Trent" ... "Ma Perkins" ... "Gang Busters" ... "The Shadow" ... You're on-the-scene at moments in history ... The First Presidential election broadcast ... Billy Sunday ... President Coolidge and Charles Lindbergh ... FDR inauguration ... The Hindenburg crash! You'll hear these and many, many more.



The Years To Remember

Fascinating broadcasts of the '30s and '40s ... W.W.II ... Great Moments in Sports. Hear Chamberlain, Hitler, Churchill, FDR and other world figures making never-to-be forgotten speeches! Witness vital events from Pearl

Harbor to the signing of the peace treaty with Japan. Thrill again to the Dempsey-Tunney fight ... Schmeling defeating Joe Louis ... Whirlaway winning the Kentucky Derby. A comprehensive cavalcade of events and people who made those decades truly *The Years To Remember!*

COMEDY...DRAMA...HISTORY...FAMOUS PEOPLE In A Collector's Record Library!

YES, You Get 3 Albums Of Living History And Entertainment Plus The Actual Broadcast Of The Most Spectacular Drama Ever Heard On Radio!

ACT NOW! These 4 Valuable Albums Are Available Only Through The Longines Symphonette Society! If They Could Be Bought In Fine Record Stores "WAR OF THE WORLDS" Alone Could Cost As Much!

ALL 4 ALBUMS **\$5.95**
One Unbelievable Low Price

MAIL COUPON TODAY—Just \$5.95 For All 4 Albums

The Longines Symphonette Society

SYMPHONETTE SQUARE · LARCHMONT N. Y. 10538

Please send me the full 4-record volumes: REMEMBER THE GOLDEN DAYS OF RADIO (Vols. 1 & 2); THE YEARS TO REMEMBER and WAR OF THE WORLDS. I have enclosed \$5.95 for the complete 4-record library, and understand that if I am not satisfied, I may return the records within 10 days for a full refund.

Mr.
 Mrs. _____ (please print)
 Miss

Address _____

City _____

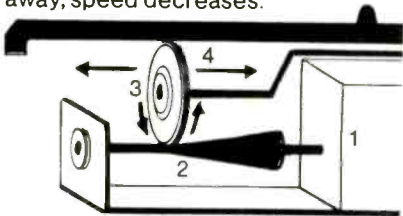
State _____ Zip _____

02 71690-008

The turntables with an infinite choice of speeds.

The variable control Lenco manual turntables offer an infinite selection of speed—a continuous sweep from 30 to 86 rpm. At the standard 16-2/3, 33-1/3, 45 and 78.26 rpm, there are click stops that can be precisely set or adjusted at any time.

Infinitely variable speed control from 30 to 86 rpm is accomplished by a unique motor and drive system. The 4-pole constant velocity motor (1) has conically shaped shaft (2) which contacts a rubber drive wheel (3). The speed control on the deck moves the drive wheel along the tapered shaft. The rim of the wheel makes contact with the underside of the turntable (4). As the wheel moves toward the center of the turntable, speed increases; as the wheel moves away, speed decreases.



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And at every one of these speeds, Swiss precision takes over. For example, the Lenco L-75's sleekly polished transcription tonearm shares



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The L-75 complete with handsome walnut base at \$99.50 offers professional quality and versatility but at



far less than studio-equipment prices. The B55 (lighter platter and an arm of almost equal specification) is only \$85.00 with base. Both are available now at your Benjamin/Lenco dealer. Benjamin Electronic Sound Corp. Farmingdale, N.Y. 11735, a division of Instrument Systems Corp.



Prices subject to change without notice.

Lenco turntables from Benjamin

pieces" and "truffles." Beethoven in particular was quite aware of the situation in Europe, and his music reflects his feelings. It is hardly dainty. With Mozart, the expression is more subtle, but it is still there. And more people knew Mozart's name while he was alive than you might imagine, Mr. Petzel, not to mention superstars such as Liszt, Mendelssohn, Haydn, and Paganini. But what difference does it make, anyway? Notoriety has nothing to do with quality, either in classical music or in rock. It took Mahler a long time to come into his own... the same holds true for B. B. King. As for today's composers, I will bet that the name of Aaron Copland, for example, will register as often with an average cross-sampling of people as will the name of Grace Slick. Insofar as present-day time capsules are concerned: yes, the Beatles and the Rolling Stones are going into them. So are Elliott Carter and Luciano Berio, not to mention Bernstein conducting Haydn. And please, Mr. Petzel, don't write off today's composers. They're much more relevant than you would think, if you'd just listen to them instead of accepting someone else's word for it. Finally, neither you nor I can predict the future. We don't know how we will be judged one or two hundred years from now musically. Maybe the Beatles will be completely forgotten, or maybe Stravinsky will be. But we don't know one way or the other, so let's not waste time guessing.

The first two paragraphs of this letter were written under the influence of Berio's *Laborintus II* and the last with the latest album from the Byrds. There is no reason why they can't co-exist peacefully.

Christopher Rouse
Baltimore, Md.

If Chuck Petzel's comments represent the majority viewpoint of "the people of the 1960s" then the barbarians may truly be said to be at the gates.

Mozart and Beethoven were writers of "dainty chamber pieces," symphonies, quartets, concertos, operas, and other "classical truffles." How could there be beauty, passion, truth, or even anger and ugly chords in their music? How can anyone fail to realize that Grace Slick is more important than Mozart? Mr. Petzel, the logician, proves it for us: Few people of the past knew Mozart existed even when he was alive, while millions today know Grace Slick and are familiar with her music. But when Mozart was alive there were no records, radio, and television. Who would know about the Beatles or Grace Slick if it weren't for contemporary media?

One thing we *do* know: Mozart, so little known then, survived to be recognized as a universal genius everywhere in the world. I wonder why, Mr. Petzel, I wonder why.

Sidney Marks
Brooklyn, N. Y.

To Rock or Not to Rock

Either your magazine should review rock music, or it should not. Presently it only pretends to do so by including a few rock albums each month in "The Lighter Side." Light music and rock—just the right kind of stuff to share space with *Follies* and others of that ilk. But at least these few albums receive reviews. Most—and this is fact, not contention—are shunted into a kiddie column called "In Brief."

The \$299 speaker for the man who is dying to spend over \$1000.

It's a familiar scenario.

Rich and idealistic audio perfectionist, his pockets bulging with large bills, sets forth to possess the ultimate loudspeaker and expenses be damned. Sees and listens to giant corner horns, full-range electrostatics, theater systems, wild hybrids with electronic crossovers. Suddenly realizes that a perfectly straightforward, not excessively large floor-standing system priced at \$279 sounds as good as, or better than, any of the exotics. Common sense prevails over conspicuous consumption; he buys the **Rectilinear III**; saves three fourths of his money.

It may sound like the fabrication of a Hollywood or Madison Avenue writer, but the substance of the story has been repeatedly validated by the equipment reviewers of leading hi-fi and other technical publications. (Reprints on request.)

The original **Rectilinear III**, at \$279, has only one small draw-

back from our hero's point of view. Its upright walnut cabinet looks handsome but simple, one might almost say austere. Its visual appeal is to the classicist rather than the romantic. And some of the richest audiophiles are incurable romantics.

So, for an extra \$20, we turned the **Rectilinear III** into a stunning lowboy and added a magnificent fretwork grille. In this \$299 version it has true visceral appeal, more like a luscious mistress than a handsome wife.

Of course, both versions are identical acoustically and electronically. Both are built around the same 12" woofer, 5" dual-cone midrange driver, two 2½"

tweeters and two 2" tweeters, and the same ingenious crossover network. Therefore, necessarily, both sound the same.

But the look of the \$299 lowboy makes it easier to forgive yourself that you didn't spend over \$1000.

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

Rectilinear III Lowboy



CIRCLE 61 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Space limitations, sure, but something is radically (or should I say conservatively) wrong when so many fine rock albums find themselves gathering critical dust in the coal bin. That's where I found The Rolling Stones's latest record, "Sticky Fingers" [August 1971]. All I learned from John Gabree's mention of it was that the album cover is "scatological" (what *will* those awful fellows do next: they need a good whuppin', music lessons, and respect for their betters), but that "most rock fans and all Stones fans will dig it." Gee. Wonder what Gabree thought of it?

Well, John, if I may be allowed to try a bit of that catchy slang you use with such gusto, I digged it. And recognized it as a distinguished musical effort. That most critics agree is not the point. Gabree should have articulated his view—if he had one.

Ronald Brown
Baltimore, Md.

A Ponselle Discography

Your readers may be interested in the recently published and first complete discography of soprano Rosa Ponselle which may be found in the Sir Thomas Beecham Society's publication, *Le Grand Baton*. The discography is in six parts: a) the Columbia records, 1919-23; b) the Victor acoustics, 1923-25; c) the Victor electrics, 1925-39; d) Villa Pace recordings, 1954; e) private recordings, 1950-58; and f) off-the-air recordings.

The bulk of the book is devoted to her career. Several congratulatory birthday letters from such artists (twenty-four in all) as Joan

Sutherland, Maria Callas, Geraldine Farrar, Tony Randall, Jack Benny, Rose Bampton, and Joan Crawford are printed for the first time.

Copies are \$5 from the Sir Thomas Beecham Society, Le Grand Baton, P. O. Box 6361, Cleveland, Ohio 44101.

Tom Villella
Brook Park, Ohio

Weingartner, Szell, and Schumann

In reference to the Szell versions of the Schumann symphonies as discussed by Philip Hart (review of the Solti set, April 1971) and Robert D. Levin ["Letters," August 1971], Mr. Levin is quite correct when he states that "conscientious comparison with scores yields the details of an obviously sophisticated re-orchestration" in the performances of the Schumann symphonies by George Szell. Mr. Levin goes on to say that "the Szell versions . . . must not be confused with Schumann's." Actually, the real creator of the "Szell versions" was Felix Weingartner.

A few years ago I came to possess a little-known volume by Felix Weingartner, a sequel to his famous treatise on the Beethoven symphonies, in which he offers his suggestions for the performance of the symphonies of Schubert and Schumann (*Ratschläge für Aufführungen klassischer Symphonien, Band II: Schubert und Schumann*, Breitkopf & Härtel, 1918; I also own a copy of the third volume in this series, which deals with the last three symphonies of Mozart). The changes and alterations he suggests for the Schumann sym-

phonies are quite drastic compared to those he recommends for the symphonies of Schubert, Beethoven, and Mozart, ranging from subtle modification of tempos and dynamics to complete rescoring of passages as long as five full pages. I don't want to discuss the aesthetic morality of such large-scale revisions, but I would like to point out that George Szell adopted virtually all of Weingartner's suggestions.

Richard R. Krueger
Seattle, Wash.

Who Needs Furtwängler?

I have been reading HIGH FIDELITY since the very first issue and I have noticed a grave deterioration in the type of records reviewed (classical). Every month there are many records released that are never reviewed and those that are reviewed usually are of no interest *whatsoever* to the majority of HIGH FIDELITY's readers. Who cares about the Furtwängler Beethoven Sixth Symphony on Turnabout? (Answer: only a handful of Furtwängler fans!) Who cares about Berwald's septet? (Only a handful!) Who cares about Brant's *Kingdom Come*? (Nobody!) Who cares about Crumb's *Ancient Voices of Children*? Who cares (two useless reviews) about Druckman? Who cares about Gibbons? Who cares about Henze? (You are obviously taken with Henze—nobody else is!) Why review *Peter and the Wolf* when there are countless other more worthy London Stereo Treasury Series records to choose from? Who in heck cares about Slonimsky? Never heard of him.

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"The sound of the Standard SR-T178DK was unusually good—one of the best of this group of decks."

"The frequency response of the SR-T178DK with 3M Type 271 tape was flatter than average."

"The low-frequency response was better than that of any of the other decks."

"The quiet background came surprisingly close to matching that of the Dolby machines."

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CIRCLE 71 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

If you have a power and performance fetish - cater to it.

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The Pioneer SA-1000 is the most advanced integrated stereo amplifier available. It offers refinements and features not found in any other stereo component of its type. With two power supplies, high power output is maintained with excellent stability. New direct coupled circuitry provides an extremely wide frequency response. With music power at 170 watts IHF (57+57 watts RMS, at 8 ohms, both channels operating) there's limitless power to drive two pairs of low efficiency speaker

systems. Yet there's never any fear of overheating speaker voice coils with the advanced protector circuit. Harmonic distortion is less than 0.3%. The SA-1000 is sensibly priced at \$299.95. And Pioneer guarantees that the unit you buy will meet or exceed these specs for a year or it will be replaced free.

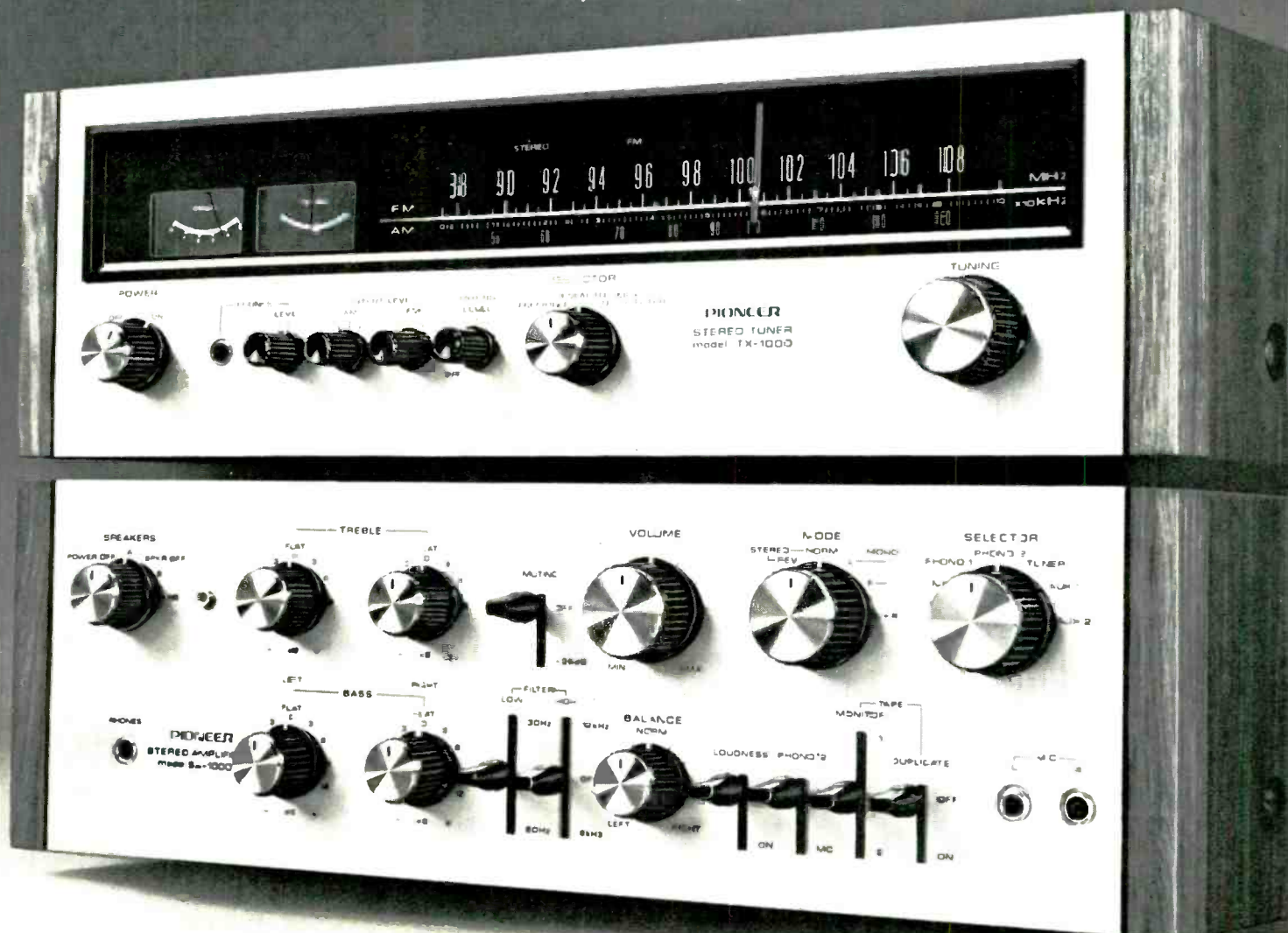
For the TX-1000 AM-FM stereo tuner, overcrowded or weak FM signals are no challenge. It's designed to deliver optimum reception. An excellent 1.7µV sensitivity is achieved with four FET's and two RF stages in the front end. Selectivity is a highly effective 70dB with a 1.5dB capture ratio due to four IC's plus crystal and IC filters in the IF section. Large twin tuning meters assure minimum noise and

maximum stereo separation. Unlike conventional tuners, you can plug in stereo headphones since the TX-1000 has its own built-in amp. At \$279.95, it's hard to find a tuner that approaches it for better reception and convenience features. And for power hungry hi-fi buffs who love records and tapes and rarely use the FM bands, two other matching Pioneer tuners are available with lower prices.

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CIRCLE 34 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

This sample can be expanded threefold. You people constantly review esoterica that only a fraction of your reading public knows or cares about.

Ted Meyer
Bahama, N.C.

Paderewski and Rachmaninoff

When Earl Wild's record of Paderewski's Piano Concerto came out in this country a few months ago, we were all thrilled by it—nobody seemed to mind Wild's rather free and easy way with the letter of the score. Now along comes Harris Goldsmith [July 1971]—whose reviews of piano recordings are the most helpful I have ever read whether I agree with him or not—and tells us that Wild shouldn't have touched up the score because it wasn't necessary!

Well, perhaps not, but such a procedure is authentically in the Romantic spirit: Earl Wild isn't one of your modern atrophied analysts of the keyboard, but a *real* pianist with guts and fire in his belly. His old-style virtuosity, warmth, and vitality are a godsend in this clinical age. It seems to me, therefore, that Mr. Goldsmith is on thin ground when he chides Wild for touching up Paderewski's music. Mr. Goldsmith knows as well as I do that Paderewski himself was no saint when it came to other people's scores: look at what he did to Chopin's C sharp minor waltz or to Liszt's F minor study. "Why," Earl Wild might well ask, "shouldn't I do to Paderewski what he did to other composers?" In my view Wild, far from reducing Paderewski's music "to a kind of anonymity," gives it far greater strength of character—though Mr. Goldsmith will probably kick me in the teeth for saying so!

Every record I have heard of Earl Wild's, whether of Liszt, Rachmaninoff, Scharwenka, or Paderewski, has struck me as "the real thing": Romantic piano playing as it should be.

Keith Fagan
Kent, England

Down with the Peer Gynt Suites

I read that the film *Song of Norway* has created a new popular interest in the music of Grieg. I hope this will mean the purchase and playing of his incidental music for Ibsen's *Peer Gynt*, of which there is only one *real* recording, that by Barbirolli and the Hallé Orchestra, with Patricia Clark, Sheila Armstrong, and the Ambrosian Singers. I also hope that the numerous records of the regrettable *Peer Gynt* Suites (arranged in undramatic order by Grieg under the delusion that Ibsen would never be heard of outside of Norway) will be allowed to drop out of the catalogues into deserved oblivion.

Norman Arlington
St. Petersburg, Fla.

Department of Amplification

In his review of the new Columbia recording of Stravinsky's *Dances Concertantes* [August 1971], David Hamilton refers to a repeat of seventeen measures beginning at No. 153 in the score and wonders if it is a revision or a tape-editing slip.

The same repetition occurs in Stravinsky's
Continued on page 20

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CIRCLE 73 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



Introducing the Heathkit

The new Heathkit AR-1500 Stereo Receiver succeeds our AR-15. But the AR-1500 is no facelift. It embodies substantial improvements in every major area of the circuitry — resulting in more pure power, greater FM and AM selectivity and sensitivity, and a much easier kit to build. And in 1967 when we introduced what was rightfully called "the world's most advanced receiver", the technology somewhat overshadowed the fact that the AR-15 was probably the best value in audio. The new AR-1500, still at 349.95, is an even better buy!

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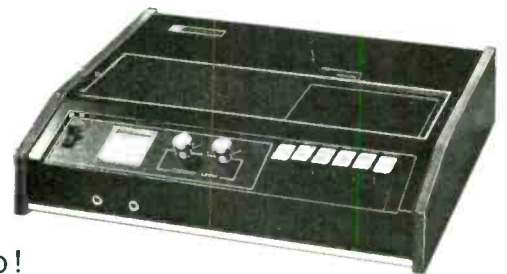
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AR-1500 Stereo Receiver

load). **Continuous Power Output per Channel:** 60 watts (8 ohm load)*; 100 watts (4 ohm load); 40 watts (16 ohm load). **Power Bandwidth for Constant .25% Total Harmonic Distortion:** Less than 8 Hz to greater than 30 kHz.* **Frequency Response (1 watt level):** -1 dB, 7 Hz to 80 kHz; -3 dB, less than 5 Hz to 120 kHz. **Harmonic Distortion:** Less than 0.25% from 20 Hz to 20 kHz at 60 watts output; less than 0.1% at 1000 Hz with 1 watt output. **Intermodulation Distortion:** Less than 0.1% with 60 watts output, using 60 and 6,000 Hz mixed 4:1; less than 0.1% at 1 watt output. **Damping Factor:** Greater than 60. **Input Sensitivity:** Phono, 1.8 millivolts; Tape, 140 millivolts; Aux, 140 millivolts; Tape Mon, 140 millivolts. Input sensitivity is the rms input voltage needed to obtain 60 watts of output power per channel into 8 ohm loads. **Input Overload:** Phono, 145 millivolts; Tape, greater than 10 volts; Aux, greater than 10 volts; Tape Mon, greater than 10 volts. Overload measurements were made using the input level controls. **Hum and Noise:** Phono (10 millivolt reference), -63 dB. Tape and Aux (0.25 volt reference), -75 dB. Volume control in minimum position, -90 dB referred to rated output. **Channel Separation:** Phono, 55 dB; Tape and Aux, 55 dB or greater. **Output Impedance (each channel):** 4 ohm through 16 ohms. **Tape Output Impedance:** Approximately 50 ohms. **Input Impedance:** Phono, 49 k ohm (RIAA** Equalized); Aux, Tape, and Tape Mon, 100 k ohms. **Tape Output:** Tape or Aux inputs, 0.9 volt output with 0.2 volt input. **OPERATIONAL CONTROLS AND SWITCHES — AM FM Tuning:** 535 to 1620 kHz for AM and 88 to 108 MHz for FM. **Power Switch:** Applies or removes all power to the internal circuitry of the receiver. **Speaker Switches:** These switches select either or both speaker systems, or disconnect both systems for private headphone listening. **Source Switches:** Tape, Aux, Phono, AM, FM Stereo, and FM Auto. **Tape Mon Switch:** Makes it possible to monitor the source signal or recorded signal while recording on tape. **Mono Switch:** Selects the mode of operation of the receiver; monophonic or stereo. **Blend Switch:** Reduces the high frequency noise without reducing the frequency response (high frequency stereo separation may be reduced). **Loudness Switch:** Compensates for the nonlinear frequency-versus-volume characteristics of the human ear at low listening levels. **Tone Flat Switch:** Bypasses the tone controls and provides flat amplifier response: (Loudness Switch in off position.) **Volume Control:** Dual tandem control provides simultaneous adjustment of both channels. **Bass Control:** Dual tandem control. Full clockwise provides 15 dB boost at 20 Hz. Full counterclockwise provides 18 dB cut at 20 Hz. **Treble Control:** Dual tandem control. Fully clockwise provides 14 dB boost at 20 kHz. Fully counterclockwise provides 15 dB cut at 20 kHz. **Balance Control:** Dual tandem control balances the right and left channels for equal sound output from the speakers. **GENERAL — AC Outlet Sockets:** Two, located on rear chassis apron for powering accessory equipment. One switched (240 watts maximum), and one unswitched (240 watts maximum). **Power Requirements:** 120 or 240 volts 50/60 Hz AC. 40 watts idling (zero output) and 355 watts at full output, with no load on accessory outlets. **Dimensions:** Overall — 18½" W x 5½" H x 13¾" D. **Mounting:** ARA-1500-1 cabinet or custom mounting.

*Rated IHF (Institute of High Fidelity) Standards.

**Rated RIAA (Record Industry Association of America).



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Continued from page 14

long-deleted RCA Victor recording (LM 1075), so it would appear to be a revision which, for some reason, has never found its way into the printed score. A similar instance is in the finale of the *Dumbarton Oaks* concerto as heard on Columbia ML 6048.

John Canarina
Tuckahoe, N. Y.

Mr. Hamilton replies: *Quite so. Shortly after I turned in the review, Professor Claudio Spies, a consummately well-informed Stravinskian, assured me of the repeat's authenticity. The next move is up to the publishers, I guess.*

New to the Field

Apparently Burton A. Spielman's Acoustic Research turntable ["Letters," August 1971] has given him no cause for complaint for several years now. Roderick S. Oakley, Jr., whom Mr. Spielman mentions as being our field service engineer, left AR in September 1968. Bill Eagar is now the man in charge of customer problems.

Jason Farrow
Acoustic Research, Inc.
Cambridge, Mass.

Paray as Musical Activist

In his otherwise fascinating article "The Musician as Activist" [July 1971], William Zakariassen failed to mention Paul Paray's courageous stand against the Nazis during the German occupation of France. Paray, a Roman Catholic, refused to submit a list of

the Jewish musicians in his orchestra when asked to do so. When the Nazis wanted to change the name of the Colonne Orchestra because its founder, Edouard Colonne, was a Jew (even though he had then been dead for thirty years!), Paray would not allow the orchestra to be renamed for himself and resigned his post as conductor.

In 1942, after a concert of German music was presented in Lyons as a propaganda measure, Paray and his wife, Yolanda, both members of the French resistance movement, organized a concert by French musicians in the same hall and included on the program *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* by the Jewish composer Paul Dukas. Then, in an auditorium filled with Nazi soldiers, Paray asked the audience to join him in what must have been a truly stirring rendition of *La Marseillaise*.

Following the liberation, when Paray returned from voluntary exile in Monte Carlo, he was given a hero's welcome; and in 1950 he was elected Membre de l'Institut, an honor equivalent to our Hall of Fame. Surely Paul Paray should be listed alongside Casals and Toscanini as an artist whose stand against tyranny is an inspiration to free men everywhere.

Steven J. Haller
Detroit, Mich.

A Stamp for Szigeti?

In the July issue of HIGH FIDELITY, the renowned violinist, Joseph Szigeti, writes suggesting that Austria might issue a stamp in honor of the late Fritz Kreisler. In the same letter he mentions the contributions of Caruso,

Elman, and Backhaus to the emergence of the gramophone as a major factor in music in this century.

With characteristic modesty, Mr. Szigeti does not mention his own unforgettable historical contributions. Szigeti is unquestionably one of the great pioneers in the development of the medium. Let it not be forgotten that his performances of the Bach Sonatas in G minor and in A minor for solo violin were the first recordings to be issued in the Columbia Masterworks series (Sets X-1 and X-2); that he was the first to record much of the important music of Bartók, Bloch, Cowell, Ives, Prokofiev, and Stravinsky. His recordings, in fact, have set a standard by which all others are measured.

On September 5, 1972, Joseph Szigeti celebrates his eightieth birthday. Surely, plans should now be under way to mark this occasion with suitable reissues of his recordings. And why not a bonus of an interview with the most articulate violinist of our time?

Should the recording industry fail to mark this milestone in the life of one of its own great pioneers, it will be guilty of a callousness that is without pardon.

Ronald C. MacDonald
Fredericton, N.B.
Canada

Schreker's Records Wanted

In his book *Modern Music* (Philosophical Library, 1946) Max Graf wrote: "Lustre, color, ornamental splendor radiate from the music of Franz Schreker." Graf compares Schreker's music to the art of Baudelaire, Rimbaud, and

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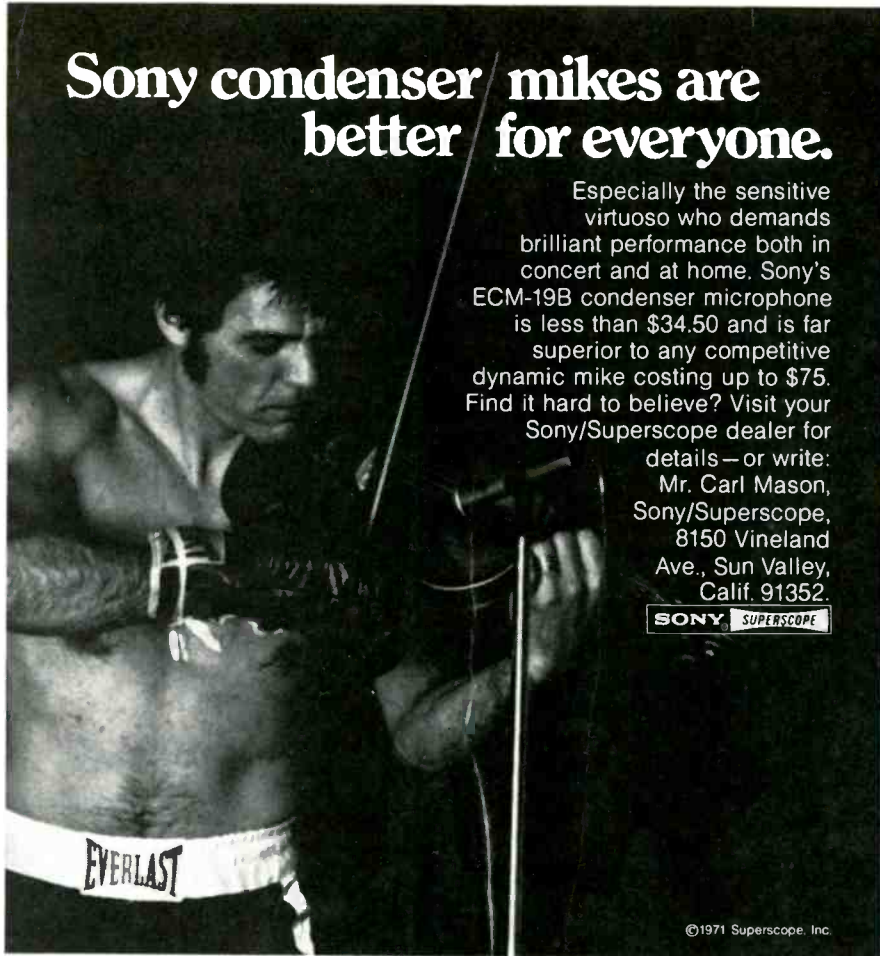
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CIRCLE 58 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Gautier and says that his orchestra, which "shimmers like silk and satin," holds its own "even next to the orchestras of Strauss and Debussy."

Born in 1878, Schreker wrote at least four operas between 1912 and 1920, apparently produced in Germany. According to *A Musical Companion*, they were "a strange mixture of unbridled eroticism and sensationalism"; their composer "absorbed every modern technique of his day, but he was not gifted with genuine musical invention."

So far as I can discover from American catalogues, not a single note of Schreker's music has ever been recorded, which puts him in the class of Havergal Brian and Mortimer Wilson.

George R. Weaver
St. Petersburg, Fla.

Egged-On Egmont

I generally agree with David Hamilton's assessment of George Szell's *Egmont* recording [February 1971]. However, I disagree with his evaluation of the over-all effect of Wussow's "variety of hysterical ranting" in the final monologue.

I used this particular recording, among others, to illustrate a lecture I recently gave. These college students were spellbound by the music and literally on the edge of their chairs during the final monologue—despite the fact that most of them could not understand German. They became so involved with Wussow's performance that when his final words gave way to the *Victory Symphony*, several applauded and one raised his arm straight into the air—fist clenched—and kept it there until the music ended.

These students found the performance not only enjoyable but relevant. Concerning Wussow's performance, several weeks after the lecture one student commented, "That was the damn most exciting thing I ever heard!" I concur with that statement, at least to this degree: the Szell/Vienna Philharmonic collaboration is by far the most exciting *Egmont* on record, achieving its impact, in part, because of Wussow's intense and dramatic reading.

Peter M. Hirsch
Associate Dean, Institutional Research
Florissant Valley Community College
St. Louis, Mo.

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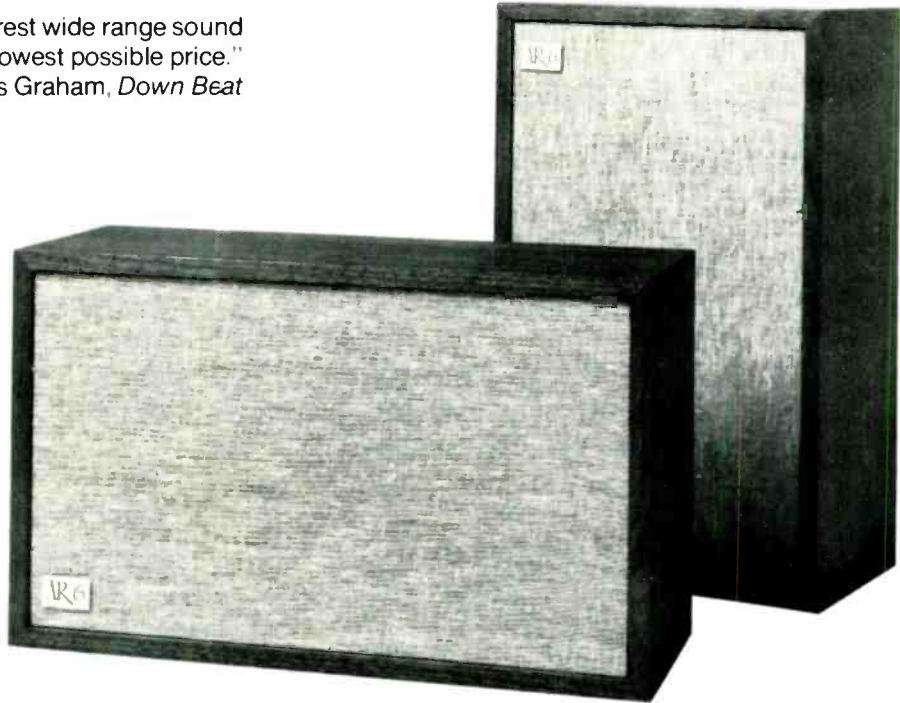
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HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

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Hirsch-Houck Laboratories, *Stereo Review*

"I am unable to get over the sheer quality represented by the AR-6. To put my wonderment in perspective, perhaps the most telling thing I could add is that I never expected to be saying of any speaker in this price range that it deserves only the finest possible associated components. The AR-6 *does*, and that says a great deal about this product."

Larry Zide, *The American Record Guide*

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Acoustic Research, Inc.

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Some Clear Information from Advent on Cassettes

For more than two years, we at Advent have tied our company's future to helping establish a new level of performance in cassette recording—one that would put the sound quality of cassettes on at least par with the best present stereo records. Since we have done a good deal more toward this goal, quite frankly, than any other audio manufacturer, we feel we can and should provide you, the prospective buyer, with some very clear information on the present state of cassette recording.

Here, then, are questions and answers that we believe will provide the information you need on cassettes:

How good a recording can I make on a cassette?

With the best present cassette decks, employing both the Dolby System® and chromium-dioxide (Crolyn®) tape to fullest advantage, you can now expect record-playback performance that is actually in excess of what you will need to record the best records and broadcasts. You will not hear *any* significant difference—in frequency range, clarity, and noise level—between the original source and the cassette copy. Only live recording with high-grade professional microphones will explore the full quality now available in the best cassette recorders.

How good are commercial cassette recordings?

The majority of cassette releases you are likely to encounter in a store right now are still not impressive. But most Dolbyized releases, provided they are made from high-quality, quiet master recordings and played back on a deck equipped with the Dolby System, are just as pleasing in overall listening quality as their disc equivalents. (A given record may win in one department of performance, the cassette in another, but things are substantially the same for the listener and his overall enjoyment.) Cassettes, we are convinced, *can* be even better than records. More on that in a moment.

How many Dolbyized releases can I count on in the reasonable future?

It's hard right now to spot the few Dolbyized releases in a sea of older-style cassettes, but there will be a really good choice before very long and an interesting variety as early as this Christmas. The list of labels now Dolbyizing cassette releases includes Ampex, Columbia, London, The Musical Heritage Society, Precision Tapes, and Vox, and the releases range from Mahler's Ninth to the latest entry from The Firesign Theater. And then there will be us.

Is Advent going into the pre-recorded tape business?

It looks that way. We plan to issue a first-class library of Dolbyized cassette releases on chromium-dioxide tape, and to do so pretty quickly. Chromium-dioxide tape is, we are sure, the final step necessary for cassette releases that in many cases should clearly exceed the quality of disc records, especially in the absence of the rumble, echo and mold-grain noise that clouds the sound quality of many discs. Something might come up to slow us down, but right now we plan to be on the market before the end of 1971 with cassette releases of the highest quality obtainable. We think they will be ear-openers.

Does chromium-dioxide make all that much difference?

Absolutely. Other new formulations for cassette tapes are clearly very good, but Crolyn appears to be the critical difference between making cassette releases as good as records and making cassettes that are preferable to records. Its combination of great signal-handling capacity and increasing sensitivity at high frequencies is ideal for cassettes, and while its use in home recording is important enough in itself, its potential for commercial releases would be almost criminal not to use properly. As just noted, we intend to use it properly.

Does Crolyn tape require a special machine?

Yes. To take advantage of its special properties, Crolyn requires a change from the conventional recording bias for cassettes, and several recorders now provide a switch to choose between Crolyn and conventional tape formulations. It's worth stressing, though, that the Crolyn characteristic we chose in the Advent 200 and 201 is distinctly different from that of other cassette decks. The usual characteristic simply exploits Crolyn's ability to absorb high signal levels. Our approach provides special equalization not only for recording

but also for playback, and it yields what we believe is an optimum combination of maximum high-frequency response with minimal noise. Other manufacturers are free to use our equalization characteristic, and we hope they will. For now, however, cassette decks made by Advent are the only ones we think yield the full benefit of chromium-dioxide tape.

What makes a really good cassette recorder?

Aside from the use of the Dolby System and Crolyn tape, the basic requirements are good low-noise electronics, proper magnetic heads (of a gap length that provides the optimum combination of high-density recording and low-noise playback) and a transport mechanism that treats cassette recording fully as seriously as open-reel recording. Before the Dolby System helped make wide-range cassette recording feasible, there wasn't much incentive for a top-quality cassette transport mechanism, and most present machines still use lightweight mechanisms that aren't very promising for continued performance over the long haul. But we and others now have rugged, really reliable mechanisms that minimize the eccentricities of cassettes themselves and should go on for years under very heavy use. We also expect outstanding performance and longevity from a new magnetic head first used in our Model 201.

Are cassettes as long-lived and damage-proof as they are supposed to be?

In essence, yes. Cassettes show every sign of outlasting records in audibly undegraded form and should be really immune to the accidental damage — from kids, dogs, and casual listeners — that plagues records. For all intents and purposes, and given reasonable care, they can last pretty near forever in excellent shape. The weakest point in cassettes remains the actual plastic cassette mechanism, which calls for manufacture of highest precision. Some brands of cassettes still jam because of inattention to their role as mini-mechanisms, but the best brands are both very good and improving very quickly. The growing number of ambitious cassette machines is certain to bring further improvements in the cassette itself.

Is cassette recording all that enjoyable?

Better than that. From our own experience, cassettes leave both records and open-reel tapes far behind in all the respects that determine whether something is fun to do. They are wonderfully easy to handle, wonderfully suited to the casual life most of us lead, and wonderfully simple in a way no other medium is. If you buy a really good cassette recorder, you will *use* it. And enjoy it constantly.



At the moment, we at Advent manufacture one highest-quality cassette tape deck, the Model 201, which retails for \$280 and is well worth it. We also market DuPont's Crolyn tape under our own Advocate label in blank cassettes, and plan to have pre-recorded releases on Crolyn available very soon. Finally, we manufacture two Noise Reduction Units that can add the Dolby System to existing cassette machines. Any of these products will indicate, we think, the seriousness with which we take cassette recording and our ability to make the right choices in design for use by real people in real situations. We hope you will listen at your nearest Advent Dealer to what we have now, and that you will keep your eyes and ears out for our line of pre-recorded cassettes.

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CIRCLE 69 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

behind the scenes

Anthony Crickmay



A glowing and intense Janet Baker as Diana; Peter Gottlieb as Mercury. Above: Hugues Cuenod, who sings the faun—a tour de force of vocal humor.

La Calisto, Diana, and the Oldest Nymph in the Business

LONDON

Janet Baker, alias the Goddess Diana, grins broadly. Her godly honor is being defended vigorously by the oldest nymph in the business, none other than Hugues Cuenod, tall and storklike—except that storks don't usually wear crimson pull-overs. For that matter neither does Diana wear a severe black dress, but this is the recording session for *La Calisto*, the second opera by Francesco Cavalli to be adapted for Glyndebourne by Raymond Leppard, and one which turned out to be an even more striking runaway success than the earlier *L'Ormindo* production.

Janet Baker, glowing and intense, provided a principal reason for that success; Hugues Cuenod, now sixty-nine and still in trumpet-firm voice, provided a powerful subsidiary one; and Cavalli's score, enhanced by a couple of tenderly serious arias out of another opera, provided the most powerful reason of all. When *La Calisto* was first heard at Glyndebourne last season (its first known performance since 1651), the rival record companies vied for the recording rights. Finally EMI (who has Janet Baker, the production's essential ingredient, under exclusive contract) opted out, leaving the ground free for Argo, the autonomous subsidiary of Decca, which had such success recording Leppard's earlier Cavalli confection.

Here's Richness. Leppard has come under fire from some of Britain's severer academics for his editorial emendations, and a couple of days before I went down to Glyndebourne for the recording session one of the critics of the *Times*, commenting on the riotously received Proms performance of the opera, objected to Leppard's five-part string harmony when Cavalli was content with three-part. I teased Leppard about it. He thrust a score under my nose—good, rich five-part harmony, he pointed out, and every note of it Cavalli's.

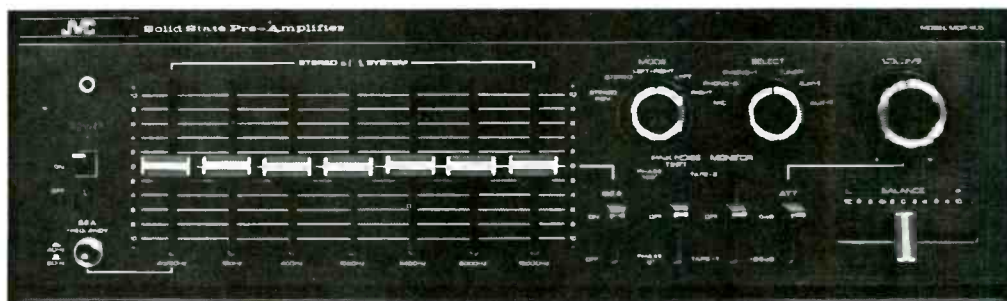
Certainly the richness of texture is, if anything, even more remarkable here than in *L'Ormindo*, and the technicians, guided by Decca's doyen engineer, Kenneth Wilkinson, reproduced it with loving care. As with *L'Ormindo*, they firmly turned down the idea of taping the opera in the actual opera house, which has a dry acoustic difficult for recording. So once again they set up shop in the organ room, the principal domestic room of the country home which John Christie used as the base for his opera house. Long before the present facilities were built, this organ room saw the first Glyndebourne opera performance: Christie with his wife, Audrey Mildmay, and a group of friends and colleagues gave a make-shift performance of Act II of Wagner's *Die Meistersinger* (Christie was such a dedicated Wagnerian that it was a won-

CIRCLE 44 ON READER-SERVICE CARD →

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SPECIFICATIONS 5110/MCP-105E

Inputs: PHONO 1, PHONO 2, MIC, TUNER, AUX 1, AUX 2, TAPE PLAY 1, TAPE PLAY 2
Outputs: PRE OUT 1, PRE OUT 2, REC. OUT 1, REC. OUT 2
Output Level: 0-5 V adjustable
Output Impedance: REC. OUT 0.5K Ω at 1V output, REC. OUT 12K Ω at 300mV DIN 80K Ω at 30mV
Frequency Response: MIC, AUX 18Hz - 5.1KHz \pm 0.5dB
PHONO RIAA \pm 0.5dB

THD: Less than 0.03% at 1V 1KHz
IM Distortion: Less than 0.1% at 1V 1KHz
Signal to Noise Ratio: PHONO 60dB, MIC 65dB, AUX 100dB
S.E.A. Center Frequency: 40/60Hz, 50Hz, 400Hz, 1KHz, 2.4KHz, 6KHz, 15KHz
Power Source: AC 100V, 120V, 220V, 240V 50/60 Hz selectable.
Dimensions: 5-2/8" (H) 16-15/16" (W), 11-3/8" (D)

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der he did not manage to include Wagner in the repertory later, even in this tiny auditorium).

For the recording of *L'Ormindo* they took up all the carpets and removed the comfortable padded furniture, but left the family oil paintings and the two large photographs—one on top of each loud-speaker—of Christie himself and Audrey Mildmay. It was quite a problem fitting in all the necessary players, for though the string section (from the London Philharmonic) is limited, Leppard uses the most lavish array of continuo instruments—a semicircle of lutes, a harp, a couple of harpsichords. One of the latter had to be squeezed into the great

inglenook fireplace, the other into the great Elizabethan bow window opposite. Even so, the sound was resonant, and the singers, used to the drier acoustics of the opera house, had no difficulty in producing an abundance of their sweetest vocal tones.

The "Reluctant" Nymph. The cast had every reason to be a bit weary on the first day of recording: not only had there been the exhausting Proms performance, but a performance for BBC television and two day-long rehearsals for the recording session itself. For economy's sake (sessions away from London are naturally more expensive what with

accommodation and/or traveling problems), the entire project was squeezed into eight sessions on only four days, which made it vital that no one should be off-color. Cuenod was a little apprehensive after his active week. He had no need to be. His voice was so clarion that it tore through the texture each time his role of nymph required him to interrupt amorous doings. In the stage performance his very appearance in a "drag" role is comic. For the microphones he had to act with his voice even more positively than usual, and the result was a tour de force of vocal humor. Proudly, Cuenod reported that he was leaving for home (Switzerland) the next day, and the following week would be starting work on the Decca/London sessions for *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* in Geneva with Joan Sutherland. Cuenod will be taking the four buffo tenor parts.

Only once did Cuenod become slightly rattled at the session I attended. In the middle of one of his passionate outbursts, he came to the words "*Voglio, voglio*" ("I want, I want"), then had a blackout. "*Voglio* I don't know what!" It was a bit of comic timing as perfect as anything pre-arranged. There is one scene in the opera where an audio equivalent will be virtually impossible: Here the aged nymph is finally seduced by one of Bacchus' more lecherous fauns, and as she is carried off, visibly before the audience, she gives up the struggle and smiles broadly. Small wonder that Raymond Leppard points out that *La Calisto*, even more than *L'Ormindo*, represents the permissive society of the 1650s, a work that could hardly have been revived until our latest permissive age.

Choral Music in the Maltings. Kenneth Wilkinson of Decca was also the principal engineer for another major project outside London, this time at Aldeburgh's Maltings, where Benjamin Britten conducted Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius* with Peter Pears in the title role. It is only three years since Pears sang Gerontius for the first time in a memorable television production conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. That experience led Pears to suggest that Britten should conduct the piece at the Aldeburgh Festival, and he agreed. The recording, unlike the live performance (which used the amateur choir and orchestra of the Cambridge University Musical Society), had a fully professional orchestra, the London Symphony and LSO Choir. This was the first time that such massive choral and orchestral sound had been recorded at the Maltings. Even a small orchestra can be made to sound massive in so richly resonant an auditorium. The engineers were worried that the sound would be too big to cope with, but in the event, as previously, the Maltings acoustics proved wonderfully adaptable. The other solo-

Continued on page 30



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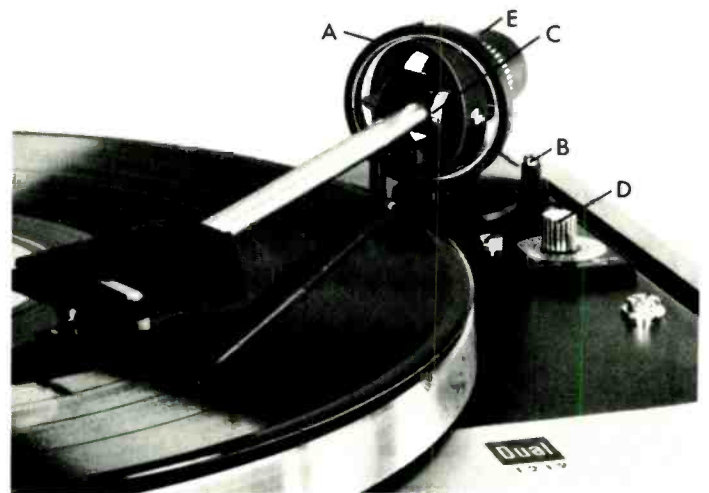
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The SL-8E

The ST-4

Here's What the Experts Say

Julian Hirsch
Stereo Review Magazine

It is probably the closest approach to perfection in a record-playing arm that has appeared to date

Tracking-angle error is essentially non-existent over the entire record surface, and distortion arising from this source is eliminated. Perhaps even more significant is the complete absence of "skating force" (an inherent problem with conventional pivoted tone arms), which eliminates the need for any form of anti-skating compensation

In our tests, the arm of the Rabco ST-4 worked exactly as intended. Both output channels of the phono cartridge had identical waveforms when playing very high-velocity test records (the true criterion for correct adjustment of the anti-skating compensation of a pivoted arm), which also confirmed the absence of significant lateral arm friction

The center of the rotating arm shaft (effectively the vertical-pivot axis of the arm) is almost exactly in the plane of the stylus and record, minimizing warp wow

In our experience the arm certainly is as good as anything we have used, and we never found a trace of degradation, noise, or any undesirable effect that might have been attributable to its unique design

In using the ST-4 we found that the arm mass was so low that it would track severely warped records without losing contact with the grooves. In this respect, it was better than practically all pivoted arms we have used, and almost as good as the Rabco SL-8 arm which is outstanding in this test

The mechanical servo-drive system of the ST-4 tone arm is so simple that one's reaction is likely to be "Why didn't someone think of that before?"

