

May 1979 \$1.50

**In Backbeat** Shaun Cassidy: Not Just Another Pretty Face

# HIGH FIDELITY

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**FM, NPR, SATCOM, etc.**  
*A Revolution in Quality Radio?*

**Highway Hi-Fi—**  
*New Products that Deliver*

**The Philadelphia Orchestra:**  
*Columbia vs. RCA vs. EMI*

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*Bob Schow*



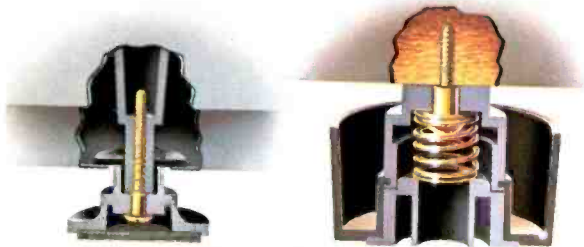
ned it not only gives  
 base greater density,  
 glue between the  
 ces acts to damp  
 oration. So when you're  
 ening to a record, you  
 n't hear the turntable.



*Common staples can work themselves loose, which is why Pioneer uses aluminum screws to mount the base plate to the base.*

### THINKING ON OUR FEET.

Instead of skinny screw-on plastic legs, Pioneer uses large shock mounted rubber feet that not only support the weight of the turntable,



*Stiff plastic legs merely support most turntables, Pioneer's massive spring-mounted rubber feet also reduce feedback.*

to absorb vibration and reduce acoustic feedback. So if you like to play your music loud enough to rattle the walls, you won't run the risk of rattling the turntable.

### FEATURES YOU MIGHT OTHERWISE OVERLOOK.

Besides the big things, the PL-518 has other obvious advantages.

Our platter mat, for example, is concave to compensate for warped records.

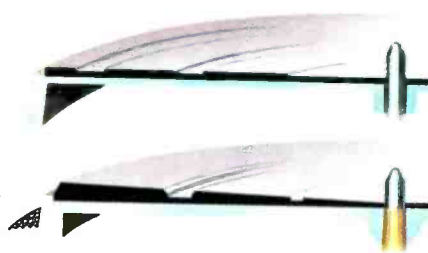
The platter itself is larger than others in this price range, which means it stays at perfect speed with less strain on the motor.

Even something like our spindle is special. It's .8 microns larger than most, so that the record is always perfectly centered.

And instead of flimsy staples, we use sturdy aluminum



*Low plastic base, particle board base is susceptible to vibration.*



*The ordinary platter mat is flat. Ours is concave to compensate for warped records.*

*Smaller, conventional platters are more subject to speed variations than our massive platter.*

screws to seal the base plate to the base.

It's details like these as well as advanced technology that gives the PL-518 an incredibly high signal-to-noise ratio of 73 decibels. And an extremely low wow and flutter measurement of 0.03%. Performance figures you'd be hard pressed to find on any other turntable for this kind of money.

So if you want to get the most out of every piece of music, you should have the turntable that gets the most out of every part that goes into it.



*Our spindle is .8 microns larger than others, to keep your records perfectly centered.*

**PIONEER**  
 We bring it back alive.

# BUY A BETTER TURNTABLE FOR UNDER \$175.

All turntables are pretty much the same on the outside.

But if you look carefully inside, you'll see the things that separate Pioneer's new PL-518 from others.

Things that add up to a turntable that can reproduce music perfectly, free of audible distortion, acoustic feedback and rumble.

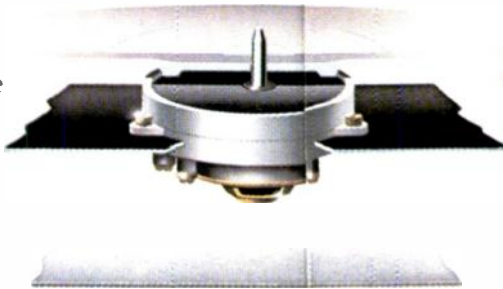
### A REMARKABLE DRIVE SYSTEM.

Obviously, all direct-drive turntables have an extremely accurate drive system.

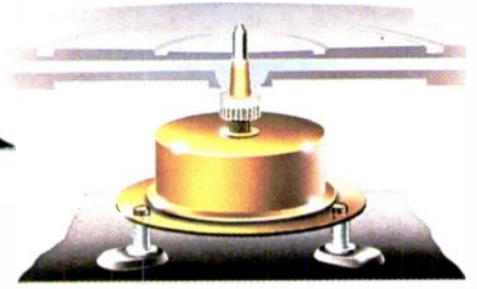
Each offers an immunity to fluctuations in line voltage, pitch control, and a built-in strobe unit to help you regulate the speed of the platter.

But we believe the drive system of the PL-518 is the most accurate found on any turntable selling for under \$175. Because the 16-pole, 24-slot brushless DC Servo motor is much the same as those found in turntables selling for \$250, if not more.

Equally important is the fact that this motor is anchored to a metal bottom plate, instead of suspended from the base, where vibration can affect your music.