The ST-4 is not critical with respect to leveling; in fact we operated it at angles as great as 15° to the horizontal with no decided change in its performance

Gordon Holt
Stereophile

A beautifully designed and constructed arm to gladden the heart of any audio perfectionist

In short we don't expect to see this arm obsoleted for some years to come, and have adopted it as our new standard for subjective testing of universal type cartridges

Norman Eisenberg
High Fidelity Magazine

There is no doubt that this type of tracking does reduce playback distortion and can extend the life expectancy of both record and stylus

ARLL rumble figure way way down at -61 dB (this beats any of the popular automatics we've tested and puts the ST-4 in the top manual class). Flutter averaged a negligible 0.07 per cent.

As a manual record-playing ensemble it is at least as good as, and in some important ways better than, anything hitherto offered

If ever a product could be characterized as "state of the art" the new Rabco arm is it. In fact, you might even call it ahead of the state of the art

It moves a pickup across a record in a true radius, with virtually no friction, negligible resonance effects, unprecedented low tracking force, no skating effects, minimum groove wear, and minimum stylus wear

It is extremely well engineered.

After months of continuous use the SL-8 remains as responsive and fool-proof as when first installed

Audio Magazine

Without question, the Rabco arm does what it is supposed to do, and does it nicely

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CIRCLE 59 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Continued from page 28

ists are Yvonne Minton and John Shirley-Quirk.

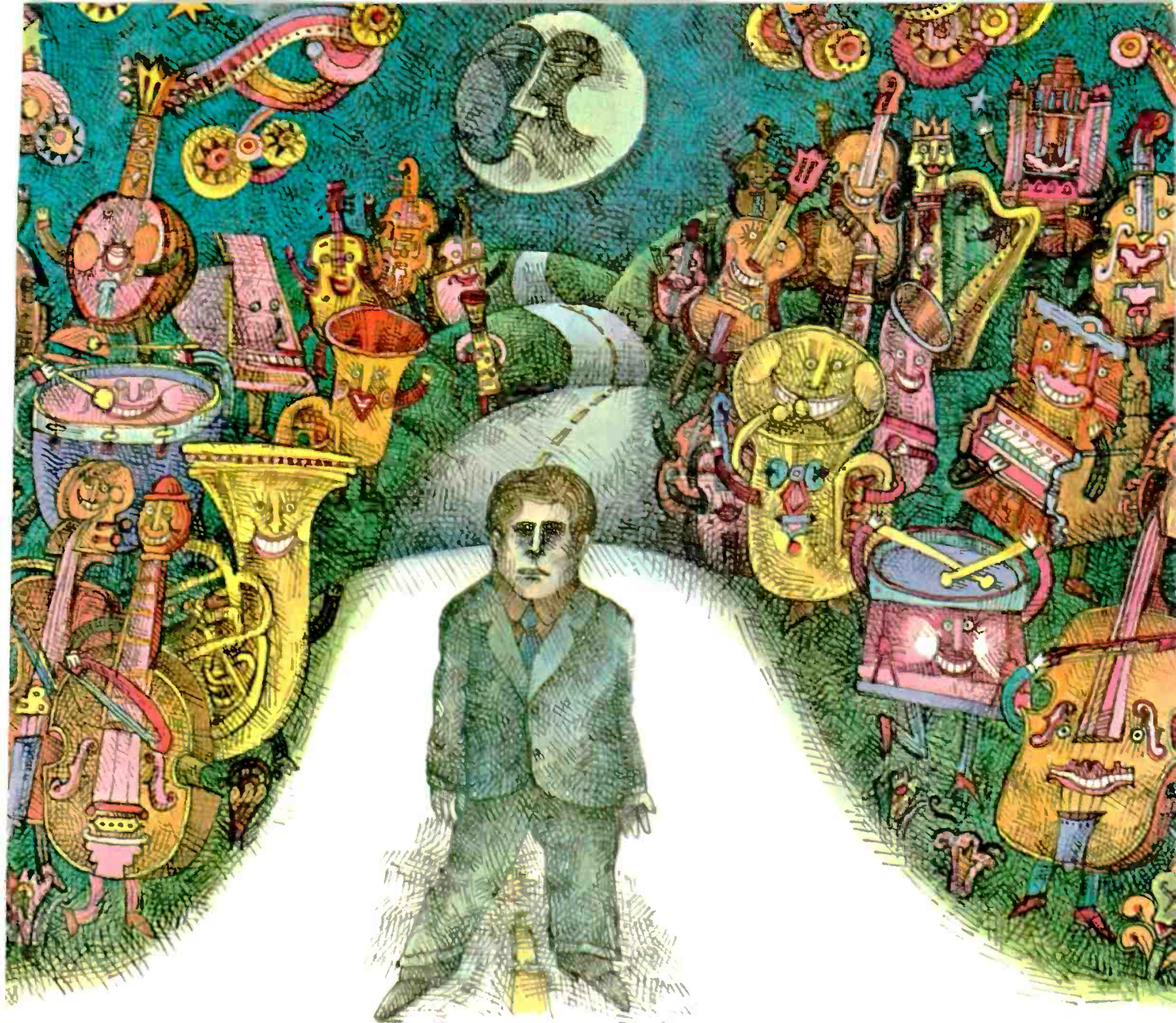
Meanwhile Daniel Barenboim was recording the other choral work that Britten had illuminated at the Aldeburgh Festival, Mozart's Requiem. The English Chamber Orchestra (Britten's ensemble as well as Barenboim's) took part with the John Alldis Choir, which in the rich-sounding church that EMI has found in South London at Tooting Graveney was made to seem bigger than it actually was. The quartet of soloists was impressive: the talented young soprano, Sheila Armstrong, joined by Janet Baker, Nicolai Gedda, and Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau. Fischer-Dieskau resists any idea of singing the part in public—the bass tessitura is too taxing—but for a recording he had no such qualms. Barenboim's feeling about the Requiem is that too often the basic pulse is allowed to stay the same through many movements and that this can grow wearisome. For his performance he took the *Dies Irae* unusually fast, almost one beat to a bar. Barenboim has also been busy with other Mozart sessions this summer—completing his cycle of the late symphonies with the ECO (Nos. 29, 30, and 34) and accompanying Fischer-Dieskau at the piano in a collection of Mozart songs.

Sills and Caballé. A more incongruous work taped in the church in Tooting Graveney was Verdi's *La Traviata* with Beverly Sills singing Violetta. The recording manager this time was one of the regular EMI team, Christopher Bishop, who found the prima donna wonderfully easy and helpful to work with. He was much impressed too with the work of Aldo Ceccato, who was conducting the Royal Philharmonic. Nicolai Gedda is the Alfredo, Rolando Panerai is Germont. As in the Sutherland and Caballé versions an absolutely complete text was used.

Caballé herself has been busy recording a number of operas, including *Pagliacci* for RCA with Placido Domingo and Sherrill Milnes and the LSO conducted by Nello Santi. Santi used to have a reputation for being temperamental (he was involved in a famous clash with Sutherland in Venice), and Mme. Caballé is not generally regarded as the easiest soprano in the world. But to the amazement of some and the relief of others, the sessions went amazingly smoothly; at the session I attended, Mme. Caballé had been placed centrally on the Walthamstow platform, while the other two singers were relegated to the far right on a microphone of their own.

Caballé's second operatic project last summer, also with Placido Domingo, was EMI's new version of Puccini's *Manon Lescaut*, recorded earlier at Wembley. EDWARD GREENFIELD

CIRCLE 43 ON READER-SERVICE CARD →



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speaking of records



Eleanor Morrison

A French Sampler

by Philippe Entremont

DO YOU EVER WONDER what happens to the income from a recording—that is, when the music is not in the public domain, and the composer or his estate receive a share? In the case of Maurice Ravel, the most popular composer of this century, I can tell you.

Because he is so popular—consider the number of recorded *Boléros*, *La Valses*, or *Daphnis et Chloés*—the royalties have been considerable. So much so that the Ravel estate two years ago began using this money to underwrite an educational organization called the Académie Maurice Ravel. It is situated in southern France, near the Spanish border, close by the birthplace of Ravel. The Académie provides master classes for young musicians of professional caliber, and the emphasis is on the interpretation of French music. I am in charge of the piano division, Pierre Bernac works with

the singers, and for the string players we have violinist Christian Ferras and cellist André Navarra. Is there any other composer's estate that feeds the royalties back into music, into the training of young musicians? I don't know of any.

At any rate, this gives me another reason for my special fondness for the music of Ravel—as if there weren't reasons enough! Not so well known in this country (and for that reason I mention it first) is his little opera-ballet *L'Enfant et les sortilèges*. Lorin Maazel has recorded a fine performance (Deutsche Grammophon 138675). When I first played this record in my house, it caused quite a commotion—at least one part did. This was the section where the sopranos imitate the sound of a cat meowing. My own cat, who normally never pays any heed to the phonograph, suddenly opened his eyes, jumped to his feet, and

commenced looking around the room for this noisy intruder.

Then there's Ravel's *Ma Mère l'Oye*, written in two versions—one for orchestra, one for piano four-hands—and with both versions available on records. My preference is for the orchestral version, which allows a more splendid explosion in the final number; and I am very fond of the recorded performance by the Orchestre de Paris under Serge Baudo (Angel S 36683). But for the *Valses nobles et sentimentales*, which is also available in piano and orchestral garb, I definitely prefer the piano version. Who wouldn't, after hearing Artur Schnabel's marvelous performance on his French recital disc (RCA Red Seal LSC 2751)? Another Ravel performance I treasure is that of *Gaspard de la nuit* by Samson François, both for its musical and personal value (Seraphim SIC 6046). I knew Samson François very well, right up to his tragic death while at the height of his career. There was a marvelous visionary quality to his playing which is present in full force in his *Gaspard* recording. Dinu Lipatti, whose career was also cut off by an untimely death, is the interpreter on another of my favorite Ravel performances, the *Alborada del gracioso* (currently unavailable).

A few other Ravel albums. *Daphnis et Chloé*, with Munch and the Boston Symphony (RCA Red Seal LSC 2568): fire, feverishness, exhilaration are the essential qualities in this music, all of which are amply supplied by Munch. Then there's a fantastic recording of *La Valse* by Monteux and the London Symphony (Philips 835 258), and the best of all *Boléros* with Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra (Columbia MS 6169, MS 6478, or MS 7673). André Cluytens was a very good interpreter of Ravel; I'm especially fond of his *Rapsodie espagnole* (Angel S 36108).

May I say something in behalf of my own recordings of another French composer, the much underrated Saint-Saëns? His piano concertos are great music. True enough, they are immediately gratifying—but what a perverse reason for dismissing them! I myself have recorded numbers 2 and 4 (Columbia MS 6778). For my collaborators, I was very fortunate in having the Philadelphia Orchestra under Maestro Ormandy—a very appropriate ensemble for this type of music—and I have always been very proud of these albums. Imagine my shock, then, when I heard them being played over a Paris radio station, on one of those "Critics' Choice" sort of programs. Instead of lavishing them with praise, the critics tore my performances apart—nothing, not a single measure, had pleased them. Needless to say, I was miserable. What a depressing reception! Then a curious thing happened. At the

Continued on page 40

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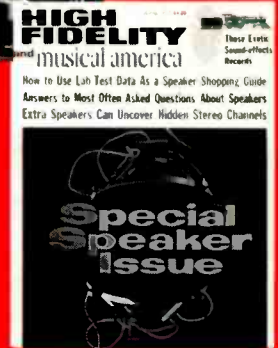
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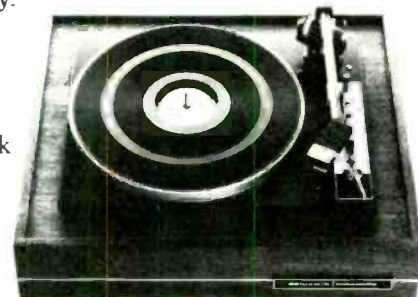
All of these features have been thoroughly performance-proven in such Miracords as the 50H. What's new about the 660H is the price at which we bring them to you: \$139.50*

And for only \$99.95, there's the new ELAC/Miracord 650. Its basic features and construction are the same as the 660H's, but its motor is a high-quality induction type, turning a lighter, pressure-formed (but still carefully balanced) platter. The 650's arm is the same dynamically-balanced, delicately-tracking arm used in the 660H; the only difference is its overhang adjustment, a simple gauging point and

slot instead of the 660H's post and leadscrew.

Whichever Miracord you buy (and there are others, at prices ranging up to \$225*), you can be sure it's built to last. Visit your dealer today. ELAC/Miracord. Another quality product from Benjamin. ELAC Division, Benjamin Electronic Sound Corp. Farmingdale, New York 11735/division of Instrument Systems Corp. (Also available in Canada).

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MASTERLINK—the latest module in the Project 60 series, with solderless connectors to enable you to construct a Project 60 stereo amplifier quickly and effortlessly. We also offer optional enclosures for the Project 60 systems including the Phase locked loop FM stereo tuner module. If you are truly the do-it-yourself type, you can still purchase the basic modules less case and Masterlink.



If you are not a do-it-yourselfer, consider the new System 3000 stereo amplifier incorporating circuitry based on the Project 60 amplifier systems, ...with 17 watts per channel continuous power into 8 ohms, and distortion at 0.1% or less! Also available—a matching tuner based on the Project 60 Phase locked loop module. The prices will surprise you....

Considering four-channel? You'll probably need another amplifier (we've given you several choices above) and another pair of speakers. Most authorities agree that you don't require expensive speakers for the rear channels, but, rather, units with clean, wide-range response. The Sinclair Q-16 fulfills these requirements. The Q-16 has been hailed in the European press for this and for its outstanding transient characteristics. Whether you are considering your first stereo system, two- or four-channel, or expanding an existing system, Sinclair can make it easier and less expensive than you may have thought. Mail the coupon below and we'll send you complete information about Sinclair products and where to find them.

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CIRCLE 13 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

end of the program, the moderator addressed the listeners, asking them to write in their requests for recordings to be heard on subsequent programs. What they received, I later learned, were some eighty-five requests for a repeat of my Saint-Saëns concertos!

One great dearth in available recordings is the piano music of Fauré. Fauré is almost unknown in America. The top-flight artists are not interested in performing him, and I think I know why: Fauré is almost impossible to play in a big hall. You can't call his writing salon music—this implies triviality. Fauré is not trivial, but there is an intimacy to his music that doesn't suit a spacious milieu. Perhaps also, he doesn't quite suit the spirit of our times. A pity on both counts. He's a terribly refined composer, and I'd like to see more recordings of his work. A few of his shorter pieces appear on the Rubinstein album mentioned above. If only Rubinstein would record more Fauré piano music! The situation has been more fortunate vis-à-vis Fauré's vocal music, thanks to a number of albums over the years by the baritone Gérard Souzay. And there's a very fine performance of his *Pelléas et Mélisande* by the Paris Conservatory Orchestra and Serge Baudo (Nonesuch H 71178).

In the area of French opera, I find another extraordinary lacuna. Despite the number of recorded *Carmens*, I have yet to find one that is fully satisfactory. In each, something important is lacking—the Don José, the Micaëla, the Carmen herself. One ideal interpretation is the Micaëla of Mirella Freni—this girl simply is Micaëla! And I'm not at all surprised to see that she's recorded the role for two different companies (RCA Red Seal LDS 6164 and Angel S 3767). I also cherish the conducting of Sir Thomas Beecham on an earlier Angel set, S 3613. Beecham was a very good conductor of French music, and did especially well with another Bizet work, the *Symphony in C*—a very curious work, incidentally, quite similar to the Prokofiev *Classical Symphony*, especially in its whirlwind last movement.

But back to opera, and to Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande*. It seems to me that there has been a tendency to overdo all the "fog" in Debussy's music and to add to the moisture, to bathe the music with hollow sonorities and diffuseness. That is why I am especially grateful for the new recording by Boulez (Columbia MS 30119). His approach is far cleaner, more simple, more elemental. As for the singers, you have an opposite situation in the *Carmen* recordings. Here we have balance, with nobody dominating.

Another Debussy performance I cherish for the same reasons is Toscanini's *La Mer* (RCA Victrola VIC 1246). True, some of the tempos are rushed—but how refreshing to be given such

clarity and excitement, instead of three fogbound movements.

Jean Martinon, who used to be music director of the Chicago Symphony, has been making a number of fine albums of French music, not all of them yet available in this country. But watch out in particular for his *Bacchus et Ariane* by Albert Roussel. On this Erato recording he conducts the French National Orchestra. There's an old recording with Martinon and the Chicago Symphony (RCA Red Seal LSC 2806), but that is merely the second suite. The new album has the complete score, and it's gorgeous. Also, he's recorded a Saint-Saëns Third Symphony, with Marie-Claire Alain playing the organ solo. All connoisseurs of splendid engineering will find this record a revelation.

So far my preferences have shown a rather chauvinist bent. But what can I do? I am French, and I love my country's music. Maybe this is why I am also so fond of the symphonies of Tchaikovsky which, for all their difference in spirit from French music, show some similarities in their compositional technique. Too much of the time we hear Tchaikovsky played with exaggerated rallentandos—and how schmaltzy and sickening it can sound! Fortunately, there's a set of the symphonies played by the Leningrad Philharmonic under Mravinsky (unfortunately, it is unavailable in the U.S.). This is authentic Tchaikovsky, full of honest excitement. Only consider the final movement of the Fourth. Mravinsky plays it straight, with no fussing around with tempos, and the effect is prodigious.

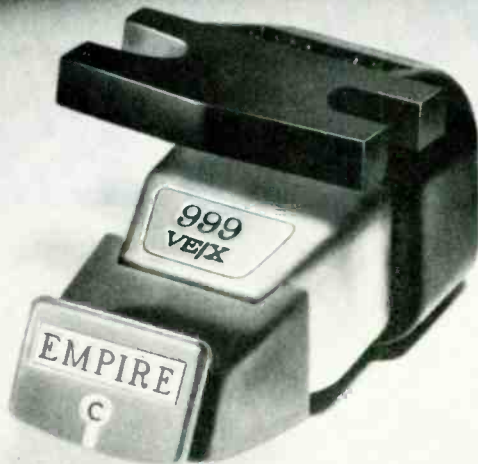
Because so much happens between the first and final measures of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, I've never heard a recorded performance that has satisfied me in absolutely all respects. But the one with Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt and the Vienna Philharmonic (London OSA 1159) comes pretty close. What I admire here is his smaller-scaled, more subdued approach, instead of the usual crash-bangery. Another favorite Beethoven performance: Karajan's Fourth (Deutsche Grammophon 138003).

For the music of Mozart, Ashkenazy's playing of the sonatas is the best I've heard (London CS 6659). And there's a recording of the *Haffner Symphony* by Bruno Walter that's like a dream (Columbia MS 6255).

Finally, an extraordinary score in a superlative performance: Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet*, played by the Bolshoi Theatre Orchestra under Rozhdestvensky (MK 205). I'll confess that when I go to the ballet, I often find myself closing my eyes and just listening to the music. Nowhere is the temptation greater than with this, the greatest of Prokofiev's works. It's so evocative, so vivid. Who needs the dancers?

Approved for 4channel

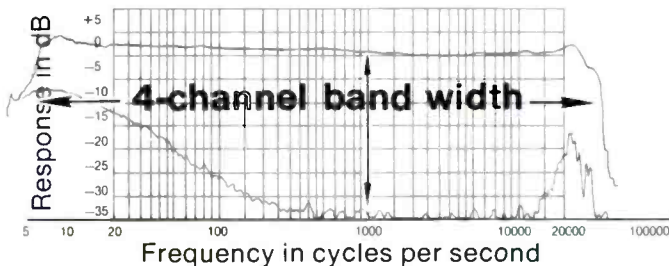
Empire's top of the line cartridges now feature new high performance parameters designed for 4-channel capability. With even greater frequency response and compliance than ever before, these cartridges will track at forces so low they barely touch your records.



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Stereo Review Magazine who tested 13 different cartridges rated the 999VE tops in lightweight tracking ability.

Hi Fi Sound Magazine called the 999VE "a real

hi-fi masterpiece... a remarkable cartridge unlikely to wear out discs any more rapidly than a feather held lightly against the spinning groove."

High Fidelity Magazine said of the 1000ZE "the sound is superb. The performance data among the very best."

Records and Recording Magazine stated emphatically that the 999VE stereo cartridge is "a design that encourages a hi fi purist to clap his hands with joy."

FM Guide wrote "...using the 1000ZE. It works beautifully... giving great results."

Audio Magazine observing a remarkable 35 dB stereo spread between left and right channels in the 999VE said "Outstanding square waves. Tops in separation."

Popular Science Magazine picked the 999VE hands down as the cartridge for "the stereo system I wish I owned" designed by Electronic Editor Ronald M. Benrey.

X designates newest improved version.

For further details write: Empire Scientific Corp., 1055 Stewart Avenue, Garden City, N. Y. 11530.



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6045



6055

Try the Sony Ears-

There are two ways to pick a receiver: by examining your budget, or by using your ears. They both can work—but the best approach is a combination of the two.

For example, you could simply decide which of the four Sony receivers best matches your budget: the low-priced 75-watt Sony 6045; the moderately-priced 100-watt Sony 6055 and 220-watt 6065; or the top-of-the-line Sony 6200F with 245 watts of power (and many other goodies).

Taking that approach you're bound to get good value for your money, but not necessarily the best value for your circumstances. You could wind up buying a little less Sony than you need—or shelling out for a Sony that more than surpasses your requirements. But you should be able to narrow it down, on price alone, to two or at most three Sonys. From there on, you have to use your ears and your intelligence.

First, look for a Sony dealer fairly near you; that's not only for convenience, but so his FM reception problems will be just about the same as yours. Then visit him, carrying a record

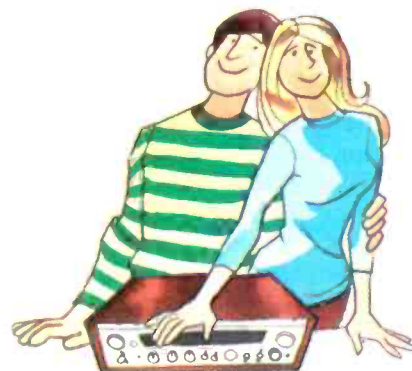


that you know and love (if you've loved it to death already, get a fresh copy).

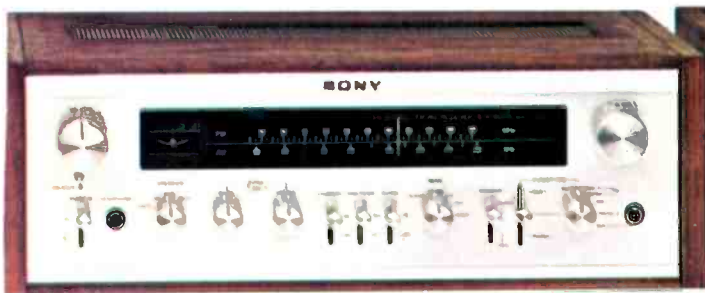
Test first for general sound quality. Using the same speakers you have at home (or ones of similar efficiency), play the loudest portion of your record



at the loudest volume you're likely to listen to. See which Sony sounds cleanest to you (though, thanks to our direct-coupled circuitry, they all sound very clean); that tells you which have enough power for your needs. (But remember, if your room's noticeably bigger than the dealer's, or you're planning to switch to a less efficient speaker, you may need a bit more power still.)



Now try to tune your favorite stations. Even if the dealer's on your block, reception conditions won't be absolutely comparable. But the receiver that brings your station in most clearly



6065



6200F

vs. Budget Test...

there should do the same when you get home with it.



Now look for other features that you think you will need. If stereo is your abiding interest, you will appreciate the 6200's stereo-only switch, that blanks out mono FM stations. And its hi-blend switch that cuts distant-station noise without eliminating the highs or losing much stereo separation in the mid-range. If you find a second phono input or a center-channel output jack very desirable, you'll choose the 6200F or 6065, which have them, over the 6055 and 6045, which don't. And so on.

Some similarities:

All four Sony receivers have: 70dB signal-to-noise ratios, and such features as linear tuning dials, headphone jacks, switchable loudness contour and hi-filters, FET front-ends and solid-state IF circuits, dual power supplies and direct coupled outputs, speaker selector switches. All

but the 6045 have: muting switches, front panel AUX jacks, quick-disconnect DIN tape recorder jacks, and center-tuning meters (the 6045 has a signal-strength meter instead; the 6200F has both types). All but the 6200F have 80 dB IHF selectivity and 1.5 dB capture ratio (6200F has 100 dB and 1.0 dB respectively).

Some differences:

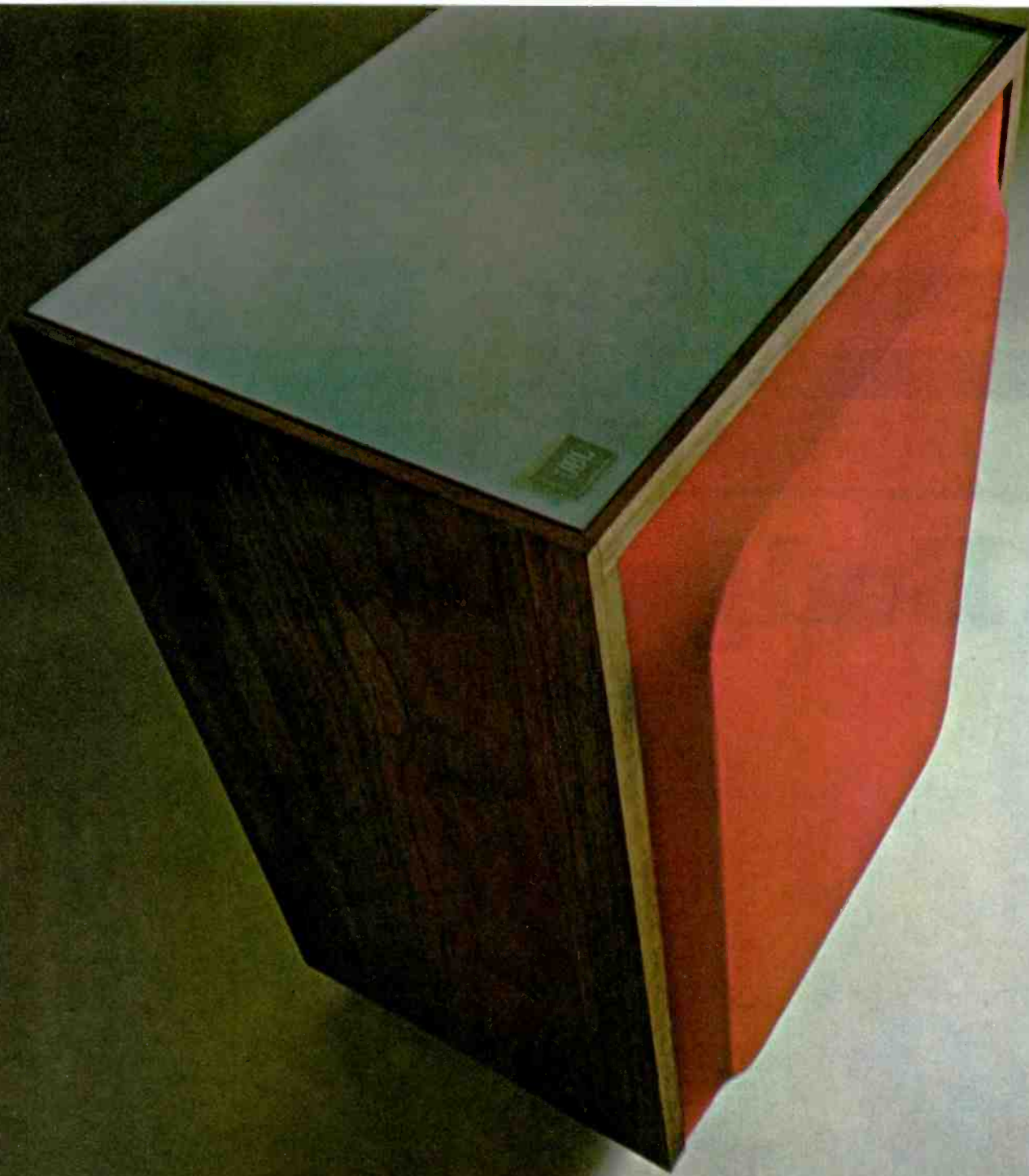
	6200F	6065	6055	6045
IHF FM Sensitivity	1.8 μ V	2.2 μ V	2.6 μ V	2.6 μ V
IHF Music Power, 8 Ω	245W	220W	100W	75W
IHF Music Power, 4 Ω	360W	255W	145W	84W
RMS@ 4 ohms	90/90W	80/80W	50/50W	25/25W
THD & IM @rated power:	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.5%
Power Bandwidth, IHF	10-40,000	15-30,000	15-30,000	10-30,000



But, if you would prefer to sit at home and pick your Sony by its specs, go ahead. You'll find the basic ones in the box above — and you can get the rest by sending for our pocket-sized Sony Selector Guide. All you'll miss will be the fun of playing with the units themselves at your dealer. Sony Corporation of America, 47-47 Van Dam Street, Long Island City, N.Y. 11101.

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too hot to handle

In your test report (April 1971) it appears that Rabco's ST-4 turntable/arm combination meets its specs with miniscule tone-arm bearing friction. But in considering the Empire 1000ZE/X or 999VE/X cartridges, tracking at around $\frac{3}{4}$ gram at the middle of their specified operating range, I'm advised that it seems extremely doubtful whether these cartridges could withstand the friction forces generated by the ST-4's tone arm during intervals of realignment. What do you think?—Harry J. Delaney, Ottawa, Canada.

"Intervals of realignment" seems to be the key phrase here. It would be appropriate to a servo-driven mechanism such as Rabco's separate tone arm (the SL-8). But the ST-4 has no servo-drive realigning the cartridge position from moment to moment. Instead, its arm follows the groove much the way a pivoted arm would. The difference—aside from the tangent-tracking design of course—is that the cartridge is not called upon to overcome the bearing friction as it would be in a pivoted arm. The ST-4's arm bearings rest on a rotating rod whose motion turns the bearings and overcomes their friction, leaving the arm free in effect to drift wherever the groove takes it. Therefore from the cartridge's point of view the arm essentially has no friction whatever and is to that extent more appropriate than conventional pivoted designs for use with Empire's light-tracking cartridges—not less.

In the July issue you expressed the opinion that the JVC four-channel disc most closely approaches four discrete channels of information. But you also stated that it requires a cartridge with a frequency response to 50 kHz. Would I need a special wide-range tape deck to copy an encoded JVC disc for playback through the decoder later on?—Scott C. Lewis, La Feria, Texas. Yes, but that's like saying that the movie version of *Gone With the Wind* won't store as neatly on your bookshelf as the original novel. If you want four-channel tapes, you should buy them in that form; the JVC disc is intended for those who want disc instead. It's an approximation of the four-channel tape, and although it admittedly comes closer than the usual "encoded" discs (the proper word for the JVC product, perhaps, would be "multiplexed"), we can see no advantage to copying the disc on tape. If and when JVC-type discs appear here—and we know of no plans for their commercial introduction—you'd be better off playing

them through the multiplex adapter and recording the four resultant signals on a quadraphonic tape recorder if tape is what you must have.

I just purchased a Scott 636 receiver for my wife's birthday—along with two "cheap-cheap" speakers I picked up. I've seen your report on the AR-6 loudspeakers. Frankly I was about to order Heathkit AS-10s. One difference is that the AS-10 is rated at 16 ohms and the AR-6 at 8 ohms. Does this matter? Are there other differences?—Del Willson, Fremont, Calif.

The impedances should be expected to make a difference. Scott rates the 636 at 26 watts per channel (continuous) with 8-ohm speakers—down a bit from the 4-ohm rating. Like many companies today, Scott doesn't necessarily give a 16-ohm rating. Very few 16-ohm speakers are offered today, and many solid-state amplifier designs respond with least power or maximum distortion when driving 16-ohm loads, a problem that will be exaggerated by low speaker efficiency (true of both models), a large or acoustically dead listening room, or high volume levels. There are differences in drivers as well, although they don't constitute a valid basis of choice. Nor do the speakers' impedance ratings alone. The ultimate test, of course, would be A/B comparison in your listening room.

My system consists of Dyna electronics and Scott speakers with a Weathers K-66P turntable, arm, and cartridge. I'm told that the Weathers combination is the Edsel of the audio world. I have used this gear for about eight years with no complaint until I was told about the Weathers. Is it time to update the record player?—Andre Cartal, Washington, N.J.

Edsels are turning into quite a fad these days. And anyway we see no reason for you to change your equipment if you're happy with what you've got.

Is there any chance of a basic amplifier for four-channel use being put on the market? It seems worth waiting for.—A. Mandler, Los Angeles, Calif.

Not in our opinion. Two identical stereo power amps will do just as well at only a slightly higher manufacturing cost. Moreover they're easier to store and can be sold interchangeably for stereo or quadraphonic use. Integrated amplifiers are a different story, since they contain switching facilities that must be set up properly if a quadra-

phonic system is to operate efficiently. But if any manufacturer comes out with a single-unit four-channel power amp in the next couple of years he'll have a hard time convincing us that he's playing with a full set of marbles.

I thought I read that antiskating is not important when tracking above two grams. Why then do manufacturers increase this corrective force as tracking force increases? You'd think it would have to be the other way around.—Elliot Dennis, Brooklyn, N.Y.

Correct antiskating force does increase proportionately to tracking force. What you're probably thinking of was the comment in this column some time ago that in the days of brutal tracking forces (as we would consider them today) we were dealing with record-playing equipment so clumsy by present standards that the fine points we now discuss so avidly would have had little meaning. Distortion and record wear were so high that nobody would notice a minor improvement. Well, almost nobody. Actually antiskating compensation was discussed by British record fanciers even before electrical recording came in. But the stereo LP, the high-compliance cartridge, and the elliptical stylus have made it a whole new ball game—one in which antiskating plays a much more obvious part.

Sixteen years after purchasing my original monophonic system I find myself bitten again by the bug. All of my original equipment has passed into other hands, but I have fond memories of an Altec 604C coaxial speaker in a Karlson enclosure. I would love to have it again—this time in stereo of course. As far as I can tell the current version of the coaxial speaker is the Altec 604E; but the Karlson enclosure is another matter. I understand that the company is out of business. I've looked for detailed construction plans, which I believe were published in an electronics magazine around 1951, but have been unable to locate the article. Can you help?—Marvin Brienese, Davis, Calif.

We don't know the article you're talking about, but Karlson is still in business. Write to Karlson Research & Development Corp., 114 Austin Blvd., Island Park, New York 11558. Maybe they can give you the name of a California dealer where you can hear a Karlson system and compare it with some more recent designs, just to make sure that it sounds as sweet in fact as it does in memory.

I have a friend who claims that if you spend more than a certain amount on a sound system you are throwing your money away. He claims that he has reached that barrier with a \$200 Capehart console and that nothing could produce better sound! On top of this he says that while he has a beautiful piece of furniture, when he looks at my component system all he sees are speakers and "a little plastic box." (I assume he means the Dual 1215 turntable.) What can I tell him?—Arnold Princhip, Miramar, Fla. Frankly, we wouldn't bother telling him anything. His problem appears to be that he's not willing to listen.

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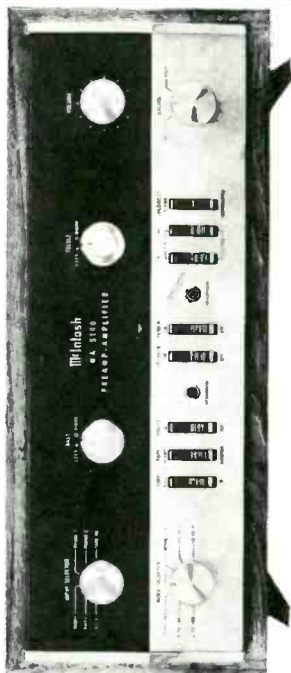
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CIRCLE 54 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



A nostalgic romp
through the pages of High Fidelity,
Musical America, and Billboard

those were the days

60 YEARS AGO

Efrem Zimbalist, who made his American debut with the Boston Symphony Orchestra on the afternoon of October 27, played a new violin concerto, Op. 82, by Glazunov. "Mr. Zimbalist scored an indisputable triumph. . . . Had one of lesser talent been performing, the audience would have fallen asleep under the soporific spell of Glazunov."

"With the recent departure for America of Toscanini and many other Italian artists, and Caruso soon to follow—he is due to reach New York on November 27—Romans are bitterly complaining at the way New York is robbing them of their artists." Meanwhile the Italian publication *Orfeo* continues its attacks on Toscanini and accuses him of attempting to damage the reputation of Mascagni in America. "Toscanini practically declared at the Costanzi last June that Mascagni . . . knew very little about the art of writing music."

The Aeolian Company introduces the *Orchestrelle*, a \$600 organlike instrument specializing in orchestral colors, which "enables you to interpret the most inspiring thoughts of the great masters with a grandeur utterly impossible with any single means of expression as the piano or violin. . . . The subtle tone gradation and blending of orchestral instruments is so marvelously simulated that new life and color are given to even the simplest composition."

40 YEARS AGO

Arturo Toscanini is again being accused in Italy of being a "renegade" to his country, "its music and its ideals." Note is made of the physical assault on Toscanini "by Fascist youths last summer at Bologna, whither he had gone to conduct memorial concerts in honor of his friend, the late Giuseppe Martucci."

"Eugene Ormandy, guesting for the first time at the Philadelphia Orchestra concerts of October 30 and 31 and November 2, confirmed the favorable impression he made last summer as conductor of Robin Hood Dell programs."

The new home of the Juilliard School of Music is formally opened on the night of November 7 with a concert by the stu-

dent orchestra under Leopold Stokowski. A recital by Sergei Rachmaninoff on November 12, and two performances on November 20 and 21 of Louis Gruenberg's new opera, *Jack and the Beanstalk*, complete the dedication series.

Franz von Suppé's *Boccaccio*, one of the Metropolitan's successes of last season, is revived at the New Yorker Theater on November 17 with Allan Jones in the title role.

20 YEARS AGO

The J. Ossola Co., makers and distributors of Torino Fine Foods, sponsors a Brooklyn Academy of Music performance of *Rigoletto* with Gino Bechi in the title role. "As with a similar venture last spring, presentation of Torino labels at the box office reduced the admission price."

The new Dinu Lipatti/Herbert von Karajan disc of the Schumann piano concerto on Columbia is "the finest version of this work currently available on records. For some time, European critics have been loud in their praise of Lipatti, who died last December at the early age of thirty-three."

It is generally agreed that, in getting the best sound for the money, it's important not to skimp on the amplifier. "Holders of this view point out, probably truly, that amplifiers differ more drastically than other components, and contend that a \$200 amplifier driving a \$30 speaker is usually more satisfactory than a \$50 amplifier driving a \$150 speaker."

A mixed bag of moods is reflected in the Top Ten favorites listed in **BILLBOARD**: *Because of You*, Tony Bennett (Columbia).

Cold, Cold Heart, Tony Bennett (Columbia).

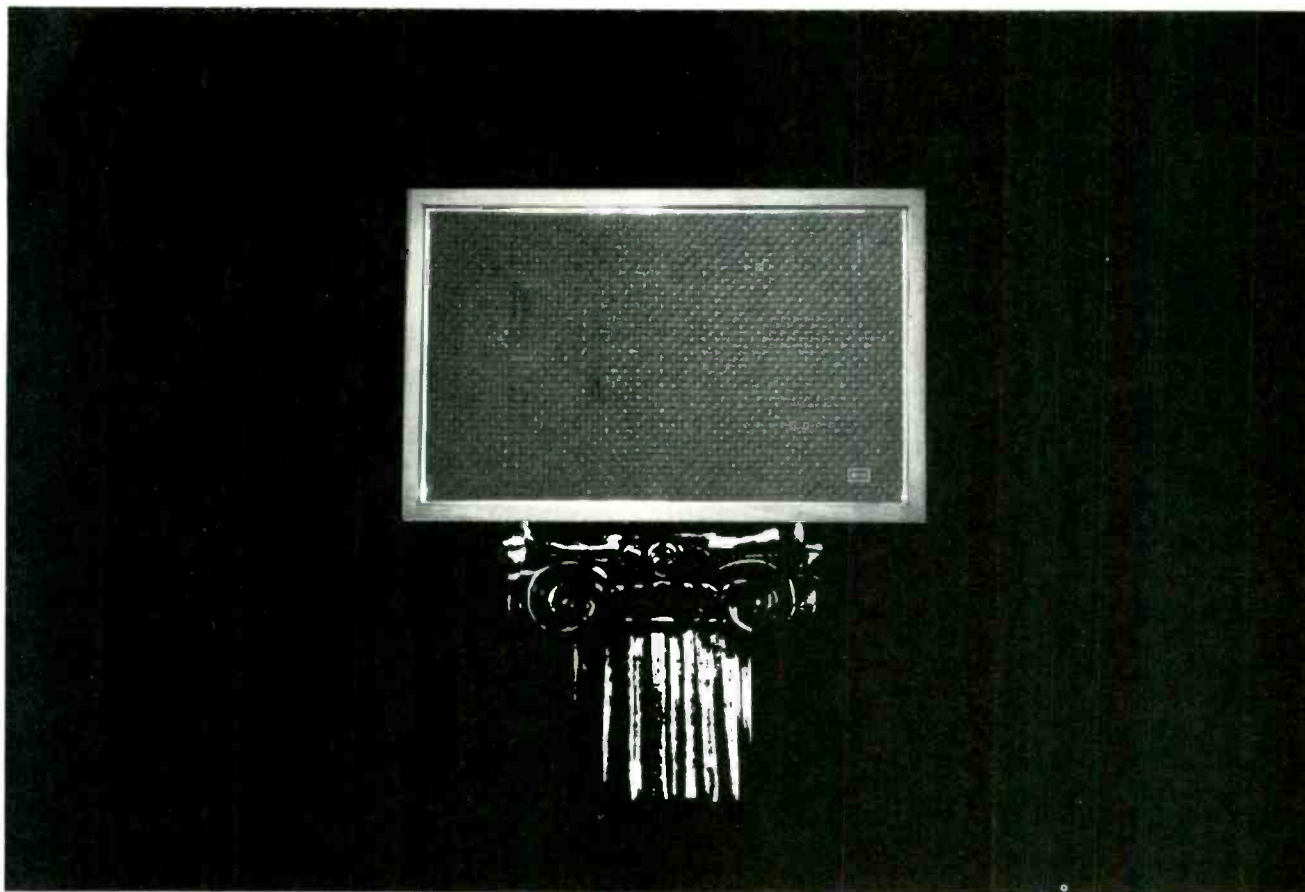
(It's No) Sin, Eddie Howard (Mercury). *World is Waiting for the Sunrise*, Les Paul-Mary Ford (Capitol).

I Get Ideas, Tony Martin (Victor). *Down Yonder*, Del Wood (Tennessee).

(It's No) Sin, Four Aces (Victoria). *Undecided*, Ames Brothers (Coral).

Detour, Patti Page (Mercury). *(It's No) Sin*, S. Churchill (Victor).

Come On-a My House, Rosemary Clooney (Columbia).



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speaker there is a critically-damped aluminum cone with excellent transient response. The entire diaphragm of the treble speaker, of thin spun aluminum, rests on a bed of soft resonance-damping foam. All cones, together with their generous ceramic magnets and precision-machined pole structures, are assembled on solid cast frames — not sheet-metal stampings.

Bozak's traditional excellence in craftsmanship is further apparent in the smart enclosure, where the warm beauty of select wood grain is brought out by careful hand finishing.

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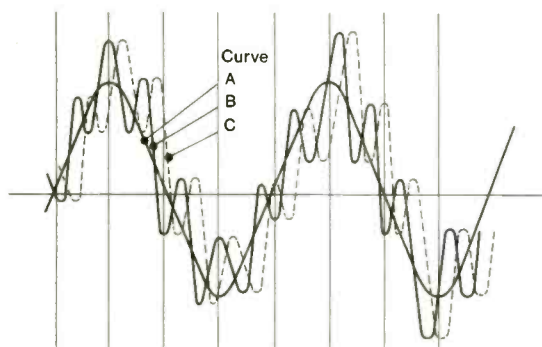
A Breakthrough In Speaker Design?

Some weeks ago two gentlemen from a company called New Product Development Services stopped by our offices with what sounded like an intriguing idea. They—Messrs. Joseph Eisenbeil and Frank Shattuck—are representing a West German inventor who has found he can improve the performance of dynamic loudspeakers by building a laminated (rather than the conventional one-piece) field magnet. His contention is that eddy currents within the conventional magnet introduce phase shift and contribute materially to distortion in the final output.

Not only that, he contends that the principle can be applied to any dynamic device—microphone, headphone, pickup cartridge, or whatever—with similar results. By keeping a tight rein on the magnetic field, the laminar magnet construction will promote accuracy in the transducer whether it is converting acoustic energy into electrical signals or vice versa.

Well, we've had credible gentlemen with interesting claims in our offices before, and we tend to be somewhat circumspect. After some discussion of principles, Mr. Eisenbeil reached into his briefcase and produced a pair of apparently identical oval speakers—the kind that might appear in a good-quality table radio. They were, as it developed, a standard model of German manufacture, one sample of which had been equipped with a laminated field magnet in place of the original. Neither was in any sort of enclosure—just the raw speakers.

We hooked them up for a listen. Without any baffling, the sound was hardly high fidelity of course. But we could hear an undeniable difference between the two



Inventor's diagram represents fundamental A plus overtones B fed to speaker coil. Solid field magnet shifts overtones to C, he says, while his laminated field magnet will not.

samples; that with the laminated magnet definitely seemed to produce sound with greater clarity than its companion.

Mr. Eisenbeil asked how he could go about documenting the difference in performance between the two, and we referred him to CBS Laboratories. The lab report is now in, and it appears that New Product Development Services may have got hold of something significant. CBS Labs fed both speakers with test tones at 200 and 2,000 Hz and measured the intermodulation in the output when the speakers were driven to sound-pressure levels of 85 dB. IM distortion measured 2.7% in the unaltered sample: not bad for a relatively inexpensive unit. With the laminated magnet, IM dropped to only 0.82%. Buzzing occurred in the standard sample when it was driven to 93 dB SPL at 300 Hz; the laminated sample went on to 102 dB SPL—or more than twice the acoustic output.

Unfortunately the unaltered speaker failed before further comparative tests could be made. But working with the special sample CBS Labs came up with IM figures ranging from 0.7 to 1.7% for output levels of 70 to 90 dB SPL. Above 90 dB the distortion rose sharply—behavior that is to be expected in a speaker of this type. The laminated magnet also proved to result in a considerable increase in driver efficiency—reducing, in effect, the power required to obtain a given sound-pressure level—and a significant increase in power-handling capacity.

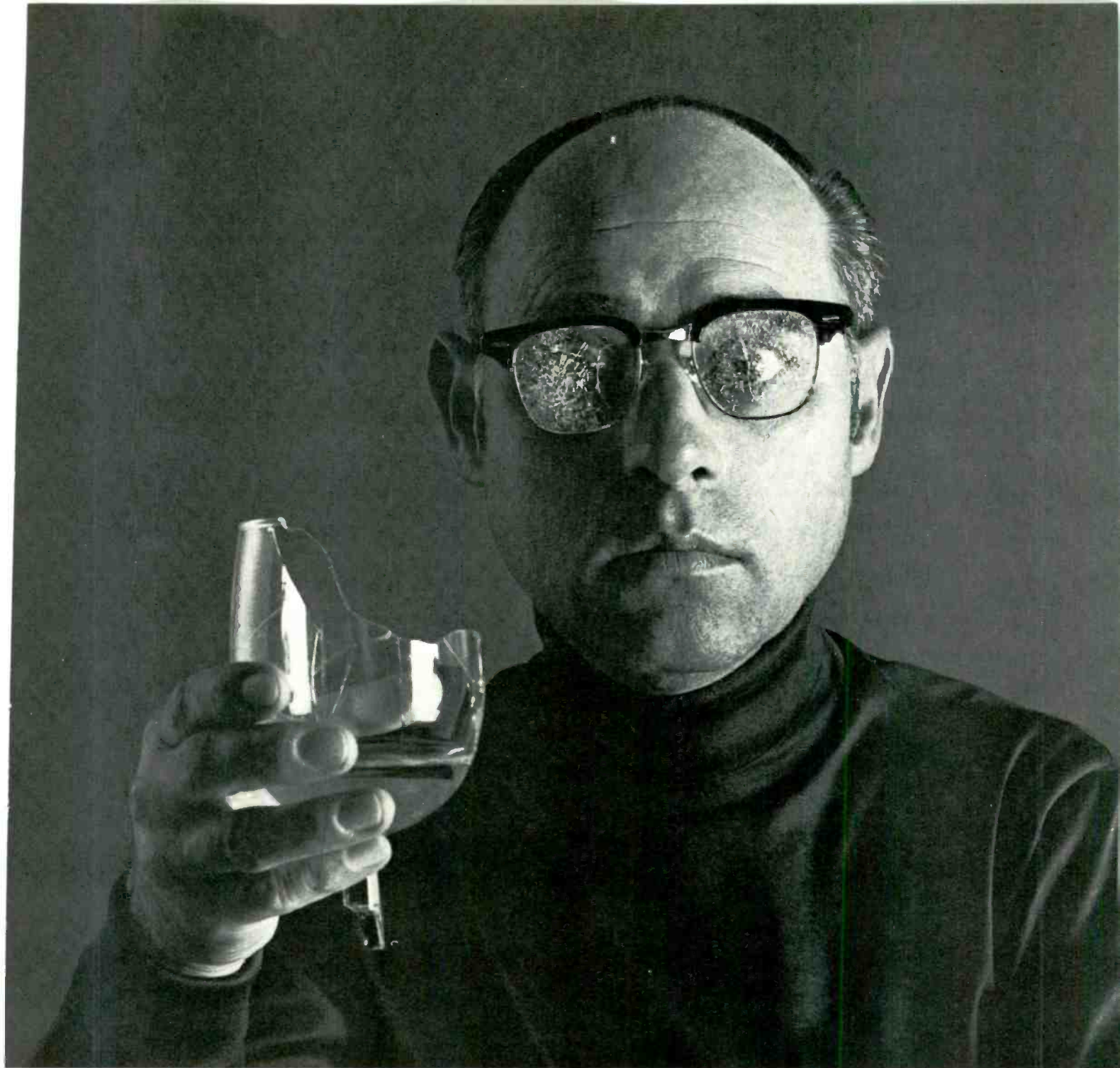
Don't rush right down to your friendly neighborhood hi-fi store for your sample, however. Although there presently is limited production of laminated speaker magnets in Germany, Messrs. Eisenbeil and Shattuck plan to offer the (now pending) U.S. patent to American manufacturers on a royalty basis, rather than going into the manufacturing business themselves. On the basis of the initial tests, it's a development worth keeping an eye on.

CIRCLE 147 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Columbia Goes Dolby; Norelco Doesn't

Late last summer Columbia Records announced that all cassette releases beginning with the August list are being Dolby-processed. The announcement makes Columbia the first American processor serving the regular retail market to tailor its output to cassette equipment incorporating the Dolby B-type noise-reduction circuitry. (Musical Heritage Society, which distributes largely through mail order, adopted an across-the-board Dolby policy a few months earlier. Ampex is issuing selected titles in Dolby processing, and Vox has two entries. Of the world's major record companies, only British Decca—represented here by London Records—had previously made such a sweeping commitment to the Dolby technique.)

The Columbia announcement cannot have been very pleasing to executives of Norelco—or Philips, its parent company in The Netherlands and the originator of the cassette. Their statements over the last few months have made it increasingly clear that they view such "tailoring" askance on the grounds that it undermines the interchangeability—the "compatibility"—of the



Introducing the Ampex Extended Frequency Cassette

Egad, what sound! What spectrum! What fidelity! At last, I can use the full range, the maximum frequency response of my magnificent stereo system. Yes, a medium to match my music. Absolutely smashing!

What's more, those clever rascals at Ampex have increased output with a smaller particle black oxide formula. They've reduced noise with super-smooth Ferrosheen® tape. They call it Extended Frequency. I call it marvelous. And, the packaging is so handsome it complements every piece of my fine equipment. Ah, quality sound with cassette convenience for just a bit more than two dollars each.

Ask your Ampex dealer to demonstrate the new Extended Frequency cassettes, another quality product in a full line of recording tapes; open reel, 8-track cartridges and standard cassettes.

But, don't wear your glasses.



AMPEX

Ampex Corporation
Magnetic Tape Division
401 Broadway,
Redwood City,
California 94063

cassette medium as a whole. Let all cassettes be equally playable on all cassette equipment, they have been saying in effect.

Officials at both Dolby Laboratories and Ampex—among others—have expressed the view that they are equally playable even when Dolby processing is involved. The argument runs as follows. The worst-case situation consists of a Dolby-processed cassette of excellent sonic properties, played back on excellent equipment but without compensating Dolby circuitry, and evaluated by a highly critical listener. For all practical purposes, that listener will be satisfied by a simple back-off in the treble control; but manipulate the balance in the original recording (virtually standard technique today), process the tape poorly (all too common), substitute playback equipment with a poor high end (even commoner), or run the test with a less critical ear (perhaps most common of all), and the problems attributable to Dolby processing will go unnoticed or even turn out to be an advantage in disguise by boosting weak highs. Their conclusion: The Dolby processing is provided for the serious listener who has Dolby equipment; other buyers will, at the least, have no complaints.

Obviously the Philips group remains unconvinced. Its own noise-reduction circuitry (called DNL) does not require preprocessing of the tapes and will attack apparent noise levels on any cassette. By offering the circuit royalty-free to other manufacturers, Philips hopes to make it the common (and compatible) alternative. (Actual production samples of equipment incorporating DNL have not yet been made available, so no definitive assessment of the system is possible at this writing.)

Meanwhile, it looks as though those who own Dolby equipment will have a growing list of titles to enjoy (noise-free) in coming months, regardless of how Norelco's plans for DNL progress.

Blow Your Own Whachamacallit

Remember the French horn? The International Horn Society says it is officially banishing the word *French* from the instrument's name. There's nothing particularly French about the horn, they say. The English gave it the name simply because French instrument makers contributed a good deal to its present design.

But what if we now dropped the *English* from English horn? Just think of the confusion between the two "horns." And after all, that instrument—as musicologists have been pointing out for years—is neither English nor a horn. The name comes from the French *cor anglais*—a term some have speculated to be a corruption of *cor anglé*, denoting the angled profile of the instrument. And as for the *horn* part, well we all know that horns are brass instruments; the English horn is a woodwind, right?

True enough, but we doubt that pop musicians, who "blow" every "horn" from piano to bass, will be much impressed by the semantic bickering. Anyway it all gives the music world a minor diversion at a time when it's becoming increasingly difficult to make a living with any kind of a horn.

Quadraphonics for a Quarter?

Stereo-4 encoded four-channel discs are now being cut (by Bob Crewe Records) on 45-rpm discs—a step toward the four-channel juke box according to Electro-Voice, whose encoding equipment Crewe uses. For the time being the 45s will produce only stereo (or mono) on existing equipment of course, but at least one juke box company is said to be interested in going all the way. So pretty soon your local beanery may be featuring wall-to-wall Welk or ubiquitous Uggams.

equipment in the news



AR-3a speaker in kit form from Heath

The Heathkit AS-103 is a loudspeaker system in kit form, using three Acoustic Research drivers (a 12-inch woofer, and hemispheric domed midrange driver and tweeter) in an acoustic suspension enclosure of oiled walnut. It gives kit builders a crack at building their own AR-3a, certainly one of the "classic" models of high fidelity. The AS-103 sells for \$189.95.

CIRCLE 148 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Pioneer's lightweight headsets

The SE-L40, shown here, is the premier model of two headsets recently introduced by Pioneer. Both rest the drivers on the ears instead of surrounding the ears with foam or fluid-filled cushions. As a result of this design and their extremely light weight, the headphones are intended to promote maximum user comfort. Driver diaphragms are of thin polyester, said to improve both treble efficiency and damping by comparison to conventional paper cones, and the back of the earpiece is made of open, perforated metal. The SE-L40, which sells for \$39.95, comes with a deluxe case. The companion SE-L20, with somewhat less luxurious detailing, sells for \$10 less.





Scott's stereo/quadrasonic amplifier

The Scott 495 integrated amplifier is rated at a total of 100 watts into 8-ohm speakers: 50 per channel if it is used in stereo, 25 per channel for quadrasonic use. It is equipped with two magnetic phono inputs, one of which can be used for microphones and is provided with an equalization switch for that purpose. In addition there is a back-panel preamp sensitivity switch affecting either use. High-level connections include tape-recorder inputs and outputs and two extra inputs. A variety of speaker hookups is possible, including use of up to sixteen speakers (main and remote systems for stereo and quadrasonic operation). The price is \$349.90.

CIRCLE 149 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Electrostatic headphone from Lafayette

The Lafayette Model F-2001 is rated for exceptionally wide-range response: 5 Hz to 35 kHz, according to Lafayette. And, at \$59.95, it also bears an exceptionally low price for an electrostatic headset. It is designed to work from the speaker terminals of a stereo system via its energizer unit, which is self-powering and includes a speaker/headphone selector switch. The coiled interconnect cord is 10 feet long.

CIRCLE 150 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



Spanish cabinets from Audio Originals

The equipment cabinet shown here is the latest in the Audio Originals line of high fidelity furniture: the Model 404SP. It is pecan, with Spanish styling. The top is fixed; behind the doors are two compartments, each 18 1/2 inches wide—one with adjustable shelves and the other with a pull-out, ball-bearing-mounted turntable shelf. A second pull-out shelf may be added to hold a tape recorder. The unit sells for \$179.50 and also is available in traditional styling as the Model 404T at the same price.

CIRCLE 151 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Utah adapter for four-speaker sound

Utah Electronics' Studio 4 is a unit designed to derive quadrasonic effects from conventional two-channel stereo systems. It requires no extra channels of amplification, being inserted between the output of a stereo amplifier or receiver and four speaker systems. It is equipped with a 2-channel /4-channel switch, a "calibration" switch for setting up speaker balance, and level controls for the two back speakers. It sells for \$39.95.

CIRCLE 152 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

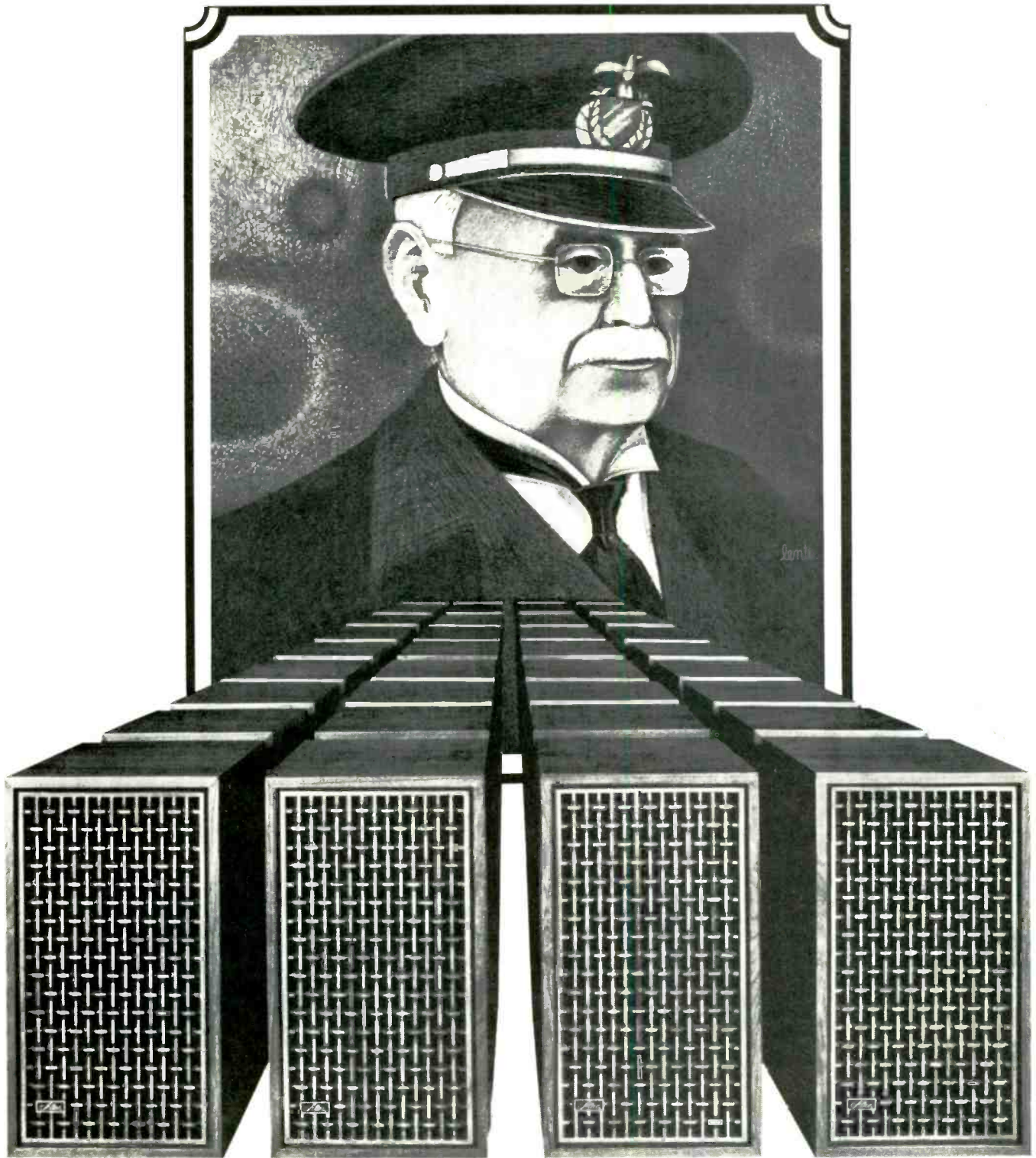


Cassette recording center by Ampex

The new Ampex Micro 187R might also be called a compact cassette system. It includes an automatic-reverse cassette recorder and the equivalent of a stereo FM/AM receiver with inputs for phono and aux, the latter switch doubling as a mike selector in conjunction with the front-panel inputs for that purpose. A high-frequency filter, intended to reduce tape hiss, is included in the controls, which also feature a switch for either continuous or out-and-back automatic operation. The Micro 187R costs \$450 including a pair of speakers and a microphone.

CIRCLE 153 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Sousa lives in the new Altec Segovia



If you're going to listen to Sousa, it should sound like Sousa. Oom-pa, oom-pa, oom-pa-pa. It should be so real that you can reach over and nudge the tuba player when he gets out of step.

The new Altec Segovia is the first bookshelf speaker system that lets you hear every sound clearly and distinctly and naturally. Oom-pa. From bass drum to triangle. There's nothing added and there's nothing taken out. Oom-pa. All you hear is what Sousa wanted you to hear. Oom-pa-pa.

Ask your dealer to put on some Sousa when you listen to the new Altec Segovia speaker system. You've never heard him so good.



ALTEC DIVISION OF THE UNITED ALTEC CORP.
The new Altec Acousta Voicette Stereo Equalizer. Hear it at your local Altec dealer today. He's in the Yellow Pages under "High Fidelity & Stereo Sound Equipment" under Altec Lansing.

CIRCLE 7 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



Pioneer's First Cassette Deck

The Equipment: Pioneer T-3300, a stereo home cassette deck (with recording and playback preamplifiers, no power amplifiers or speakers). Dimensions: 13 by 9 by 3 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches. Price: \$149.95. Manufacturer: Pioneer Electronics, Japan; U. S. distributor: U. S. Pioneer Corp., 178 Commerce Rd., Carlstadt, N.J. 07072.

Comment: This cassette deck—the first from Pioneer, though the company has been offering open-reel models for the last two years—is a distinct success. It is handsome, efficient, moderately priced, and offers more than minimal features.

One of the extra features becomes apparent as soon as you look at the top plate: it has seven (instead of the usual six) keys in its control lineup. Two of them are special colors, making it easier to find the key you want than it is when all (or even all but the record key) are the same color. From the left, these keys control: eject (and stop), recording (red), rewind, playback (or record, when the red interlock has been pressed), fast forward,

stop (gray), and pause. Why both an eject/stop key and a stop key? Take the example of copying a series of individual short cuts from disc. The pause control makes this process very simple until you want to recue the cassette to correct a mistake. You listen for the cue point and, when you find it, press the pause key. Now you must revert to the record mode. On the T-3300 this means pressing the stop key, then pressing both record and play. Start the disc, release the pause key, and you're home. If the stop key also causes ejection, you risk losing your precise cue point; if it is the type that requires a second push for ejection, it will solve this problem only at the expense of extra fuss each time you want to change or turn over the cassette. As a result, we found that the Pioneer system simplifies things for the serious user.

To the left of these "piano keys" is the power on/off switch. Beyond the smoked-plastic cassette-well cover are two other controls. To the right is a three-digit counter. To the left is an automatic-stop switch that

REPORT POLICY

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

selects either of two modes when the cassette comes to an end: stop (the equivalent of pressing the stop key), or "pop-up" (the equivalent of pressing the eject key). We tended to prefer the pop-up position. While it represents only a marginal time saving, you'll be surprised how much it reduces the sense of bothersomeness in listening to cassettes.

At the right of the top plate are the electronic controls: dual sliders (for left and right channels) to set recording levels, and a similar pair for playback levels. In front of the sliders is a dual VU meter, which operates in playback as well as recording. The playback level controls with their metered output—both of which are omitted on many cassette decks—actually can help in matching the T-3300's output to the rest of a component stereo system.

At the front of the unit, below the VU meter, are phone jacks for left and right microphones and for stereo headphones. Inserting the microphone plugs automatically disconnects the line inputs. (An outboard mixer can of course be used if you want to mix live sound with that from another source.) Pioneer recommends dynamic microphones rated at between 10,000 and 50,000 ohms. The headphone jack is designed for use with standard low-impedance sets.

The remaining connections are made at the back of the deck. Beginning at the left, there are phono-jack pairs for the line input and line output—the latter delivering better than 2½ volts from a 0-VU signal with playback gain turned all the way up (more than enough for typical tape-monitor or aux connections in your stereo system). Next comes a DIN-style input/output connector, then the power cord, then a grounding terminal that can be used for a ground line to your receiver or preamp if you encounter hum problems, and finally a combined line-voltage selector and fuse.

Considering the amount of gain available in the recording preamp (which is set at maximum during the lab's S/N testing, in this case using Scotch 271 cassettes), the noise measurements are excellent. Note, however, that the meters on our test sample registered 5 dB high, putting home-recorded signals on the tape at a level 5 dB lower than would normally be the case. At that level, IM distortion figures compare favorably with other cassette equipment (though at "normal" levels they would be appreciably less impressive); and the S/N figures indicate enough dynamic range to allow these lower-than-normal levels without concomitant noise problems. Reduction of record levels below those usually taken as standard also makes possible a gain in practical frequency response over that indicated by the lab figures measured at the standard -10 VU. In making our own recordings on the T-3300—using the meters in the normal way with instantaneous peaks driving barely into the red area and sustained loud signals kept below

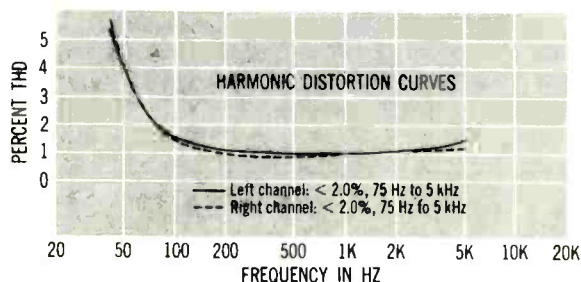
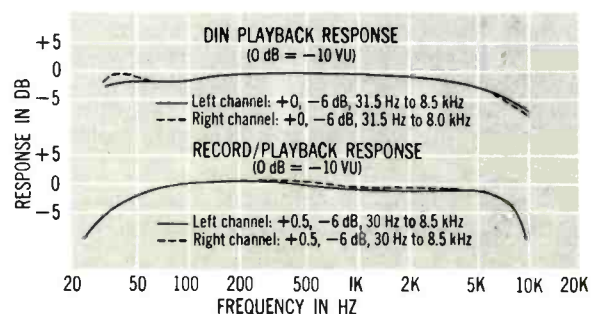
the red area—we had no complaints about restricted high-frequency response compared to other good cassette equipment. The sound produced by the unit, with home-recorded or commercially recorded cassettes, was smooth, natural, and relatively noise-free.

Motion stability figures measured in the lab are excellent for cassette equipment. Although the deck ran slightly fast, 3.3% is not excessive; and the absolute stability with changes in line voltage is impressive. Even more impressive, perhaps, is the very low wow-and-flutter figure.

The handling of the unit is unusually smooth and trouble-free. The finish throughout is what we have come to expect of Pioneer: excellent. The precision with which the parts are mated is particularly reassuring since so much cassette equipment has a somewhat slapdash "feel" to it, suggesting short life expectancy. Pioneer is to be congratulated on a very attractive unit.

Pioneer T-3300 Additional Data

Speed accuracy, 1% ips	105 VAC: 3.3% fast 120 VAC: 3.3% fast 127 VAC: 3.3% fast
Wow and flutter, 1% ips	playback: 0.07% record/playback: 0.08%
Rewind time, C-60 cassette:	56 sec.
Fast-forward time, same cassette:	58 sec.
S/N ratio (ref. 0 VU, test tape)	
playback	L ch: 58.0 dB R ch: 55.0 dB
record/playback	L ch: 53.5 dB R ch: 53.0 dB
Erasure (400 Hz at normal level)	63.0 dB
Crosstalk (400 Hz)	
record left, playback right	37.5 dB
record right, playback left	40.0 dB
Sensitivity (for 0 VU recording level)	
line input	L ch: 78.0 mV R ch: 88.0 mV
mike input	L ch: 0.77 mV R ch: 0.87 mV
Accuracy, built-in meters	Left: 5 dB high Right: 5 dB high
IM distortion (record/play)	
1% ips, -10 VU (test tape)	L ch: 15.0% R ch: 20.0%
-10 VU (meters)	L ch: 12.0% R ch: 9.0%
Maximum output at 0 VU	L ch: 2.7V R ch: 2.6V





Philips' High-Quality Pickup

The Equipment: Philips GP 412, a magnetic stereo phono pickup with elliptical stylus. Price: \$67.50. Manufacturer: Philips of The Netherlands; U.S. distributor: Norelco (North American Philips Corp.), 100 E. 42nd St., New York, N.Y. 10017.

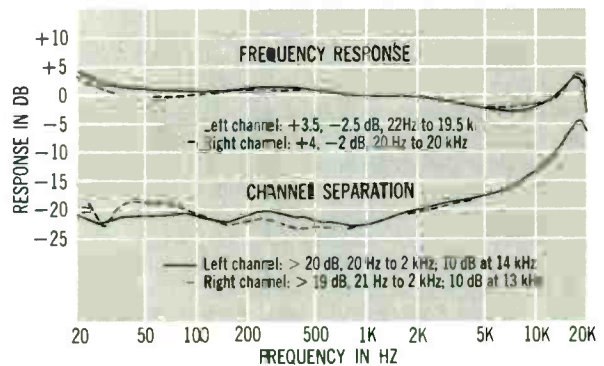
Comment: The GP 412 cartridge, known in Europe as the Philips Super M, is a magnetic phono pickup supplied with elliptical stylus (user-replaceable). Size and dimensions, including mounting holes, are similar to those of other current pickups; the GP 412 will fit any known tone arm. A swing-up stylus guard comes fitted to the cartridge.

Performance of the GP 412 is characterized by wide, smooth frequency response, adequate channel separation, and high compliance. While its harmonic distortion was a shade poorer than average for a pickup in its price class, its IM distortion was exceptionally low. The GP 412 needed 1.5 grams of vertical stylus force to track the torture bands of the CBS test records, and this force was used to derive the test data. Output voltage per channel was comfortably high and very well balanced at 6.3 and 6.2 millivolts respectively for

left and right channels. The stylus' vertical angle measured 19 degrees. Compliance laterally was 25×10^{-6} cm/dyne; vertically, 20. The tip, a true elliptical, measured 0.8 by 0.25 mils. Low-frequency resonance, in the SME arm, was well down at 6.8 Hz.

In extensive listening tests, using the GP 412 in different arms and in various record players, we found it to be an eminently satisfactory cartridge. The bass end was clean, solid, and well-defined; the mids and highs sounded smooth and "well aired" with ample bite in the upper registers. The pickup's fairly high signal output, which tends to improve the signal-to-noise ratio in a given playback system, is a definite plus, particularly when combined with the other performance virtues noted here that make the GP 412 a serious contender for attention by the critical listener and discophile.

CIRCLE 141 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



A Budget Receiver from Sansui

The Equipment: Sansui 350A, a stereo FM/AM receiver. Dimensions: 16 1/2 by 5 1/2 by 12 inches. Price: \$199.95. Manufacturer: Sansui Electric Co. Ltd., Japan; U.S. distributor: Sansui Electronics Corp., 32-17 61st St., Woodside, N.Y. 11377.

Comment: When we describe the Sansui 350A as a budget receiver we mean just that: It will be attractive to buyers who want a component system but who must

budget themselves to a minimum price consistent with component standards.

The 350A has much of the styling and "feel" of Sansui's higher-priced models. The top of the front panel features the typically wide Sansui tuning dial with even spacing between FM channels. To its left is a signal-strength tuning meter; to its right, the tuning knob. Across the bottom are the power on/off switch; headphone jack; speaker switch (main or main-plus-remote); bass, treble, volume, and balance controls; loudness/volume, stereo/mono, tape-monitor, and multiplex-noise-filter switches; and the selector knob (phono, FM, AM, aux). The FM switching illustrates Sansui's way of keeping costs down. Most receivers have a mono-FM position that disables the multiplex circuitry and prevents stereo reception. The 350A does not: Any subcarrier above its stereo sensitivity threshold will produce stereo reception (and light its stereo indicator). If the station still is not strong enough to produce good, quiet listening you can either switch to the mono mode (which recombines left and right signals in the set's amplifier section, effectively canceling the extra noise) or switch in the multiplex noise filter (actually a high-blend circuit that similarly reduces high-frequency noise).

The back panel has clip-type (no spade lugs needed) terminals for 300-ohm FM antenna (twin-lead), 75-ohm FM antenna (coaxial), long-wire AM antenna, and two stereo pairs of speakers. Phono jacks, in right-and-left pairs, are provided for magnetic-phono input, aux input, tape-recording output, and tape-monitor input. Other elements on the back panel include grounding connections, a local/distant FM switch, a ferrite AM antenna, the AC cord, fuse, and a switched convenience outlet. Hidden under the nameplate is an unusually versatile voltage selector, which need not concern most U.S. buyers since the unit is delivered set for standard U.S. house current.

The interrelationship between control and connection features generally is kept as simple as possible in the 350A—reducing costs but imposing some practical limitations. For instance, the speaker selector allows the A system (normally, the main speaker pair) to play either alone or with the B pair, but the B pair cannot be played alone. Inserting a headphone plug into the front-panel jack turns off all speakers—preventing headphone listening in one room while the speakers are used in another. And left and right channels cannot be varied individually at the tone controls. A great many users—perhaps the vast majority—need no more flexibility than that supplied by the 350A, however, and Sansui evidently has chosen its economies with considerable care.

Lab tests of technical performance further confirm this care. In terms of both distortion and frequency response, the deep bass is somewhat disappointing in the CBS Labs test data. But chances are that budget speakers appropriate for the 350A will not reproduce this region adequately in any event. To put it a different way: Don't expect to get 30-Hz organ tones on a budget stereo system. In the rest of the range, where performance really counts, the 350A generally does very well—particularly by comparison to budget equipment of only a few years ago.

Its tuner section also performs well, though it obviously is no record-breaker. At 2.5 microvolts, its IHF FM sensitivity figure is only a little poorer than the 2.0 microvolts figure that is common in better equipment. As input signal strength increases, quieting

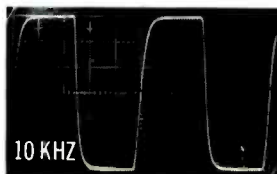
increases rapidly from the 30 dB at which the IHF figure is measured to greater than 40 dB—a figure at which fairly quiet listening is possible. Then the curve descends gradually to the ultimate quieting of 48 dB, achieved by the time signal strength has reached 125 microvolts. In our cable tests the FM section logged forty-two stations, of which thirty-three were judged suitable for long-term listening or recording.

The 350A does not have much reserve power, and very inefficient speakers are to be avoided—particularly if two pairs are to be used—unless the listening room is exceptionally small or live, or you play music only at background-music levels. But with these reservations, we believe that the 350A is admirably suited to anyone who has only \$200 to spend for both a tuner and an amplifier.

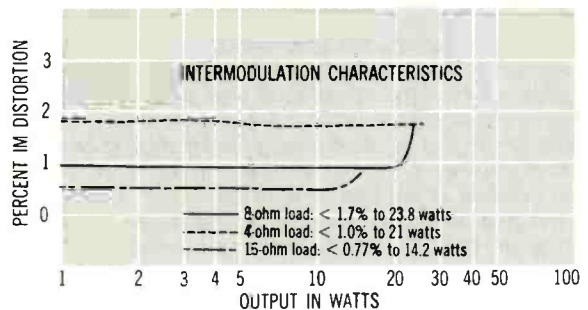
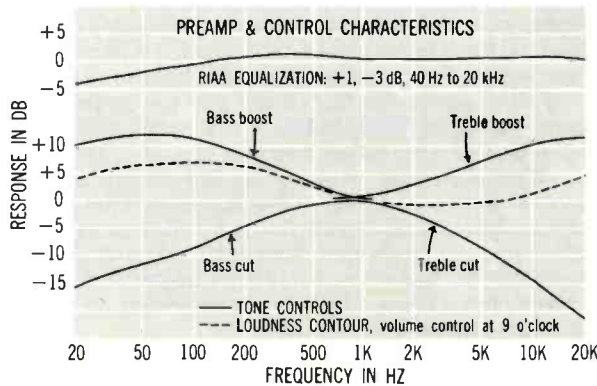
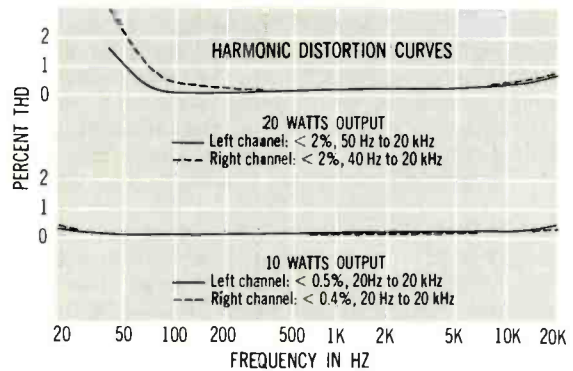
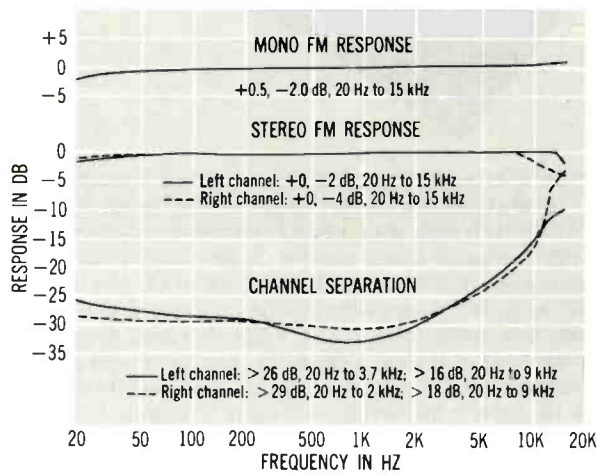
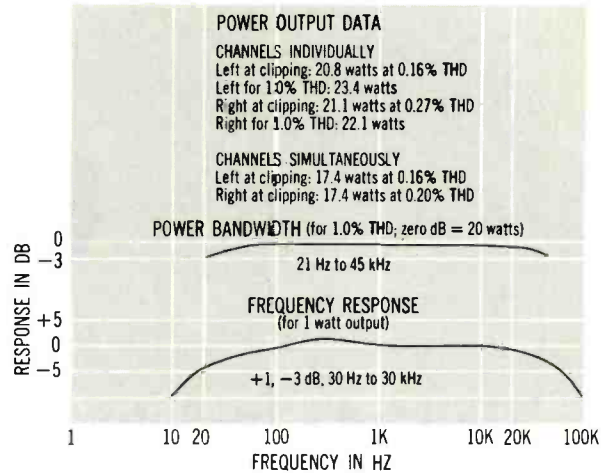
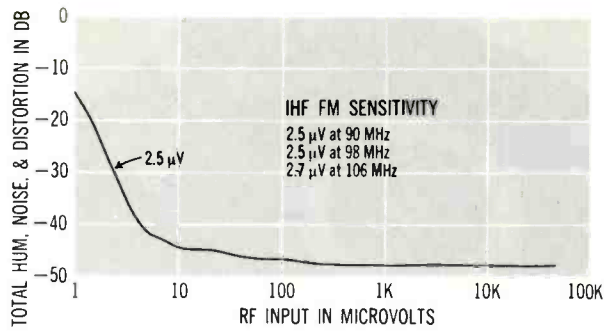
CIRCLE 144 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Sansui 350A Receiver Additional Data

Tuner Section			
Capture ratio	3 dB		
S/N ratio	75 dB		
IM distortion	0.76%		
THD	Mono	L ch	R ch
80 Hz	0.30%	0.52%	0.33%
1 kHz	0.21%	0.24%	0.23%
10 kHz	0.45%	7.5%	7.4%
19-kHz pilot	-55.5 dB		
38-kHz subcarrier	-51.0 dB		
Amplifier Section			
Damping factor	60		
Input characteristics (for 20 watts output)			
	Sensitivity	S/N ratio	
phono	2 mV	61.0 dB	
tape monitor	150 mV	72.5 dB	
aux	164 mV	68.0 dB	



Square-wave response.



REPORTS IN PROGRESS

- Crown IC 150 Preamp
- Panasonic RS-736 Tape Recorder
- Pickering V-15 Phase IV-ATE Phono Cartridge



Garrard's In-Between Synchro-Lab

The Equipment: Garrard SL72B, a three-speed (33-, 45-, and 78-rpm) changer. Dimensions: 14 by 12¼ inches; requires 4¾ inches clearance above mounting board for changer spindle, 7 inches for spindle removal, 3 inches clearance below mounting board. Price: \$89.50; B2 base, \$6.50 additional. Manufacturer: Garrard Engineering Ltd., Wiltshire, England; U.S. distributor: British Industries Co., Westbury, N.Y. 11590.

Comment: The Garrard SL72B is a Synchro-Lab model, meaning that its motor is of the synchronous/induction design that Garrard has successfully used in its premium models for the last few years. The SL72B is very similar to the SL95B (see HIGH FIDELITY test report, January 1971). At the left of the top plate is the speed/size selector with positions for 12-inch 78s, 7-inch 45s, and 12-inch, 10-inch, and 7-inch LPs. To the right are three levers: automatic change-cycle start/stop, manual off/on motor switch, and play/lift for the damped cueing control.

Three spindles are provided: the tall automatic-change mechanism, the stub manual-play spindle, and a large-hole 45 adapter that fits over the manual-play spindle. (A changer spindle for large-hole 45s is available as an accessory.) With the manual spindle in place, records can still be cued automatically by pressing the first of the lever controls, and the arm will return to the rest position at the end of the side.

The arm assembly is similar in basic description to that in the SL95B, with the same plug-in cartridge clip, though the arm itself is a thin, hexagonal tubular design. Just in front of the pivot ring is the tracking-force gauge; at the back end is an adjustable counterweight. On the pivot assembly are adjustments for arm height during the change cycle and stylus set-down point. Beside the arm mount is the antiskating bias adjustment. A restraining clip is built into the arm-support post to prevent accidental motion of the arm when records are being placed on or removed from the turntable.

The turntable is delivered without base, for custom mounting. The usual mounting template is provided, as are clips to hold the three spindles when they are not in use. Most users probably will prefer to buy a base, however. The manufacturer's own B2 base we used with the SL72B has compartments for the spare spindles,

making mounting of the accessory clips unnecessary.

In lab tests the SL72B behaved very much like the SL95B with only insignificant variations in all but one test. Turntable speed is within ½ per cent of correct at all speeds (0.5% fast at 33 rpm, 0.4% at 45, and 0.2% at 78) and did not vary with voltage changes over the normal test range (105 to 127 VAC). Average flutter was measured at 0.09%; CBS-ARLL rumble at -56 dB. By comparison to the SL95B, arm resonance (with a Shure V-15 Type II Improved cartridge) is slightly higher in frequency (7.5 Hz) but slightly lower in amplitude (8 dB). At 20 milligrams in the lateral plane and 70 milligrams vertically, the arm-pivot friction is the only measured characteristic that is significantly poorer than lab measurements of the SL95B, but these figures are by no means excessive. A tracking force of 0.5 grams is needed to trip the changer mechanism. Stylus-force measurements showed the gauge to read somewhat higher than true, but at the bottom of the scale (where tracking force tends to be most critical) it is most accurate. Antiskating forces measure very close to optimum.

In other words, the SL72B will give you virtually the performance of the SL95B at a saving of some \$40—not a bad deal no matter how you look at it. The most obvious differences between the two models are the somewhat smaller platter of the SL72B, and the jazzier arm assembly of the SL95B. As the friction figures document, the change in arm does entail some change in performance; but since no serious degradation is involved, the SL72B can be recommended as a fine changer and an excellent buy.

CIRCLE 143 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Garrard SL72B Additional Data

Stylus gauge accuracy: Gauge setting Grams measured		
1		0.8
2		1.6
3		2.5
4		3.4



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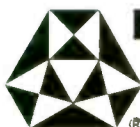
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CIRCLE 82 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

by Conrad L. Osborne



McKay

Paul Boesing as Oedipus in a Center Opera production.

The Revolution Comes to Opera

A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO, I participated in a happily knockdown, drag-out panel discussion at a Central Opera Service conference in Minneapolis. I forget what it was we were supposed to discuss; what we in fact talked about was opera's current failure in this country to connect to practically everybody. The moderator was John Ludwig, general manager of the country's only full-time experimental opera company, Minneapolis' Center Opera; and my fellow panelists were Robert Israel, a young artist who has designed some of the more elaborate Center Opera productions and who is bored by almost all traditional opera save *The Magic Flute*; Patricia Collins, a ridiculously energetic lighting designer, of whom more in a moment; and Robert

Ashley, composer and a founder of The Once Group, who gravely argued that no performance should be repeated, and whom I will always cherish for his reply to the question, "Would you deny our children Mozart?" (After a considered pause: "Yes, that would be my position.")

Shortly after this meeting broke up, or down, Pat Collins herded a bunch of us upstairs, where we lined up to enter, about a dozen at a time, an igloo-like little dome. Inside, we tailor-sat around the dome floor while images from a variety of sources covered the entire inside surface, so that we were surrounded by a welter of color movie and slide projections. These multitrack visuals were keyed by means of an intermedia cueing system to a quadra-

phonic soundtrack. Sights and sounds shifted and intercut continuously; Sutherland getting out three bars of "*Regnava nel silenzio*"; the rude honk of a car horn; a weary voice saying "Please. . ."; traffic; a few more bars of *Lucia*. It was very funny and rather exciting, and it was the demonstration pilot module for an enterprise called Opera Today, of which Pat Collins is the artistic director. And Opera Today is as good a starting point as any for a look at the joggling that opera is already receiving from some of its most talented young practitioners.

Pat is a theater technician—specifically, a lighting designer, and a highly regarded one—with a special interest in the possibilities (as opposed to the common practice) of the musical theater. Some of her earliest work was in opera (with the Turnau Opera Company) and most of the rest in dance, notably during a goodly stint with the Joffrey Ballet. While she was with the Joffrey, her general feeling that the contemporary potential for sung theater was enormous but largely unrealized crystallized into the vision of a breakthrough in the form of presentation. (She gives at least partial credit to the Joffrey production of *Astarte*, a work in which live dancing co-exists with multiscreen film work, and the film and its projection surfaces becoming actual performing elements rather than simply set or décor.)

Since she is a visual technician, Pat Collins' solution is naturally visual and technological in nature. As her pilot module suggests, her company is to perform in a domelike structure, the current version of which consists of a frame of interlocking metal hoops covered with, er, nylon thermal underwear. The actual shape and size of such a structure could of course vary considerably, as could the nature of the playing space inside, since the seating is also in lightweight units.

Scenery in the conventional sense is dispensed with, since the multiprojection system provides a sort of total visual environment that can be used with all the traditional scenic implications, in addition to being a performing element. Live action of any sort may then take place within the playing area, and may assume any chosen relationship to the visual material. Live accompaniment may be played with or against the recorded soundtrack in similar ways.

"There are a hundred ways to approach the problems of technology in the theater," says Pat Collins. "Ours is to confront the technology directly, to try to make a statement about man and his environment through this juxtaposition of live performers with performing technology. There are all sorts of other answers, and they should all be tried—we need all the experimentation we can get. But we feel that this ability to make a statement about modern man and his world by building it right into the medium will result in some exciting work."

There is also an economic factor in Opera Today's figuring. Traditional forms of operatic

presentation lose the economic battle on two fronts: 1) Even if a given production were to break even or show a profit on a night-to-night basis it could not hope to register enough performances to amortize the initial production expense. Nor can it play on a continuous-run basis, since the physical demands on the singers are too great. 2) Particularly with the "grander" types of opera, the salaried personnel, onstage and backstage, are so numerous and the other expenses of performing so high (especially in a repertory situation, with its constant shifting of sets, resetting of lights, and so on) that the running costs themselves will outstrip income anyway, thus simply adding to the loss. In the larger companies, more money is lost every time the curtain is raised.

An Opera Today production involves a large initial investment; the dome itself—together with all the associated technical equipment—is capital outlay, and costs of the imposing amounts of color movie and slide photography, editing, and processing involved are very high. Once the show is open, however, running costs can be quite low, since the mechanical elements run themselves and the number of live participants can be (though not necessarily will be in all cases) minimal. Works can be designed to incorporate any proportion between live music and prerecorded or electronic varieties, but an obvious advantage, which will surely not be wasted, is that both visually and aurally, large-scale effects can be obtained without the presence of masses of live performers. While a "hit" run for a new opera may yet be some distance off, a realistic possibility is extended touring. Since all the elements strike down to a few bundles of hoops, some portable electronic consoles, trays and canisters of visual material, and the underwear, it is conceivable that a large-scale production with its personnel might easily travel in a single vehicle. And since the theater itself is part of the package, the company does not depend upon the presence and availability of local facilities. "Give me a gym or an armory," says Pat Collins, "any sort of space, and we're ready to go."

An armory and a gym, in fact, provided the settings for the first life-size demonstration of Opera Today, an attempt to dramatize *Les Illuminations*, Benjamin Britten's cycle of Rimbaud poems. The production embraced the full battery of surrounding visuals, a company of four dancers, and a live tenor. The accompaniment was entirely recorded (as played by the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra and taped in the extremely sophisticated sound studio of Herb Pilhofer in Minneapolis); and

On the cover: Surrounding hard-hat Mel Boyd are Terry Hemsworth, Paul Boesing, James Scheu, and LeRoy Lehr in the Richard Randall-designed production of Kurt Weill's *The Wise Woman and the King* for the Center Opera Company. Photo by Sutherland.

Film Techniques in Opera



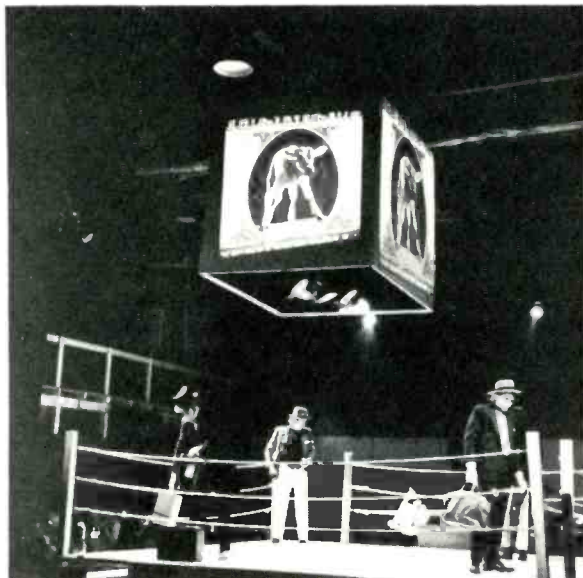
Ken Howard

Projected in back. Haunted faces loom from the backdrop in this scene from the rock opera *Tommy*, as the hero (Steve Curry) is menaced by his sexual initiate, the Acid Queen (Bette Midler), during a Seattle production created by Richard Pearlman earlier this year.



Dagmar

Projected on scrim. In a 1969 Pearlman production, this time for the Washington Opera Society, Benita Valenti as the Governess in Benjamin Britten's *The Turn of the Screw* sits encased in a ghostly shell created by the effect of two motorboat headlights shining through a scrim into the audience as an apparition is projected onto the scrim.



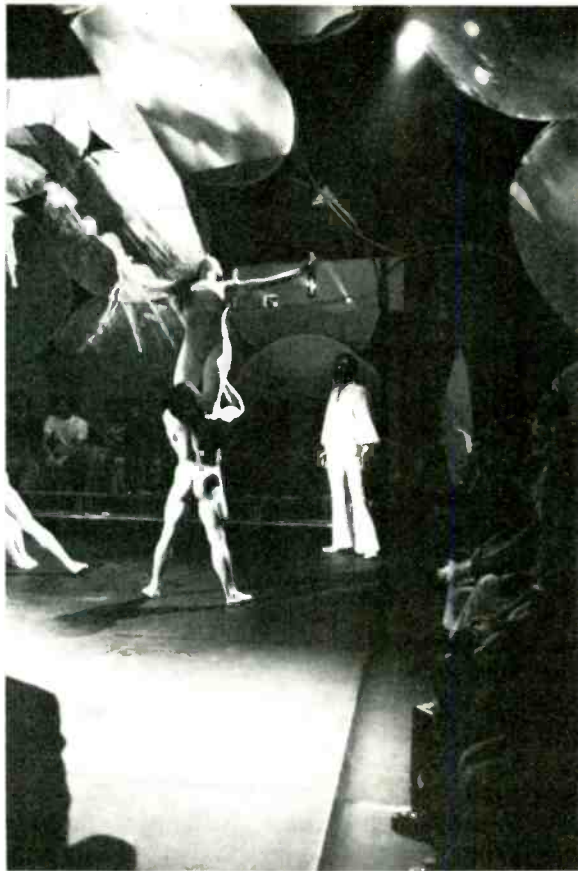
Whitestone Photo

Projected on props. A bitter commentary on the sacred dollar is projected on a prize-ring light enclosure during Ian Strasfogel's version of the Brecht/Weill "little" *Mahagonny* in Tanglewood this past August.



McKay

Projected on people. Designer Herman George's white costumes for John Faust (Vern Sutton) and Marguerite (Sarita Roche) become screens for light projections by Patricia Collins in the Center Opera Company's production in Minneapolis of *Faust Counter Faust* last January.



Projected on underwear. The underwear, to be sure, is stretched across the hoops that form a sort of distorted Buckminster Fullerish dome, under which four dancers and a tenor perform another Britten work, *Les Illuminations*, in a 1970 Opera Today production by Patncia Collins.

a few segments of tenorizing were also on the soundtrack, welded more or less seamlessly to the vocalizing of the live singer. The production ran to invited audiences in a New York armory, then in a gym at the Lake George Festival on a double bill with Stanley Silverman's "occult opera," *Elephant Steps*.

Les Illuminations was intended to demonstrate, backers-audition style, the possibilities of the Opera Today concept. It did: All those things can go on at once, and the technical complexities are obviously within the company's grasp despite a few first-time-through crudities. There is an undeniable excitement to the general aural/visual ambience. It also demonstrated (at least for me) that critical selectivity must be exercised in focusing the onlooker's attention (no matter how interesting or important the film material, it is impossible to ignore a live dancer working a few feet from the audience, and if the visuals are only marginally perceived, then they indeed become mere scenery); that unusually accomplished performers and, especially, a sure directorial taste are required if acting, dancing, and

singing are to be successfully combined; and most of all, that new works rather than pre-existing song cycles must form the material of this performance format—almost all the difficulties were surely traceable to the fact that despite the level of talent and imagination involved, none of this except the singing was in any way organic to the Rimbaud/Britten cycle; at best, it constituted commentary on the work.

Opera Today is currently in the process of creating its first new work, a full-length piece whose libretto is a sort of contemporary commentary on the last book of *Gulliver's Travels*—the final voyage. Three composers are contributing to the score, and the librettists, composers, and Miss Collins and her associates are forming a kind of creative/production team, so that the work is growing quite directly out of the idea of this sort of music theater. She feels the problem of focus will be less acute in this piece, since the dome will be considerably larger than the one used for *Les Illuminations*. "When you're in a small space and that close to it, the live performer has got to take all your attention—you can't take in enough at once to avoid making him the center of it. In the larger space we'll be able to obtain a better perspective, and throw the emphasis one way or the other.

"Besides, in our own work we won't be stuck with the structure of the pre-existing piece, which in the Britten is beautiful but is essentially linear and sustained. That's not the nature of our kind of presentation, which is geared to fast contrasts and changes, and to the reception of a multiplicity of impressions. We think—and this is born out by audience reactions so far—that our way of communicating will make special sense to the young, to those who have been raised on the technical/visual language of films and television. Things happen with unbelievable suddenness, wham, they change, they don't stick, lots of things happen at once, some of them perceived only subliminally. You can argue about the possibilities and limitations of this, but there's no doubt it has an expressive validity and somehow describes our world—now. We're trying to do what the technology can do best, use it for its strengths, set against what the live performer can contribute."

It is symbolic of the beginning operatic revolution that Pat Collins has formed her own company to embody her personal artistic vision. She continues to work in more traditional opera companies as lighting designer, but feels the answers to the operatic crisis will lie outside these institutions. "It's just not going to happen in the traditional opera company—forget it. Of course this means a lot of extra insecurity and trouble for the artist, organizing your own company, raising money, making your case. Artists have got to start pushing pencils whether they like it or not, because it's the guys who push the pencils who call the shots." Pat

New Comic Stylizations



McKay

In the Robert Indiana-designed production of Virgil Thomson's and Gertrude Stein's *The Mother of Us All* for the Tyrone Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis, Susan B. Anthony (Judith Erickson), flanked by caricatures of Angela Davis, Jimi Hendrix, Herbert Hoover, and S. I. Hayakawa, sings to promote women's liberation.



Ken Howard

Actress Sheila Nelms as Brünnhilde and female impersonator Johnny McGowan (he was Jackie Kennedy in the underground film *Tricia's Wedding*) as Salome invade the domain of Richard Best as Don Pasquale at the San Francisco Spring Opera this year.



Whitestone Photo

Michael Best in the title role points his broken sword at "subtitle" held by Boutefeu (David Holloway) during last August's Tanglewood production of Offenbach's *Croquefer*.

and her colleagues (Herb Kaplan, music director, and Al Berr, business manager) are pushing pencils, and at some not-too-distant point, *Gulliver* will get its shot.

Another company that has already cut a swath in terms of contemporary opera productions is John Ludwig's Center Opera Company of Minneapolis. The group was formed in 1963 as a little performing unit of the Walker Arts Center. Its initial funding came from the Rockefeller Foundation and local sources, along with the charge to produce experimental opera. Ludwig, whose background was primarily theatrical (Yale Drama School, a Ford administrative internship at the Cleveland Playhouse, and such professional assignments as production work with Nikos Psacharapoulos' high-grade summer theater in Williamstown, Mass.), joined the Center's staff as administrative head of the opera unit, and recruited Wesley Balk, a director he had met at Yale, to act as resident director and to attempt to build an ensemble that could work together as a cohesive theatrical unit.

This progression is symbolic of the Center Opera's orientation, for while Balk has been on the scene virtually from the start as its theatrical director and most influential creative individual, the company has only this year appointed a full-time music director. He is Phillip Brunelle, who has conducted, coached, and played piano in a number of the company's productions, and who left the position of pianist with the Minnesota Orchestra to devote full time to the Center Opera. From the start, the Center's repertory has been heavily

contemporary (very rare excursions into Mozart or Monteverdi are the only exceptions), and has focused on works which need only a few performers and a few instrumentalists. This has been largely a matter of artistic policy, but obviously one of economic limitations as well; though the budget has grown substantially since the first season, it is still extremely small as seasonal opera budgets go, and one of the company's recent promotional pieces—a brown paper bag with scrawled lettering—boasts that the Center is America's CHEAPEST opera company.

At first, there was a strong emphasis on imaginative treatment of visual elements in the Center's productions. This concentrated in the costuming, since the company consciously avoided involvement with massive scenic elements, and since the productions were presented on the thrust stage of the Tyrone Guthrie Theater. Israel's imagination simply took off with several of the shows, and at a showing of his work in a New York gallery last year his costumes for Eric Stokes' *Horspfa* and designs for Harrison Birtwistle's *Punch and Judy* attracted much of the attention. Robert Indiana designed a lavish, pageant-style *Mother of Us All* (the company's current touring version of this piece is based on a very different production concept), and a local designer named Herman George has made distinctive contributions to several productions, including the *pasticcio* *Faust Counter Faust*, also in the company's touring repertory.

Design is still an important facet of the Center Opera's work, but in the past few years, constant reconsideration of the functions of this type of company have led to a gradual shift of emphasis onto the performers themselves. This reflects two goals in the thinking of Ludwig and Balk—first, the creation of a true ensemble of theatrically capable performers who hold some artistic goals in common and share a technical language; second, the creation of a situation wherein a resident group of performers can live and work on a sustained, year-round basis, as true professionals rather than as jobbers or piecework craftsmen. (This is a condition that does not exist for American singers short of the Metropolitan.)

Ludwig, who is probably the most astute and thoughtful general manager on the American operatic scene, has worked hard toward the latter concept, and has brought it to the point of having a small resident company (and one drawn from talent already in the area) under long-term contract, though not yet at a pay scale that can be called professional in the middle-class American sense. Balk has taken advantage of this unfortunately unique situation to create what is so far the only American opera group whose members are free, flexible, and directable on the stage, in a way that is assumed in legitimate theater, but considered revolutionary in opera. (As one girl in the company

says, "I'd think nothing of singing a role standing on my head.") Rehearsal periods are long, and when one show is finished, the next starts—the company is thus a permanent workshop. Balk's work needs the long rehearsal just from a mechanical standpoint—it is stylized and complex. But the continuity pays off in basic ways too, for the standard of precision extends into the musical side, and the productions are customarily close to impeccable in terms of both musical and theatrical execution. There has never been a prompter, and due to the design of the Guthrie, the company developed ways of placing the accompaniment backstage or below stage, with conductor contact through closed-circuit TV.

The Center Opera's current basic problems are two—repertory and audience. Of the contemporary works that have demonstrated some appeal for the traditional opera audience, most are too grandiose for the Center (panoply operas, such as Ginastera's, or the American "mainstream" works of Carlisle Floyd, Robert Ward, Douglas Moore, et al., which also accord badly with the company's experimental aesthetic), and though there is certainly a large quantity of "small" contemporary operas there are very few good ones. Increasingly, the company is seeking to create its own work. Commissioning has been a part of its activity right along, especially where area composers could be involved (e.g., Eric Stokes and Dominick Argento). More recently, and especially since the establishment of the resident ensemble, the company has worked toward techniques of group creation and improvisation, with the singers and director participating quite directly in the creative process—a practice almost as old as opera itself, but one in disuse of late. Improvisation figured heavily in an Oedipus piece a season ago, and contributed toward the finally fixed form of *The Wanderer*, a work by Paul and Mary Boesing in which scenes and characters were developed around patterns suggested by the *I Ching*. *The Wanderer*, in fact, with its gently folk-rockish score written to the strengths of a particular group of legitimate singers, and with its total absence of compositorial posing and intellectual diddling, is one of the most successful of American operas in terms of establishing audience contact in an unforced, emotionally valid way. It went well with a predominantly young audience in Minneapolis (at the Cedar Riverside Theater), and scored a hit during a summer run in Houston.

The audience problem is a tough nut to crack for the Center. On the one hand, a loyal audience of some size must be found if the year-round resident concept is to have a chance, and if money is to be raised from either box-office or contributed sources. On the other, the company is dedicated to the production of new work and to experimentation with production concepts and styles, neither of which will go forward if too wary an eye is kept on the

Two New-Style Opera Directors



Richard Pearlman stands in for a shot during the filming of *The Turn of the Screw*.



Whitstone Photo

Ian Strasfogel (right) directs Syble Young, Joyce Castle, Poppy Holden, and David Holloway in a passage from his own creation to the music of György Ligeti's wordless (but filled with vocal and oral sounds) *Adventures*, a highlight of the past Tanglewood season.

box office. As Balk says, "I'm afraid our experience shows clearly an inverse ratio between the degree of experimentation and the size of the audience." The Twin Cities area is culturally alive and intellectually sophisticated, but one cannot expect large, steady audiences until all the experimentation has, as it were, come out at the other side, and American sung theater emerges with its own voice. Meanwhile, there is no substitute for struggle.

Though the Center is the only American company yet working in concrete ways toward the goal of a full-time resident company for the performance of predominantly contemporary American work, there are signs of a dawning awareness that opera ought to have some congress with theatrical developments of the past quarter-century. Among the established institutions, a major gesture in this direction has been taken by the Spring Opera Theater of San Francisco. This is the direct descendant of the San Francisco Spring Opera, which was a semi-autonomous arm of the San Francisco Opera, performing English-language spring seasons in the War Memorial Opera House with casts of young American singers.

For a variety of artistic, economic, and logistic reasons, the board of the Spring Opera pulled the company out of the opera house and plunked it down in the Curran Theater on Geary Street in the heart of the entertainment district. A semithrust stage was built out over the pit, and the orchestra placed backstage, with closed-circuit TV links between stage and conductor, in a variation of the Center Opera's system for the Guthrie. The brief repertory season mounted this year represented an effort to come to grips with the problem of opera as a directorial medium. Except for a visiting package of the Center Opera's *Faust Counter Faust*, the season consisted of old works: *Rigoletto*, *Don Pasquale*, and Mozart's *Titus*. But each of these pieces was entrusted to a young director with a very special view of the work: Gil Moses (director of *Slave Ship*) saw *Rigoletto* in terms of the decadent misuse of power and the relation of the exploited to the power structure in a modern society; Richard Pearlman put *Pasquale* into San Francisco's North Beach district around the turn of the century (with Norina a Japanese maid); and William Francisco wrestled with what I firmly believe to be the insoluble *Titus* problem by viewing it as a moral parable presented by a group of teenage amateur actors, with alternate casts of the young actors (making

dialogue of all the secco recitative) and adult singers in evening dress.

The season was a huge success in popular and critical terms—the Curran was jammed with a lively audience (a startling proportion of which was altogether separate from San Francisco's normal operatic audience) that responded with great enthusiasm; press reception was friendly. Artistically, it was of course refreshing to see all the standard assumptions challenged, and attempts made to find the individual viewpoint which alone makes for theatrical vitality—again, something taken for granted in legitimate theater (no one's jaw drops at the thought of a change in period or a new interpretive approach to Shakespeare). The Spring Opera Theater evenings all had a basic life and interest seldom found on the operatic stage.

But this first season represents only the first step—the logical conclusions must be drawn. In any theater in which the focus is on genuine re-creation by director and performers (any worthwhile theater, in other words), one must be willing to follow through. Directorial concepts are but a small part of the battle—execution is finally what counts. In this first season, Spring Opera Theater was attempting to produce valid theater with bold directorial concepts, but within the standard mold of operatic preparation and production—the very system that has been responsible for the exclusion of our theatrical mainstream (to say nothing of experimentation) from the opera house. You cannot present a director with a preselected cast (this alone compromises things from the outset), allot three weeks of rehearsal for three new productions, and hope to achieve what is achieved in the spoken theater through careful casting in consultation (at least) with the director and a minimum of four weeks' full-time rehearsal for a single production—and without the crucial extra problems attendant upon the musical side of operatic production.

This is, literally, impossible. In the Spring Opera productions, one saw hints, beginnings of interesting ideas and concepts—and indeed there was nothing wrong with any of the basic production plans *per se*. But the ideas were seldom followed to their logical theatrical ends, seldom translated into an organic, continuing life on the stage. One was grateful for the first step. To take the second step, the Spring Opera Theater (which has an intelligent and energetic board and the backing of Kurt Herbert Adler's San Francisco Opera—an unusual and encouraging sign from an established grand opera company) must have its own artistic director and over-all production co-ordinator, a system of casting that takes each production concept as a determinant, a willingness to commission its own translations to fit such concepts (there is no point in attempting what Gil Moses attempted in *Rigoletto* and grafting the result to a standard Martin translation), and at least double its present

rehearsal time. These are tall orders, but in my opinion it is not a matter of choice but of necessity. Salutes are in order for the distance leaped in the first season; with the talent and intelligence at work in San Francisco, further progress is bound to be made.

It will be noted that almost all this activity proceeds from the assumption that operatic production should get out from under the dominance of the musical side of the form and its practitioners (music directors and conductor). Either the visual/design elements form the starting point (as with Opera Today and, to an extent, some of the Center Opera productions), or the director becomes what we might term the interpretive leader, as he is in the legitimate theater, or as the choreographer (*not* the conductor) is in dance theater. And in addition to established directors from the American legitimate theater who have involved themselves more or less heavily with opera (e.g., Corsaro, Mann, Quintero, Caccoyannis) there is an emerging generation of directorial talent with a contemporary theatrical orientation and a primary interest in sung theater of one sort or another. Besides the aforementioned Balk, Moses, and Francisco, there are at least two who have already attracted serious attention: Richard Pearlman and Ian Strasfogel.

Pearlman has a solid background in big-company grand opera, having worked in Italy and, for three years, at the Metropolitan. He is unusual among his contemporaries in that he obviously has considerable understanding of, and affection for, the traditional operatic literature. He has almost nothing good to say about grand opera production as usually practiced, and is driven up the wall by the conglomeration of tension, syndrome, and hangup that comprises most operatic acting; but he does not deride the power of great singing, nor the validity of most of the works that survive in the repertory.

Pearlman is intensely interested in the current experimentation in group creation and improvisation; some of his recent time has been spent with Joseph Chaikin and his Open Theater group, and the directions taken by Peter Brook, Jerzy Grotowski, and other post-Artaud manifestations absorb much of his interest. He also has strong predilections in visual/technical matters, and elaborate film, slide, and light work has figured in several of his productions, often in collaboration with Ron Chase.

Upon leaving the Metropolitan, Pearlman had a spell as artistic director of the Washington Opera Society, during which he produced a string of unorthodox and popularly successful shows, perhaps the most notable of which was a *Turn of the Screw* (with Chase) that made complex and almost continuous use of film (projected on scrims and directly onto performers, props, furniture) to create the eerie ambiguity of the piece's atmosphere. Washington

being nothing if not a political town, Pearlman was after a time an outgoing administration. He thereupon staged the San Francisco *Pasquale*, and then (again with Chase) a staged interpretation of *Tommy*, which scored an enormous audience success and won good critical reception in Seattle, under the aegis of the Seattle Opera.

Pearlman is one of those individuals with a permanent luggage of production ideas and scenarios. Scratch his forehead and out comes *Poppea* in a mixed-media, allegory-of-Fascist-power interpretation; or a *Traviata* in a New Orleans bordello, with a Creole Violetta; or an evening of the occult in song. He is reluctantly but probably inevitably concluding that the operatic world as it exists will not afford him space and time for the things he wants most to do, and much of his talk centers on the idea of a modern "populist" music theater, derived from popular sources raised to the level of important artistic statement. His next project is right down this alley: a new work called *The Dream Machine*, which he will direct this season at the Arena Stage in Washington. Book, lyrics, and music are by Jimmy Steinman, who presented it originally at Amherst College as an academic project. ("He got a D on it," Pearlman reports.) Pearlman believes Steinman is "an almost unlimited talent . . . his music is a sort of combination of Prokofiev, Bartók, and hard rock, if you can imagine, but with something very much his own. The libretto is brilliant. It reminds me a bit of an early Verdi opera, where you can say that this or that is a bit crude, but it all just doesn't matter because the sheer savage energy sweeps all of that out of the way. I told Zelda Fichandler [of the Arena Stage] that for something like this I'd need at least two months' rehearsal. She said, 'Oh, all right.' How could I not do it?"

Ian Strasfogel is the son of Metropolitan conductor and coach Ignaz Strasfogel, and thus obviously grounded-by-association in grand opera. He spent a period as apprentice/observer under Walter Felsenstein at the Komische Oper in East Berlin, about six months in the directors' unit at the Actors Studio, and some time staging with the New York City Opera. He too has worked directorially within the standard system (principally for the St. Paul Opera), but he too believes that the important directions will be taken outside that system. "How can you do interesting work when not only is the time much too short, but the real problems of performance aren't even recognized? And how are we ever going to arrive at anything meaningful when everything we do must be calculated in terms of short cuts to 'pleasing' a particular audience? Under that kind of production pressure, we all fall into those traps—you see it in the work of the best directors, doing something flashy and fashionable and meaningless, because at least it will trigger

some applause, and there isn't time for anything more."

As a first step toward something more, Strasfogel, who has for several years been director of opera for the New England Conservatory, secured the cooperation of the Boston Symphony for the establishment of a Music Theater Project at Tanglewood this past summer. The project pulls together about a dozen gifted young singers ("really serious about doing something creative and new," says Strasfogel, "they truly are *not* interested in that London recording contract"), some of the young instrumental talents that seem to spring out of every bush at Tanglewood, with Gunther Schuller as music director, and some mixed chamber-opera repertory (mostly modern, but a little classical and even romantic, if satirical Offenbach can be called that), and puts them all down in the West Barn, a structure that has been renovated and set up as a more or less free-space theater.

Like Balk and Pearlman, Strasfogel believes it is of cardinal importance to work with young singers individually toward a basic stage flexibility and relaxation, and as a group toward an ensemble sensitivity. Ideally, there should be a lengthy period of such work in private before performance preparation is initiated. But such conditions do not obtain, and at Tanglewood the project was expected to produce two operatic bills in the five weeks' work. The first was a double bill of Offenbach's *Croquefer* and the "little" *Mahagonny* of Brecht/Weill—the latter in a particularly strong presentation; the second, a triple bill of Satie's *Socrate*, Harrison Birtwistle's *Down by the Greenwood Side*, and György Ligeti's *Adventures*.

Strasfogel looks to the day when such a group can exist on a year-round basis and with less production pressure, forming the nucleus of a new kind of opera company. "And I would want to do the administrative work, too," he says, quite without cueing from Pat Collins. "Artists should learn it and do it, so that the administrative structure will grow out of the artistic needs, rather than fight them. It still seems extraordinary to me that the people who are good at money-raising feel this entitles them to a say in artistic matters, but that's the way it is, and I guess in fact there is a certain justice in it. So the artist must get himself involved in all that."

It is going to be a while before any of these young artists finds or makes the conditions he needs, or before any of these companies leads a safe, unharried existence. The important thing, the exciting thing, is that some of the problems have been recognized and attacked by people of intelligence, energy, and talent. There is a healthy mix and clash, a healthy attitude of artistic independence and creative contemporaneity. Something will come of it. ●

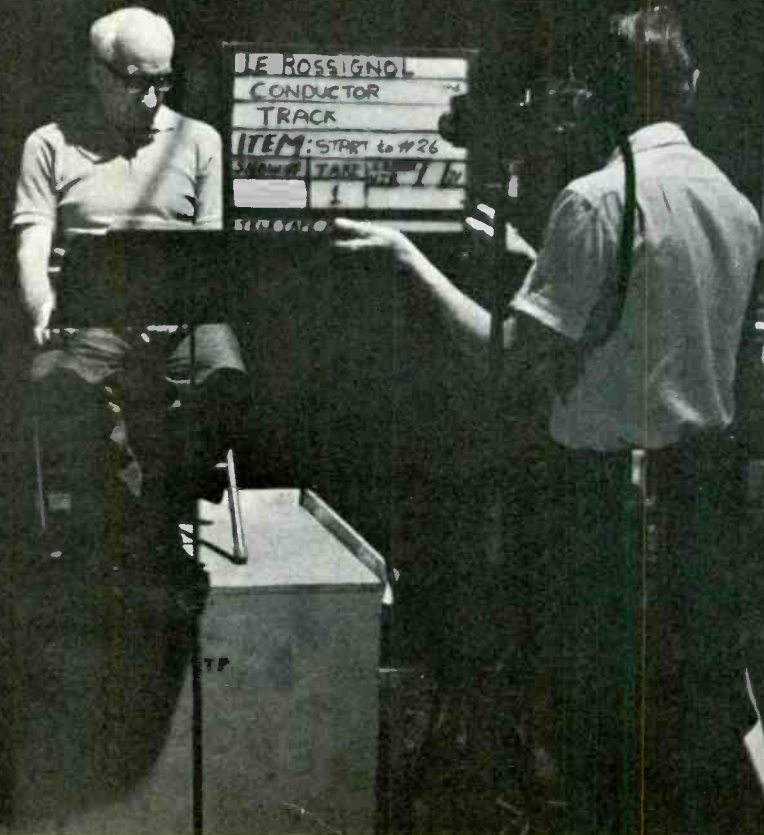


A revolutionary procedure:
sight and sound are months
and cities apart.

THERE ARE ANY number of ways to prepare an opera production for television, each with its particular pitfalls. During the days of the NBC Opera, everything—both the musical and the visual elements—were broadcast live, with no opportunities for re-takes, and hence with sometimes hair-raising results. But live telecasts and NBC Opera are both things of the past. Now we have the Opera Theater of National Educational Television (NET), under the music directorship of NBC Opera's former chief, Peter Herman Adler. For its first two years, NET Opera's procedure had been to record the show with the orchestra under Adler in one room, and with the sets and on-camera performers in another room under the direction of an assistant conductor who followed Adler's beat via a monitor.

The method has one costly disadvantage: that of paying for an idle orchestra during the many inevitable periods taken up by technical adjustments. To overcome this, NET devised another procedure—one which, in Adler's words, "could be either a trail-blazer or a fatal affair." It retains the isolation of the audio from the video—but now with a vengeance. For this season's opening production of Stravinsky's *Le Rossignol* (*The Nightingale*) next month, the video—including on-camera singing—

Taping *Le Rossignol* for Television





was taped last June in New York; the unseen performers—including NET's "pit" ensemble, all members of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, and leading singers Reri Grist, Lili Chookasian, and Sidney Johnson—recorded their parts three months later in Boston. In New York, the seen vocalists were accompanied by a distant piano, and their voices were picked up by directional mikes which, hopefully, did not pick up the piano sound. While one recorder taped both singing and staging, another, carefully synchronized with the first, recorded the conductor. The purpose of the latter: to enable Adler to watch himself via a monitor during the Boston sessions, and thus match the audio tempos to the video ones. He also had an eye on a second monitor in Boston, showing the video track.

Because of the problem of maintaining the same beat on separate occasions, *Le Rossignol* was a happy choice of opera by NET. "It is a work that can be done in bits and pieces," Maestro Adler declared. "It has no roles which need the emotional development of *Butterfly* or *Tosca*. Stravinsky was an antiromantic, so he doesn't use rubato. There's only one accelerando mark in the entire score."

Other reasons for the choice of *Le Rossignol*: Stravinsky's death earlier this year; last year's production by the Santa Fe Opera (from which came most of the props and costumes); and the work's forty-minute length—making it an easy one with which to experiment.

JACK HIEMENZ

In New York last June . . .



Among the directional microphones is this one concealed in the handle of the fan held by baritone Emile Renan, who performs the role of the Emperor.



While a video camera records Peter Herman Adler's conducting, a microphone picks up piano (played by Martin Smith) and understudy Susan Spacagna (substituting for Reri Grist's Nightingale). The sound accompanying the stage action will not be heard on the air, but will go onto a "cue channel" of the video tape, for use in editing and monitoring later on.



Photos by Sheila Schultz

Sung Kil Kim, Robert Owen Jones, and Michael Best as the Japanese ambassadors sing to the piano accompaniment. Although the piano will not be heard on the final tape, their singing, picked up by directional microphones, will.



Dancers in the Chinese Emperor's throne room perform to the accompaniment of the piano.



Staging consultant Rhoda Levine shares a coffee break with choreographer John Butler as Kirk Browning pares his nails.



Audio engineer Jack Pfeiffer and producer Kirk Browning watch monitors of both the stage action and Adler's conducting during the session.

Three Months Later in Boston . . .



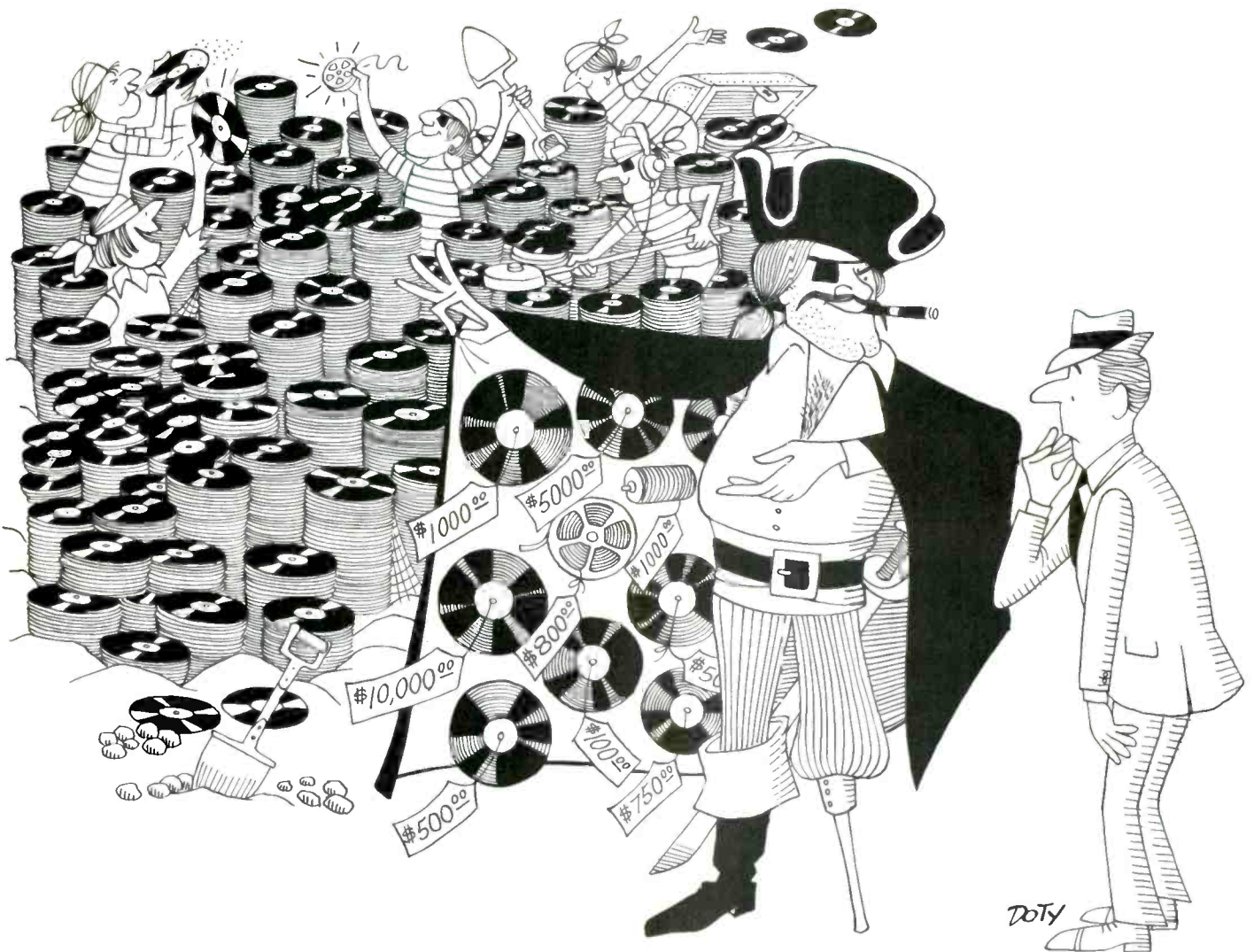
Eyeing the monitors in front of his stand, Adler prepares to direct members of the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

THE NEOPHYTE who joins the opera underground is like the proverbial child with a new toy. He begins to get record lists from the pirates, tape lists from new correspondents, rumors from his friends, and a dying wail from his bank account. Depending on whether he has a bent for historical-vocal or musical-vocal recordings he begins by spending every spare cent on old Met broadcasts or endless obscure bel canto operas. If his interests are both historical and esoteric, then he'd better have the salary of an AT&T vice-president. He fires off his own lists, buys tape by the case, and the days are never long enough to get the listening done. One day, after he has complete collections of Verdi, Wagner, and Gounod, fourteen Bayreuth *Ring* cycles, every breath Caballé has taken since debuting at the Bremen Opera, and more performances

of *Fedora* than the Met has given in its eighty-seven-year history, a feeling comes on him which in the first flush of discovery he never thought he would feel—he's jaded.

He scorns taping yet a third Roussel *Padmâvatî* as ridiculous ostentation; he turns down a prewar Bayreuth *Meistersinger* whose only virtue is a later-famous soprano singing the apprentice. And when he hears (as I did recently) that a New York collector is on the trail of a complete opera featuring Enrico Caruso he realizes consciously what he has known for some time. Everything exists! If it was ever recorded, it still exists; someone has it. If it was ever broadcast, it still exists; someone has it.

The first inkling of this must have come to the generation of collectors that preceded mine, when the late William H. Seltsam of the International



by Bill Collins **Mining the Musical**

Record Collectors Club discovered and issued the legendary Mapleson cylinders, recorded by Mapleson backstage and sometimes in the prompter's box at the Metropolitan Opera from 1901-3 when he was the Met librarian. Suddenly the long-lost voices of Jean de Reszke, Fritzi Scheff, and Lucienne Bréval sounded loud and sometimes even clear from those fragile ovals. Could the other fabled, rumored cylinders be far behind: the widely advertised products of Gianni Bettini's recording studio (the De Reszkes, Patti, Plancon, and Sembrich in their primes); Brahms playing Brahms. Mrs. Grieg singing Grieg; perhaps even the Holy Grail of collectors, the Jenny Lind cylinder?

Then came the '50s and the beginning of the flood of underground records, proof that long before the invention of tape the faithful had begun preserving complete stage roles of Ponselle, Tibbett, Martinelli, and Pinza—live performances that overshadowed the endless remakes of "*O Paradiso*," "*Il balen*," and "*Sempre libera*" turned out in the antiseptic studios at Camden, New Jersey and Hayes, Middlesex. Now the once-a-century mountings of Rossini, Bellini, Donizetti, and Verdi were captured, preserved—and purchased (if you knew somebody). Whatever it is, it exists; someone has it. The problem, all too often, is the owners.

Consider for a moment what is known to exist. The Swedish Radio has the only extant cylinder of the supersoprano Christine Nilsson, who sang Marguerite in the Metropolitan's opening night *Faust* in 1883. They won't play it. Nor will they rebroadcast their complete *Faust* with Feodor Chaliapin, recorded in 1935. The Austrian Radio has a Chaliapin *Faust*, too. And a *Boris*. And Strauss conducting his *Rosenkavalier* (the latter is available to any radio station with an extra \$10,000, however). Somewhere in a Windsor Castle attic reposes at least one cylinder made by Jean de Reszke in the 1890s, as well as Lord knows what else—Queen Victoria loved opera singers and in her last years had them record as well as entertain. Yale University recently purchased the only known cylinder of the voice of Jean Baptiste Faure, but who can hear it? Not you, not I.

The list is endless. Most European broadcasting companies have transcriptions going back to the early Thirties, but because of their own restrictions and those imposed by the musicians' union even station executives cannot listen to them. Many of the major opera companies (the Met, Covent Garden, Teatro Colón, to name only a few) have been officially or unofficially taping all performances

since the mid-Fifties. A former executive of the Chicago Lyric Theatre Opera has the only tape of the famous Callas/Bjoerling/Stignani/Bastianini *Trovatore*; another Chicagoan claims a Galli-Curci *Bohème*, her farewell to the stage; and there is a money-mad Philadelphian who has eight of Caruso's unpublished records. They're yours for \$8,000. But before you start taking up a collection, bear in mind the fate of a collector-pirate record producer who did get up the dough, only to be told by an RCA vice-president that yes indeed he could buy the Caruso set but that they must be immediately turned over to Victor, and remain unpublished. Oh, the dogs; oh, the mangers.

Still, at the risk of a too-mixed metaphor, the devils we know must seem to us more evil than the devils we don't. Who has the Martinelli/Flagstad *Tristan* of 1940? Who has Flagstad's *Oberon* from Radio Zurich in 1942? In spite of wartime bombing, is Radio Italiana really bereft of Gigli's Poliuto and Des Grieux, or Schipa's Werther and Nemorino? Are the Russians really sitting on fourteen complete operas in primitive stereo conducted by Furtwängler and taken as spoils of war from Berlin (not to mention the Joseph Schmidt/Bruno Walter *Idomeneo*)? Is a ten-minute segment all that still exists of Schoenberg conducting *Von Heute auf Morgen* on German radio in 1930? What about the Chicago Opera broadcasts of the late 1920s with Muzio, Mary Garden, and Yvonne Gall? And what about those Callas broadcasts of Fedora, Alceste, Konstanze, the *Don Carlo* Elisabetta, Haydn's Euridice, Boito's Elena, and Isolde? And surely Commendatore Bettini sold more of his cylinders than just Sembrich's *Voices of Spring* and Pope Leo's benediction.

To be sure, nothing can be done about the private persons who insist on proprietary rights to unique and valuable sound documents. Only time, conscience, and luck, or perhaps a bit of enterprising burglary, can deal with them. The record companies, radio networks, and musicians' unions may perhaps be another matter. No precedent has yet been established regarding the Toscanini, Koussevitzky, Furtwängler, and Mengelberg broadcasts that have been commercially pressed. All they prove is that some large symphony orchestras keep accurate records on their union personnel.

The author, a publishers' representative, is familiar with buried music treasures. In his off hours he is an opera critic for Pacifica Station KPFA which broadcasts a program of underground records and tapes in San Francisco.

Underground

Should buried treasures be left exclusively for the pirates?

Nor have the wartime opera and concert performances perpetuated on Urania, England's Unicorn label, or the U.S.S.R.'s Melodiya proved anything except that nobody from the late (Third) Reichsrundfunk Gesellschaft cares to argue the reprint rights for Nazi Germany-originated recordings.

More pertinent, certainly, is the case of the EMI/Covent Garden *Turandot* from the coronation season of 1937. With every intention of eventually issuing them to the public, EMI recorded major in-the-house excerpts from several super-performances of Martinelli and Eva Turner singing under the baton of John Barbirolli, but royalty discussions with the Musicians Union on behalf of the players of the London Philharmonic and Covent Garden chorus held up pressing until far too late. England went to war, and when a decade later EMI returned to the possibility of making them available to the public, the question of just who had played in the orchestra or sung in the chorus was an unanswerable one—German bombs had taken their toll of lives and files, and no way could be found to reconstruct the roster of participants, let alone contact them or their next of kin for the required releases and royalty agreements. Never mind the historic content of the performances, never mind their next-to-definitive nature: if the union acceded here, the domino theory would overwhelm it in subsequent requests for the release of historically and artistically irreplaceable documents. So it reasons, and so it may well be right. Would that be so wrong?

The *Turandot*, or a good part of it at least, has of course appeared in the underground. Nobody is making any royalties on it and nobody ever will, except the man who markets it. The union has lost, but so have thousands of record buyers who will never find the contact that leads them into the underground, or who lack the energy to wheel and deal there.

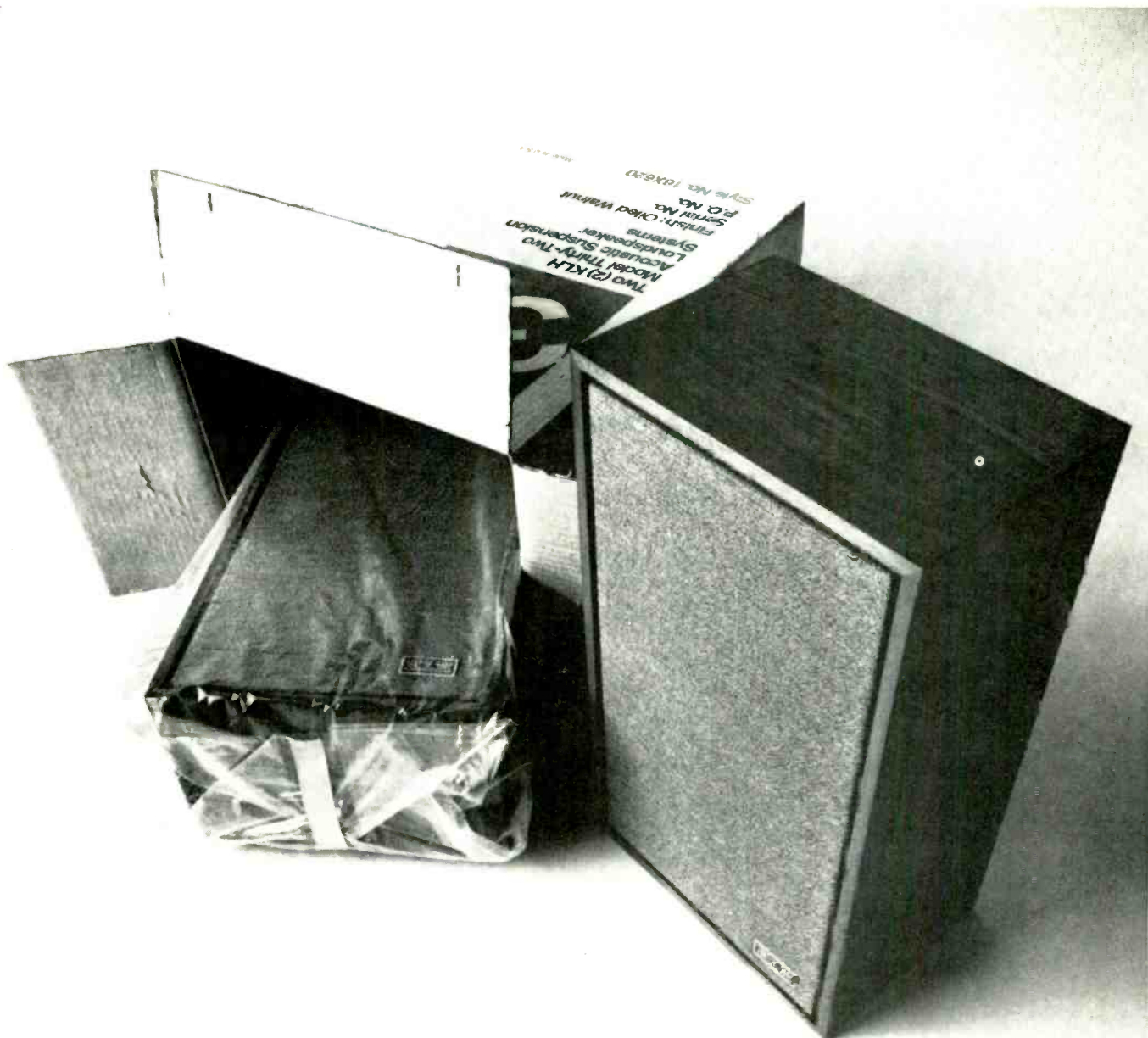
The conflicting points of view concerning performances that have been "pirated" for public sale are too well known to reiterate. On the one hand there is the admitted necessity of having a union exercise some control over the mass distribution of public performances so as to insure that artists receive their royalties. On the other hand there is the unchallengeable right of aficionados to have access to the great performances of the past, and easy access at that. Additionally, it has to be considered that even if the radio stations of the world were to throw open their vaults the time and expense involved in traveling to take advantage of this on a first-hand basis would militate against the listener without substantial means.

As for the unfamiliar works that are revived from time to time in the smaller Italian and German houses, or for festivals, the record companies have but to utilize their resources in preserving these rather than yet another *Bohème* or *Aida* to force the

pirates into retirement. Barring that unlikely occurrence, the status quo is the best solution: the pirates record the broadcast of the unknown opus, and sooner or later it finds its way to the two or three thousand people interested in it. If an illustrious singer is featured in the performance, the chances are that he can pressure his label to record it commercially, and the lovers of vocal music get their innings, though at a higher price.

We come to a thornier matter when we consider the question of historic performances that reside in the vaults of radio stations. The question again is one of royalties; the prize, forty years of vocal and orchestral treasures. Forty years is an arbitrary figure, but one not without basis. In 1931 both the Metropolitan Opera and the New York Philharmonic began their nationwide broadcasts (the Chicago Opera had been on an irregular schedule of hour-long excerpts on a Midwest independent network since 1928); forty years ago Bruno Walter was conducting complete performances of unfamiliar works with the best singers Berlin had to offer on a regular basis. Forty years plus or minus three (1928–34) saw the beginning of regularly broadcast opera on the BBC, on the Swedish, Austrian, and German networks. Whether such transcriptions lie hermetically sealed in Stockholm, in London, in warehouses on the Jersey shore or in Moscow, the chances are that most of this treasure trove is intact.

Could not the broadcasting unions and musicians' unions of the world declare a forty-year limit on individual royalty payments for nonsoloists, then license the material for commercial issue and donate the fund to the particular country or city's musicians' retirement pension fund? This plan might initially be unfair to a few of the younger players in the orchestras of the Thirties, but by the time 2011 rolls around (assuming it does) the computers would undoubtedly be fairer to the long-lived survivors of the season of '71, and the forty-year limit could then be abolished. Meanwhile, the listener could look forward to DGG's Toscanini *Parsifal* and a Ponselle/Lauri-Volpi *Norma* by this year's end, the Serafin/Pinza/Ponselle/Schipa *Don Giovanni* next year, the world premiere of Strauss's *Arabella*, in 1974 Supervia's *Il ballo delle ingrate*, Rethberg's *L'Africaine*, and so forth. Perhaps they really can't be found—but as matters stand today there's no use anyone looking. As the years roll on, however, more and more of this buried treasure will be retrievable, and the list of possibilities is as endless as the Saturday afternoons of the Met, the Sundays of the New York Philharmonic, the premieres of Vienna and Dresden, or the nights of Bayreuth and Salzburg. To go over the cast lists is to be intoxicated; to read the radio pages of old newspapers is to be tantalized; to realize that so much still exists is to be frustrated beyond measure by the history that lies hearable but unheard. ●



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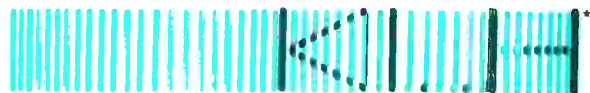
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CIRCLE 46 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

by Robin S. Lanier

From Two Channels to Four— With a Little Bit o' Pluck

Do-it-yourself conversion readies tape deck
for quadraphonic sound.

QUADRAPHONIC SOUND can be enjoyed via ordinary stereo equipment. All it requires is a conversion job that takes more determination than actual technical skill to accomplish. You do need a good three-head open-reel tape deck to begin with. By substituting a four-channel playback head for the two-channel playback head, you can transform the machine into a quadraphonic tape player that still can play two-channel stereo tapes and make two-channel recordings.

The difficulty of making the head change in a given model will depend on how its two-channel playback head is mounted. On some decks substitution is easy because the new head will fit right into the bracket that holds the old one. In other models some kind of spacer may be needed. Or the original brackets may not work at all for the new head, in which case it may be best to mount the new head with a good metal-to-metal adhesive, such as an epoxy glue or the GE Silicone Seal.

Of course if you are experienced in machine-shop work and have access to a lathe, you can always fashion any parts you need for a difficult conversion. But such a semiprofessional approach isn't essential; the conversion can be done more simply, and the results will be just as satisfactory.

In converting a Viking 807 tape player and a Lafayette RK-830 tape recorder deck, I found neither job difficult. The Viking job was easier since its head bracket fitted the new four-channel head; the Lafayette needed a spacer and adhesive. Close examination of the head assembly of your own machine ought to give you a pretty good idea of how to go about converting it. If the inspection doesn't make everything clear, a careful disassembly of the head-mount will surely do so.

The four-channel head I used for each conversion was the Nortronics Model 5603. To give you an idea of how it may fit on your machine, its dimensions are: 0.575 inch wide; 0.580 inch front to back, not including the connection pins, which pro-

ject another 0.130 inch at the back; and 0.490 inch high.

You can see your over-all objective in Figs. 1 and 2, which show the track configurations on both two-channel quarter-track tape and on four-channel quarter-track tape. Note that the two "front" channels on the latter tape are the familiar left and right channels of two-channel stereo. Thus, to play a two-channel tape after the conversion you merely turn off the signal to the rear speakers.

Head Conversion on the Viking 807

After removing the two head-assembly covers, carefully pull the connectors off the headpins. Treat these tiny connectors and their attached cables gently; you will be using them for two of the channels on the new head.

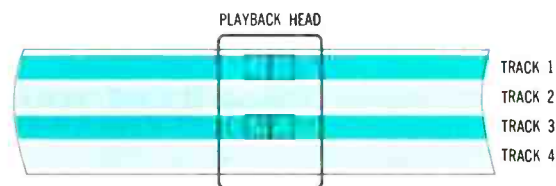


FIG. 1: TWO-CHANNEL FOUR-TRACK TAPE AND HEAD

Only track 1 (left channel) and track 3 (right channel) pass the head elements in forward direction of travel—from left to right here. Other two tracks are for reverse direction.

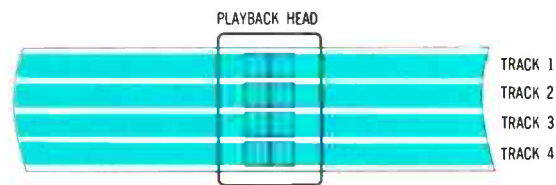


FIG. 2: FOUR-CHANNEL TAPE AND HEAD

The quadraphonic playback head has four "stacks" or elements, playing all four tracks on a single pass of the tape.

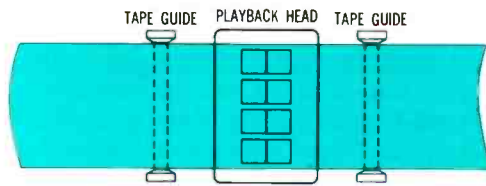


FIG. 3: REGISTRATION OF HEAD STACKS WITH TAPE TRACK

With tape properly positioned in guides, the head must be moved up or down until clearance between the outside stacks and the edges of the tape is the same at both top and bottom.

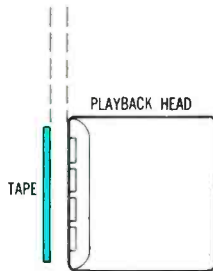


FIG. 4: PARALLELISM

The head must be positioned so that its surface is parallel to that of the tape even when the two are not in contact.

Note how far the head projects from the front of the bracket into the tape path. Now you must retract fully the two tiny Allen screws against which the top of the head rests and on which it rocks from side to side. You need a very small Allen wrench for this. Also loosen the azimuth adjustment screw, which is at the left end of the bracket holding the head (looking down on the machine from the front). With the screws loosened, you should be able to push the head right out of the bracket, along with the tiny bracket plate on top of the head.

Push the new head into the bracket, with the small plate on top of it (the new head is a tiny bit smaller than the old, which makes installation easier). Push the head through the bracket until it projects into the tape path as much as the old one did. Screw both of the Allen screws down a turn or two until they just press against the top of the head. Tighten the azimuth screw until the head is approximately square with the bracket. The head will now be held tightly in place.

Now you must line up the head-stacks with the tracks on the tape and get the head-face parallel to the tape, as shown in Figs. 3 and 4. Adjustment of the tiny Allen screws and of the azimuth screw (they are interdependent so you must work back and forth) will move the head into the right position.

First get the head parallel by sighting along the nearest tape guide. Then thread in a length of tape, pull it tight in the guides, and put the machine into "play" mode. The tape should exactly bridge the four stacks in the head, with an almost imperceptible amount over at each edge, as shown in Fig. 3. The "track adjustment" should be set to "Q", or quarter track—turned to the *right*. You move the head across the tape, to bring it into registration

with the stacks, by turning both Allen screws the same amount in or out.

The two cables from the old head go to output jacks under the deck, because there are no electronics of any kind on this machine. For the two additional channels you need two more output jacks, and a standard dual-jack plate will fit right on the bracket beside the existing jacks: there are even holes in the lips of the bracket in exactly the right places for the attachment screws.

Open the bracket and put in your new jack plate. Make the two new cables of shielded wire with two inner conductors, each about seven inches long. Solder the small pin connectors (supplied with the head) onto the inner conductors at one end of each cable. This takes careful work: don't let the solder run into the slip-on end of the connector where it will prevent the connector from slipping on the pin. Make no connection to the shield, but wrap insulating tape around it at both ends of each cable so that there will be no shorts to the connectors or open conductors.

Feed the open ends of the two cables through the machine along the same path as the old cables, and solder the inner conductors to the center sleeves and shells of the new jacks. If the cables have insulation over the shield, clear about a half inch on each cable at the right place to make contact with one of the unused metal tabs in the side of the bracket. Put the two cables under the tab so that they will be held in the same way as the two old cables, making sure the tab or the side of the box makes contact with both shields.

Mark the two old jacks "one" and "three" with stick-on labels or adhesive tape on the top of the plate, and the two new jacks "two" and "four." Make a note of the color coding of all the inner conductors to help identify, in each cable, which conductor is the "hot" lead and which is "ground." Trace the cables through to determine, at the pin connector ends, which jack number is assigned to each. Now you can close the jack bracket by screwing the top plate down again.

Put the connectors on the headpins in the order shown in Fig. 5. Track 1 is at the *bottom* of the tape on this machine because the tape supply reel is reversed from the usual orientation; the label side of the reel will be against the machine. The tape

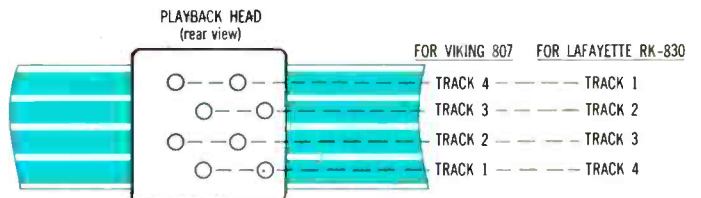


FIG. 5: PIN CONNECTIONS FOR NORTRONICS 5603 FOUR-CHANNEL HEAD

Because the tape travels from right to left and the heads face away from the user on the Viking 807 deck, its track orientation is the reverse of the standard configuration.

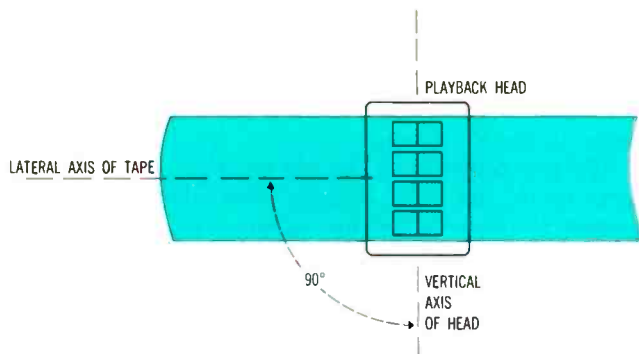


FIG. 6. AZIMUTH ADJUSTMENT

Head axis (and therefore the four head gaps) must be perpendicular to tape axis, or high-frequency response and phase relationships between channels will be compromised.

moves *up* to the head assembly, rather than *down* as on most machines. The alternation of old and new cables on the headpins makes maximum use of the tiny plastic insulation collars on the old connectors and greatly reduces the chance of pin-to-pin shorts, a fairly likely possibility with the extremely small clearance between the pins.

We have left until the end the azimuth adjustment of the head. You have to complete the assembly and wiring and connect your tape machine to an amplifier if you want to make the azimuth alignment with an alignment tape and output meter in the standard way. You can do it that way, but the adjustment is so uncritical, with the very short gaps on the head, so you can probably come close enough by eye. Thread in a length of tape, pull it tight in the guides, turn the mode switch to "play," and adjust the azimuth screw until the vertical axis of the head appears to be perpendicular to the long axis of the tape (Fig. 6).

Electronics for the Viking 807

Since this tape machine has no electronics you will need four complete amplifier channels, including in each one the preamplification and equalization that must be applied to the tiny signals from the tape head.

There are many ways, of course, to put four amplifier channels together. If you now own a stereo amplifier or receiver with "tape-head" inputs the simplest way to complete your electronics is to get another similar unit. Remember that best results are obtained by using identical amplifiers for all four channels, so the front and back output signals will be exactly in phase. If you use a different amplifier for the back channels, the signals at the back could be as much as 180 degrees out of phase with those at the front, a likely source of distortion.

Another way to get four channels is to buy them all in one package. A number of components designed specifically for use in quadraphonic systems—or for adapting stereo systems to four-channel use—are available already, and more are expected in the next few months.

The experienced electronics amateur doubtless

will think of other ways to get the required amplification. For instance, he might build a four-channel preamp-equalizer that can be fitted to the tape deck. He then could use two external stereo amplifiers, feeding the signals from the machine into "auxiliary" or "tape" inputs on the amplifiers. Or he can, of course, build a duplicate of his whole stereo amplifier. But that takes considerable engineering skill, some advanced test equipment, and possibly some special parts.

Connect your tape machine to the four "tape-head" inputs on your two stereo amplifiers (or one quadraphonic amp) using four standard shielded cables fitted with phono plugs at each end. More on that under the "Setup and Operation" section.

Head Substitution on Lafayette RK-830

The RK-830 uses a head-mount that is similar to those found on many other tape machines in its price class. Since its playback head is taller and narrower than the Nortronics 5603 head, the bracket is too narrow for the new head.

The Lafayette head rides on an adjustment plate held above the machine panel by springs under three screws that provide adjustment for registration with the tape tracks, parallelism with the tape, and azimuth.

After clipping off the head-connection cables, remove the head and adjustment plate together by taking out the three adjustment screws. Lift up the assembly very gently when the screws are disengaged so that you don't push the three tiny springs down into the machine. Then lift the springs off the base and set them carefully aside.

Note how far the head projects from the front of the adjustment plate. Remove the head and bracket from the plate by taking off the single nut in the bottom of the plate. To find how far above the plate the top stack on the new head should be, I measured the distance from the top of the top stack on the Lafayette head to the plate: it was about 14 mm. However, the distance from the top of the top stack on the Nortronics head to its base is only 9 mm. I therefore needed a spacer of about 5 mm. thick between head and plate. The spacing does not have to be ultraprecise because the adjustment screws will let you bring the head to an exact registration with the tracks on the tape after the head is mounted.

I used a small block of hardwood as a spacer. I put the head, the spacer, and the plate together with a generous amount of silicone glue between each junction, being careful to get the head square with the plate and also projecting about as far from the plate as the old head. I put the three in a vise under *extremely* light pressure, just enough to hold them together while the adhesive got hard. You should wait several hours at least (a full day would be better) before putting any pressure on the junctions.

You can also use an epoxy glue to mount the head; it makes a somewhat firmer joint than the silicone bond, but the latter is easier to get apart if you ever want to change things again—a strong pull will usually do it.

Install the new head onto the machine by standing the three springs over the holes for the screws, putting the screws in the adjustment plate and lowering the plate carefully so that the screws go down through the springs. Turn in the screws just far enough to hold everything in place.

Thread in a tape and pull it tight in the guides, with the mode control turned to “play” so that the pressure pads come down on the tape. Now, by differential adjustment of the three screws, you can 1) get the head-face parallel to the tape, 2) move the head across the tape to register with the four tracks, and 3) adjust the azimuth to get the vertical axis of the head perpendicular to the lateral axis of the tape. Because the adjustments are somewhat interdependent, you will have to repeat one or more of these adjustments until all is right.

Electronics for the Lafayette RK-830

You have a choice of either using the preamplifier and equalizer already there for two channels, or of ignoring the playback electronics in the machine altogether and proceeding along the same lines as for the Viking 807.

The latter is the easier way. You need two additional output jacks (for either approach). The most convenient place to put them is in the extreme right end of the rear panel (looking at the machine from the front). You must drill the necessary holes in the rear panel to mount the two jacks or a dual-jack assembly. An alternative is to bring all the cables out of the machine through a hole in the front or rear panel. The installation of jacks is a bit troublesome but makes for a more convenient connection job.

Cables run directly from the head to the output jacks. You have to tie them together and fasten them in a path that does not interfere with any moving parts and is away from other wiring in the machine. The two cables you take off the old head should be grounded—centers connected to shields—and taped to prevent shorts, and then tucked inside. Lift up the cables connected to the existing output jacks, tape the ends for insulation, and tuck them away. This removes the circuit that lets you listen to the signal about to go on the tape when you push the “input” button on the front panel, as well as the monitoring of the recorded signal in the “tape” position of the button—the button is out of the circuit. But you can work out switching on your external amplifier to monitor during recording.

After the conversion you can continue to make two-channel stereo recordings exactly as before. You play them back as explained in a moment.

If, on the other hand, you choose to use the playback electronics in the Lafayette machine, your main problem is to build a duplicate of the preamplifier and equalizer circuits, to supply two additional channels. You need enough familiarity with transistor circuits to identify, on the Lafayette schematic, all the elements of the two existing preamplifiers, including the equalization for the head signals. The additional electronics can undoubtedly be installed somewhere in the machine so that you will end up with four preamplified and equalized signals at the four output jacks. Then you need, externally, only “auxiliary” or “high level” or “tape recorder” inputs.

Loudspeakers

Based on my limited experience to date, I’d say that the rear speakers may be somewhat more modest in performance than the front speakers. However, if you can afford it, it would be more desirable to use four identical speakers.

Positions of the speakers in the room don’t seem to be critical. But the two “rear” speakers must, of course, be somewhat in back of the listener.

Setup and Operation

The most convenient way to set up the system, with the present track assignments on four-channel tapes, is to connect tracks 1 and 3 to the front amplifier, tracks 2 and 4 to the back amplifier. Turning off the rear channels—to play two-channel tapes—then merely requires turning off the rear amplifier. (If you don’t turn it off when you play a two-channel, four-track tape, you will hear the *second* stereo program on the tape, from the rear speakers, played backward. Fine—if that’s what you want.)

For proper effect the volume levels in the four speakers must be equal. Some of the four-channel tapes have tones or voice announcements to help achieve this balance. Set the balance and volume controls on the two amplifiers so that the tone or voice announcements seem equally loud in the four speakers. If you are using identical amplifiers and *identical speakers*, the volume levels will probably be quite close when the volume controls on each amplifier are moved to similar positions. The output meters on the Scott 499 can be a great help if, again, your speakers are all the same. But if you use different speakers for front and rear, variations in speaker efficiency could result in unequal volume even when the electrical power outputs of the four channels are identical.

A final note: don’t try to balance the outputs on normal stereo program material. Since the program itself may vary in level from speaker to speaker, you can’t possibly determine the comparative volume levels by listening to such material. ●

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Carlo Maria Giulini
MAHLER SYMPHONY NO. 1
Chicago Symphony

S-36047



Carlo Maria Giulini
BEETHOVEN SYMPHONY NO. 7
Chicago Symphony

S-36048

Last spring's Orchestra Hall concert featuring Mahler's First left critics unanimous in their pleasure. Thomas Willis of the

Tribune called it "Giulini's finest hour to date," the performance "impassioned . . . of monumental stature." Bernard Jacobson (*Chicago Daily News*) headlined his review, "Giulini bows as master of Mahler." Kenneth Sanson: "If last night's performance can be duplicated on the forthcoming Angel recording, the Grammy Award committee looking for 1971's best classical recording will need look no further." (A note to Mr. Sanson: It was.)

For the orchestra's opening concert of its 80th year, Giulini conducted the Beethoven Seventh. "Giulini's grasp never wavered throughout a reading remarkable for its fusion of directness and intensity." The distinctive interpretation that pleased Bernard Jacobson has been secured — magnificently — in this new album.

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Janacek: Sinfonietta
Lutoslawski: Concerto For Orchestra



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DU PRÉ
BARENBOIM
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by Robert C. Marsh

Mahler's Symphonies— The Best Complete Set

Kubelik and DGG's engineers
combine to provide a superb edition.

THE TRADITIONAL REMARK of record reviewers when confronted with a collected edition of some major portion of a composer's work is to tell the reader in the best consumer-advocate style that he probably will do better if, instead of buying a big package, he shops around. There is a certain aesthetic basis for this. Any portion of the output of an important composer is going to reflect a variety of musical contents, and one performer may not be able to do them all justice. But in the case of Mahler this is less pronounced than in the works of some other men. A conductor who can play the Ninth Symphony well should have no trouble with any of the others.

A more important factor is that many times the album is a collection rather than an edition. The Bernstein Mahler volume, for example, can be taken in one sense as a documentation of his growing skill as a Mahler interpreter. Two orchestras, a number of acoustical environments, and considerable time span is built into the set, and for this reason, some portions of the Bernstein are now, in my estimation, technically outdated.

The Solti edition, which probably will be the third to appear, can be seen now as another collection of this type. In this case three orchestras are involved and the recording of the Fourth Symphony presently proposed to be included is one I reviewed in this magazine in July 1961. The range of acoustical settings is also considerable. The Chicago Symphony (heard in four of the nine works) will alone be represented in three different halls.

The Kubelik set here at hand is, in a more orthodox sense, a real edition, and the person who elects to buy a fourteen-record complete Mahler in this form presumably wants the special qualities which such an album can supply. The prime virtues are consistency and insight. The same orchestra is heard throughout, and it is a first-class ensemble that plays in complete sympathy with Mahler's personal idiom. The conductor is an outstanding example of the generation of musicians who, al-

though too young to have direct contact with Mahler, seems to have grasped his style and artistic purposes as fully as some of his illustrious contemporaries and disciples (in fact, more fully than some).

I cannot guarantee that the same hall is used throughout, but the same engineering philosophy is operative from start to finish and I suspect this edition will remain the most homogeneous in sound for some time (until, perhaps, Haitink has completed *his* cycle with the Concertgebouw for Philips). One reason for this is that all these recordings are of quite recent vintage, and the total time span involved may be scarcely four years. (The first three of the series are appraised, for example, in the 1969 *Records in Review*, where it is observed that "when complete, Kubelik's set is certainly going to compel great admiration . . ."—a prophecy that seems to have worked out well.)

For Kubelik, Mahler complete consists of the nine scores completed in Mahler's lifetime and the first movement of the unfinished Tenth Symphony as edited in the new critical edition. Bernstein has not recorded the fragmentary No. 10, perhaps following the lead of Bruno Walter (who would not play this music without Mahler's final revisions). Solti is of several minds about the Tenth and may someday record the revised Cooke version of the entire score, but his edition will presently consist of the canonical Nine. Yet this fragment of the Tenth is a beautiful thing. Dr. Walter's anxieties notwithstanding, I am happy that Kubelik includes it, and in his performance it is a distinct asset to the set.

New in the complete edition are Symphonies Nos. 5, 7, and 8. Suffice it to say that the new releases ought to win praise comparable to that of the previous releases. But the main reason for buying this edition is not simply that it is well played. There is quite a bit of well-played Mahler on records these days. It is because this is far and away the best recorded edition of Mahler by any conduc-

tor who has placed a significant number of the symphonies on discs.

The Fifth Symphony is as good a place as any to illustrate this. There is strong artistic competition from Solti and the Chicago Symphony, but if you play the two recordings against each other, side by side, the quality of sound Deutsche Grammophon provides is so superior to that of the London engineers in the Solti set—not merely from the standpoint of an audiophile but from the standpoint of hearing what Mahler must have conceived as textures, harmonies, and counterpoint—that, for me anyway, there is only one possible choice.

The Kubelik performance is not in any sense acoustically dry. The musicians are surrounded by resonant space, but the focus is always on the musicians and their music; *the space frames the performance but does not become part of it*. The ensemble sound blends, coalesces, and comes to you with a sense of unity and integrity that will be flattered by a large room which can add reverberation of its own. The Solti, in contrast, inundates you with the reverberation of the recording room and allows detail to be lost and textures to be blurred, and gives the impression that you are never hearing sound at the source but sound that has already bounced off one or more reflective surfaces. Thus the sense of presence provided by the two recordings is quite different. In the Kubelik the orchestra is a well-defined entity spread across the end of your room. In the Solti edition the orchestra is out there somewhere and a good deal of very live space lies between you and it—the classic balcony-seat viewpoint.

In a small dry room this resonant effect might be preferable to the Kubelik recording. (I'll have to make the test.) And there are devoted balcony sitters who have no desire to hear an orchestra from the conductor's vantage point. But my final judgment is that Kubelik plays the Fifth Symphony just as well as Solti (better in a few respects) and that I hear enough extra detail to add tremendously to my satisfaction.

In the Seventh Symphony the most interesting recording is Klemperer's, but it is quite a special performance, extremely measured and analytical, and definitely not for everybody. Kubelik's, on the other hand, is precisely that, the most forthright and readily accessible account of this long and mysterious score that I can recall. The Seventh Symphony demands enormous change of mood since it places two interludes of the most evocative night-music in the center of the design, separated by a scherzo that is also filled with mystery. But at the beginning and the end Mahler is robustly self-assertive, and the final rondo is filled with roguish humor that is often lost (but which Kubelik captures fully). The interpretive task is to make these five elements convincing as a single work of art, to pace them so that one leads persuasively to its successor, and to sustain the listener's interest so that the work builds right up to the end with no sense of anticlimax. This rarely happens. Even with Klemperer's skill, the last movement becomes a problem, but Kubelik manages these things superbly. After flooding us with moonlight and roses and the distant sounds of a guitar (these night pages, except for the Bavarian cowbells, are quite Italian, and I wonder why they did not turn up in the film *Death in Venice*), Kubelik sets the finale spinning. The excitement never lets up to the last bar.

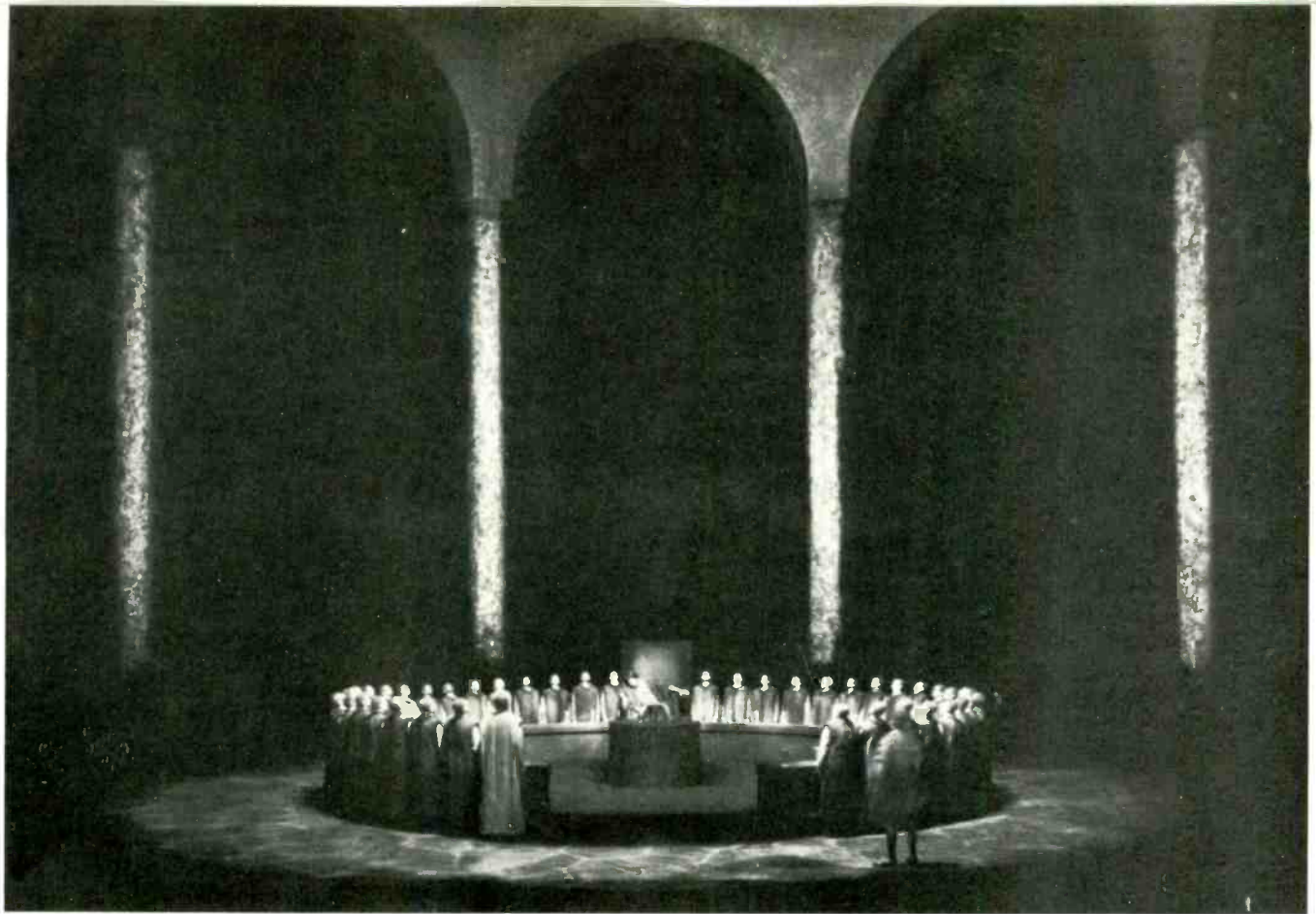
This brings us to the Eighth Symphony, a work that has been recorded only five times previously despite the great increase in Mahler's reputation in the past dozen years. Technically, the score was completely impossible to capture in monophonic sound, and it is becoming clear (especially with a live performance by Solti in my recent memory) that two-channel stereophony can do only so much more. A real approximation of the directional effects requires four-channel sound with a clear definition of the points of the compass in the listening room. That being said, I must add that the Kubelik set seems to me clearly the finest to date. Despite the huge performing forces, one still feels close contact with the orchestral and vocal sources and the sonic perspective is substantially the same as the rest of the symphonies. The massive climactic pages burst forth with all necessary power and glory, but with apparent ease. There is no sense that every VU meter has the needle on the pin and that the distortion factor is up to the maximum.

Kubelik's most noticeable asset is the quality of his chorus and soloists. The chorus projects a German text with the ease of those singing in their native language (and in the first movement the Latin is equally fine). The English-speaking choruses in the Bernstein and Abravanel sets cannot manage this, and indeed, the British choruses in the Bernstein set show a distinct tendency to sing flat in exposed passages where it is very important that they be on key.

But the truly devastating competition in the Kubelik performances comes from Martina Arroyo and Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, who head the strongest group of solo voices in any recording of this music. Thus, although other conductors have had good soloists, Kubelik has great ones. To hear the music of Pater Estaticus from Fischer-Dieskau is to hear it as if for the first time, to know the meaning of religious ecstasy as Mahler conceived it. This is one of the finest achievements in the entire recorded repertory of this remarkable artist, and Miss Arroyo's contribution provides an equally strong measure of her impressive artistry.

Less obvious, but no less important, is the factor of insight mentioned earlier. For the strength of this performance surely comes from the fact that Kubelik has mastered the music to the fullest degree. This is reflected on all sides, in his ability to establish and sustain a musical line in passages where others produce a disjointed succession of phrases, and in his obvious sympathies for both the Latin hymn and the scene from *Faust* that provide the texts of this gigantic score. When the chorus proclaims "*Das ewig Weibliche zieht uns hinan*" you are sure Mahler believes it, and you probably believe it too. Mahler thought of the Eighth Symphony as his Mass, and Kubelik plays it as an act of consecration.

MAHLER: Symphonies: No. 1, in D; No. 2 (*Resurrection*); No. 3; No. 4; No. 5; No. 6, in A minor; No. 7; No. 8, in E flat; No. 9; No. 10, in F sharp (Andante-Adagio only). Edith Mathis, soprano; Norma Procter, alto (in No. 2); Marjorie Thomas, alto; Tölzer Children's Choir (in No. 3); Elsie Morison, soprano (in No. 4); Martina Arroyo, Edith Mathis, and Erna Spoorenberg, sopranos; Julia Hamari and Norma Procter, altos; Donald Grobe, tenor; Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, baritone; Franz Crass, bass; Choirs of North and West German Radio; Children of Regensburg Cathedral Choir; Women of Munich Motetchoir (in No. 8); Chorus and Orchestra of the Bavarian Radio, Rafael Kubelik, cond. Deutsche Grammophon 2720 033, \$63 (fourteen discs).



Lauterwasser

Parsifal at Bayreuth

Boulez conducts the
third complete recording
from the Festspielhaus.

by David Hamilton

ONE OF THE MORE remarkable circumstances in the discographic history of *Parsifal* is the prevalence of recordings from Bayreuth, far more pronounced than with any other Wagner opera. The famous 1927 series under the direction of Karl Muck and Siegfried Wagner is still impressive, although the only complete LP issue, on Italian Odeon 33QCX 10464, did not do justice to it (the Good Friday Scene is still available, in a better transfer, on Seraphim 60124, a Kipnis collection). And Muck, who conducted the opera at nearly all the Bayreuth festivals from 1901 until 1930, also recorded a wonderfully spacious reading of Act III (omitting the opening scene with Kundry) in Berlin around the same time, a set due for imminent reissue on the Preiser label (LV 100); with its very detailed orchestral playing, fine solo work by Gottfried Pistor, Ludwig Hoffmann, and Cornelis Bronsgeest, and superbly unified choral sound, this is a classic among Wagner recordings.

Aside from these two sets, plus the limply conducted if strongly sung Act II duet of Flagstad and Melchior (RCA Red Seal LM 2763) and scattered bits of the "monologues" of Amfortas, Gurnemanz, Kundry, and Parsifal, Wagnerians had to wait until the first postwar Bayreuth Festival in 1951 for a complete recording. We have now three such sets, all from Bayreuth—two conducted by Knappertsbusch (1951 and 1962), who occupied the same position there with respect to *Parsifal* in the postwar years as did Muck before 1930, and this new one directed by Pierre Boulez. Unlike the earlier sets, which have been widely recognized as monuments of the recorded literature, strongly cast, superbly conducted with an extraordinary sense of the "long line," and well recorded for their time (both are still available, the first on a Richmond reissue, RS 65001, the second now on imported Philips pressings, 835 220/4), the "Boulez *Parsifal*" is certain to be controversial.

Toward the end of a stimulating essay in the libretto

booklet, Boulez makes reference to the matter of tempo in a rather defensive way, pointing out that his running times vary only slightly from those of Hermann Levi at the very first performances in 1882, under the eye of the master himself (Levi: 107, 62, and 75 minutes for the three acts, respectively; Boulez: 100, 61, and 70 minutes). This suggests that Boulez anticipates criticism for his "fast" tempos, but I am amused to note that Knappertsbusch's 1962 timings are only slightly slower (and mainly in the second act: 107, 69, and 73 minutes)—and "Kna" was always regarded as a "slow" conductor! (To be sure, the 1951 recording is somewhat slower than the later one, although I don't have timings at hand—but over the years there have been far greater discrepancies in running time for this opera at Bayreuth. Consider the following total timings: Levi, 244 minutes; Muck, 266; Toscanini, 288; Richard Strauss, 248; Clemens Krauss, 224; Knappertsbusch in 1962, 249, Boulez, 231—with a maximum variation between Krauss and Toscanini of more than an hour!)

All this goes to show what we have always known, that tempo is a relative, not an absolute matter. There isn't a great deal of fast music in *Parsifal*, of course, and by taking it at a good clip you probably don't gain much time over-all—probably enough to account for the Boulez-Knappertsbusch discrepancy; on the other hand, if you take the slow music very slowly, *Parsifal* will run very long indeed. The tangible and significant difference is one of tempo *contrast*, for the fast music is certainly thrown into greater relief by Boulez; the Klingsor-Kundry scene, in particular, seems more volatile, and the second act as a whole has more variety by comparison with the earlier recordings.

Regrettably, a full discussion of the Boulez approach to *Parsifal* is not easy in the context of this recording, for so many aspects of the approach are inseparable from the actual execution, which seems to me seriously flawed. For one thing, neither orchestra nor chorus is up to the level of previous Bayreuth recordings; a quavery first flute is a severe disability in this score, and the unhomogeneous sound of the choral tenors spoils the effect of the Grail scenes. The generally lower level of ensemble suggests that there may not have been as many rehearsals for *Parsifal* in 1970 as previously, perhaps because Boulez had conducted it there for several seasons running. At any rate, this recording frequently does not do justice to the extraordinary scoring: there are coarse climaxes and blends that don't quite come off—although the special Bayreuth acoustics, which Wagner certainly had in mind when composing the opera (the covered orchestra pit, from which the sound emerges premixed, as it were, gives a very special color to the *Parsifal* orchestra), is one of the main reasons for recording the opera under these difficult conditions.

By the same token, the singing here rarely matches the level of the earlier recordings, thus impeding useful comparison of the "interpretations" in the abstract. Broadly speaking, the lower voices are better than the higher ones: Ridderbusch is a fine Titurel—but so was Talvela in 1962. Crass sings a generally smooth, rich-sounding Gurnemanz, although lacking the variety of tone color and declamatory resource that makes Hotter's 1962 reading a triumph of theatrical and musical intelligence over waning vocal resources. Stewart's Amfortas is vocally more focused than George London's in 1962

(his best vocal estate is only to be heard in the 1951 version), but the latter did more with the text and relied less on sheer volume to make his points; Stewart does, however, sound in better voice than he did last winter at the Metropolitan.

From here on, we run into bigger troubles. Donald McIntyre is variable as Klingsor, sometimes singing quite firmly, but often reaching out into unfocused barking; the hectoring result is not to be compared with Uhde's brilliant characterization in 1951 or Neidlinger's more conventional but firmly-sung approach in 1962. When a simple dignity is called for from Parsifal, James King can be quite convincing, as in the first scene of the third act (before the Good Friday music). He is hard put, however, to string the more angular note-groups of the second act into true melodic lines, and this stiffness re-echoes upon his characterization: a Sunday School teacher in a bordello. At high volume and pitch (the two generally go together, regardless of what Wagner wants), the tone is dry and unpleasant. Back to Thomas and Windgassen (not to mention Melchior!).

And finally we come to Gwyneth Jones, who, in the space of little more than five years, has apparently managed to almost completely ruin a splendid natural endowment. Even in the lower registers, the tone has now an incipient quaver, and anything more than an octave above middle C is total disaster: effortful attack, uncertain pitch, and a pronounced wobble. In the circumstances, to speak of interpretation is ridiculous: a Kundry who makes noises like this cannot possibly do justice to more than the virago aspect of the role. (If the recording had been made a few years earlier, Christa Ludwig would have been the Kundry.)

Here and there, one picks up inklings of what kind of a *Parsifal* recording this might have been under better conditions. The swan episode, taken gently and without portent, seems much less lachrymose and sentimental than usual, and the prelude to the second act projects a fine precise nastiness. On the other hand, Boulez' deadpan approach to Wagner's sequential passages (in which a short segment of music is repeated at different pitches) tends to rob them of meaning; with each step of the sequence exactly identical in articulation, there is no sense of progression, and one misses the kind of over-all shaping of the entire passage that would clarify the ultimate destination. Not surprisingly (in retrospect, anyway), some of those wind sequences on the "Faith" motive come out sounding like Debussy's *Nuages* (where such an approach is musically quite justified).

Don't misunderstand me: It is interesting to hear a *Parsifal* so different from Knappertsbusch's—but in all honesty I cannot assert that this recording is a satisfactory one, especially when the superb Philips version is readily available. Perhaps someday Boulez will have an opportunity to restate his views on the opera with an adequate cast (although, given the present international deterioration of Wagner singing, I am inclined to be pessimistic). In the meantime, if you desire a contrast to Knappertsbusch, be advised that a Solti *Parsifal* is in the works.

WAGNER: Parsifal. Gwyneth Jones (s), Kundry; James King (t), Parsifal; Thomas Stewart (b), Amfortas; Donald McIntyre (b), Klingsor; Franz Crass (bs), Gurnemanz; Karl Ridderbusch (bs), Titurel; Chorus and Orchestra of the 1970 Bayreuth Festival, Pierre Boulez, cond. Deutsche Grammophon 2720 034, \$34.90 (five discs).



The Bettmann Archive

by Harris Goldsmith

Sibelius' Forgotten Masterpiece

A blazing performance of the surgingly lyrical *Kullervo* Symphony.

ALTHOUGH NO ONE would suggest that any similarity exists between the music of Rossini and Sibelius, there are obvious parallels between the two composers. Both men were legends in their own lifetimes, and both chose to retire from creative life while still at the peak of their powers. Rossini, of course, penned an attractive collection of small pieces in his latter years, and although he called them *Sins of My Old Age*, he did not withhold them from the public. Sibelius, on the other hand, composed another symphony after No. 7, and the English conductor Sir Basil Cameron insists that he once held the manuscript for that vanished work in his own hands. It is quite feasible that Sibelius—following the example of Brahms and Dukas—destroyed the work, feeling that it was unworthy.

By contrast, the Finnish master was much more compassionate when reckoning with his early choral symphony, *Kullervo*. The work might be cited, Rossini-like, as a "Youthful Indiscretion." Sibelius worked on the score in 1891 and completed it a year later. Although it is identified on the title page as a symphonic poem for two soloists, male chorus, and orchestra, the composition is thoroughly symphonic in all its essentials. Coming some seven years before the familiar Op. 39 which all Sibelians know as No. 1, *Kullervo* is Sibelius' true First Symphony. Its first performance was a great success, but soon thereafter, the developing composer became dissatisfied and forbade any further performances during his lifetime. He also withheld the score from publication. He did relent in later years, for with hindsight perspective the innate merits of the admittedly unpolished composition became evident to its composer once again. In 1935 there was an unofficial performance of the central movement, and just before his death Sibelius partially reworked the final portion of that section, *Kullervo's Lament*, for separate performance by the Finnish basso Kim Borg.

Some background for the *Kullervo* Symphony might be welcome before discussing Angel's excellent premiere recording. Sibelius was always deeply interested by the *Kalavela*, the Finns' national mythology, and the *Kullervo* legend is recounted in *Runos* 31 to 36 of that epic. Two brothers, Untamo and Kalervo, quarrel and take up arms against each other. Untamo is victorious, slays his brother's clan, and abducts his pregnant wife who subsequently gives birth to Kullervo. Kullervo grows to manhood with the resolve to avenge his family. There are many variations to the legend. In one, Kullervo is sold into slavery; in another, he learns from the Old Women of the forest that his family still lives, except for an eldest sister who was lost in childhood on a foraging expedition. Of course, Kullervo meets up with his long-lost sibling, commits incest with her unknowingly, and both kill themselves out of shame. But Kullervo delays his end

until after he has had the chance to vanquish Untamo.

Sibelius' music is only roughly programmatic. The first section is an introduction; the second deals loosely with Kullervo's youth and childhood. The longest section is the third movement which depicts the brother and sister. The fourth movement is the battle scene and the fifth describes Kullervo's death. The two soloists appear in the third movement, and the chorus narrates the death scene; the other movements are purely orchestral. Early though it is, *Kullervo* is unmistakably Sibelius. One thinks of *En Saga* in the orgiastic rhythm of the third movement, and countless other sections bring to mind the later symphonies and tone poems.

The first posthumous rendition of *Kullervo* took place under Jussi Jalas' direction in 1958, a few months after Sibelius' death. A tape of that performance has been circulating in the underground and has hitherto been the sole means of hearing this extraordinarily interesting work. Now the resurrected opus makes its entry into the legitimate annals of recorded music with an inspiring version taped after the first British public performances last year. One could not hope for a finer presentation. The Bournemouth Symphony is still functioning at the tip-top level established by its late music director Constantin Silvestri. Moreover, the musicians seem to have received additional doses of adrenalin from the Finnish vocal forces and the inspired direction of conductor Paavo Berglund. Berglund brings a degree of fervor and grim concentration to the performance that drives it triumphantly past all possible snags. The energy is absolutely white-hot, the music surges about with angry ferocity and affecting lyricism. The orchestration blazes in the typically but irresistibly uncouth fashion of most developing Romantic geniuses (e.g., Brahms's D minor Concerto or Strauss's early tone poems), and the sincerity of the performance is as welcome as it is rare in these days of antiseptic tape-edited studio recordings. In fact, I would turn this conductor and orchestra loose on the complete Sibelius orchestral canon without delay—they have just the right approach: The music blazes with affirmative conviction, and they make *Kullervo* sound like a bona fide masterpiece. The selections on the fourth side of this two-disc set are equally precious additions to the catalogue, also beautifully performed.

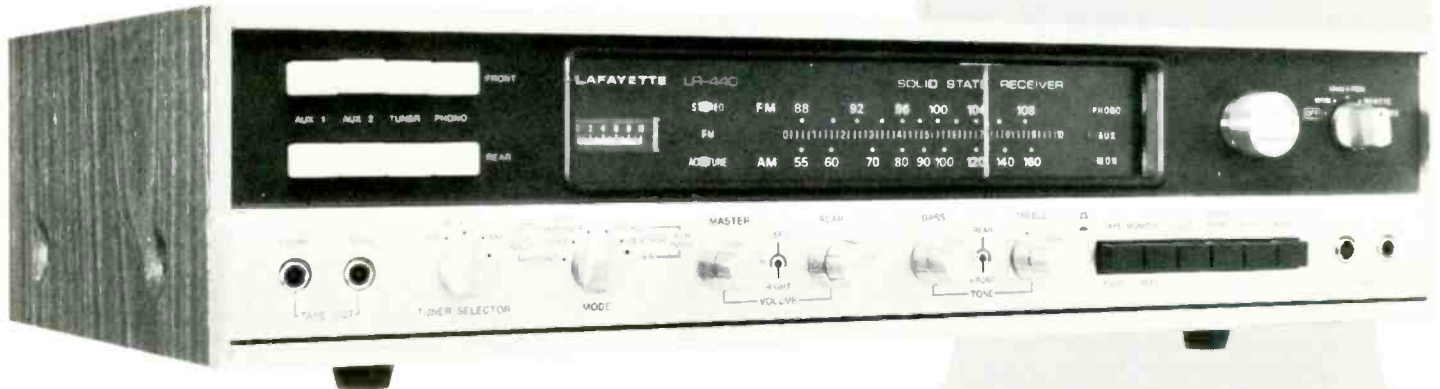
The engineering is absolutely first-rate, further enhancing one of the most exciting releases of this year.

SIBELIUS: *Kullervo*, Op. 7; *Kuolema*, Op. 44; *Scene with Cranes*; *Swanwhite Suite*, Op. 54; *The Harp*; *The Maidens with Roses*; *Listen, the Robin Sings*; *Swanwhite and the Prince*. Raili Kostia, soprano; Usko Viitanen, baritone; Helsinki University Male Chorus (in *Kullervo*); Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, Paavo Berglund, cond. Angel SB 3778, \$11.96 (two discs).

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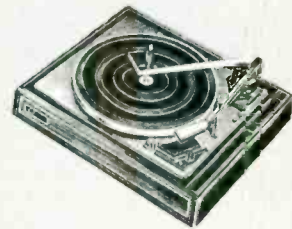
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BACH: A Musical Offering, S. 1079. Concentus Musicus, Nikolaus Harnoncourt, cond. Telefunken SAWT 9565, \$5.98.

The *Musical Offering*, like *The Art of Fugue* also written in Bach's last years, has always been one of his most highly respected and most seldom played pieces. The story of its composition has long been a popular anecdote. Bach was invited in 1747 to visit the Potsdam palace of Frederick the Great, given a theme by Frederick (himself a rather good amateur flautist and student of the famous Quantz), and asked to improvise a six-voice fugue. Bach declined, improvised instead a three-voice fugue on Frederick's theme and a six-voice fugue on a theme of his own, then went home and started to work at once on what turned out to be the most profoundly complex contrapuntal tour de force ever devised, surpassing even *The Art of Fugue* in a few ingenious particulars. The completed set consists of the three-voice fugue that had previously been improvised (now called a *ricercar* to emphasize its scholarly character), the carefully worked out six-voice *ricercar* that had been requested, ten canons, and a complete four-movement trio sonata for flute, violin, and continuo, all based on the so-called Royal Theme. Bach had the set published and sent it off to the king as a kind of "musical offering."

The theme itself is a strange one, rather similar to the one Bach later used for *The Art of Fugue*, but much more chromatic and difficult to handle. (Frederick knew full well what difficulties it presented and that impro-

vising a six-voice fugue on such a theme would be an impossible task.) The result in the case of the two *ricercars* is two of the most magnificent fugues Bach ever wrote—highly chromatic, supremely logical, and perfectly balanced compositions. In the original publication the six-voice *ricercar*, like *The Art of Fugue*, was printed in open score on six staves, erroneously giving the impression that it should be orchestrated. Actually, there has never been any question that these two pieces were intended for the clavier, and they are soberly and impressively played here on that instrument by Herbert Tachezi.

The trio sonata is a more freely invented piece in the traditional four-movement "church sonata" style. Its second and fourth movements are both fugal; in the first, the Royal Theme appears briefly as a kind of *cantus firmus* woven into the fugal texture, while the second uses a variation of the Royal Theme as its subject. In this trio sonata Bach gets his revenge on the flute-playing king for assigning him such a difficult task on his visit to Potsdam: the flute writing here is of such difficulty that in all probability Frederick couldn't play it. Leopold Stastny and his confreres of the Concentus Musicus have no such difficulties, and they turn in a lively, vigorous, and thoroughly entertaining performance.

In the ten canons Bach resurrects the Renaissance practice of playing highly sophisticated musical-intellectual games by putting the Royal Theme into an astonishingly complex series of juxtapositions and combinations. In several of the numbers Bach writes only one part of the canon, leaving to the king the not inconsiderable task of figuring out for himself when the second voice comes in, on what pitch it begins, and whether or not it is to be inverted or played in retrograde motion. One of the most unusual canons modulates up a whole tone in the course of its eight measures; it must then be repeated six times until it returns to its starting key of C minor.

Nothing would surprise Bach more than to see a modern audience sitting piously in a concert hall or in front of their phonographs listening to professional musicians perform these little gems. They were not meant to be "listened to" in the usual sense, but to be "figured out" like any intellectual puzzle. If I have any complaint about this record, it is that the Concentus Musicus seems to be taking their task awfully seriously, trying to convince us that there is musical profundity here when in fact only intellectual amusement is intended—and profoundly realized. Otherwise, the record is strongly endorsed, especially for the delightful reading of the trio sonata. C.F.G.



BACH: "Organ Works." Toccata and Fugue in D minor, S. 565; Toccata and Fugue in F, S. 540; Prelude and Fugue in E minor (*Wedge*), S. 548; Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor, S. 582. Heinz Wunderlich, organ (Arp Schnitger Organ of the St. Jacobi Church, Hamburg). Nonesuch H 71252, \$2.98.

Vol. 9 of the Nonesuch "Masterworks for Or-

gan" series offers four of Bach's biggest "show-stoppers" in big broad-brush performances by Heinz Wunderlich on the brash, raucous, and thoroughly exciting Arp Schnitger organ of the St. Jacobi Church in Hamburg. The combination of repertoire, performer, and instrument is about as subtle as a brass band in a boiler works, but there can be no doubt that healthy doses of adrenalin are flowing.

If it weren't for the obvious and overriding fact that Wunderlich does manage to build up quite a head of steam in each performance, one would be inclined to more critical of the numerous flaws and perversities in these readings. Chief among them are his peculiar and often old-fashioned notions about phrasing. Every measure shows the Albert Schweitzer/Helmut Walcha influence, which has no basis in Bach's style: a glance at a few of the works in which Bach has indicated phrasing will show clearly that across-the-bar slurs (from the second beat of one measure to, and including, the first beat of the next), all-staccato fugue subjects, and the like are completely unidiomatic. It must be said that the too frequent and too fussy phrasings are preferable to the bland, all-legato style we often hear, but Wunderlich's lily-gilding really does go too far. The opening canons of the F major toccata suffer the most here from the little burps between the third and fourth eighths of every bar.

What Wunderlich seems to be aiming at is maximum excitement through maximum contrasts, particularly in registration. Typical is the F major double fugue which begins on very full organ and with a very legato statement of the first section. When the second subject arrives it is played staccato on delicate little 8-foot and 2-foot flutes on the positiv. When the two subjects combine near the end we are back on utterly full organ with the 32-foot pedal reed for a truly cataclysmic finale. The warhorse D minor toccata and fugue offers plenty of opportunities for contrasting registers and Wunderlich takes advantage of every one plus many more. Here the jumping around every measure over all four manuals is really excessive: even Virgil Fox wouldn't do such a kaleidoscopic job.




The Schnitger Organ in the St. Jacobi Church, you may recall, is the same one Helmut Walcha used a number of years ago for his mono recordings of many of the Bach organ works. On this Nonesuch disc (taken from Cantate originals) the sound is infinitely superior, partly because of the fine, modern recording, but mainly because of Wunderlich's vastly superior handling of this magnificently rich and

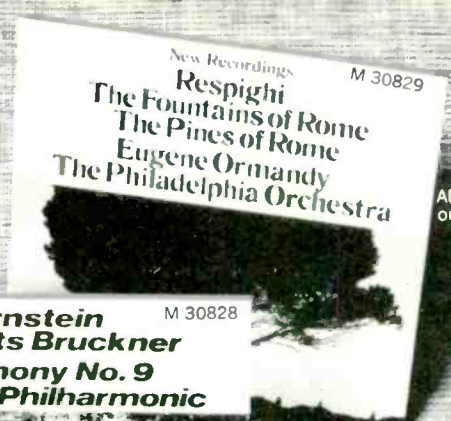
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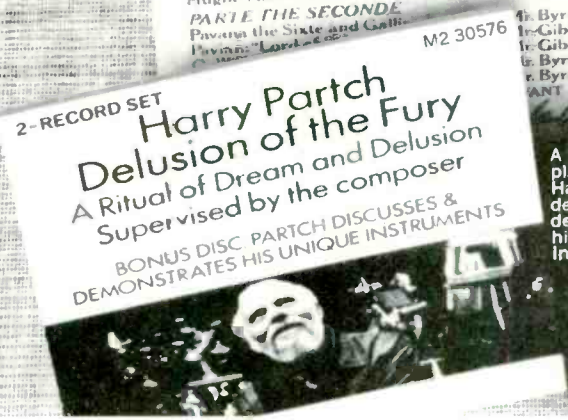
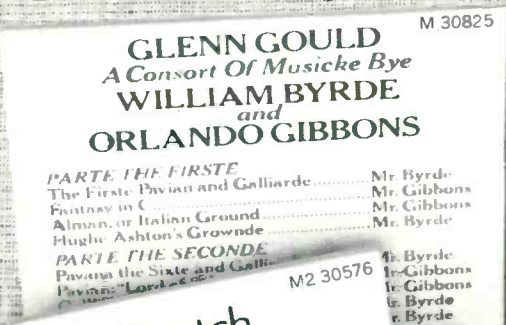
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BEETHOVEN: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 4, in G, Op. 58; Overtures: Creatures of Prometheus, Op. 43; Ruins of Athens, Op. 113. Jakob Gimpel, piano (in the concerto); Berlin Symphony Orchestra, Arthur Rother, cond. Genesis GS 1001, \$5.98.

These are sturdy, orthodox, workmanlike performances taped by Ariola/Eurodisc and licensed to the small West Coast label Genesis, who have commissioned some rather unorthodox liner notes from (of all people) Henry Miller. Mr. Miller is all wide-eyed wonderment and admiration for Mr. Gimpel—by his own confession a recent acquaintance, and by inference a recent shrine to worship at. For myself, I respect the pianist's efficiency and straightforward strength, but find him rather deficient in coloristic range, singing legato, and most of all a truly personal poetry. The approach is rather briskly paced, didactic, and Teutonic: if you liked the older Wührer/Perlea (Vox) and Backhaus/Schmidt-Isserstedt (London) editions, my wager is that you'll like this one.

In short, there's nothing to take offense at here, but several versions (e.g., Schnabel, Moravec, Istomin, Fleisher) offer a wider range of expression and more tonal beauty. Arthur Rother conducts admirably and gives idiomatic performances of the two overtures, which proceed with good rhythm and tonal solidity. The Berlin Orchestra (whoever its

personnel are) plays like a first-class band. Cadenzas in the concerto, incidentally, are by Beethoven—that for the first movement is the more familiar of the two alternatives. H.G.

BEETHOVEN: King Stephan, Op. 117 (excerpts); The Ruins of Athens, Op. 113 (excerpts). Margit László (s), Sándor Nagy (b); Chorus of the Hungarian Radio and Television; Budapest Philharmonic Orchestra, Géza Oberfrank, cond. Hungaroton LPX 11474, \$5.98.

Does it seem at all credible, as we stand here neck-deep in Beethoven albums, that the bicentennial *Festmahl* should have come and gone without producing even approximately complete recordings of the incidental music to *König Stephan* or *Die Ruinen von Athen*? Admirers of Beethoven's better work, including the composer himself, have made much of the weaknesses in these two scores, written on demand as parts one and three of a trilogy by the poet Kotzebue for the opening of the Pest Theater in 1812. But far worse occasional music has been written, and there are fascinating things to be heard in both works, which date after all from a time when Beethoven had already composed six of his symphonies.

In this Hungarian recording we get the standard abbreviated versions of both scores: from *King Stephan*, the overture and six of the nine numbers; from *The Ruins of Athens*, the overture and seven of the eight, omitting only the off-stage music, No. 5. However, none of the dialogue is included, which means internal cuts are necessary at times (in *Athens*, the *Marsch und Chor* is truncated by 75 measures at the start because the music at that point accompanies a melodramatic exchange be-

tween Mercury and Minerva). But the Budapest orchestra and chorus make a good match for these straightforward and actually quite attractive works, bringing to both a robust rather than technically glossy ensemble tone, and immense conviction. The conductor, Oberfrank, avoids the pitfalls of trivializing Beethoven's flights of stage fancy (some of them endearingly giddy, to be sure), and his seriousness pays off in performances of homogeneity and occasional magic. Thus, in *King Stephan* we hear not only reminders of *Fidelio* and other noble strains, but what could be taken as pre-echoes of Verdi's tawdriest ballet music. *Athens*, even more disconcertingly, offers a Brahms *Liebestieder* waltz in embryo and a Rossinian finale, as well as the familiar *Turkish March*.

In sound and performances, the Hungaroton record is more acceptable than the similar disc of excerpts on Turnabout. The soprano soloist, Margit László, does quite well in her brief turns, and the baritone, Sándor Nagy, is passable, although several of his entries could be less tentative, and his last aria less strained. In sound, at least, too, the Oberfrank album is good enough to overcome the mono competition of Beecham's *Athens* excerpts, and in the absence of complete recordings of either score these sizable stereo samples should serve admirably to keep Beethoven's genius in perspective. D.J.H.

BEETHOVEN: Quintet for Strings, in C, Op. 29; Sextet for Horns and Strings, in E flat, Op. 81b. Members of the Vienna Octet. London CS 6674, \$5.98.

This disc presents the virtuoso players of the Vienna Octet in two of Beethoven's most delightful chamber works. Both performances are elegant, relaxed, and polished. With a few exceptions, they show high-level understanding both of the pieces and of the requirements of good ensemble playing.

The quintet—for two violins, two violas, and cello—is an early work, but one in which Beethoven's radical departures from eighteenth-century style are already becoming apparent. The finale, especially, is atypical because of its sharp contrasts among different moods and themes. Setting off the dramatic character of most of the movement are two slow lyrical sections, followed each time by a sudden return of the opening theme.

It is in this movement that one could wish for a more energetic and dramatic performance. The Viennese musicians do not provide enough contrast between the passages dominated by the agitated, almost ominous, opening theme and the two andante sections. Also in this movement the instrumental lines are not always clear; the sound is occasionally muddled. Otherwise the performance is excellent, showing fine balance among the instruments and an exemplary sense of ensemble. The second movement is beautifully expressive.

The Sextet in E flat (for two horns and strings) is a difficult work principally because horn and string timbres are very different and do not readily blend. The task of the players is therefore to make every effort to attune themselves to each other, lest the result be a horn duet vaguely connected to a string quartet.

This kind of ensemble consciousness is more evident at the end of the performance than at

The Beethoven Violin Concerto—for Piano by Harris Goldsmith

I HAVE HAD ample opportunity to familiarize myself with this very remarkable disc since I first heard it via an imported pressing several months ago. The most notable feature about the Peter Serkin/Ozawa reading is its complete freedom from "tradition" and freshness of outlook. These artists approach the music as if neither had ever known the original violin version: Under their aegis, one hears a genuinely lyrical, moving musical experience, not a dusty curio arrangement.

Notable felicitous detail abounds: Serkin's delicate but yet iron-firm sonority, full of ravishing color and nuance; the judicious *stretto* introduced into the first movement cadenza; the occasional tasteful embellishment; the extra (completely appropriate) cadenza inserted into the rondo. The tempo of the first movement is certain to raise eyebrows since it is far and away the most leisurely I've ever heard. However the rhythmic precision is so strong that the

tutti preserve tautness and vitality even with the slow motion. Everything about the playing breathes and stimulates. In sum, this edition makes all three prior attempts obsolete: It's a demonstration of a bona fide artistry.

The sound—clear, spacious, unpressured—is up to the finest work RCA has produced in London, and the American pressing compares favorably with the European. The album cover—a ruddy, outdoorsy photo of Peter Serkin taken by his wife Wendy—adds more good vibrations to this release; in Great Britain, the disc was accompanied by a trite cover featuring a plastic, two-bit violin posed on a piano keyboard. The change is definitely for the better.

BEETHOVEN: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, in D, Op. 61a. Peter Serkin, piano; New Philharmonia Orchestra, Seiji Ozawa, cond. RCA Red Seal LSC 3152, \$5.98.

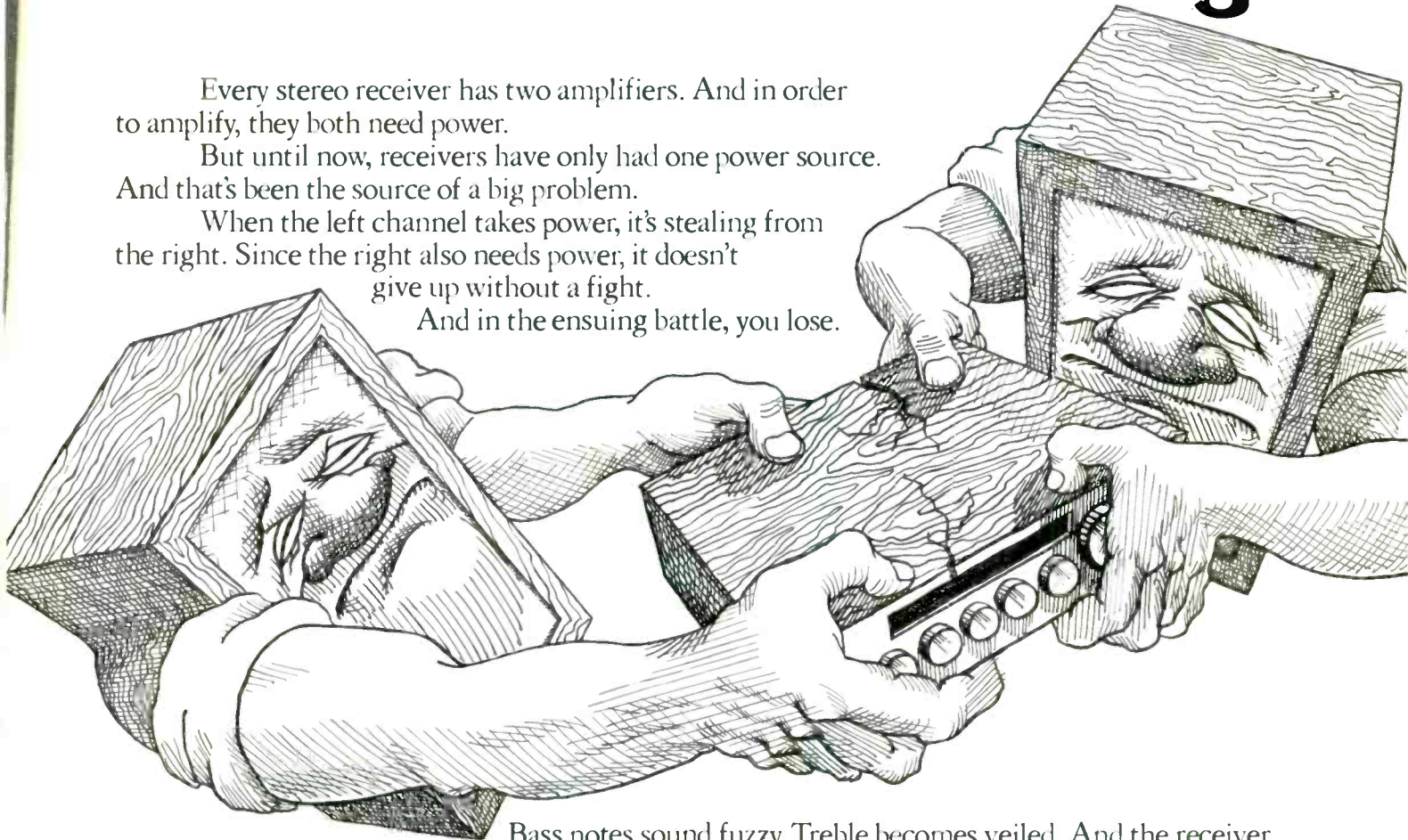
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the beginning. In the first movement each instrumental group seems to be going its own way. The blend is better in the second movement, and by the finale the players are fully aware of each other so that the listener has the sense of an integral sextet.

Although the string playing is uniformly excellent, the horns have a few technical difficulties and do not always produce a good tone. They sound hesitant at points in the second movement, thus failing to get a good lyrical line. The finale is a touch too slow and seems to lack energy, especially in the middle section, which should be a dramatic contrast to the gaiety of the remainder. **A.M.**

BLOCH: Baal Shem; Nigun—See Wieniawski; Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 2, in D minor, Op. 22.

B **BLONDAHL:** Symphony No. 3 (*Facèter*); **ROSENBERG:** Symphony No. 6 (*Sinfonia semplice*). Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra, Sixten Ehrling, cond. (in the Blomdahl); Stig Westerberg, cond. (in the Rosenberg). Turnabout TVS 34318, \$2.98.

Perhaps best known for his "space opera" *Aniara* (which is, surprisingly enough, rarely performed these days), the late Karl-Birger Blomdahl belongs to a rather small category of composers (Wallingford Riegger and Henri Dutilleux come immediately to my mind) whose harmonic language lies about halfway between tonality and nontonality (as opposed to systematic atonality) and yet who are able to create from this idiom a highly charged, highly dramatic emotional climate of almost unbearable intensity. Although Blomdahl's Third Symphony, composed in 1950, is certainly more tonal than the composer's later works, it is nonetheless characterized by a frequent use of extremely close harmonies—with some occasional tone clusters—that give much of Blomdahl's music its special, almost expressionistic hue. Subtitled *Facèter* (Facets), the work is basically a kind of variation-symphony whose diverse moods interlock in a cumulative series of "facets" that eventually return, at the end of the symphony, to mirror the opening statement. As the symphony builds toward its powerful climax, Blomdahl employs a truly extraordinary gamut of dynamic rhythmic complexities and instrumental combinations.

In its performance of the Blomdahl symphony, the Stockholm Philharmonic turns in an almost flawless performance, a fact that is probably due at least as much to Sixten Ehrling's brilliant conducting as it is to the excellence of the orchestra itself. Ehrling is one of those rare conductors who seems to have the entire breadth of a given work in his mind as he leads the orchestra, so that there is an inevitability to his interpretations. What a shame, then, that both the work and the performance have been almost drowned by some of the worst recorded sound I have heard on a "modern" release. While the brass and winds fare relatively well here, the strings are almost totally lacking in highs, and may as well have been dubbed from an old 78. Combined with a ridiculously low recording level, the final result turns out to be a meager approximation of the original Swedish recording. Only the

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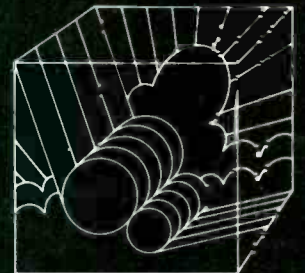
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spacious stereo effect merits praise—but even here, the channels have been reversed (miraculously, they are returned to normal for the Rosenberg).

As for the Sixth Symphony by Blomdahl's composition teacher, Hilding Rosenberg (who has survived his pupil), it is an extremely well-crafted work that opens with a lovely *cantabile* movement establishing the thematic direction for the entire symphony. Rosenberg, however, follows up on this promising opening by creating a rather unwieldy mélange of nonessential episodes, quasi-traditional forms, and some almost atonal melodies. Everything seems to have been calculated to produce the unexpected; but the trouble is that nothing holds together, so that the work as a whole gives the impression of being little more than a sterile

collection of well-wrought musical ideas with no real, inevitable unity behind them. Perhaps a conductor such as Ehrling could give this symphony more soul, although Stig Westerberg's interpretation seems quite convincing, all things considered.

The recorded sound for the Rosenberg is a peg or two above that of the Blomdahl, although it suffers from many of the same defects. But since the Blomdahl Third represents (at least for me) one of the "classic" twentieth-century symphonies, and since it receives a stunning interpretation here, this disc is definitely worth having if you can't get the Swedish recording of the same performance. Turnabout should definitely be encouraged to continue its "Contemporary Music from Sweden" series—but it should also be

forced to find engineers who will not bend, fold, staple, or otherwise mutilate the original product.
R.S.B.

BRAHMS: Hungarian Dances Nos. 5 and 6; Waltzes, Op. 39. **SCHUBERT:** Marche militaire No. 1, in D, D. 733; Fantasy in F minor, D. 940. Richard and John Contiguglia, pianos. Connoisseur Society CS 2037, \$5.98.

Brahms's Op. 39 Waltzes are often—usually, in fact—played as a piano solo. Duetists have taken them up, but I don't recall ever hearing a complete performance in a four-hand format. Indeed, although Brahms originally wrote them as duets and only later revised them for solo piano, virtually everyone labors under the false notion that the four-hand version came later. In all honesty, I prefer Op. 39 as a solo—there is little here that cannot be managed by a single player. With two pianists the sonorities tend to get a bit bass-heavy and overrich, losing the sparseness and sense of challenge that you hear in a good solo rendering. Be that as it may, you won't find a better account (two- or four-handed) than this one by the Contiguglia brothers. They play with superb synchronization, with the most delicately gauged rubato, and exquisitely liquid, nuanced inflection. The two *Hungarian Dances* go equally well, although perhaps No. 6 is held back a little *too* much rhythmically.

I am less convinced by the Schubert performances on the overside. Part of my dissatisfaction comes from the very resonant Connoisseur Society sound: while Brahms's hefty textures blossom in just such an ambience, Schubert's spare, fragile, crisp writing, it seems to me, becomes bloated. Quite apart from the sound per se, I cannot help feeling that a faster tempo and a more tightly knit approach would make a much more incisive, hard-hitting entity of the great F minor Fantasy (I have heard the music played in this fashion and thoroughly approve of the result). For this piece, I recommend the Demus/Badura-Skoda (DGG), Menuhin/Ryce (Everest), and Brendel/Crochet (Turnabout). For the *Marche militaire*, the Turnabout version by Walter and Beatrice Klien is delectable.

Still, I must point out that the Contiguglias are light years ahead of that other stereotype two-piano team *Pesante* and *Mariellato*. These brothers are subtle musicians, not tinklers!

H.G.

R CATALANI: *La Wally* (excerpts). Renata Tebaldi (s), *La Wally*; Lydia Marimpietri (s), Walter; Stefania Malagù (ms), Afra; Mario del Monaco (t), Hagenbach; Piero Cappuccilli (b), Gellner; Justino Diaz (bs), Stromminger; Alfredo Mariotti (bs), Pedone; Coro Lirico di Torino; Orchestre National de l'Opéra de Monte Carlo, Fausto Cleva, cond. London OS 26202, \$5.98 [from London OSA 1392, 1969].

Listening to these excerpts, about an hour's worth from the complete London recording, I was impressed all over again with *La Wally*'s melodic fineness and by Catalani's sensitive harmonic and orchestral touch. Someday, when the right voices and operatic personalities appear and after every Donizetti opera has been revived, we'll have an opportunity to re-evaluate the largely neglected era (c.



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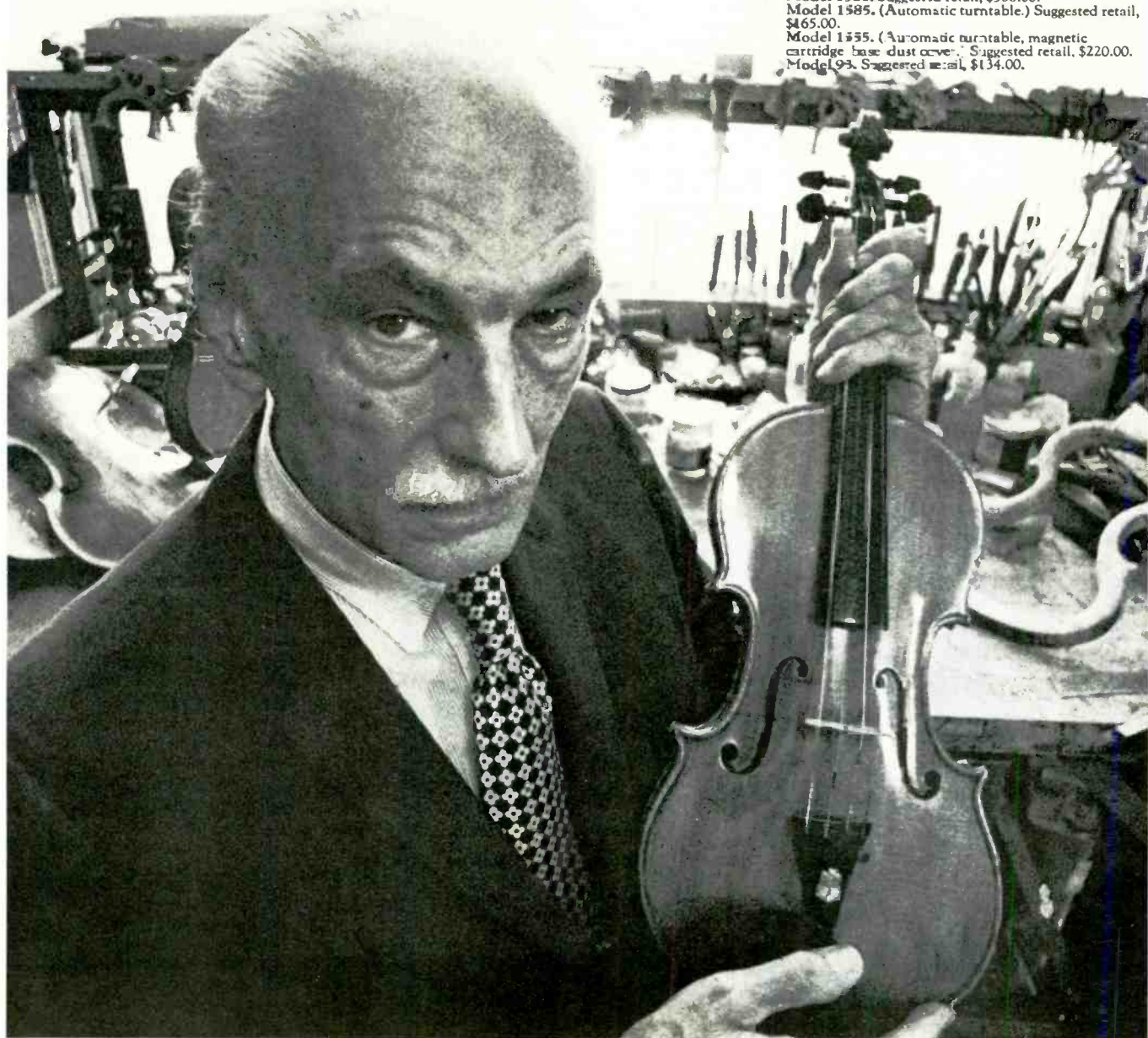
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1890–1915) that produced this and many other equally viable works—much as that prospect may seem fashionably horrifying at the moment.

Essentially what London offers here are the extended finales to all four acts—with the exception of Act I which unfortunately stops abruptly after Wally's famous "Ehben? . . . *Ne andro lontana*." Each segment comes off well on its own, especially the marvelous "kiss-stealing" scene in Act II where Catalani juxtaposes the internal drama of Wally and Hagenbach against the external festivities with considerable skill. Almost all of Act III is included, beginning from Gellner's furious outburst through Wally's bitter lament and the rescue of Hagenbach from the ravine. The lengthy concluding duet and catastrophic avalanche finishes off the two lovers and the disc. Much of Catalani's poetic mood- and scene-setting music has been omitted in favor of the more active portions of the score, but on the whole this is an effective cross-section of an immensely appealing opera.

Both Tebaldi and Del Monaco bring experience and the right general flavor to their roles: the former's strain above G and the latter's lack of dynamic contrast are a bit of a trial but not disastrously so. The supporting singers are excellent and Cleva provides steady support. P.G.D.

CRUMB: Echoes of Time and the River (Echoes II). **ELLIS:** Kaleidoscope for Orchestra, Synthesizer, and Soprano. Joan Wall, mezzo (in the Ellis); Louisville Orchestra, Jorge Mester, cond. Louisville LS 711, \$5.98.

George Crumb won the Pulitzer Prize in 1968 with *Echoes of Time and the River*, a most elusive, delicately conceived, and evocative work in four movements. The movements are entitled "Frozen Time," "Remembrance of Time," "Collapse of Time," and "Last Echoes of Time"; the last two run together more or less as a single structure. Throughout the entire score the big orchestra is handled as a series of chamber ensembles: percussion, winds, strings, and with such unusual additions as a mandolin—each group handled separately and mostly quietly, against a back-

ground of total silence. What happens primarily in this music is a sense that something is *going* to happen; there are a few loud, brassy gestures here and there, but they do not really qualify as events; the real event hasn't yet come off when the music runs out at the end of its twenty minutes. But you sit fascinated throughout. Crumb has conjured time perhaps more successfully than he knows.

Merrill Ellis' *Kaleidoscope*, on the other side, could easily bear the title *What the Boys Are Doing Nowadays*. It has all the stylish traits: orchestra and Moog synthesizer playing in and out of each other, vocal soloist doing incredible things through the texture, a long aleatory passage—the whole bit. It is fat and sassy, especially when compared to the incredibly lean, implicative character of the piece by Crumb. It has lots of delightful effects and descends only occasionally into cliché. That Joan Wall is a wonder. A.F.

ELLIS: Kaleidoscope for Orchestra, Synthesizer, and Soprano—See Crumb: Echoes of Time and the River (Echoes II).

HAYDN: Symphonies: No. 22, in E flat (*The Philosopher*); No. 39, in G minor (*The Fist*); No. 47, in G (*The Palindrome*). English Chamber Orchestra, Raymond Leppard, cond. Philips 839796, \$5.98.

For some, nothing but a complete collection of Haydn symphonies will do. For others, a selection, at least from the first fifty, is all that budget or interest will justify. Both groups will find this record welcome. All three works are strong examples of Haydn at work between 1764–72 and the performances are nicely recorded to capture the lively qualities of playing with the lightness and open texture of a first-class chamber orchestra.

The Symphony No. 39 has been called the model of Mozart's "little G minor," K. 183. The name comes from the very tightly written, assertive character of the piece. *The Philosopher* is the unconventional work, with two English horns and an opening slow movement. The most frequently recorded of these three

scores, it is unique even in the extensive Haydn symphonic literature and, as Leppard plays it, contains some exceptionally lovely sounds.

No. 47 is a symphony that requires an animated statement if it is not to seem at times a virtuoso exercise in counterpoint. This version has plenty of life, and the voices come forth shining. R.C.M.

HAYDN: Symphonies: No. 97, in C; No. 98, in B flat. Cleveland Orchestra, George Szell, cond. Columbia M 30646, \$5.98.

This is one of the last recordings George Szell made in Cleveland before his death in 1970. In it are revealed an orchestra and conductor of the highest excellence performing two of the great classical symphonies. The performances, as might be expected, are superb.

Both symphonies depart somewhat from traditional form and style and look forward to the young Beethoven. Haydn experiments with keys remote from the basic tonality and adds minor formal oddities and characteristic humorous touches. The works are thus at once fully representative of their type and interesting modifications of it.

One notable feature of No. 97 is the written-out repeats of the Minuet and Trio. The second time around, Haydn adds subtle differences that throw new light on the original ideas. The finale of this symphony has a complicated, quasi-fugal development section followed by an abrupt return to the original key, and punctuated throughout by comic relief.

The finale of No. 98 has numerous passages for solo violin, an oboe solo at the opening, and a concluding passage with a harpsichord solo. Also in this movement Haydn explores unusual key relationships, often moving in and out of them suddenly.

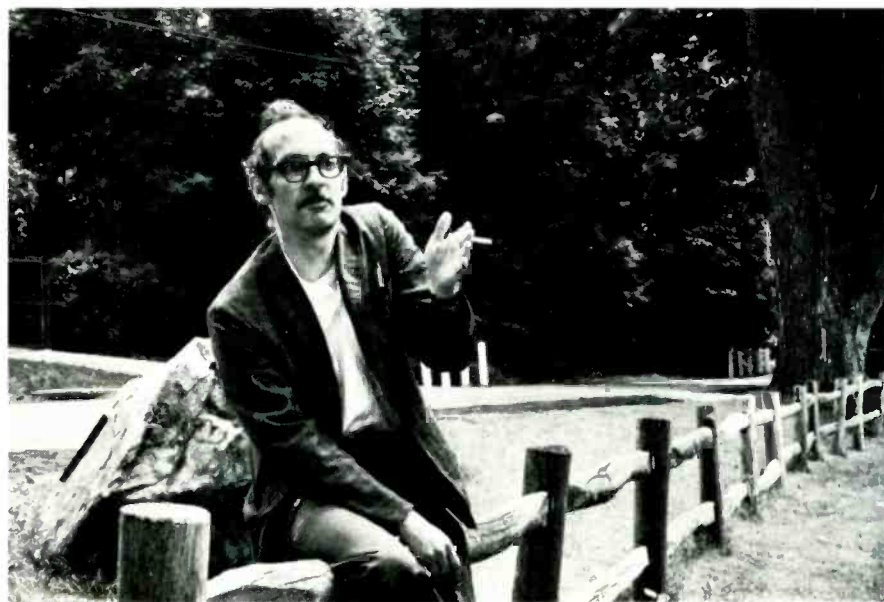
Such points as these may be regarded as minor details or considered integral factors in the total understanding of the work. Szell, like the consummate musician he was, takes the latter attitude. His approach to both of these works as a whole, and to their unusual aspects in particular, has a freshness and spontaneity that make them seem as innovative as they undoubtedly sounded in the 1790s. Also, he evidently worked from a score that incorporates the results of current research into authentic manuscripts.

Szell has fastened onto the basic rhythmic pulse of each movement, and his tempos—each one exactly on the mark—reveal the inner rhythmic structures. Sections of complex counterpoint, as in the first movement of No. 98, are scrupulously executed to bring out the individual lines. There is a sense of total control, total integration of each musical element, and a feeling that orchestra and conductor are thoroughly enjoying what they are doing. A.M.

KABALEVSKY: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in C, Op. 48—See Wieniawski: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 2, in D minor, Op. 22.

LISZT: Sonata for Piano, in B minor; Etude d'execution transcendante, No. 4 (*Mazepa*); *Années de Pelerinage, Première Année (Suisse)*; No. 6, Vallee d'Obermann; *Liebestraum No. 3*. Pascal Rogé, piano. London CS 6693, \$5.98.

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Sonata provides an interesting comparison with the recent Columbia edition by André Watts. Both pianists have tremendous virtuosity at their disposal but their methods of employing it are strikingly different. With Watts, one encountered a big, swashbuckling, almost heart-on-sleeve temperament. The playing, to be sure, was intelligent and reasonably disciplined, but the spur-of-the-moment gesture always held sway. With M. Rogé, purity and strictness of design are uppermost. At the very first statement of the principal theme, for example, Rogé's performance is refreshingly free from the tottering rubato unspecified by Liszt but nonetheless deemed *de rigueur* by dunderheaded "tradition." The entire performance has clarity, proportion and forward motion, a sense of logic and welcome continuity—but perhaps, almost too much objectivity for some tastes. It is rather similar to Leon Fleisher's excellent account on the deleted Epic LC 3675, but lacking that version's intensity and profile. In the overside selections, Rogé seems to allow himself a bit more leeway, but that might be just an impression conveyed by the shorter, more rhapsodic nature of the pieces themselves. In any case, despite any quibbles I have, this is a debut of real distinction.

I'm not crazy about London's piano sound, though; it's overresonant and tends to divide into plangent treble and mushy bass. H.G.

MACHAUT: Messe de Notre Dame; Veni creator spiritus; O livoris feritas; Double Hoquet; Bone pastor qui pastores; Plange regni republica. Capella Antiqua of Munich, Konrad Ruhland, dir. Telefunken SAWT 9566, \$5.98.

MACHAUT: Messe de Notre Dame; De petit po; Douz viaire gracieus; Donnez signeurs; De toutes flours; Rose lis printemps; Mes esperis se combat; Ma dame vostre douz viaire; Dame comment; Quant je ne voy ma dame. Ernst Häfliger and Friedrich Melzer, tenors; Jakob Stämpfli and Kurt Widmer, basses; C. Schmidt and H. Müller, fidel; E. Dombois, lute; U. Holliger, medieval harp; R. Zosso, hurdy-gurdy; G. Höller, recorder; W. Stifner, dulzian-bass; D. Kinsela, regal; R. Scheidegger, portable organ; August Wenzinger, dir. Archive 2533 054, \$6.98.

MACHAUT: Messe de Notre Dame; Foy porter; Quant ma dame; nuls ne doit avoir; Tant doucement; Tres douce dame; Douce dame jolie; Amour me fait desirer. Ian Partridge, John Buttrey, and Nigel Rogers, tenors; Geoffrey Shaw, baritone; J. Caldwell, organ; J. Rimmer, psaltery and tabor; R. Taylor, recorders; S. Trier, alto clarinet; D. Watkins, harp; C. Wellington, viola; Grayston Burgess, dir. Oiseau-Lyre SOL 310, \$5.98.

I have often felt somewhat smug when my colleagues complain so bitterly over the appearance of the twenty-first *Pathétique* or the fifteenth *Aida*; but my just comeuppance has arrived with three new recordings of Guillaume de Machaut's *Messe de Notre Dame*. Now it is my turn to ask why, when there are two perfectly fine versions currently in the catalogue and when there are genuine masterpieces still unrecorded, do the record companies insist on their sheeplike follow-the-leader stance?

Not that the Machaut Mass isn't a very fine work; it is, and a most unusual one to boot. Guillaume de Machaut, who died in 1377,

lived at the end of the age of the troubadours and the trouvères. He was a poet—an important figure in French literature—whose favorite topics were courtly love and romance cast in the complex and elegant forms of his day. The Mass stands as an anomaly in his work. It is the only liturgical piece he ever wrote—and this at a time when only a couple of adventurous souls had ever tried to produce a complete setting of the Ordinary.

One cannot look for the kind of unity in Machaut's Mass that is present in Palestrina or even Dufay. The movements are not tied together by shared *cantus firmi*, the quick syllabic Gloria and Credo are quite different in tone from the towering isorhythmic structures of the other movements. Nevertheless there is a unity of personal style which is perhaps more effective than external device and which gives the work its overwhelming impact on a listener six hundred years after its composition.

Like most masterpieces the Machaut *Messe de Notre Dame* can stand up to a tremendous variety of interpretation, at least in theory. It can be lyrical and songlike with emphasis on the finely traced melodic lines or at the other extreme one can stress its rugged monumental qualities, taking advantage of the terrific rhythmic energy which impels the movements forward. Wenzinger on Archive belongs to the former school, Ruhland and Burgess to the latter. That Wenzinger does not succeed in realizing what he obviously intends while the others do, however, does not deny the validity of his approach.

Wenzinger's great strength has been in his interpretation of baroque music; lest you fall into the trap of believing all "old" music is alike, may I point out that about 300 years separate Machaut and Bach and there are about 200 years between Bach and Milton Babbitt. Fine musicians as they are and authentic as they have attempted to make their performance, the Archive ensemble simply does not feel the style naturally enough to make its performance convincing. It is too slow for one thing, taking twenty-eight minutes to a comparable twenty-three by Konrad Ruhland. The phrases are mannered and overdone; Wenzinger shapes each one so lovingly that all the momentum in the line is lost and the total effect after a few minutes is unrelieved boredom. What is true for the Mass is even truer for the secular pieces which make up the second side. Ernst Häfliger, usually a graceful and relaxed singer, produces some extremely pinched and desperate tones. His interpretation, too, is polite and respectful but without the natural sympathy I think he would develop given the time and the inclination.

The Oiseau-Lyre offering is a curious mixture, a superb reading of the Mass, quite possibly the best to date, paired with a thick-skinned, insensitive performance of the secular music by a group of singers who ought to know better. The Mass is very exciting; The relentless drive of the Gloria and Credo, whose quick-moving syllables culminate in the magnificent outpouring of their isorhythmic Amen sections; the superb sonority of the opening of the *Sanctus*; the tight control over tempo, phrasing, and balance which are a tribute to Grayston Burgess' ability as a conductor and the devotion and effort he has put into his interpretation. The organ interpolations from the contemporary Faenza codex illuminate the Kyrie with brilliant flashes of color and their

performance by John Caldwell is nothing short of inspired. Considering the excellence of the solo singers in the Mass, their pedestrian performance on the reverse side is particularly disappointing. Since they all—unlike Häfliger—are experienced in the medieval style, I can only conclude that one rehearsal at most was allotted to the filler numbers, a great pity since they are in no way inferior to the Mass.

The most satisfying disc of the three is the Capella Antiqua led by Konrad Ruhland. The biting sound of the ensemble and their commitment to the structural niceties of the music are perfectly combined in Ruhland's reading of the Mass. If his Kyrie is not quite so dazzling as Burgess', it is still a solid, nicely paced movement well integrated with the rest of the interpretation. Always a structuralist, Ruhland lets us hear the isorhythmic backbone of the work through subtle instrumentation without letting the complicated musical forms obscure the beauty and emotional power of the work as a whole. As a complement to the Latin Mass he has chosen four of Machaut's six Latin motets and a purely instrumental piece which shares the same musical style. Except for *Veni creator spiritus* the texts are secular and semipolitical. The motets are laid out on Gregorian tenors arranged much like the isorhythmic Mass movements in complex patterns held together for the listener by repetitions of striking rhythmic rather than melodic figures. The light, bouncy performance, however, captures some of the carefree joy of the motets' less stylized forebears of the thirteenth century. Two English counter-tenors, James Bowman and Tom Sutcliffe, were wisely imported to help out the Capella, which does not have solo singers to match most comparable ensembles, and they sound perfectly splendid. My only complaint about this otherwise exemplary recording is that the engineer placed the microphones so close to the singers that the sibilant syllables intrude most unpleasantly upon the vocal lines. S.T.S.

MAHLER: Symphonies (complete). Soloists; Chorus and Orchestra of the Bavarian Radio, Rafael Kubelik, cond. For a feature review of these recordings, see page 83.

PENDERECKI: *Utrenja*, The Entombment of Christ. Stefania Woytowicz, soprano; Kerstin Meyer, mezzo; Seth McCoy, tenor; Bernard Ladysz and Peter Lager, basses; Temple University Choirs; Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond. RCA Red Seal LSC 3180, \$5.98.

Penderecki's *Utrenja* was commissioned by the Philadelphia Orchestra and given its United States premiere by that ensemble with soloists Woytowicz, Meyer, McCoy, Ladysz, and Lager, and the Temple University Choirs under Eugene Ormandy's direction in the fall of 1970. The present recording was made using the identical personnel following the concerts given on that occasion.

The word "*Utrenja*" means "morning service" or "morning prayer" and refers to a service which takes place on Holy Saturday—that is, the day after Christ's death (Good Friday) and the day before His resurrection (Easter). The service thus deals with the period of Christ's entombment, a period accorded minor significance in the Western Church but

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of considerable importance in the Eastern Church of Penderecki's background. Dramatically speaking, it is a time of relative calm between the climactic points of the Crucifixion and the Ascension, and the text (in old Slavonic) assembled by the composer for the composition is strongly colored by a sense of grief over the event just past and of hope for the one to come.

It is interesting to observe the effect this text has had upon Penderecki's music. Those who know the *St. Luke* Passion will be in for something of a surprise, for although the technical means are essentially the same, the two works are quite different in general atmosphere. Whereas the earlier work relied heavily upon striking (if at times rather obvious) musical effects to punctuate the dramatic events portrayed in the text, the present one depends for the most part upon nondramatic, impressionistic devices. Indeed, it is a work remarkably static in atmosphere, whose interest derives largely from the sheer beauty, or strangeness, of the momentary sounds.

Of course, all of Penderecki's music is ultimately static in nature, as has been pointed out by my colleague David Hamilton in previous reviews in these pages. But it is much more obvious in the nondramatic context of this work than in the *Passion*. And it is interesting that even those critics who were extremely enthusiastic about the earlier piece have been lukewarm about this one. The absence of a clearly defined "story" tends to point up the musical limitations, and the essentially somber, "grey" quality of the score makes it less immediately arresting than most by Penderecki. But my own view is that *Urenja* is one of the composer's more interesting pieces, despite the obvious problems. He has to rely on more specifically musical means for his effects, and some of these work extremely well. Particularly notable is the appearance of occasional triadic passages in the chorus, which within this context seem to emerge from the depths of one's musical memory. Also impressive is Penderecki's evocation of the character of

traditional Eastern Church music—created, however, without a specific borrowing of church melodies.

The emphasis in the work is largely vocal. One section, the first, is completely a cappella, and the voices carry the main burden in several others. Only in the second section, in fact, does the orchestra take a really significant role, sharing a huge vocal/instrumental crescendo which shapes most of the section. The five soloists perform their roles well, but Penderecki treats them so perfunctorily that they are able to attain little individuality. The real focus, however, is on the chorus, which completely dominates the greater part of the piece. And fortunately, the extraordinarily demanding choral parts (which feature various kinds of vocal noises, as well as straight singing) are beautifully managed by the combined Temple University Choirs, which under the direction of Robert Page obviously did their homework extremely well. The orchestra is less successful, although even here the Philadelphians manage to produce a beautiful sound. But the instrumental mass is so rich and syrupy that it is very difficult to pick out individual events, a fact which results partly from Penderecki's thick, clustered scoring, but also, I suspect, from Ormandy's lack of experience with this kind of music. But the vocalists are more than sufficient to carry the day. The sound is excellent, and a translation of the text is included.

R.P.M.

ROSENBERG: Symphony No. 6 (*Sinfonia semplice*)—See Blomdahl: Symphony No. 3 (*Facetter*).

B ROSSINI: Guillaume Tell (excerpts): Overture; Où vas-tu? Quel transport t'agite; Ils s'éloignent enfin... Sombre forêt; Oui, vous l'arrachez à mon âme; Sois immobile; Guillaume est dans les fers... Asile héréditaire. Andréa Guiot (s), Mathilde; Nicolai Gedda (t), Arnold; Ernest Blanc (b), Guillaume; Orchestra of the Paris Opera, Alain Lombard, cond. Seraphim S 60181, \$2.98.

Once before, in dealing with *Les Troyens*, EMI limited itself to half-measures, only to be trumped by Philips' splendid complete version. We can only hope that a similar fate will befall this quarter-measure on behalf of another great masterpiece of the French operatic literature. I'll not devote space here to singing its praises at length—that was done far more effectively than I can, by none other than the composer of *Les Troyens*, in a famous essay (readily available in translation in Oliver Strunk's invaluable *Source Readings in Music History*). In any case, you won't be able to hear many of those splendors on this disc, which limits itself to solo numbers, and devotes—so help me—three fifths of a side to the Overture, of which there have been a few other recordings. In fact, only the Mathilde-Arnold love duet from Act II is a relative rarity on disc, although most of these selections are best known in the Italian version. But *Guillaume Tell* without a chorus? Without the splendid ensembles of the second act? Without the sublime modulations of the *ranz des vaches* in the Finale? Even Everest's boiched transfer of the antique Cetra recording will tell you more about the genius of Rossini than

these "highlights." (Much more can be done, even on a single record judiciously selected to show numerous aspects of the opera, as was proven some years back by a European Philips record with Tony Poncet and the Karlsruhe Opera.)

What we have here, in essence, is a record for fanciers of the genus tenor, species Swedish. Miss Guiot is hardly more than serviceable, for her lack of control, especially at the register break, prevents her from tracing a smooth line in Mathilde's aria, and in the fast music of the duet she is simply choppy. Blanc emits a woolly sound, and his big aria lacks commitment. Gedda gets most of the work (an abridged, chorusless version of the stretta is appended to his last-act aria), and accomplishes it in his usual sturdy, musical fashion. If advancing years have made his voice a shade less flexible, his tone a little thicker than of yore, he remains uniquely comfortable above the staff, and without such command of altitudes the role of Arnold is not possible. Lombard and the orchestra do well by the Overture, but elsewhere there are some uncalled-for and unsatisfactory tempo changes.

The Seraphim issue tames somewhat the fierceness of bass that beset the French issue of this recording, although the American surfaces are slightly less clean. The sample supplied for review gave no indication of whether a libretto will be supplied with the final version.

D.H.

SCHUBERT: Lieder: Trauer der Liebe; Sehnsucht; Das Bild; Die Liebe hat gelogen; Abendbilder; Der Entfernten; Schwanengesang; Erinnerung; Stimme der Liebe. **SCHUMANN:** Lieder: Anfangs wollt' ich fast verzagen; Es treibt mich hin; Dein Angesicht, so lieb und schön; Du bist wie eine Blume; Lehn' deine Wang' an meine Wang'; Die Lotosblume; Was will die einsame Träne; Entflieh mit mir; Es fiel ein Reif in der Frühlingsnacht; Mit Myrthen und Rosen. Werner Krenn, tenor; Erik Werba, piano. London OS 26216, \$5.98.

This is Werner Krenn's second recital record for London, and musically it rates at the same high level as his first. Krenn has a beautiful lyric tenor voice, and he cultivates a fine legato and a ravishing *mezza voce*. In addition, he is one of those rare Lieder singers who can establish the mood of a song from the start.

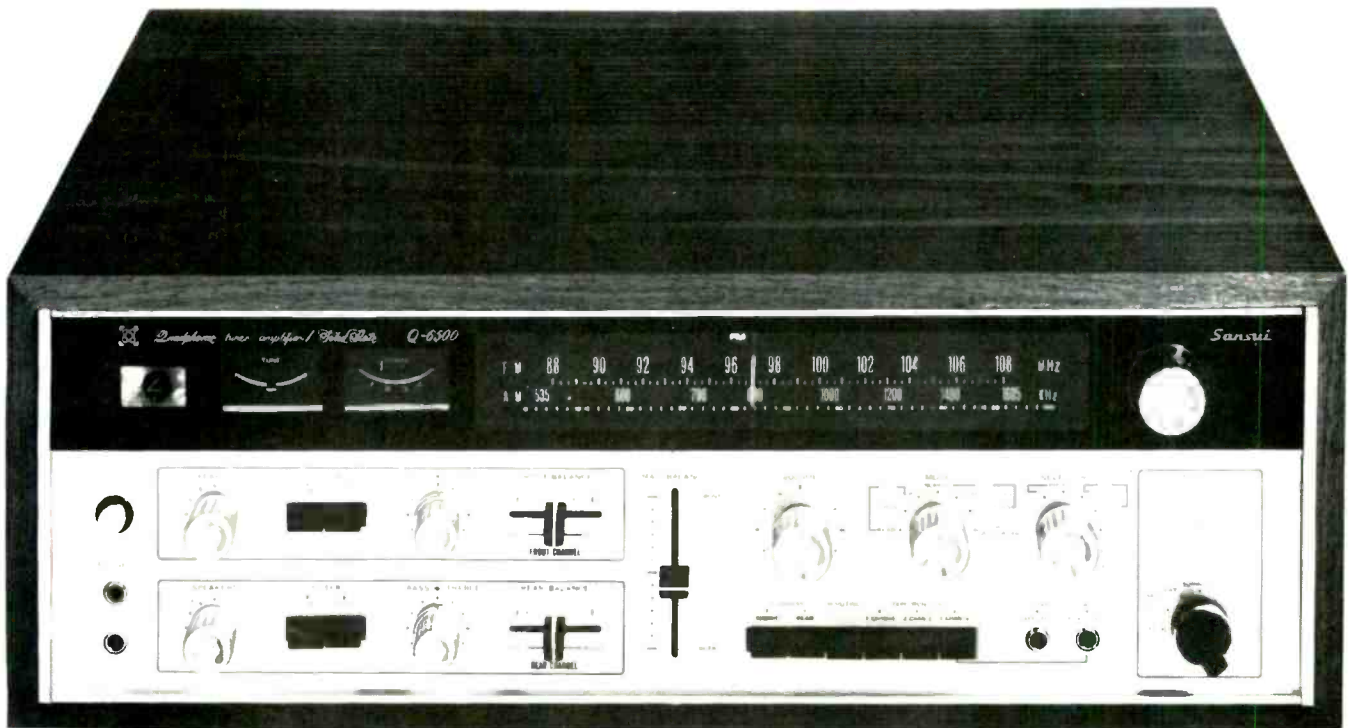
Taken individually, the songs in this program are very well sung, but taken as a recital (and this goes especially for the Schubert group) there is a sameness which is monotonous for my taste. Krenn sings with a small dynamic range, and as most of the Schubert songs presented here are strophic, his small-scale approach makes them repetitious. I do not want to give the impression that the Schubert side is not worth listening to. It contains some real gems, like *Schwanengesang* in which Krenn is able to sustain an almost unreal mood. With few exceptions, like *Die Liebe hat gelogen*, these songs are rarely heard, and are therefore a definite attraction for every Lieder collector, even if all of them do not represent Schubert at his best.

Krenn succeeds much better on Side 2 because many of these songs are prime Schumann and the piano plays a greater part in the dynamic structure. I have seldom heard *Dein Angesicht* or *Du bist wie eine Blume* as well sung as on this record. *Entflieh mit mir* is a bit



Krzysztof Penderecki—exploring the sheer beauty found in static, momentary sounds.

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too much for his vocal equipment, but he is able to create a real feeling of excitement in *Die Lotosblume*.

In conclusion, I consider Werner Krenn more poet than dramatist, but definitely a most promising addition to the ever-diminishing number of true exponents of the German Lied.

Nowadays (for financial reasons only), the Lied is generally performed in enormous halls which rob it of its intimate character. It would be a great advantage to hear fine Lied performances in your living room in the acoustics for which they were conceived. I wonder, therefore, why London's engineers have tried their best to give us the big-hall effect which goes so much against the chamber music spirit in which this music was written. G.K.

SCHUBERT: Marche militaire No. 1, in D, D. 733; Fantasy in F minor, D. 940—See Brahms: Hungarian Dances Nos. 5 and 6, Waltzes, Op. 39.

SCHUMANN: Lieder: Anfangs wollt' ich fast verzagen; Es treibt mich hin; Dein Angesicht, so lieb und schön; Du bist wie eine Blume; Lehn' deine Wang' an meine Wang'; Die Lotosblume; Was will die einsame Träne; Entflieh mit mir; Es fiel ein Reif in der Frühlingsnacht; Mit Myrthen und Rosen—See Schubert: Lieder.

SCHUMANN: Sonata for Piano, No. 1, in F sharp minor, Op. 11; Fantasiestücke (3), Op. 111. Claudio Arrau, piano, Philips 802 793, \$5.98.

Arrau brings masterful insight to the relatively unfamiliar Op. 111 *Fantasiestücke*, shading and shaping the contours with exemplary studied warmth and freedom, lavishing all sorts of pianistic chiaroscuro on the typically Schumannesque textures. The songful middle section of the triptych especially is declaimed with particularly sagacious, warmhearted simplicity. The F sharp minor Sonata, on the other hand, is an uncommonly problematical essay to hold together. Some of the older generation performers (bless their Romantic souls!) were extremely fond of the work, but Paderewski (or was it Harold Bauer?) suggested the not particularly praiseworthy solution of chopping out large chunks of the music.

Arrau, of course, will have none of such vandalism. His way with the knotty work is to make it as richly detailed and as interesting as possible. He makes the most of such niceties as ambiguous rhythmic interplay and staccato-legato contrasts, sudden shifts of dynamics, and the like. For all the obvious mastery of the pianism though, I do not find that it adds up to the best Schumann or, for that matter, even the best Arrau. The playing here strikes me as a bit too studied, overly elaborate, and lacking the thread of continuity that is, admittedly, so hard to obtain in this particular work. H.G.

SCRIABIN: The Poem of Ecstasy, Op. 54.
TCHAIKOVSKY: Romeo and Juliet. Boston Symphony Orchestra, Claudio Abbado, cond. Deutsche Grammophon 2530 137, \$6.98

These recordings will be of special interest to the audiophile as the first to be made (February 8, 1971) with the DGG engineers' permanent Symphony Hall setup featuring a new, extremely elaborate multichannel console in a new control room of advanced acoustical design located in the hall's basement [see HF, May 1971, p. 21]. I had the good fortune of attending the afternoon (Tchaikovsky) session and of hearing and seeing—along with many other press guests—the proceedings both via the control-room's monitor speakers and closed-circuit TV screen and directly from the first balcony overlooking the orchestra, which for recording purposes was spread out on the auditorium floor. It was a fascinating experience, but after the intervening months I find it difficult to correlate what I heard then with what I now hear from the finished disc. Certainly I can't remember which of the various takes of different *Romeo and Juliet* sections were finally chosen, nor can I now spot where different takes have been joined. And it's much easier for me to compare the recorded sonics, as such, with earlier DGG Boston recordings than what I heard last February—in the control room, that is: what one hears "live" at a recording session is necessarily quite different.

Anyway, what I do hear now is excitingly rich and vivid, yet to my personal aural tastes not quite as satisfactory as the sonics of some of the earlier recordings, particularly those of the Boston Pops Orchestra. There now seems to be a larger ratio of direct as against reflected sound (i.e., the orchestra seems closer): the transparency is such that the percussion (the cymbals especially) are somewhat unnaturally—however dramatically—spotlighted; and the high-frequency brilliancies (particularly those of the clarion first-trumpet part in the Scriabin) are often unduly intense and sharp-edged. Over-all, however, the results are so thrilling that it's perhaps unjust to complain about what may not be considered faults at all by other listeners.

Interpretatively, Abbado's uninhibitedly romantic approach is appropriate for both works—essential perhaps for the Scriabin, even if at times one has the impression that he is being swept along by the music rather than firmly controlling its torrential flow. In-



Alexander Scriabin—at last, an integral recording of the nine sonatas for piano.

deed, it is just such passionate fervor that gives these readings a slight edge over the recent ones by Mehta for London Records (in different couplings). Although Mehta holds his Los Angeles Philharmonic players under more authoritative control, they don't play as beautifully as the Bostonians and Mehta himself never gives the impression that he really relishes the music itself. And although the somewhat more distantly miked London recordings are perhaps more equable in spectrum balance, the richer tonal coloring and more glittering engineering here turn both showpieces into sonic spectaculars supreme. R.D.D.

SCRIABIN: Sonatas for Piano: No. 1, in F minor, Op. 6; No. 2 (Sonata-Fantasy), in G sharp minor, Op. 19; No. 8, Op. 66; Désir, Op. 57, No. 1; Caresse dansée, Op. 57, No. 2; Etude in C sharp minor, Op. 2, No. 1. Ruth Laredo, piano. Connoisseur Society CS 2035, \$5.98.

SCRIABIN: Sonatas for Piano: No. 4, in F sharp, Op. 30; No. 5, in F sharp minor, Op. 53; No. 6, Op. 62; No. 7 (*White Mass*), Op. 64; No. 8, Op. 66; No. 9 (*Black Mass*), Op. 68; No. 10, Op. 70. Roberto Szidon, piano. Deutsche Grammophon 2707 053, \$13.96 (two discs).

With Ruth Laredo's third Scriabin recording, the complete sonatas by this Russian mystic are available in their entirety for the first time in the U.S. Of the three previously unrecorded (domestically) sonatas offered on this new release, the First, with its many parallels to the popular Third Sonata, offers the most interest, while the Eighth represents, in my opinion, the least worthy of the composer's ten sonatas since, unlike the other "late" works in the genre, the Eighth never manages to settle into a unified harmonic language. The two-record set by Roberto Szidon, on the other hand, contains all of the late sonatas and lacks only the Third to make it a cream-of-the-crop selection.

The differences between Laredo's piano style and Szidon's are striking, all the more so since both turn in some truly excellent performances. Szidon's playing seems to be pretty much of the let-your-fingers-do-the-working school, while Laredo obviously makes good use of arm-weight and general body relaxation. This probably greatly explains the difference in piano tone between the two artists—Ruth Laredo produces, to my mind, one of the richest, most sumptuous tones of any living pianist; Szidon, on the other hand, has a much drier tone that works admirably in the quieter passages but tends to become almost incredibly loud and tinny in the loud ones. Thus, the ever-present triads of the Fifth Sonata (my personal favorite, along with the Sixth) form expansive lakes of sound in Laredo's recording, whereas they lose their *raison d'être* in Szidon's. Some of this may be due, of course, to the differences in recorded sound. Deutsche Grammophon's engineering is disappointing—the recording level is too low, the high tones lack sharpness, and the sonics as a whole do not match the clean and superbly resonant sound of the Connoisseur Society discs. If anything, the latter were perhaps miked a tiny bit too close, thus probably robbing Laredo of certain dynamic nuances.

Indeed, in the dynamic-shading department, Szidon comes in a strong first: he projects Scriabin's many sudden changes with

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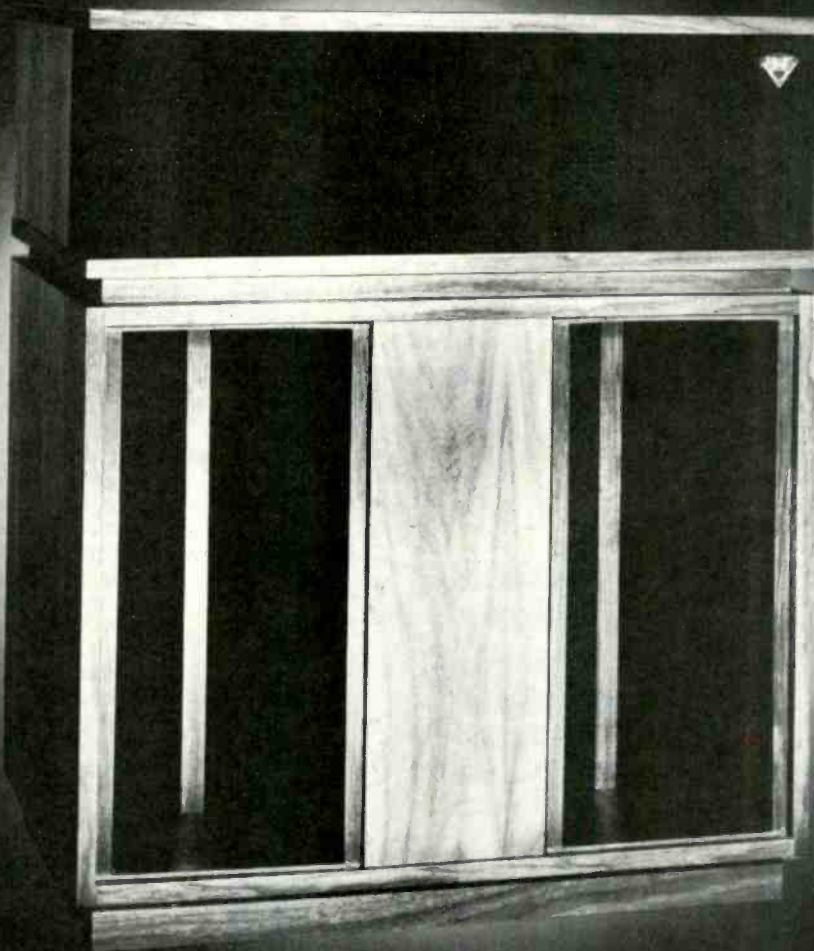
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marked vividness. Furthermore, Szidon's grasp of the almost unfathomable formal problems within each sonata surpasses any pianist I have ever heard. He carefully shapes every melodic fragment yet molds the many transitions from episode to episode into an urgent, sculptural whole. Thus, by the time he reaches the end of the Fifth Sonata, he has made the final spasm of sound so inevitable that only the word "orgasm" seems appropriate.

In Laredo's case, the dynamic shading represents her weakest point, particularly in her two most recent Scriabin recordings (the first is close to perfection). Time after time, she blithely ignores the various markings in the score, continuing at a volume that is almost always, it seems to me, too loud. Thus, the ethereal series of chords (marked, incredibly, *quasi niente*) in the First Sonata's fourth movement hardly suggest the "almost nothing" effect suggested by Scriabin. Furthermore, Laredo, in spite of her magnificent tone, occasionally tends to hammer a melodic line to death, without integrating the theme into the over-all work as Szidon does so skillfully.

Laredo and Szidon both create an extraordinary feeling for movement, but in two entirely different manners. Szidon's momentum arises particularly from his uncanny comprehension of Scriabin's interlacing and interlocking formal patterns and thematic ideas. Rhythmically, he tends to be overly impetuous, jerky (an eighth note becomes a sixteenth, a sixteenth a thirty-second, etc.), and rather artificial. Laredo, while tending to drown the themes and lose sight of the over-all conception (especially in her two recent endeavors), marvelously captures the inherent rhythmic movement of Scriabin's compositions. She also excels in bringing out the subtle harmonic shifts that give, for instance, the scherzos of the First and Third Sonatas their virility.

Conclusion? Laredo's deficiencies are more than compensated for by her over-all excellence, and I can see no reason to prefer Szidon's truncated set when, for an additional disc, one can have the complete sonatas and a number of fascinating miniatures from Laredo (the third release also includes the bizarre *Désir* and *Caresse dansée*, for which Laredo has found a perfectly apropos style, and the famous Etude Op. 2, No. 1, which receives a somewhat less-than-subtle performance). The engineering on the Szidon release adds yet another minus, particularly vis-à-vis Connoisseur Society's sumptuous sonics. But if you are interested in a different and often startling point of view and some truly brilliant pianism (almost for its own sake, on occasion), the Szidon set bears investigation.

P.S. Faubion Bowers, in his liner notes for the Laredo recording, hits a new high in precious absurdity—or in absurd preciousness, if you will: how slyly (the clever fellow) he makes a connection between Scriabin's "fall" and subsequent "resurgence" and the fact that the composer was born on Christmas and dies on Easter. Dime-store mysticism, anyone?

R.S.B.

SIBELIUS: Kullervo, Op. 7; Kuolema, Op. 44; Scene with Cranes; Swanwhite Suite, Op. 54; The Harp; The Maidens with Roses; Listen, the Robin Sings; Swanwhite and the Prince. Raiii Kostia, soprano; Usko Viitanen, baritone; Helsinki University Male Chorus; Bournemouth

Symphony Orchestra, Paavo Berglund, cond. For a feature review of this recording, see page 87.

STRAUSS, R.: Salome. Gwyneth Jones (s), Salome; Mignon Dunn (ms), Herodias; Ursula Boese (c), Page; Richard Cassilly (t), Herod; Wieslaw Ochman (t), Narraboth; Peter Haage (t), 1st Jew; Jürgen Förster (t), 2nd Jew; Kurt Marschner (t), 3rd Jew; Heinz Kruse (t), 4th Jew; Willy Hartmann (t), Slave; Horst Wilhelm (t), 2nd Nazarene; Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (b), Jokanaan; Hans Sotin (bs), 1st Nazarene; Kurt Moll (bs), 1st Soldier; Carl Schultz (bs), 2nd Soldier; Franz Grundheber (bs), Cappadocian; Heinz Blankenburg (bs), 5th Jew; Orchestra of the Hamburg State Opera, Karl Böhm, cond. Deutsche Grammophon 2707 052 \$13.96 (two discs).

DGG's new *Salome*, the third version available in stereo, is a live souvenir of the three performances given last November at the Staatsoper, Hamburg by Karl Böhm, who was returning to conduct opera in that city after an absence of thirty-six years. Two other guest artists, Fischer-Dieskau and Gwyneth Jones, also contributed to the occasion, which was in effect a "festival" production, and the results are never less than interesting. Of course any live recording has certain disadvantages: the presence of small inaccuracies that would have been eliminated in the studio; sound quality a cut below prevailing standards. The Staatsoper orchestra, while not of international standing, plays very well, yet without the security that studio corrections might have enabled them to achieve. And the sound, though never less than professional, is variable, being often cloudy and lacking in definition.

On the other hand, as this release shows, there are significant advantages to recording "live." Immediacy is one. There is a real sense of occasion here. Indeed it comes as some-



Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau—a new recording triumph for this "astounding" baritone.

thing of a surprise not to hear applause after the concluding bars (presumably the final tape is a composite that includes rehearsals). In this instance there is an additional advantage. Apart from the two stars, the cast consists of members of Hamburg's resident company and they perform with a feeling for ensemble that is bound to be absent from a merely *ad hoc* group. Passages like the theological squabble of the five Jews, or the soldiers' dialogue in the first scene, make a far more vivid effect here than in the Victor set. The Hamburgers do not merely sing, they characterize and interact. In this respect, too, Herodias (Mignon Dunn), the Page (Ursula Boese), and Narraboth (Wieslaw Ochman) are eminently satisfactory, though the two women sing with rather plummy tone.

Richard Cassilly has a much harder task. Herod is really the co-protagonist of this opera. He, no less than Salome, is responsible for creating the work's neurasthenic atmosphere, the depravity, the aura of moral despair. Cassilly's performance is first-rate. He is more dramatically responsive, more interesting, than Richard Lewis on Victor, and more musical than Gerhard Stolze (a self-indulgent and ultimately wearisome performer) on London. Cassilly falls short only by comparison with Julius Patzak on Richmond (mono only), but Patzak's Herod is one of the phonograph's definitive performances, an unforgettable projection of mounting hysteria and self-revulsion.

Jokanaan is a much easier proposition. Unlike the complex, wayward Herod he is the embodiment of a single impulse. He curses, he condemns sin, he prophesies the triumph of the Messiah—and in rather banal music. Fervor, with perhaps a touch of grandeur, is the main requisite for a successful Jokanaan, and both Sherrill Milnes (RCA) and Eberhard Wächter (London) are excellent. The eternally astounding Fischer-Dieskau, however, manages to bring an extra touch of nobility to the role. The most striking instance of this is the passage where Jokanaan tells Salome to seek salvation from Christ at Galilee. Here Fischer-Dieskau, by broadening the melody, by veiling his tone, and by binding the notes together in a seamless legato, transmutes an inherently sanctimonious moment into musical truth. Even though some of his top notes are uncomfortable, this is a great performance.

Gwyneth Jones, unfortunately, is not in the same class. Despite her prodigious European popularity (she seems to be featured in any number of major festival and recording projects these days), Jones is not a very satisfying artist. Her talent is enormous. She is intelligent and musical. She grasps the essence of a role immediately. But despite a superb natural instrument, her vocal technique is not adequate to the demands she places on it. The fresh, luminous voice of a few years ago now sounds tired; the tone is frequently unfocused and spread, the top notes hard-driven, the ends of phrases clipped. There is certainly some fine singing in her *Salome*, but an air of vocal tentativeness, even clumsiness, makes it much less enjoyable than either Nilsson (London) or the surprising Caballé (RCA).

Karl Böhm, alas, is less help than he might be. For all his experience as a Strauss conductor, *Salome* is not really one of his specialties. He does justice to the score's exotic coloration, but on the whole his approach

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seems too intellectualized. He doesn't bring much in the way of excitement or tension. His handling of the final scene is, in particular, a bit stodgy and unyielding. Solti (London) and, especially, Clemens Krauss (Richmond) are much more physical and elemental. Of the stereo rivals, then, London is probably the best choice, even with the drawback of Stolze. Caballé on RCA is fascinating and Fischer-Dieskau should certainly be heard on this new recording from DGG.

One small point. What sounds like clumsy tape editing has eliminated one of Herodias' lines ("Ich will nicht haben, dass sie tanzt.") after Herod's first "Tanz für mich, Salome!" on Side 3. D.S.H.

B **STRAVINSKY:** Serenade in A; Duo concertant; Capriccio for Piano and Orchestra; Piano Rag-music. Igor Stravinsky, piano (in all works); Samuel Dushkin, violin (in the Duo concertant); Orchestre des Concerts Straram, Ernest Ansermet, cond. (in the *Capriccio*) Seraphim 60183, \$2.98 (mono only) [from originals recorded 1930-34].

H **STRAVINSKY:** Pastorale; Ragtime; Octet; Preludium; Tango; Ebony Concerto; Concertino for Twelve Instruments. Israel Baker, violin (in the *Pastorale*); Benny Goodman, clarinet (in the *Ebony Concerto*); Toni Koves, cimbalom (in the *Ragtime*); Columbia Jazz Combo (In the *Preludium, Tango, and Ebony Concerto*); Columbia Chamber Ensemble (in the other works). Igor Stravinsky, cond. Columbia M 30579, \$5.98.

A time span of about three decades separates the recordings on these two discs, both of them indispensable to any serious Stravinsky collection, although neither is without certain tangible flaws.

Not for many years have any recordings of Stravinsky at the keyboard been available, and the Seraphim collection represents a down payment, at least, on the considerable number of his prewar recordings for EMI—a rather chintzy down payment, to be sure, for the French equivalent of this disc (Voix de son Maître 2C 061-11300) also includes the performances with Dushkin of the latter's transcriptions from *Firebird* and *Petrushka*. The same EMI archives also include numerous orchestral and chamber performances as well, but since Stravinsky abandoned his public career as pianist in later years, the solo piano recordings form the most important part of this legacy.

The Serenade in A was actually composed so that each of its movements would fit onto a single record side, although the recording was not made until some years later. The *Capriccio*, on the other hand, seems to have been recorded very shortly after the Paris premiere in 1929, and likewise the 1932 *Duo concertant*, composed for use on joint tours with Samuel Dushkin. All of these are admirable performances, the occasional burble compensated for by the metrical security and sparkling articulation. Dushkin, despite a few intonational flaws, brings great verve to the spiccato passages, and superbly controls the soaring line of the final *Dithyramb*.

On the negative side, however, one must register serious disappointment in the transfers, particularly that of the *Capriccio*, which has transformed the boxy clarity of the original

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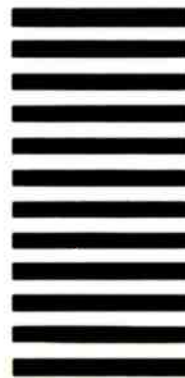
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into a muffled grittiness, the winds losing their sharp colors and the piano becoming submerged into the general muddle: too much added echo, too much top cutoff (the French LP is, alas, only slightly better). The other pieces suffer less because they involve simpler textures, but the loss is still tangible. Please, let us have flat transfers, without echo, instead of this botched "enhancement," which goes far to nullifying the value of such a reissue.

Turning now to the latest installment in Columbia's mopping-up operation on the Stravinsky tapes still remaining in its icebox (still to come are some short choral works, including the notorious arrangement of *The Star-Spangled Banner*), we find the usual mixture of new material with repackaging. In the latter category fall the 1961 Octet (good, if occasionally too robust; this is from MS 6272, all the components of which have now been recoupled), the excellent 1962 version of *Ragtime* (from the deleted MS 6372), and the stodgy, poorly balanced *Ebony Concerto*, recorded in 1965 (also available as part of a Benny Goodman "classical jazz" collection on MS 6805; Stravinsky's old Columbia version with the Woody Herman Orchestra was a good deal crisper).

Two items on this disc are first-ever recordings: the brief but salty and engaging *Pre-*

ludium for jazz ensemble, composed in 1937, revised in 1953, but not published until 1968; and the composer's own orchestration of the *Tango* (previous recordings used an earlier arrangement by Felix Guenther), which underlines the sour satire implicit in the original. Then there is Stravinsky's first recording of the *Concertino*, in his 1952 chamber orchestra version; an astringent and substantial piece, this is one of his most successful reworkings (the string quartet original dates from 1920), and the performance here is both freer and better sounding than Boulez' precise but rather grim reading (Everest 3184). Finally, there is the violin and wind quartet transcription of the early *Pastorale*, rather clumsily played—this sounds like something that was rushed through at the end of the *Concertino* session.

The sound of the Columbia disc is variable—four sessions in two cities are involved—but generally acceptable (best of the lot is the *Ragtime*, worst is the *Ebony Concerto*). D.H.

TCHAIKOVSKY: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1, in B flat minor, Op. 23. Martha Argerich, piano; Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Charles Dutoit, cond. Deutsche Grammophon 2530 112, \$6.98.

When one recalls the supercharged account of Chopin's B minor Sonata that Argerich recorded a few years ago, her account of the Tchaikovsky No. 1 is surprisingly calm and considered. I was surprised at the outset by an introduction which almost rivals the Richter/Von Karajan for deliberation. However, unlike Richter/Von Karajan Miss Argerich and Maestro Dutoit (in private life the pianist's husband) keep their rhythms alive and well sprung, so that the result isn't too ludicrous.

It's a pretty fair performance—a shade lethargic for my own decidedly more red-blooded taste—but I find it lacking in immediacy and flair, also a shade bleak and tonally light. Part of the trouble might be due to DGG's sound, which is airy, spacious, and well detailed, but lacking punch at the climaxes. Frankly, I feel that "bash power" more than sonic elegance is called for by this music, and nobody can rival the 1943 live version by Horowitz and Toscanini (RCA Red Seal LM 2319) in that respect. H.G.

TCHAIKOVSKY: Romeo and Juliet—See Scriabin: The Poem of Ecstasy, Op. 54.

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS: Job (A Masque for Dancing). London Symphony Orchestra, Sir Adrian Boult, cond. Angel S 36773, \$5.98.

Job is a forty-five-minute ballet composed in 1930. Its scenario is based on Blake's engravings for the Biblical book and its décor was presumably derived from the same source, but like many other great dance scores, the work has survived almost exclusively in the concert hall.

Vaughan Williams insisted that the subject be approached through the old English tradition of the masque. His score therefore contains much folksy material in modal style and much that goes back to the old English court dance. The more dramatic episodes thunder and strain in the manner of the same composer's Fourth Symphony, which was his next work; the suggestions of the symphony are, in fact, quite specific and rather surprising—so much for the legend that the strenuousities of the Fourth Symphony were an outgrowth of feelings about World War II. The total effect of the piece is of a great, powerful Vaughan Williams score organized not on a symphonic plan but according to some Joycean principle of free association. And it is all the more remarkable for that.

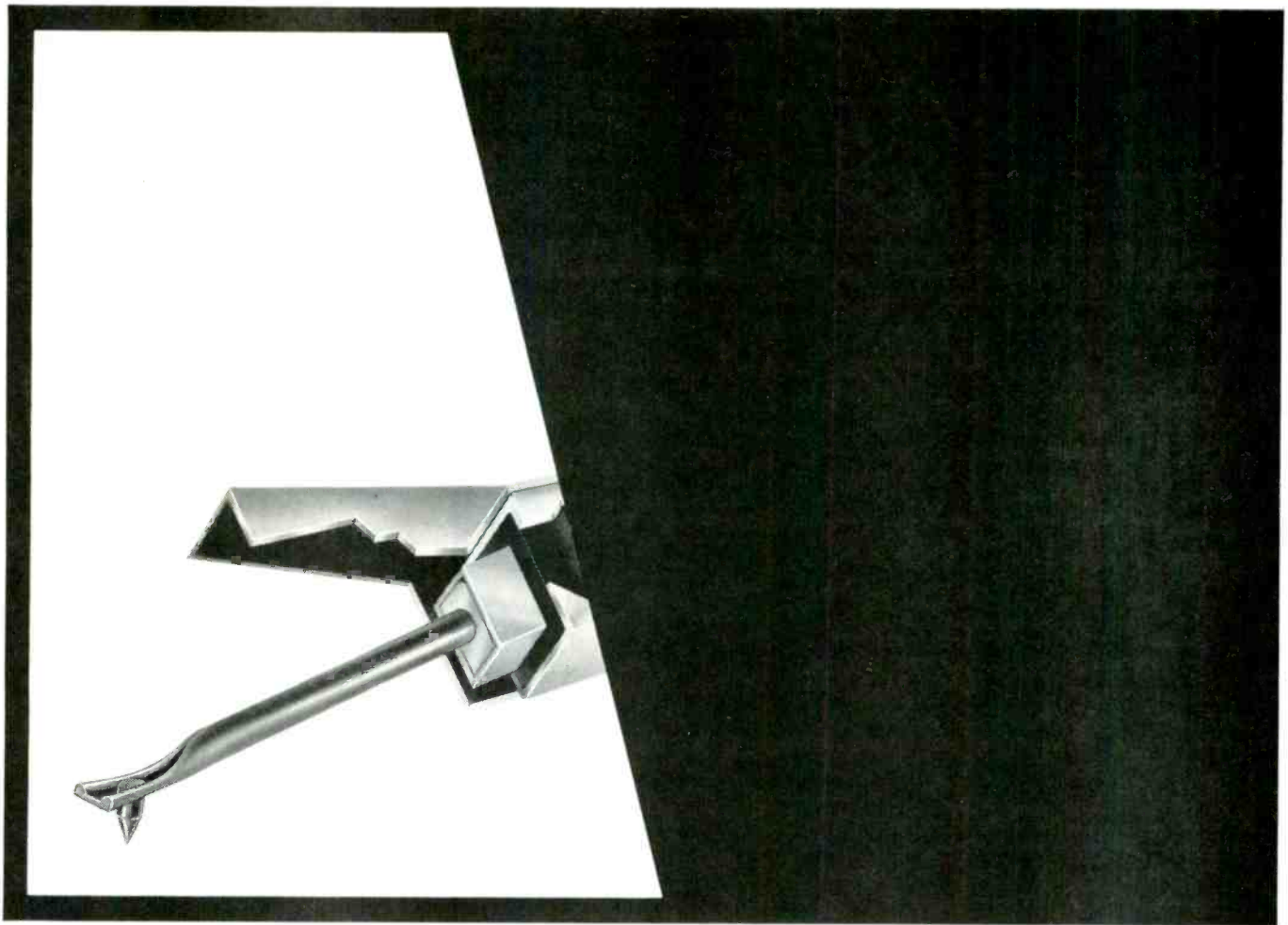
The performance, by the world's foremost Vaughan Williamsist, leaves nothing to be desired, and the recording is superior to the old one (on Everest) by the same conductor. A.F.

B **VERDI:** "Golden Age Aida": Celeste Aida; Ritorna vincitor; Fu la sorte dell'armi; Alla pompa, che s'appresta; O patria mia; Già i sacerdoti adunansi; La fatal pietra; O terra, addio. Johanna Gadski (s), Aida; Louise Homer (c), Amneris; Enrico Caruso (t), Radames; Pasquale Amato (b), Amonasro; various orchestras. RCA Victorla VIC 1623, \$2.98 (mono only; from Victor originals, recorded 1909–1913).

Aida is one of the best-loved, most often re-



Picasso's sketch for the title page of Stravinsky's *Ragtime*.



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corded, and most frequently excerpted of all operas. These items have been famous for a half century and many of them must already be in the collections of those who care for historic records. Yet collectors owe the Victor people a substantial debt of gratitude for this release, for here is an original and worthwhile idea handsomely brought off. It is much more than the sum of its parts for it delivers, as nearly as we can ever hope to have it, the reconstruction of a Metropolitan Opera performance of that house's Golden Age. By careful selection and arrangement we are enabled to get the sweep of an *Aida* night at the Met during a legendary time, performed by four luminaries who sang together on that stage, in this opera and others.

Caruso's contribution includes the last (and in many ways the best) of five versions of "*Celeste Aida*" that he recorded. He is also superb in the pretrial duet with Amneris and virtually the complete final scene and duet with *Aida*. Johanna Gadski (1872-1932) is a heroine of undoubted power and dramatic thrust, but present-day listeners may find her somewhat gusty in the big moments of her part, preferring the intensity and legato she manifests in quieter passages. Gadski sang at the Met for many seasons, and was unassailably a prima donna.

Louise Homer lived from 1871 to 1947. Her time at the 39th Street house lasted nearly thirty years, during which time many famous colleagues arrived and departed. Her Amneris is perhaps less passionate than one might wish (and there are a few notes in the two duets that a cruel critic might call flat) but this performance is undoubtedly big-league, of star quality.

Pasquale Amato's work is a kind of throw-back to the performing style of the past century, for he "burns in" every word and note in a startling way—nothing is thrown away. But the voice and manner are so magnificently confident that you are soon convinced that this is how the part needs to be done.

In one respect the list of contents above is misleading, for *Aida's* Nile Scene aria in Act III is followed by the great duet with her father, and the music continues almost to the entrance of Radames—at which point it comes to an abrupt and frustrating close. But such details are unimportant. What matters is the opportunity, here provided, to experience the feel of a great night at the Met in 1910 or thereabouts. Remember that it was an age when the phonograph was liberating the operatic art from the walls in which rich men had always held it captive, when music on records was reaching new audiences at their own firesides. Such recordings as these, such artists as these, made that liberation possible.

G.M.

WAGNER: *Parsifal*. Gwyneth Jones, James King, Thomas Stewart, Donald McIntyre, Franz Crass, Karl Ridderbusch; Chorus and Orchestra of the 1970 Bayreuth Festival, Pierre Boulez, cond. For a feature review of this recording, see page 85.

WEBER: "Complete Music for String Quartet": Slow Movement (1905); Quartet (1905); Five Movements, Op. 5; Six Bagatelles, Op. 9; Quartet, Op. 28. Quartetto Italiano. Philips 6500 105, \$5.98.

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slightly short of being "complete": a Rondo from 1906 has already been published, and there are apparently some other youthful works in the Moldenhauer collection. Be that as it may, the two 1905 works that the Quartetto Italiano plays here are new to the American catalogue. The *Slow Movement* is a surprisingly conventional work, with almost trivially regular phrases and very formal working-out of the material. Especially as over-weighted by lush tone and a lugubrious tempo in this performance, it does not excite much interest except as a historical curiosity (an earlier European recording, Dutch EMI, SCHX 126, by the Gaudeamus Quartet, was not as well tuned, but the choice of a faster tempo kept the piece from dissolving, as it almost does at the hands of the Italians).

It would be difficult to imagine a greater contrast than the one-movement quartet from later in the same year, which offers a variety of texture, harmonic rhythm, and tonal coloring so great as to suggest that a different composer might be involved. If the course and direction of the piece are not always ideally clear, the hand of an original and skilled composer is always in evidence—albeit one who has clearly studied with the composer of *Verklärte Nacht*, among other things. The performance is very fine indeed, with much gorgeous pianissimo playing.

The same might be said about the readings of the "canonical" works, although there is an occasional overripeness about this group's tonal quality that fits less well with the idiom of the mature Webern, especially the austere Quartet, Op. 28. One might well prefer the greater purity and tension of the Juilliard Quartet (Opp. 5 and 9, on RCA LSC 2531) and

the Claremont Quartet (Op. 28, on Nonesuch H 71186); I do, although I respect the skill of the Italians and would not want to be without the early Quartet. Good sound, by the way—less boxy than the Juilliard, if without the razor-sharp clarity of the Claremont's Nonesuch disc. D.H.

WIENIAWSKI: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 2, in D minor, Op. 22. **KABALEVSKY:** Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in C, Op. 48. **BLOCH:** Baal Shem; Nigun. Pinchas Zukerman, violin; Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Lawrence Foster, cond. Columbia M 30644, \$5.98.

The Wieniawski D minor concerto is one of the standard "vehicles" in the violinist's repertory; it was probably inevitable that Pinchas Zukerman would record the work early in his career and he will, no doubt, return to it again. Presently he approaches the piece with considerable and undisguised sentimentality, especially in the Romance section where he tends to exaggerate the already saccharine mood. Similarly, he plays the *a la zingara* passages of the finale with strong emphasis. His reading is a far cry from the patrician style of a Heifetz or the controlled energy of a Stern, both of whose records were made some time ago and are now deleted. Curiously for a work so favored by violinists, Zukerman's is the only current recording listed.

Kabalevsky's concerto, so far as I can determine, is also the only version available at present. Dating from 1948, this is a strangely old-fashioned work in the "vehicle" tradition—how odd that such music should be written

during an era when Prokofiev and Shostakovich were flourishing in Russia. Kabalevsky's concerto owes much to the example of the Wieniawski, especially in its lyric slow movement. The outer movements attempt at times, and then only feebly, to imitate the more pungent orchestration of Prokofiev. But the scoring for the solo is brilliant and challenging, so it will probably retain some appeal for the virtuoso violinist.

In both works, as well as in a rather sentimental reading of Bloch's *Nigun*, Zukerman plays with a mastery of his instrument that will delight all who value great violin playing for its own sake. A product of a distinctly "American" violin tradition—based, via Ivan Galamian, on the Auer school—Zukerman approaches his tasks as if no technical challenge could ruffle him; the clean, beautifully focused tone in all registers, the impeccable intonation and impressive flexibility and variety of timbre are a marvel. In years to come, he will certainly play this music as well, but I doubt whether he could recapture the youthful confidence and exuberance he shows here—qualities that both appeal and also lead to excesses of sentiment. But he is, as I know well from personal experience elsewhere, capable of greater artistry and musical perception.

The young American conductor Lawrence Foster, who has won considerable renown abroad and in recent guest appearances at home this season, assumes the direction of the Houston Symphony Orchestra. Here he has little to do but follow conscientiously the soloist's lead; and the results become somewhat tortuous as he attempts to match Zukerman's highly individual ideas of phrasing. P.H.

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recitals and miscellany

PHILIP JONES: "Just Brass." **ARNOLD:** Quintet for Brass. **DODGSON:** Suite for Brass Septet. **SALZEDO, L.:** Divertimento for Brass Sextet. **EWALD:** Symphony for Brass. Philip Jones Brass Ensemble. Argo ZRG 655, \$5.98.

A sonic sleeper! Whatever your interest in twentieth-century works for small brass ensembles, this release is well worth investigating simply for its enchantingly beautiful recording of brass timbres. The engineer who worked the sonic miracles here is not given jacket credit; he should have been, for he has solved problems of tonal balance, differentiation, and buoyancy—to say nothing of ideal chamber-music acoustical ambience—that have baffled most audio experts in the past.

Indeed the sheer aural appeal is so magical that at first one forgets to give proper credit to the skilled British players, or to the composers. Of the latter, only Malcolm Arnold, with a 1961 quintet, strikes me as achieving marked distinction, but Stephen Dodgson and Leonard Salzedo also write deftly and idiomatically, Salzedo notably so in an Interlude movement featuring various types of muted timbres. And the dilettante composer Victor Ewald (1860–1935) provides amusingly romantic and self-consciously "Russian" contrasts to the more sophisticated contemporary British works. Incidentally, what's called his "symphony" here apparently is the B flat Quintet, Op. 5 (1910) recorded a couple of years ago by Desto. The Arnold quintet also has been recorded previously, while the Dodgson suite of 1957 and Salzedo divertimento of 1959 seem to be "firsts." But all such considerations don't matter in the slightest: It's the superb recorded sound quality that makes this disc one not to be missed. R.D.D.

"O SACRUM CONVIVIAM." **MESSIAEN:** O Sacrum Convivium. **POULENC:** Litanies à la Vierge noire de Rocamadour. **FAURÉ:** Messe basse. **LANGLAIS:** Messe solennelle. **DURUFLÉ:** Four motets. Choir of St. John's College, Cambridge, George Guest, dir. Argo ZRG 662, \$5.98.

If any country can be said to be responsible for maintaining the tradition of Catholic church music in the twentieth century, it is France. And if this music is often striking for its beauty and profound sincerity, this is at least partially due to the strong aesthetic tradition which is at the core of France's approach to religion. At the same time, this tendency has permitted extraordinary variety, not only in musical style, but even in fundamental orientation to religion, and one of the outstanding features of this superb new release is that it offers five excellent and varied examples of personal, intrareligious inclinations translated into art.

Certainly, one of the most arresting works on this album comes from the least-known composer, Jean Langlais, a sixty-four-year-old composer/organist who has been blind from birth. As might be expected, the organ has an impressive and beautifully varied role in Langlais' *Messe solennelle*—it almost always sets the tone and atmosphere for the choral

parts. As a whole, the *Messe* is divided up into a number of relatively short, contrasting, and mostly undeveloped Janáček-ish sections that occasionally cut across the traditional divisions of the Catholic Mass. With its modal melodic lines, frequently open harmonies, use of plainchant, and basically simple musical construction, Langlais' *Messe* has a unique, archaic quality to it.

The a cappella Duruflé motets, on the other hand, have a much more conventional, much more unified character—each begins with a Gregorian chant, sung by a solo voice, followed by a short choral development on the opening chant. Fauré's *Messe basse*, the earliest composition on this disc, has much of the *dolce*, childlike innocence that marks the composer's celebrated Requiem. Besides his unmistakable gift for creating beauty through understatement—little in the *Messe basse* seems to rise above a mezzo-forte—Fauré has a genius for incorporating into his works unexpected harmonic shifts that create both depth and a certain tension within the underlying serenity.

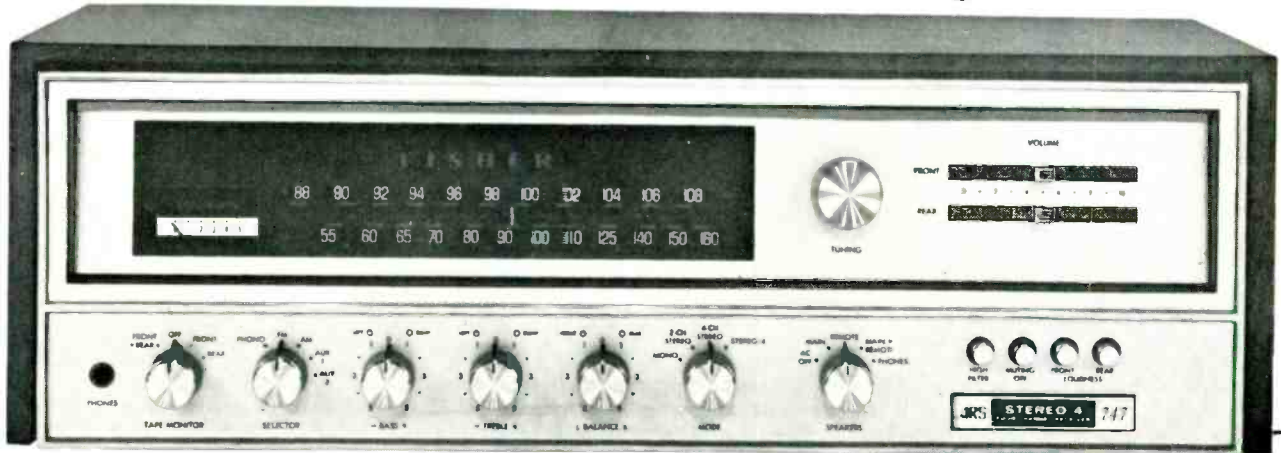
Olivier Messiaen's special musical mysticism is nowhere brought out with more subtlety or beauty than in the short, a cappella *O Sacrum Convivium*. The work is based on a non-resolving, chordal style which determines the basic contour of the melodies; in each of the work's two similar sections the melodic line rises to an ethereal high (climactic the second time) that rapidly subsides back to a state of unresolved calm. Messiaen has also scored the voices, particularly in the lower registers, in an uncanny manner that adds numerous coloristic effects to the work.

Composed in 1936 in honor of the black-wooden Virgin at Rocamadour where Francis Poulenc rediscovered his faith, the *Litanies a la Vierge noire de Rocamadour* was Poulenc's first sacred work. Although intended to capture the spirit of a kind of "peasant devotion," the *Litanies*, like so many Poulenc compositions, has a markedly sophisticated and highly dramatic character to it which separates this music from the other works on the disc. The organ, for instance, is often used to punctuate the various litanies with antiphonal outbursts that are often highly dissonant. Here, the aesthetic level does not quite converge with the spiritual plane (unlike in Poulenc's deeply moving *Stabat Mater*), but musically the *Litanies* stands among Poulenc's best compositions.

The Choir of Saint John's College, Cambridge, has excellent depth, and the fine, assured performances elicited here from their director, George Guest, manifest a strong identification with the music—indeed, I prefer this version of the Fauré and Poulenc works to the more polished, but decidedly colder, interpretations by the Maîtrise d'enfants on the French Pathé label. The organ is particularly well recorded (and well played by Stephen Cleobury), the chorus somewhat less so, although the over-all sound quality is quite good. This sensitively produced and beautifully performed recording offers five rarely heard works that should be a fortunate discovery for many collectors. R.S.B.



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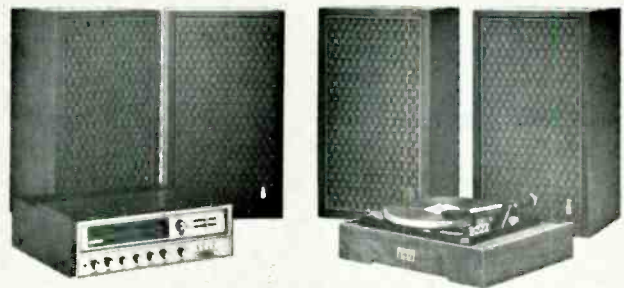
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in brief

DVORAK: Symphony No. 4, in D minor, Op. 13; *Othello Overture*, Op. 93. London Symphony Orchestra, Witold Rowicki, cond. Philips 6500 124, \$5.98.

Rowicki is well on his way to finishing his complete traversal of the Dvořák symphonies: Nos. 5, 6, 8, and 9 have already been released, and I presume Nos. 1 and 2 are due imminently since they are advertised on the back of the present jacket. The newest entry is up to the impeccable standards set by the prior issues. As before, the London Symphony plays with precision and airy cultivation. Rowicki's leadership is judiciously balanced between intellectual detachment and sanguine commitment, and Philips' recorded sound has wonderful clarity and ambience. Everything considered, the reading is a bit freer in phrasing, less antiseptic in outlook than the very decent London version with the same orchestra under Kertesz. The *Othello Overture* also comes off splendidly. I couldn't hope for better or more idiomatic accounts of either composition. A superb release in every way. H.G.

HAYDN: Six Sonatas for Violin and Viola. **MOZART:** Duos for Violin and Viola: in G, K. 423; in B flat, K. 424. Dénes Kovács, violin; Géza Németh, viola. Qualiton LPX 11426/27, \$11.96 (two discs).

Any string fancier will enjoy this set. Haydn's six sonatas for violin and viola are remarkably attractive works even taking into account that, unlike the Mozart duos, the burden of the message lies with the violin. The viola accompanies, except in occasional slow movements where it leads the melodic way with a sonorous authority. But Haydn knew what he was doing: in the fast movements the rhythms are unfailingly pungent and spritely, and the slow movements are as full of feeling in their way as some of Vivaldi's are in theirs. The Mozart duos, which of course are really the crowning works for this combination of instruments, are played with a bold, extrovert power that lets the music speak out on its own terms. These are not subtle performances—nor are those of the Haydn, which might have gained an extra touch of charm with a bit more lift at phrase endings. But in general this very masculine music-making is appealing. The recorded sound is marvelously clear and close. S.F.

STRAUSS, JOHANN III: Marches: *Egyptischer*, Op. 335; *Persischer*, Op. 289; Polkas: *Auf der Jagd*, Op. 373; *Unter Donner und Blitz*, Op. 324; *Pizzicato* (with Josef Strauss); Waltzes: *Tales from the Vienna Woods*, Op. 325; *Morgenblätter*, Op. 279; *Vienna Life*, Op. 354. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. Herbert von Karajan, cond. Deutsche Grammophon 2530 027, \$6.98.

Despite the enormous sales of Von Karajan's 1968 Strauss program, a success probably hyped by the use of its *Blue Danube* in the film spectacular *2001: A Space Odyssey*, connoisseurs of Viennese dance music have long ranked him among the many noted maestros (no names, no pack drill!) who, whatever their other talents, lack the right "feel" for Strauss waltzes. The present three examples provide no cause for softening that verdict. The polkas and marches come off better, of course, but even they lack the grace, zest, and above all the humor with which these delectable little pieces can be played. What's left, then, is sonically superb orchestral playing captured in an impressive—if sometimes just too vividly spotlighted—recording. R.D.D.

STRAUSS, R.: *Don Juan*, Op. 20; *Till Eulenspiegel*, Op. 28. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. Henry Lewis, cond. London Phase 4 SPC 21054, \$5.98.

As his recent Phase 4 edition of *Also sprach Zarathustra* made plain, Lewis has a distinct flair for Straussian orchestration and felicities of the Straussian style. This new disc adds further evidence. The recorded sound is absolutely first-class—the sort of thing that happens when a conductor with an unusually keen ear works with engineers who can get on tape precisely the sort of balances, textures, and instrumental highlights he wants to hear. Thus, although a half dozen other records offer this same combination of scores, this is the obvious one to acquire if your primary interest is sound and musical force. Till, as Lewis sees him, is a very sleek, wise cat who steps high on velvet paws. The best word for this performance is sophisticated. It's full of nice musical points, adroitly achieved, and they add up to a really strong interpretation. *Don Juan* is impassioned without being dramatically inflated, and a big, richly colored orchestral sound, such as Lewis provides, so often is a temptation to overstatement. The performance has a nice sweep and singing line. You'll like it. R.C.M.

"**LIEDER UND TANZE AUS DEUTSCHLAND 1460-1560.**" Songs and Dances by Senfl, Othmayr, Rhau, Kottler, Neusiedler, Isaac, Judenkünig, Hofhaimer, Weck, Finck, Stoltzer, and Kleber. Various vocalists and instrumentalists, Dietrich Knothe, dir. Archive 2533 066, \$6.98.

Germans have always been enthusiastic amateur music-makers and a rising bourgeois class in the Renaissance demanded these song settings and instrumental arrangements to play at home and with their friends. The performances here are short and sweet: a minute or two suffices for most of the thirty-four unassuming numbers. Different stanzas of well-known tunes—*Innsbruck*, for example, and *Ich stund an einem Morgen*, *Ach Elslein*, *Mir ist ein feins braun Mägdlein*, *Ach Lieb mit Leid*, and *Entlaubet ist der Walde*—are performed in varying arrangements for two and four voices and in lute and keyboard transcriptions. The singers are suitably unpretentious while the instrumentalists, Roland Zimmer (lute) and Walter Heinz Bernstein (keyboard) in particular, have a little more zip. S.T.S.

PIERRE THIBAUD: Trumpet Concertos by Torelli, Haydn, and L. Mozart. Pierre Thibaud, trumpet; Bamberg Symphony, Otto Gerdes, cond. Deutsche Grammophon 2530 138, \$6.98.

Remembering the razor-edged tonal quality (as well as the virtuosity) of Thibaud's trumpeting in the Bach *Brandenburgs* conducted by Richter for Archive, I'm not surprised either by his thin-toned intensity or by his bravura floridity in the high-register passages here. But I wasn't prepared for the vulgarly obese tonal qualities in the lower registers nor for near-complete misconceptions of both baroque and rococo stylistic traditions. Gerdes, the DGG official who doubles as a conductor, shows more control than the soloist, and the spirited if no more idiomatic orchestral playing also fares far better in the mercilessly candid recording. With such handicaps, it's just as well that the program itself offers nothing new: The Haydn and Leopold Mozart concertos have been recorded often, those by Telemann and Torelli at least several times earlier—all of them in performances markedly preferable to the present ones. R.D.D.

NARCISO YEPES: "Spanish Guitar Music." **ALBENIZ:** Suite española: *Asturias*; *Leyenda*; *Recuerdos de Viaje*; *Rumores de la Caleta*; *Malagueña*; *Piezas características*: *Torre bermeja*; *Serenata*. **GRANADOS:** *Danza española*, No. 4 (*Villanesca*). **FALLA:** *El Amor brujo*; *El Círculo mágico*; *Canción del fuego fatuo*; *El Sombrero de tres picos*; *Danza del molinero*; *Farucca*. **TURINA:** *Sonata*; *Fandanguillo*. Narciso Yepes, guitar. Deutsche Grammophon 2530 159, \$6.98.

To his fast-growing catalogue for this label, Yepes adds this very pleasant recital of Spanish specialties, giving them carefully thought-out, technically skillful performances, which may lack something in a feeling of spontaneous impetus but can hardly be faulted on the grounds of musicianship or understanding. I found the sforzandos in Albéniz' *Asturias* rather harsh, but the same kind of brisk impact suited the Falla *Three-Cornered Hat* perfectly. The least typical of the pieces here is the Granados *Villanesca*, with its drone bass and obbligato figuration; the most lively is the smart, Prokofievian *Canción del fuego fatuo* from *El Amor brujo*. S.F.

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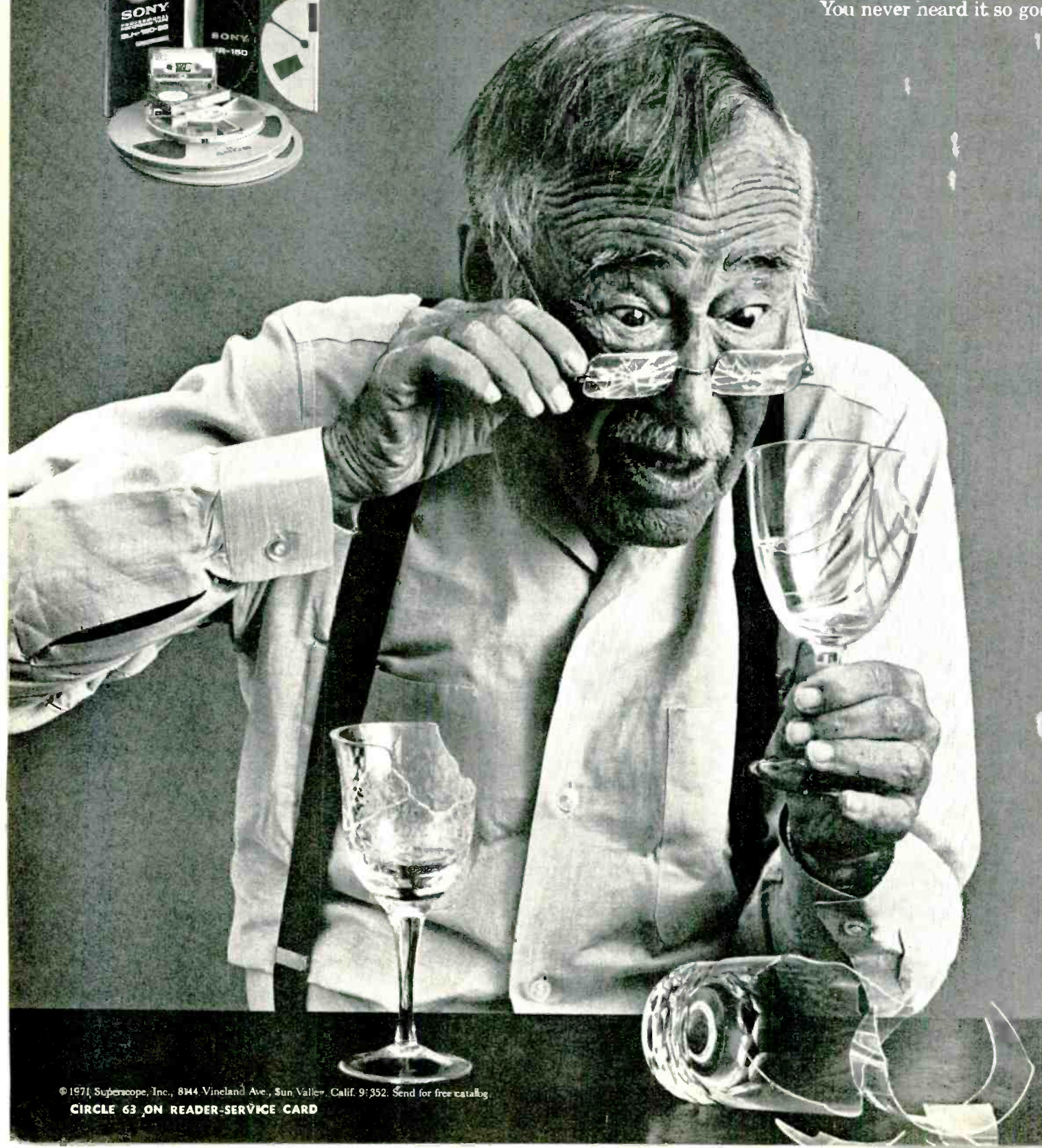
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 **MA RAINEY:** *Down in the Basement.* Ma Rainey, vocals; instrumental accompaniment. *Runaway Blues; Oh Papa Blues; Blues, Oh Blues; Morning Hour Blues; Trust No Man; Victim of the Blues; Sleep Talking Blues;* seven more. Milestone MLP 2017, \$4.98.

As with few other strains of artistic development, we are able to trace the blues to its roots. Although we know it stretches back to the moans and chants and field hollers of the slavery era, the blues were really born with Ma Rainey whose recordings offer us a nearly unique peek at the beginnings. There are no legendary blues figures, such as jazz's Buddy Bolden who is shrouded in that style's prehistory. Ma Rainey, born in 1886 and singing in southern tent and minstrel shows by the turn of the century, is the font from which every blues current has flowed.

Equally remarkable is the catalogue of her recorded material that has been preserved for us. These fourteen later sides (made in Chicago for the Paramount label between 1926 and 1928) form the third Ma Rainey reissues album from Milestone. Since they were recorded relatively late, they preserve the quality of her performances remarkably well. As a professional stage performer, she had developed a straightforward and easily assimilated style, unlike many other important blues greats whose local dialects and references sometimes render understanding difficult. Like Bessie Smith, upon whom she had tremendous influence, Ma Rainey was a mature and sophisticated performer. "Down in the Basement" also profits from the presence of sidemen like guitarist (and kazooist) Tampa Red and pianists Lil Henderson and Claude Hopkins. About half the cuts feature her "Georgia Band" (cornet, banjo, drums, in various combinations) and the rest have her "Tub Jug Washboard Band" (piano, kazoo, banjo, jug) or just piano and guitar—and the simpler the setting the better. Although not as numerous as the Columbia Bessie Smith reissues, this series by the Mother of the Blues is truly a milestone and will interest anyone who loves the blues. J.G.

TOM NORTHCOTT: *Upside Down.* Tom Northcott, guitar; instrumental accompaniment. *Spaceship Races; We Will Find Love; Old Kentucky Home; Suzanne; I Think It's Gonna Rain Today; It's True;* five more. Uni 73108, \$4.98.

Another example of an overproduced folk record. Northcott's voice sounds at times like Arlo Guthrie's, but it peeks out from behind the violins like an embarrassed rabbit. *We Will Find Love* is an "everybody get together" cliché, a genre of song I would like to have thought was finished by now. His version of Leonard Cohen's *Suzanne* is possibly one of the least engaging I have heard. Northcott does better with Randy Newman songs, of which there are two on the LP (*Old Kentucky Home* and *I Think It's Gonna Rain Today*). The latter is too good a song for him to mess up and, though overproduced, still works well. *It's True*, an original, starts well but becomes hampered by the arrangement. Why isn't a guitar enough? Loudon Wainwright III proved that you can actually record an album with nothing but voice and guitar. Why must the "semiliving" strings always be brought in? To keep union musicians in work? Northcott could be better on his own, with good material, and just his trusty guitar. M.J.

 **LENA HORNE:** *Nature's Baby.* Lena Horne, vocals; Donny Hathaway, William Eaton, and Robert Freedman arr. *Only the Moon and Me; Mother Time; Feels So Good;* eight more. Buddah BDS 5084, \$4.98.

Lena Horne gathers no moss. She does no laurel-resting, as do ninety-five per cent of her contemporaries. This is a grandmother—this lady who searches out her own material in the current marketplace, who sings youth's songs with pure honesty and excitement? Miss Horne is not trying to be a kid. She is simply responding to the musical '70s with fresh, open ears. Her recent albums, including this one, have been a joy.

You will hear Leon Russell's strong and tender *A Song For You*. How well she must understand its lines: "I've acted out my love on stages with ten thousand people watching./ But we're alone now and I'm singin' this song for you." Listen to Paul McCartney's happy *Maybe I'm Amazed* or Joe Raposo's sweet *Being Green* from "Sesame Street." Elton John's hit *Your Song* becomes Lena Horne's song. So does Harry Nilsson's quaint *Think About Your Troubles* from the TV special "The Point."

Two songs, *Mother Time* and *Nature's Baby*, were written by Gene McDaniels, who wrote Les McCann's hit, *Compared to What*. McDaniels is a young, New York-based singer/composer, and both his songs bear signs of having been written especially for

Miss Horne. Both fit into Miss Horne's special celebration of life and music.

Unfortunately, the album does not tell which of the three arrangers (listed above) goes with which arrangement. However, all are beautifully done. Producer Alfred Brown and his assistant, William Eaton, have kept things simple and personal. The three energetic background singers are Joshie Armstead, Maeretha Stewart, and Carl Caldwell.

Lena Horne is in the dead center of the age group that neither understands nor *likes* the age group represented so graphically by contemporary music. The elders, so often busy being paranoid, bewildered, and victimized by youth, forget that today's children are hardest on themselves—their dreams of peace are permeated with equal parts hope and suicide.

The most heartening thing about Lena singing new music is that she is so relaxed about it. In the middle of the whole uptight mess, Lena Horne likes the kids and learns from them. She makes good music, and she makes hope. M.A.

THE WHO: *Who's Next.* Peter Dinklage, guitars, VCS3 organ, A.R.P. synthesizer, vocals, and piano; Roger Daltry, vocals; John Entwistle, bass, brass, piano, and vocals; Keith Moon, drums. *Baba O'Riley; Bargain; My Wife; Song Is Over;* five more. Decca DL 79182, \$4.98. Tape: ● 6 9182, \$6.98; ●● C73 9182, \$6.98.

By now it is taken for granted that The Who is a major group and each new album is awaited with the same anticipation afforded the work of other superstars. If anything, "Who's Next" is getting more attention than usual because it is the first collection of entirely new material since *Tommy* and because its release coincides with the band's first American tour in several years.

As usual it is a polished and innovative set, with leader Pete Dinklage showing just how a synthesizer can be effectively integrated into a pop framework. In addition Dinklage demonstrates once again that he is in the first rank of rock guitarists on both acoustic and electric. Roger Daltry continues to expand his abilities as a vocalist, and Keith Moon is as choppy and exciting as ever on drums.

Somehow, however, the new album lacks excitement over-all, mostly because of the quality of the writing. There is only one tune from the usually offbeat John Entwistle, the rather ordinary *My Wife*. Dinklage is always a somewhat problematical writer, since he tends to focus outside himself without ever making especially careful observations. When he clicks—on much of *Tommy* or in songs like *My Generation*, he is sharp and compelling; but he can also be, as he is on some of "Who's Next," boring and repetitious. He compensates with his playing, though, and no reservations need apply to the eight-and-one-half

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minute version of *Won't Get Fooled Again*, which in its shorter form was one of the best singles of the year. This is not the most successful by The Who, but it is probably worth acquiring anyway. J.G.

* **THE MOTHERS:** Fillmore East, June 1971. Frank Zappa, guitar and dialogue; Mark Volman, lead vocals and dialogue; Howard Kaylan, lead vocals and dialogue; Ian Underwood, vocals, winds, and keyboards; Jim Pons, vocals, dialogue, and bass; Bob Harris, vocals and keyboards; Don Preston, mini-Moog. *The Mudshark; Bwana Dik; Latex Solar Beef; Happy Together; Peaches en Regalia*; seven more. Bizarre/Reprise MS 2042, \$5.98. Tape: Ampex M8 2042, \$6.95; M5 2042, \$6.95.

Frank Zappa has put out a score of extraordinary albums, none more so than this set recorded in June of this year at the Fillmore East. Certainly it is the most complex and demanding collection heard on a live LP. Zappa's music—he wrote all the songs here except *Happy Together*, a tune performed flawlessly in the manner of the Turtles—demands more of its vocalists and instrumentalists, and its audience, than that of any other currently popular performer. In fact, it is probably also the most challenging and entertaining for anyone who takes the time to listen.

"Fillmore East, June 1971" is going to be remembered, as are most of Zappa's LPs, for the quality of several extended parodies of contemporary music and mores. *The Mud Shark. What Kind of Girls Do You Think We Are? Bwanda Dik, Do You Like My New Car*, etc. together form one of the most biting contemporary satires, slashing away at sexual constraints and pop pretensions, and in general being outrageously up-front (when did you last hear a song applauding hemorrhoids?). What cannot be forgotten is the quality of Zappa's music. Each of these intricate dialogues is delicately arranged and flawlessly executed—so perfectly, in fact, that this album almost defies belief as a "live" effort. Combining influences from every form of electronic and electrified music—classical, pop, rock, jazz, and r & b—the Mothers range all over the musical map, forcing all these tendencies to coinhabit one small, confined but not incompatible musical environment. Also, *Willie the Pimp* offers a too rare chance to hear Zappa stretch out on guitar, and throughout there is the pleasure of the instrumental work of Don Preston, Ian Underwood, and others to be enjoyed. A very special release. J.G.

WARM DUST: Peace for Our Time. Paul Carrack, vocals, piano, and organ; Les Walker, vocals, harmonica, and vibraphone; Keith Bailey, vocals and drums; Terry Comer, bass; Alan Solomon, saxophone, flute, clarinet, and organ. *Blood of My Fathers; Winds of Change; Very Small Child; Justify, Things Your Hands Have Done*; four more. Uni 73109, \$4.98.

Remember word-jazz? Perhaps this is word-jazz-rock. The jazz-rock is fine, polished and moving. But the words miss by a good distance. They chronicle the history of man's inhumanity to most everything, from World War II to the present. The music is fine, as I

said, but the words are clichés, meaningful but bearing a meaning that nearly everyone has already expressed. You will probably want to hear these lyrics only once or twice—not even once in the case of *Blood of My Fathers*. Words really need to be profound in order to stand more than a few hearings, particularly when they're on a basically unpleasant subject. In the realm of war protests, Country Joe McDonald's "War War War," a musical rendition of the World War I poems of Robert W. Service, is much better. It's on the Vanguard label. M.J.

BERNARD HERRMANN: Music From Great Film Classics: Welles Raises Kane; The Devil and Daniel Webster; Jane Eyre; The Snows of Kilimanjaro. London Philharmonic Orchestra, Bernard Herrmann, cond. London Phase 4 SP 44144, \$5.98.

Bernard Herrmann must be considered one of the most interesting, intriguing, and successful of all film composers. One principal reason is that Herrmann, although writing in a more or less traditional cinematic style, adds an extra something that goes far beyond the usual punctuational clichés. For Herrmann's music masterfully re-creates and complements the mood and atmosphere (often, but not always, sinister) of the films he has worked on. With their characteristic low woodwind passages, moody chromatic harmonies, unexpected shifts of direction, abundance of major and minor thirds, frequent sequences, skillful instrumentation, and haunting melodies, Herrmann scores have distinctively enhanced films both by the idols of the "New Wave" (Welles, Hitchcock, etc.) as well as those by the "New Wave" itself (Truffaut).

Herrmann could not have made a more auspicious debut: His first film score was for Orson Welles's *Citizen Kane*, excerpts of which are included on this disc. As might be expected, Herrmann did not find himself burdened with the usual soundtrack restrictions while collaborating with Welles—not only did the composer work hand in hand with the director while the film was being shot, integrating each musical excerpt into the movie, but certain of the film's sequences were actually timed to fit the music, rather than vice versa. The music on this disc includes four movements from a five-movement suite called *Welles Raises Kane*, which incorporates music from both *Citizen Kane* and from the second Herrmann/Welles collaboration, *The Magnificent Ambersons*. Personally, I would have much preferred some genuine excerpts from either one (or both) of these soundtracks, rather than this reworking (the suite is available in its entirety on Pye's Virtuoso Series label in England). But there are some marvelous things here, particularly the *Theme and Variations*, whose deliciously ironic and marvelously orchestrated *Promenade* variation is unforgettable (and the last variation contains a hint of the gruesome *Psycho* string glissandos).

Both the selections from Robert Stevenson's *Jane Eyre* (in which Welles acted) and from Henry King's *Snows of Kilimanjaro* are new to discs. The *Jane Eyre* music capsulizes in thirteen minutes the film's entire narrative, thus causing Herrmann's skillful mood changes to stand out rather spectacularly. I also find the lyrical opening theme particularly effective. Both of the *Snows* excerpts, on the other hand, are static, atmosphere pieces, with the some-

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what overdrawn Interlude being reminiscent of several of Herrmann's poignant love themes. As for the two pieces from William Dieterle's *The Devil and Daniel Webster* (once again taken from a five-movement suite integrally available on the Virtuoso release), I cannot for the life of me imagine what dictated the choice of these two excerpts. Both are rather garish showpieces incorporating American folk themes, and neither is all that indicative of Herrmann's true talents. One of these would have been enough, particularly since the suite's first movement (*Mr. Scratch*) is absolutely pure, vintage Herrmann.

Herrmann conducts his own music well, and I prefer his performances of the *Kane* and *Devil* music here to those on the English release. The orchestral playing, on the other hand, is not always well controlled, especially in the *Snows* excerpts. The engineering captures beautifully the details in Herrmann's truly skillful scoring for winds—even the clarinetist's breath can be heard as he plays. And the claustrophobic sound quality that detracted from the earlier Herrmann release (of Hitchcock scores) has been eliminated (the album layout is likewise much improved). The music on this recording does not generate the excitement and tension of the composer's Hitchcock collaborations—but then, that would be almost impossible. But these new excerpts broaden the perspective on this remarkable composer, and more Herrmann albums would definitely be welcome. R.S.B.



MOUNTAIN BUS: Sundance. Tom Jurkens, vocals; Bill Kees and Ed Mooney, guitars; Craig Takehara, bass and banjo; Steve Krater and Lee Sims, drums. *Sing a New Song; Rosalie; I Don't Worry About Tomorrow; I Know You Rider*; three more. Good Records G 101, \$2.98.

This is the first release from Good Records, a new company formed in Chicago that promises to overcome the high price of most records. It vows to sell its L.P.s at \$2.98 list, three dollars less than the \$5.98 list recently adopted by the major record manufacturers.

The difference is made up by the elimination of several levels of middlemen, the company says. It plans to distribute directly to record stores, which means, considering Good Records' twelve-man staff, that the albums might be a bit hard to find at first. However, the company claims that before long it will have a distribution system equal to any. And this first release is well worth going out of the way to find.

Mountain Bus is heavily influenced by the Grateful Dead, and does a magnificent job at producing a similar tight, complex, and sinewy music. The interplay between guitars and bass is at times incredibly exciting. All the songs are good. The singing, again like the Dead's, is perfectly appropriate.

I cannot stress too heavily how pleasant a surprise this album is—particularly when one considers the price. Such an endeavor deserves support, for both financial and artistic reasons. M.J.

BIFF ROSE: Half Live at the Bitter End. Biff Rose, vocals, dialogues and piano; Reverend Basil McDavid, vocals. *Astrology; Wow, California; Heavy Dropping*; others. Buddah 5078, \$4.98.

This is Biff Rose on stage—the real Biff Rose, his piano pounding, his mind racing through side trips that are spoken the instant they are thought. In between dialogues are bits of songs: *Great Movies; I Wouldn't Mind Hangin' on the Cross If I Knew What Jesus Knew; I Get High on Resentment* (which is Biff's version of making the best of bad vibes).

Biff Rose travels in his own special country and is delighted with those who can keep up. Occasionally a wonderfully complete idea emerges: "I went to a Catholic school. I got the kind of education that would prepare me for any kind of crisis that might arise here in the twelfth century." But most of his thoughts are quick—clear your throat and you miss it. "How you gonna keep 'em down on Broadway after they've seen the farm?" After laughing: "I didn't mean to laugh; it's like a smile that got away." It is hard to say what Biff Rose is, other than a man who operates exclusively on his own terms, more out of instinct than stubbornness. You may have seen him on the "Johnny Carson Show" a year or two ago. Carson didn't know what to make of him either, but Rose was invited back six times in about two months.

Audience receptivity is crucial to Biff Rose. If he finds himself with people who are friendly toward his peculiar, touching, often hilarious wave length, he can be a stunning performer. In this album, the Bitter End audience is with him all the way. It causes several moments of overindulgences (such as Reverend Basil McDavid, who doesn't come off), but as always, Rose vindicates himself with some lightning-quick insight, song, sound. Biff Rose is, incidentally, an excellent songwriter and strong pianist. But this is not a song album, really. It is Rose's own patchwork quilt.

You may or may not respond to this album. It is highly personal, highly wired, high in general, and sometimes brilliant. Underneath, one senses Rose's need to share himself and be reaffirmed. I feel that Biff is on his way to somewhere important, but not quite ready to face arrival. He says it better himself in one of his song fragments: "I don't know whether I'm together but it's a start if I'm apart." M.A.



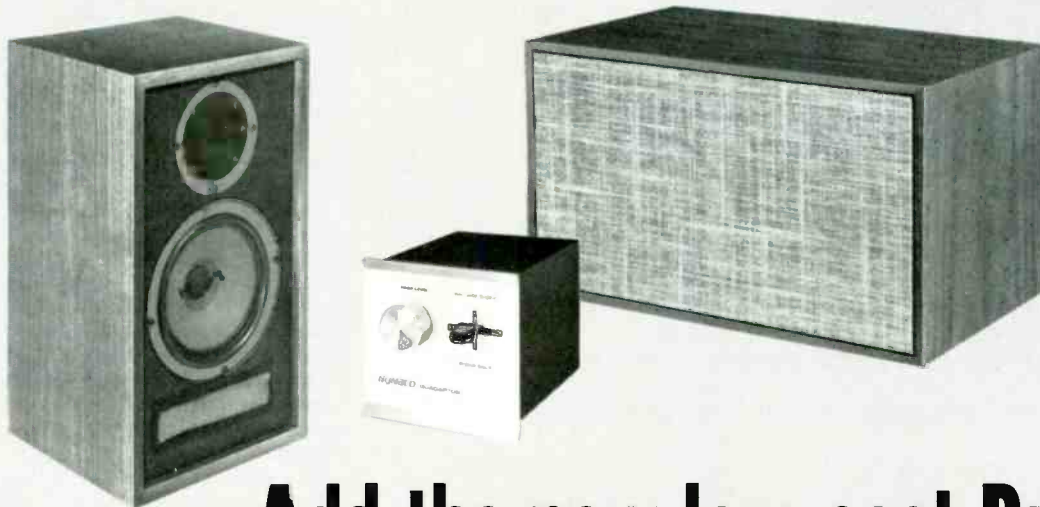
THE PERSUASIONS: We Came to Play. The Persuasions, a cappella vocal quintet. *Chain Gang; Man, Oh Man; The Sun; Gypsy Woman; Let It Be*; five more. Capitol ST 791, \$5.98.

This extraordinary record is one of the last remnants of what was once one of the most important strains in pop culture, a cappella rhythm and blues. Many of the most important and influential early singles, especially in L.A. and New York, were done by quartets and quintets unaccompanied by anything but hand claps or an occasional drum. As this album by the Persuasions indicates, the two key voices were the lead and bass, both of which had to have a keen sense of rhythm if the style was to work. In addition, though it was not vital that they equal the quality of the first two, the other voices had to have sure pitch and rhythm to pull off the intricate supporting harmonies.

Although the best of the a cappella groups could make even mediocre material interesting, naturally the better the material the better the record. On "We Came to Play" the group tackles songs by, among others, Elmer Bern-

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stein, Goffin-King, Curtis Mayfield, Sam Cook, and Joe South. You will probably be intrigued by the new readings they give to tunes familiar in other versions, especially the different approach to Joe South.

What music there is on the LP is highly recommended, but there is the drawback that Side 2 runs 13:55 and Side 1 a measly 11:47, despite the producers' lack of excuses (this must have been a remarkably cheap album to produce in this day of multitracked multi-instrumentalists). J.G.

SONGS OF THE RUSSIAN LAND: Soviet Army Chorus and Band, Boris Aleksandrov, cond. *Since Our Native Land Began; Ballad of the Russian Street Boys; Vasya-Cornflower*; seven more. Melodiya/Angel SR 40170, \$5.98.

Somewhere in the Soviet Union there must be a Nashgrad (or maybe just a Brill Building in Moscow) where teams of songsmiths grind out pop songs and dances stamped "Made in Russia" just as clearly as the products of Nashville and Broadway are stamped "Made in the U.S.A." How much such partners as Vasner & Matusovsky, Novikov & Oshanin, Pakhmutova & Dolmatovsky, et al., pull down in take-home pay is something their American colleagues probably will never know, but it should be considerable, considering how indefatigably industrious they seem to be.

Of course there always will be some foreigners to scoff that when you've heard two Russian songs (one lively, one sad), you've heard 'em all. But that's unfair, at least to the better songs here: the rousing *Celestial Brothers*, martial *John Reed Walks Through Petrograd*, sensuous *Submariners' Waltz*, dramatic *Ballad of the Russian Street Boys*, and insidiously schmaltzy *Ballad of Our Native Land*. It must be conceded, though, that the first of these owes its inspiration to Smetana's *Bartered Bride*, and that the memorial to Reed (the earliest American sympathizer with the Revolution) faintly echoes both *On the Road to Mandalay* and *Old Man River*. Well, worse models could have been chosen, and in any case the all-male chorus and soloists sing with uninhibited gusto, the band (which includes balalaikas and accordions) plays with bravura polish, and the recording again demonstrates that the art of audio is very much alive and well in Russia nowadays. R.D.D.

NIGEL OLSSON'S DRUM ORCHESTRA AND CHORUS.

Nigel Olsson, vocals and drums; Kathi McDonald, vocals; Caleb Quaye, guitar and keyboards; Mick Grabham, guitar; B.J. Cole, guitar and dobro; Dee Murray, bass; vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Sunshine Looks Like Rain; I Can't Go Home Again; Weirdhouse*; seven more. Uni 73113, \$4.98.

I wonder if there isn't a subtle category called "studio speaker rock." If so, then this is it: an album that sounds great on \$5,000 recording studio speakers, but seems flat and lifeless when played on most home systems. This is hard rock, featuring the main backup musicians for Elton John (Olsson, Quaye, Murray). Olsson is a magnificent drummer—witness his performance on Elton John's *Ballad of a Well-Known Gun*, on the "Tumbleweed Connection" album. But as a bandleader little seems to jell for him. And, for a group centered around a drummer, the drums are not very prominent. There might have been one ex-

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tended solo, but there isn't. The singing is lifeless also, and the songs are not much to brag about. Best is *I Can't Go Home Again*, on which Kathi McDonald sings.

What bothers me most about this album is that it seems a good example of a regrettable tendency in the record industry to latch onto any excuse whatever to record and release an LP. The fact that Nigel Olsson has done well as a sideman for Elton John does not constitute a reason for producing an entire recording around him. M.J.

CHER. Cher, vocals; Al Capps arr. *Fire and Rain*; *He'll Never Know*; *I Hate to Sleep Alone*; seven more. Kapp KS 3649, \$4.98.

There's a new runaway hit TV show, folks: "The Sonny and Cher Show." It gets all awards as the superslickest package TV has yet produced. And it arrived at a moment when it had to look good, for in midsummer, television makes no attempt to disguise its moron-appeal. Lucille Ball, Fred MacMurray, and all the heavies go on vacation to unplug their brains. Television makes watchers colorless, but summer television makes them stupid. So Sonny and Cher Bono look pretty good, especially for those millions who hate to let twenty minutes go by at night without seeing guests such as Glen Campbell.

In truth, Sonny and Cher are beautiful performers. They made their name in rock with shallow hits like *I Got You Babe*, but they bailed out of the teeny scene as soon as possible, opting for the chic world of top supper clubs. Sonny can't sing for trying but he's learned to be a good buffoon. Cher plays Miss Supercool, a reincarnation of Keely Smith as once set off by Louis Prima. That's the act: Sonny the clown and Cher the statue. They do it brilliantly.

Cher is presented as the real singer of the duo. This is her latest album, sharply timed to coincide with the TV debut. She is a heavy singer. That is not meant in the vernacular sense in which heavy is deep, man, meaningful. I mean heavy in poundage. Cher's vocal equipment is so weighted that it slurs downward at the end of most notes, as if it hadn't the muscles to stay up there. She overexaggerates her words to the point of tedium, so that "friend" comes out "fuhreynduh."

Cher is what used to be called a song stylist; but today style is no longer nearly enough. On the other hand, she has great style as a woman, charm as a performer, and nerve as

a fashion plate (blood red fingernail polish and all).

"The Sonny and Cher Show" beats its competition, "FBI" and "Bonanza." The new Cher album beats your old Gary Lewis with the Playboys discs. That said, you're on your own. M.A.

DONALD HULME: Sounds Impossible. Donald Hulme, Cordovox; Marty Gold and His Orchestra. *Spinning Wheel*; *Theme from "Love Story"*; *Classical Gas*; seven more. Audio Fidelity AFSD 6248, \$4.98.

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"Sounds impossible," do you call it, Sir? I wish it were impossible." R.D.D.



GARY MCFARLAND AND PETER SMITH: Butterscotch Rum. Gary McFarland, vocals, songs, and arr.; Peter Smith vocals and lyrics. *Jenny's Path*; *Poor Daniel*; *Salvation Army Rags*; six more. Buddah BDS 95001, \$4.98.

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by humming softly in unison with a vibraharp on Beatles tunes. He made many successful records. Today, the same sound can be heard on television commercials for shampoo, coffee, and other McFarland accounts.

I remember two McFarland-arranged albums with particular fondness. One featured Zoot Sims's tenor saxophone. The other was a much-honored suite called "America the Beautiful," a wry tribute to our shattered countryside. Through it all, McFarland has loved to write songs. In this album Gary has met his match in lyricist Peter Smith. Together they have come up with a beautifully relaxed and totally together project (whose equally impressive artwork is by Smith).

All vocals are by McFarland and Smith, sometimes as soloists and sometimes together. Smith's voice is somewhat darker than McFar-

land's, but the two are amazingly compatible in mood, inflection, and simplicity. At times there is a quality of innocence about their sound. They do not sing to prove they are singers, but rather to accompany their songs.

The songs are engrossing. The quiet reflection of *All My Better Days*: "There was a railroad family, just about as tight as they could be: / There was a country, as clean as the rivers that carried their names; / As clean as the first snow that covered their graves; / Just like all my better days." The cowboy humor of *Straight Arrow*: "Sylvia, you got me moving too fast: / Sylvia, you got me out of my class: / Sylvia, I shouldn't do this with you: / But old Straight Arrow like to shoot at something new." The strange whimsy of *Dance With Me*: "Darlin, why don't you dance with me no more? / I left your shoes all shined beside the

door." *Rain on the Ocean* is a lovely seven-and-one-half-minute track featuring McFarland the singer/arranger, inspired by Smith's haunting lyric of paralyzed love.

Here are Gary McFarland and Peter Smith at their best. I highly recommend the album for its musicality, poetic spirit, humor, and love. M.A.

* **HOYT AXTON:** *Joy To The World*. Hoyt Axton, vocals; rhythm accompaniment. *Joy to the World; The Pusher; Have a Nice Day; Ease Your Pain; Indian Song*; five more. Capitol SMAS 788, \$5.98.

* **LEE MICHAELS:** 5th. Lee Michaels, vocals and keyboards; Joel Larson, percussion; Jackie Kelso, reeds. *Ya Ya; You Are What You Do; Oak Fire; I Don't Want Her; Rock Me Baby*; five more. A & M SP 4302, \$4.98.

* **GRAHAM NASH:** *Songs For Beginners*. Graham Nash, vocals; instrumental accompaniment. *Better Days; Be Yourself; Simple Man; Sleep Song; Chicago*; six more. Atlantic SD 7204, \$5.98. Tape: ● M 87204, \$6.95; ●● M 57204, \$6.95.

* **MARK SPOELSTRA:** *This House*. Mark Spoelstra, vocals and guitars; rhythm accompaniment. *Better Butter; Amazon Song; Pretty Bird; Dirty Movie Show; Bucket Of Grease*; six more. Fantasy 8412, \$4.98.

By now these four singer/songwriters are all veterans. Axton and Spoelstra both made their first runs for the big time during the late folk period and arrived at their present berths via several other record companies; Axton has hit big a few times as a songwriter, notably with Steppenwolf's *The Pusher* and Three Dog Night's *Joy to the World*. Graham Nash started out in the British Hollies and has spent the last couple of years in the shadows of Steve Stills and Neil Young.

Lee Michaels is fairly unique in that his long career (this is his fifth album) has traveled a remarkably straight line: the music is infectious characterized by his voice backed only by his own piano or organ and a solitary drummer. Michaels is one of the best rhythm keyboard men in pop and his touch doesn't fail him here. He continues to write fine songs and he has selected several others from the rock library, especially *Can I Get a Witness* and *Willie and The Hand Jive*, to give the Michaels treatment. Great rock-and-roll.

"Songs For Beginners" will come as a surprise to those who have concentrated on Stills's doughy intensity or Crosby's *Good Vibes*. Graham Nash turns out to be at least as good a songwriter as Stills or Young (though in a more commercial, Beatle-ish style) and a more disciplined performer than either. He sings beautifully and he has produced each cut on this album with consummate skill. The best record of its kind since George Harrison's.

Axton and Spoelstra are both well served by their new labels. Self-production (Spoelstra with the help of Creedence's Doug Clifford) seems to agree with them too. Axton is simply superb as he grows out his songs, some of them already well known and most of the others, I suspect, destined to be. The only problem with Spoelstra's album is that some of the songs are not as good as might be expected, given his past efforts. However, this lack is made up for by the excellent production and the first-rate support of drummer Clifford.

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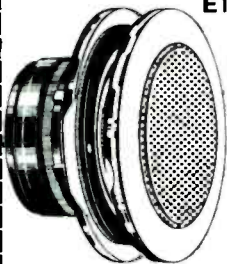
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* **THE ALLMAN BROTHERS BAND:** At Fillmore East. Duane Allman, lead and slide guitar; Gregg Allman, vocals and keyboards; Dicky Betts, guitar; Berry Oakley, bass; Jai Johanny Johanson, drums, congas, and timbales; Butch Trucks, drums and timpani. *Statesboro Blues; Stormy Monday; In Memory of Elizabeth Reed; Whipping Post*; three more. Capricorn SD 2 802, \$9.96 (two discs).

This lively blues band was the ensemble to earn a distinction of sorts: it closed the Fillmore East. A two-LP set, this release details an earlier (March 1971) performance at the theater. Two of the sides are taken up with two long songs, and in general it can be said that there is enough blues-rock in here to satisfy most anyone.

The band is tight and exciting. They are not blues purists exactly, but are far above most white bands who have tried this music. Duane Allman's guitar is especially noteworthy. This is a good disc for raising the volume and the roof and getting back at the neighbors. M.J.

jazz

* **JIMMY RUSHING:** *The You and Me That Used to Be*. Jimmy Rushing, vocals; Ray Nance, cornet, violin; Zoot Sims, Al Cohn and Budd Johnson, saxophones; Dave Frishberg, piano; Milt Hinton, bass; Mel Lewis, drums. *Fine and Mellow; Bei mir bist du schon; Home*; eight more. RCA LSP 4566, \$5.98. Tape: • PBS, 1784, \$6.95.

It's too long between Jimmy Rushing records, particularly now, as he sings his September songs. This disc, his first for a major label in years, is welcome for many reasons: It gets RCA, an uncertain supporter of jazz during the past decade, back into the jazz field; it provides Rushing with the support of a splendid group of musicians; and it showcases Rushing in an area where he is usually overlooked as a singer of ballads. In his early, pre-Basie days, ballads were his specialty. Blues, he has said, were an avocational sideline. But, at Basie's urging, he shifted to blues and became so closely associated with the style that his skills as a balladeer have largely been forgotten.

So here he is with ballads—*The You and Me That Used to Be* and *My Last Affair* (both tunes he sang with the Basie band but did not record). *Home, Thanks a Million, When I Grow too Old to Dream*—songs that definitely represent the pre-World War II era in which he sang his ballads.

Rushing is no crooner. He belts out his blues and he belts out his ballads. When his voice serves him well in this collection (sometimes it comes through with a forced hoarseness), he sings with the urgent lift that has always been his hallmark. And even when the vocal gears are grinding, the backup band lifts him, sup-

ports him, and then goes swirling off on its own.

Al Cohn trails memories of Lester Young all through *The You and Me That Used to Be*. Zoot Sims makes a glorious dash through *Linger Awhile*. Budd Johnson's soprano saxophone is a fresh, exhilarating color all through the set and Ray Nance's cornet adds some crackling fire. But the most consistently impressive of the supporting musicians is Dave Frishberg, a pianist who manages to find his own interesting way through any tune, who provides properly intimate accompaniment for Rushing's two excursions into piano-and-voice—*I Surrender, Dear* and *More Than You Know*—and who adds sparkle to the band's ensemble passages. This is a well-balanced mixture of rich, rewarding mainstream jazz elements. J.S.W.

GEORGE SHEARING TRIO: Number 1. George Shearing, piano; Andy Simpkins, bass; Harvey Mason, drums. *I Can't Get Started; What the World Needs Now: All Soul*; eight more. Sheba ST 103, \$5.50 (Sheba Records, P. O. Box 2120, No. Hollywood, Calif. 91602).

George Shearing's decision to make and re-release his own records is amply justified in this first recording of the Shearing Trio under his own aegis. His last previous trio album (made for Capitol) has never been released, so it cannot be said with any certainty that this set is superior. But this is certainly one of the most refreshing collections of Shearing's work that I can recall hearing in many years—no strings, no woodwinds, no horns, no rattling congas or bongos, not even that early Shearing blend of vibes and guitar that became his trademark and then became, inevitably, somewhat monotonous.

Easygoing, low-keyed charm is the hallmark here. Shearing does finger-tip playing, dancing lightly and crisply over the keys to give a bubbling sense of joy to a tune such as *Happy Talk*, which needs as much imaginative skill as it can get, and generating delicacy on *In a Sentimental Mood* and brisk irony on *When Johnny Comes Marching Home*. One of the special delights is a treatment of Tommy Dorsey's theme, *I'm Getting Sentimental Over You*, that turns this usually solemn ballad into a sparkling flurry of blitheness. There's humor too in Andy Simpkins' grumpy bass exposition of *Tumbling Tumbleweeds*. J.S.W.

LOUIS ARMSTRONG: July 4, 1900–July 6, 1971. Louis Armstrong with various groups. *Hustlin' and Bustlin' for Baby; Don't Play Me Cheap; Save It Pretty Mama*; thirty-one more. RCA VPM 6044, \$11.96 (two discs). Tape: • PBS 5102, \$9.95.

Although this two-disc set is given the surface appearance of a memorial to Louis Armstrong, it is actually a sweeping-up of those recordings made by Armstrong during his three periods with Victor (1932–33, 1946–47, and two sides cut in 1956 with a studio band). Little of this material had previously been reissued on three earlier LPs—"Town Hall Concert Plus" (LPM 1443); "The Authentic Sound of Louis Armstrong in the '30s" (LPM 2322); and "Louis Armstrong in the '30s/in the '40s" (LPM 2971).

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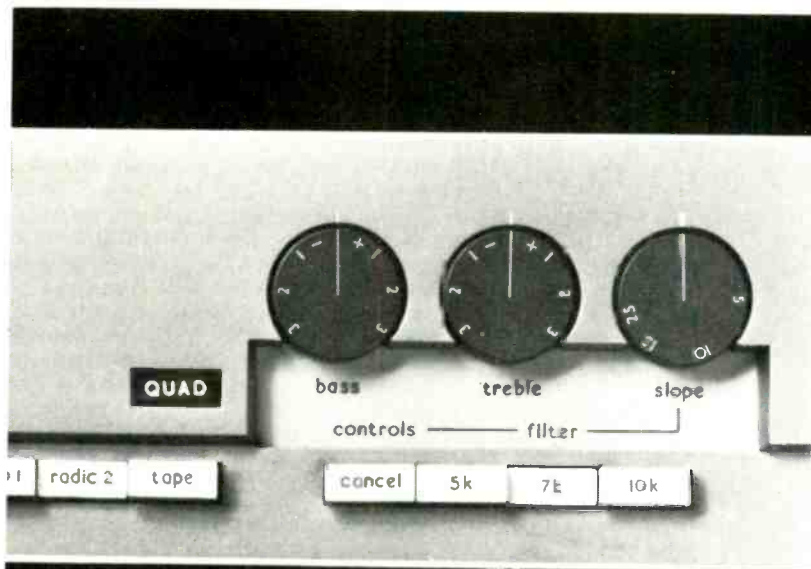
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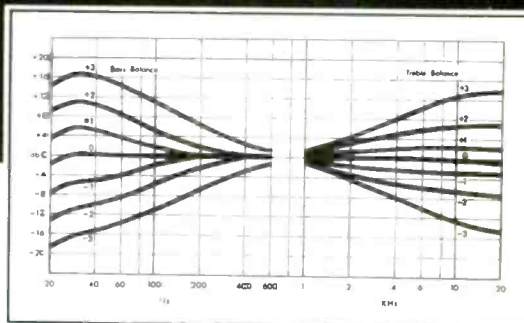


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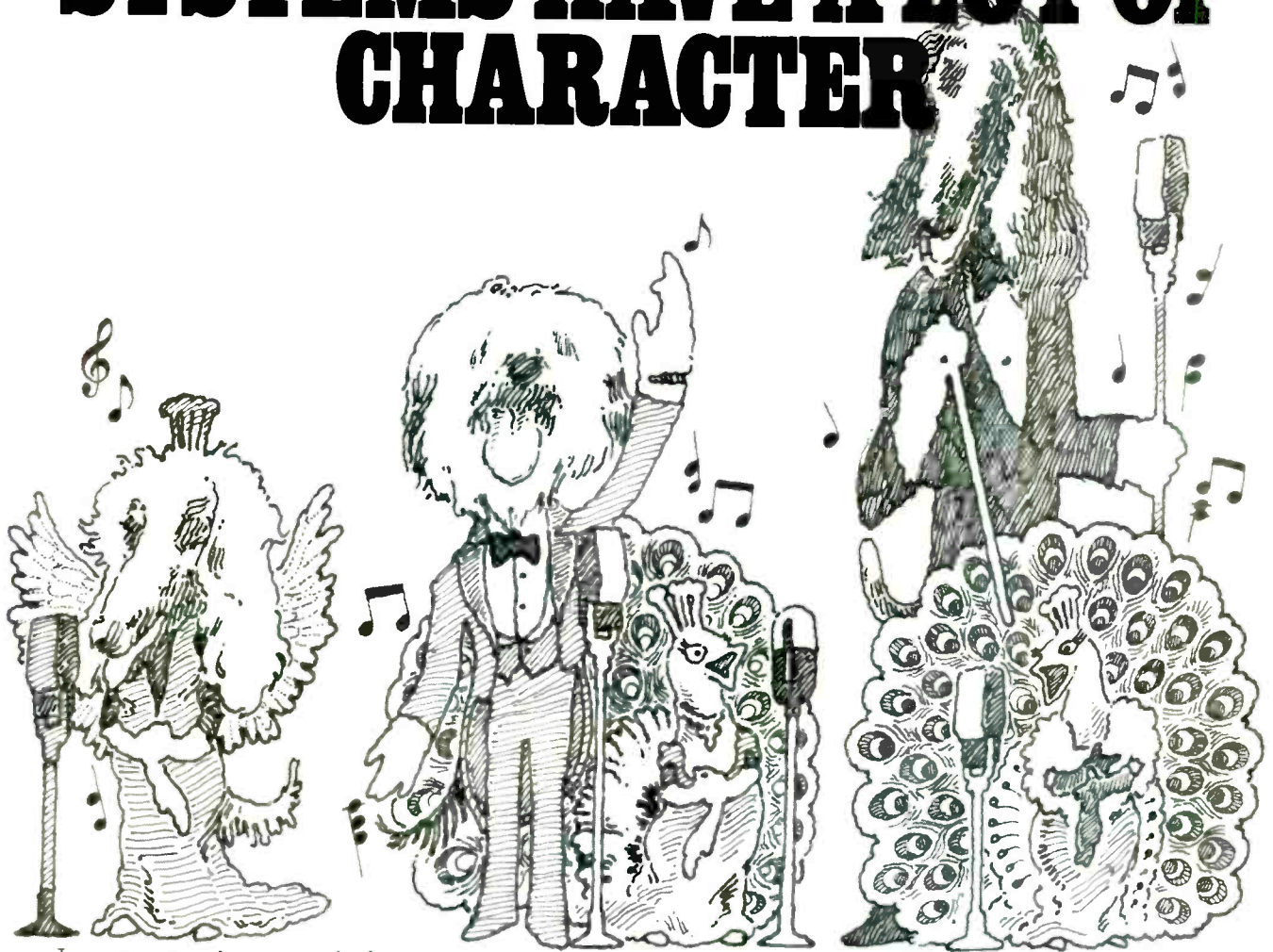
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CIRCLE 24 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

phones; Richard Wyands, piano; Wendell Marshall, bass; Roy Haynes, drums. *Trane Whistle; Walk Away; You Are Too Beautiful*; three more. Prestige 7834, \$4.98.

A 1960 session with a strong band and early Oliver Nelson arrangements surrounding the biting, full-toned tenor of Eddie Davis, who shares most of the solo space with Clark Terry. Nelson's writing carries strong echoes of the Basie band style, a sense that is emphasized by the inclusion of the two Ernie Wilkins charts from the Basie book. J.S.W.

THE GREAT JUG BANDS: 1926-1934. Jed Davenport and His Beale Street Jug Band: *The Dirty Dozen*; three more. Cannon's Jug Stompers: *Viola Lee Blues*; three more. Phillips' Louisville Jug Band: *Soldier Boy Blues*. Dixieland Jug Blowers: *Skip, Skat, Doodle-Do*; two more. Earl McDonald's Original Louisville Jug Band: *Rockin' Chair Blues*. Memphis Jug Band: *Papa Long Blues*; two more. Historical 36, \$5.98.

If nothing else, this collection shows that there was diversity among the jug bands of the late '20s, despite the basic groan-and-puff sound around which they were built. Jed Davenport's Beale Street Jug Band, for instance, has a lively attack with a bright fiddle, a strong jug blower, and some gutty harmonica playing by Davenport. Cannon's Jug Stompers, on the other hand, have a heavier, funkier feeling, although not quite as stolidly heavy as the Dixieland Jug Blowers.

And there is a totally different approach in Phillips' Louisville Jug Band's *Soldier Boy Blues*—humor and imagination, using the unusual blend of alto saxophone, flute, guitar, and jug. And the Memphis Jug Band, a Will Shade group, turns in what might be considered an urban hoedown on *Memphis Shake-down*, centered on Charlie Pierce's exuberant fiddle playing. In addition to Will Shade, these jug bands include such noted performers in this idiom as Gus Cannon, Noah Lewis, Charlie Burse, and Will Weldon. J.S.W.

CHRIS MCGREGOR'S BROTHERHOOD OF BREATH.

Chris McGregor, piano; Mongezi Feza and Harry Beckett, trumpets; Mark Charig, cornet; Malcolm Griffiths and Nick Evans, trombone; Dudu Pukwana, Ronnie Beer, Alan Skidmore, Mike Osborne, and John Surman, saxophones; Harry Miller, bass; Louis Moholo, drums. *MRA; Andromeda; Union Special*; three more. Neon NE 2, \$5.98.

Brotherhood of Breath, despite the fashionably obscure name which suggests a rock group, is an English orchestra laced with African elements that stem directly from the big jazz-band tradition. In fact, that tradition is extended by including among its sources some echoes of the jazz avant-garde. B of B is, as Stan Kenton used to say of his band, "experimental," meaning that it is not settled entirely in well-defined grooves but that the "experimental" aspects seem to be more on the surface than in the heart of the music.

So this is, for the most part, solid big-band playing—more spirited as a rule than what one hears from American studio bands—with soloists, notably Mongezi Feza on pocket trumpet and Dudu Pukwana on alto saxophone, who show an unwarranted fondness for the shrill, grating solo style of the avant-gardists. The band also falls victim to the currently wide-

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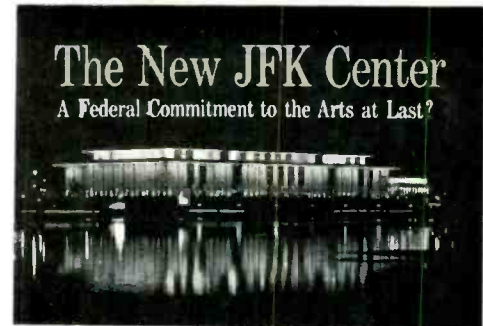
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spread fallacy that if you play nothing long enough it will turn into something. A piece called *Night Poem*, which starts out as an evocation of night sounds, builds up to an everyman-for-himself wingding that goes on for twenty long minutes with only the occasional appearance of a catchy supportive riff to keep it from disintegrating entirely.

But *MRA*, the opening selection, shows off a beautifully voiced, strongly swinging band that has great ensemble vitality in an arrangement, presumably by Pukwana, that aptly crosses jazz with a rhythmically propulsive African chant which is tossed about from section to section. And on *Davashe's Dream*, Pukwana exhibits a positive, emotionally affecting solo style on alto that is only slightly flawed by his eventual use of the rubber-reed technique. J.S.W.

in brief

THE QUINAIMES BAND. Elektra EKS 74096, \$4.98.

This group formed from the ashes of the Myddle Class and Jake & the Family Jewels, and produces a nice, bouncy rockabilly music. Best are their uptempo songs, like *Look to Yourself* and *You Don't Knock*. On this debut LP, only Dylan's *Visions of Johanna* is a disappointment. M.J.

SPOOKY TOOTH: Tobacco Road. A & M SP 4300, \$4.98.

Paced by Mike Harrison and Gary Wright, produced by Jimmy Miller, Spooky Tooth's "Tobacco Road" is one of the more enjoyable recent rock albums. A-minus, at the least. J.G.

PAUL STOOKEY: Paul And. Warner Bros. 1912, \$4.98. Tape: ● M8 1912, \$6.95; ●● M5 1912, \$6.95.

"Paul And" is the middle portion of Peter, Paul, and Mary. This album is done on his own. Mary Travers did the same thing a few months ago and came up with a fine set. But

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she was an exception to the rule that long-time group singers can't make it alone. Rumor has it that Paul Stookey's album is selling, but not in my house. M.A.

WHITE LIGHTNIN': Fresh Air. Polydor 24-4047, \$4.98.

If calling themselves White Lightnin' and getting packaged like a rock group helps old-time bluegrass musicians Byard Ray and Obray Ramsey sell records, more power to them. They certainly deserve to be heard by as many people as possible. (With a lot of help from city friends like Judy Collins, Eric Anderson, and John Herald.) J.G.

ELVIS PRESLEY: The Other Sides (Worldwide Gold Award Hits, Vol. 2). RCA LPM 6402, \$11.98 (four discs). Tape: ● PBS 1774, \$6.95; ●● PK 1774, \$6.95.

Having a white back released a multi-LP set of Elvis' best hits, RCA now brings out this four-record boxed set containing his worst. Many of these come from the singer's show-biz days, the years that followed his initial success, and are laden with forced sentimentality. There are several good tunes here: *His Latest Flame*, *One Night, Rip It Up*, and *Trouble*. But four songs on four LPs hardly make this set a bargain. M.J.

JO MAMA: J Is for Jump. Atlantic SD 8288, \$4.98.

This is the best yet from Jo Mama, featuring knockout tunes by member Danny Korichmar (who is James Taylor's friend and cohort. Kootch), plus several by Carole King (who sings back grounds and is friend to Korichmar, Taylor, etc.). All these people are a beautiful family circle, and they're all excellent musicians. *Keep on Truckin'* is already a single hit. Buy it. M.A.

THE BEST OF CLARENCE CARTER. Atlantic SD 8282, \$4.98.
The best of Clarence Carter. J.G.

THE BEST OF BARBARA LEWIS. Atlantic SD 8286, \$4.98.
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THE RASCALS: Peaceful World. Columbia G 30462, \$5.98 (two discs).
Ho hum. J.G.

RANDY NEWMAN: Live. Reprise 6459, \$4.98.
Always buy new Randy Newman albums. They're bound to have several new classic songs. This time, among others, we get *Maybe I'm Doing It Wrong*—which means what you think it does. This is a concert set, just Randy and the piano. Wonderful. M.A.

BILL WITHERS: Just as I Am. Sussex SXBS 7006, \$5.00. Tape: Ampex ● M8 7006, \$6.95; ●● M5 7006, \$6.95.
This album features the hit *Ain't No Sunshine When She's Gone*. Withers is a strong, plaintive singer with both chops and deep feeling. He is also a warm songwriter who writes repeatedly about the woman who went away, and he always says it well. The album is superbly produced by Booker T. Jones, who is Withers' mentor and fan. Highly recommended. M.A.

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BY R.D. DARRELL

Israeli/Egyptian Crisis, c. 1225 B.C.

Of all Handel's oratorios, none is more fascinating to musicologists (who delight in tracing its multitudinous borrowings from other composers as well as the composer's own earlier works), none, not even *Messiah*, has more heaven-storming choruses, and none is more sonically overwhelming than *Israel in Egypt*. Yet up to now no recording (including a 1958 taping long out of print) has been really satisfactory. Hence the special significance of the present Leeds Festival version conducted by Mackerras (Archive/Ampex D 8020, two 7½-ips reels; \$14.95; with a libretto booklet including identifications of all known "borrowed" materials).

Of course it's still possible, as with any art work of Himalayan stature, to complain about minor weaknesses: Except for countertenor Paul Esswood, the soloists are no more than competent; some of the densest double-chorus textures remain opaque. But the soloists play minor roles here; for the most part the chorus, as well as the first-rate orchestra, is recorded with superb lucidity and spaciousness; and Mackerras' authoritative reading holds one spellbound throughout. So these reels may be immensely relished—not only by Handelian specialists, but by every listener responsive to Handel's tonal grandeur and dramatic power. And perhaps nowhere are these qualities more fully realized than in this elaborate patchwork of old, stolen, and new materials.

American Music's Black Prince. One of the most illuminating revelations of my reviewing apprenticeship was the discovery—deep in the then supposed artistic trash barrel of so-called "race" records—of a melodist of almost Schubertian fertility, an explorer of colorful new tonal worlds scarcely imagined by Rimsky-Korsakov and Ravel, and a conductor who was pioneering in the new art of microphone recording. This was a composer/orchestrator/pianist/conductor of the late '20s and early '30s, some of whose extraordinary creations have just been reissued in "This is Duke Ellington" (RCA P8S 5100, double-play, 8-track cartridge, \$9.95). Also included are some of his now more famous hits of the '40s (*Caravan*; *Take the "A" Train*; *Sophisticated Lady*; etc.), but it was the earlier and even more original works that mesmerized me then and still do—regardless of audio aging, neither dimin-

ished (nor increased) by "stereo reprocessing." The very titles make music: *Creole Love Call*; *The Mooche*; *Black and Tan Fantasy*; *East St. Louis Toodle-O*; *Mood Indigo*. These (plus a pop hit, *Three Little Words*, that Ellington metamorphosed into his own) impressed me so powerfully as new, giant-stride advances in American music-making, that I wrote what must have been the first "serious" article about Ellington (*disques*, Philadelphia, for June 1932) under the title of one of his own—now lamentably forgotten—little masterpieces, *Black Beauty*. The Duke went on to become world-famous and to write and record many more fine works, but after rehearsing his earliest ones, I'm convinced that he rarely matched and never surpassed them.

Bach Without Wig. So many Bach organ recordings concentrate on his big works that there is a tendency to overlook his many smaller, "easier," and often more immediately engaging pieces. These include not only lyrical chorale preludes, written specifically for the organ, but chorales, cantata excerpts, songs, and little clavier marches and dances well suited (often without any "arranging") for organ performance—as in "The Biggs Bach Book" (Columbia MA 30539, 8-track cartridge; cassette MT 30539; \$6.98 each). It includes two chorale preludes, four chorales, four cantata excerpts (among them the familiar *Jesu Joy of Man's Desiring*, *Sheep May Safely Graze*, and the No. 156 *Sinfonia*); plus, more eponymically, two songs and eleven short pieces from the second (1725) *Anna Magdalena Bach Notebook*; also a gigue (actually by Telemann) from the *Wilhelm Friedemann Bach Notebook*. Biggs plays them with characteristic relish, some in more imaginative registrations than usual; and the clean, ungingeried recording makes the most of the sonic piquancies of Biggs's two organs: the 1958 baroque-styled Flentrop in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and the 1761 Silbermann in Arlesheim, Switzerland.

Jesu Joy of Man's Desiring and *Sheep May Safely Graze*, plus three *Well-Tempered Clavier* preludes, a lute prelude and allegro, several gavottes from unaccompanied violin and cello works, and the *Sleepers Wake* chorus from Cantata No. 140 comprise a similarly "light" program of guitar transcriptions: "Christopher Parkening Plays J. S. Bach" (Angel 4XS 36041, cassette, \$6.98). The gifted young Parkening reminds us again that good guitar transcriptions can beautifully differentiate the inner lines of harpsichord and organ works. Yet at the same time even so restrained an interpreter as this seems unable to eliminate all suggestions of an overexpressivity that is decidedly *not* Bachian. Nevertheless, his exquisite tone coloring is cap-

tured here with a vivid presence achieved without oppressively close miking; only a determined purist will resist such charming music-making.

Take Care of the Sounds and the Sense Will Take Care of Itself

well may be the motto of London's Phase 4 engineers (among others). It's worked some audio miracles in the past, admittedly, but carried to the extremes of which the protean Stokowski is still capable, it's sure to horrify musical traditionalists as violently as the Stokowski/Phase 4 Debussy *La Mer* has revolted many reviewers of the disc edition. I quite agree that this *La Mer* and its overside second suite from Ravel's *Daphnis et Chloé* (anticlimactically followed by a lumbering Berlioz *Dance des Sylphes*) is aesthetically indefensible. Yet I still find extraordinary, if indeed horrid, fascination in their sheer *sound* qualities (London/Ampex L 75059, 7½-ips reel, \$7.95; cassette M 94059; 8-track cartridge M95059; \$6.95 each). The titillating paradox is that these ultraromanticized impressionistic performances are recorded with exceptionally close, vivid, and realistic sonic characteristics. "Wrong" as the combination is, the tonal richness is aurally seductive; while for the student of the magical Debussy and Ravel scores there are details (along with Stokowskian emendations) to be heard better here than in any earlier recordings. In short, an audio triumph that is, musically, a Pyrrhic victory.

To a far lesser degree there is a not incomparable paradox in the recent Mozart *Magic Flute* conducted by Georg Solti (London/Ampex D 31182, two Dolbyized cassettes, \$14.95; libretto on request; R 90182, two 7½-ips reels, \$21.95; libretto enclosed). At least that is my best clue for solving the problem (that's baffled me for a couple of months) of how to do justice both to this release's considerable merits and to my personal strong sense of over-all dissatisfaction. Conductor, chorus, and orchestra are generally excellent and most of the male soloists are very good; but while I can't expect another Miliza Korjus as Queen of the Night or Tiana Lemnitz as Pamina, I still can't accept Cristina Deutekom and Pilar Lorengar in these roles. But what is even less acceptable is the recording of such quintessentially fairy-tale music: The reproduction conveys a microscopic closeness and searching realism worthy of, say, a *Wozzeck*. There is nothing here as outrageous as Stokowski's *La Mer*, but there still is an irreconcilable incongruity between sound and (artistic) sense. The only previous *Magic Flute* taping to include dialogue (genuinely necessary here), that by Böhm for DGG, is by no means all that a Mozartean might want, but over-all it still remains preferable to this one.

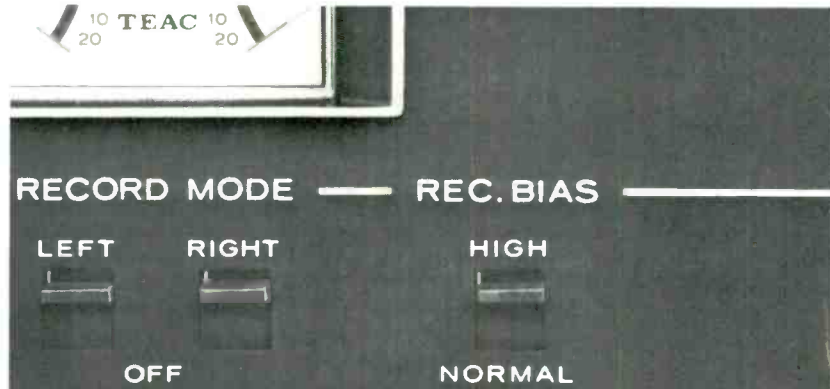
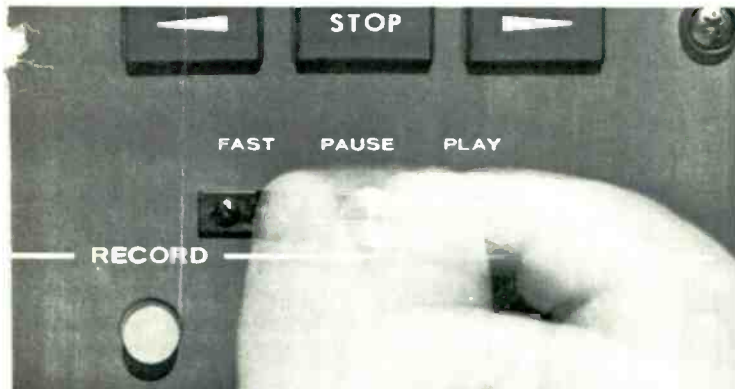
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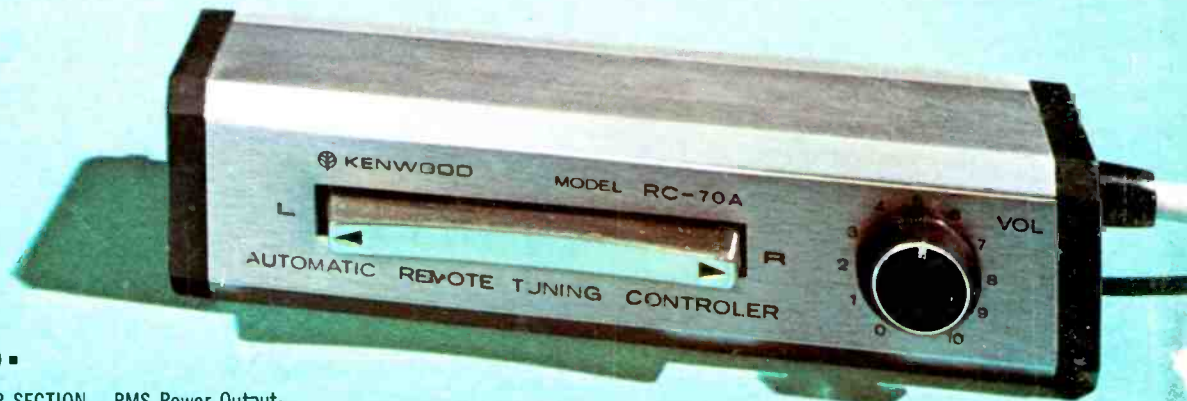
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