*Instead of suspending the rotor, Pioneer has anchored it so vibration can't affect the music.*

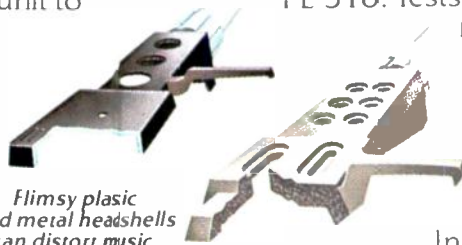


han the auto-return on most turntables.

Then there are two separate ball bearing assemblies used in the tone arm for greater stability as it passes over the record.

A plastic headshell is good enough for most one arms. It's nowhere near good enough for the PL-518. Tests show plastic tends to

resonate at frequencies between 75 and 300 hertz. By using a glass fiber shell, resonance above 75 hertz is all but eliminated.



*Flimsy plastic and metal headshells can distort music, so Pioneer's is made of glass fiber, which eliminates all resonance above 75 hertz.*

In fact, nothing vibrates on the tone arm with the exception of the stylus. So nothing comes through the tone arm but music.

### SOMETHING YOU RARELY SEE IN A TONE ARM: THINKING.

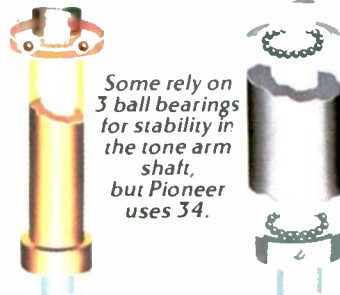
To give you further insight into the virtues of our PL-518 you only have to look at the way some tone arms are mounted. On piano wire. Or cheap plastic casings.

Instead, ours is gimballed on steel pivot bearings. So it can't vibrate.

A great deal of thought also went into developing an auto-return mechanism with fewer moving parts. It imposes less load on the motor and is more reliable



*Many tone arms are mounted on piano wire that vibrates, which is why our tone arm floats on steel pivot bearings.*



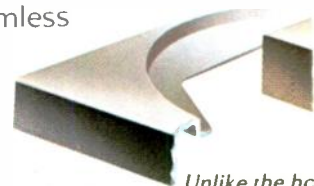
*Some rely on 3 ball bearings for stability in the tone arm shaft, but Pioneer uses 34.*

### A SOLID ARGUMENT FOR THE 2-PLY PARTICLE BOARD BASE.

The base on many turntables is nothing more than a hollow plastic shell. Or worse, sheet metal neatly hidden beneath imitation wood veneer.

Both seem harmless enough, but they tend to vibrate and cause acoustic feedback when the volume is turned up.

The base on the PL-518, however is made of two solid blocks of compressed wood, each 20 millimeters thick. When the two are



*Unlike the hollow plastic shell, our solid 2-ply is far less likely to vibrate.*

# WHEN YOU PUT IT ALL TOGETHER, YOU CAN



**TO FULLY APPRECIATE PIONEER'S  
NEW DIRECT-DRIVE TURNTABLE,  
YOU HAVE TO TAKE APART  
THE COMPETITION.**



PIONEER DIRECT DRIVE  
AUTOMATIC RETURN MODEL PL-518

THE PL-518.

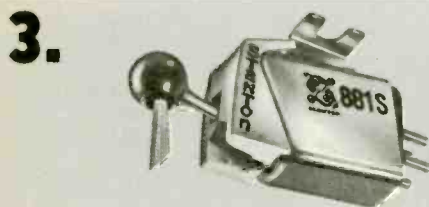
# What do you get when you put together...



**A tonearm worth \$150...**  
(with UNIPOISE® patented single pivot point suspension)



**A turntable worth \$200...**  
(with GYROPOISE® exclusive patented magnetic suspension)



**A cartridge worth \$150...**  
(Professional Calibration Standard with patented STEREOHEDRON® stylus tip)

## Stanton's NEW 8005 turntable system!



### Stanton's handsome new low profile Turntable has unequalled features:

1. The Gyropoise® platter actually floats on air. This magnetic suspension eliminates vertical friction and almost complete acoustical isolation is insured.
2. Unipoise® tonearm with patented single point suspension reduces lateral and vertical friction to a minimum.
3. Automatic stop and lift-off on some models ... manual operation on others.
4. Each Turntable comes with a top-of-the-line calibrated Stanton cartridge (881S or 681 Triple-E).

5. The Universal Cartridge Adapter Head accommodates all cartridges (a free Adapter Head comes with each turntable).

6. Other features:

- a) Precision ground belt drive
- b) Tracking force and anti-skate mechanism
- c) Viscous damped cueing
- d) Die cast aluminum platter
- e) Hinged dust cover adjustable to any position

For further information write:  
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Terminal Drive, Plainview, N.Y. 11803

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# HIGH FIDELITY

MAY 1979

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# Listener Fatigue

I was recently discussing with colleagues that universally accepted phenomenon known as "listener fatigue" when I realized I didn't know what we were talking about. In audio jargon LF generally indicates fatigue resulting from listening to music reproduced over a system that adds to it certain not clearly determined types of noise and/or distortion. We were discussing whether particular forms of quadriphony led to LF. How could one find out?

Granted, certain sonic annoyances will tire you after a while. The most blatant would create an intellectual fatigue rather than the more subtle listener fatigue. Some, like a fingernail scratching a blackboard, reach their critical moment quickly; others, like road noise, you can ignore for a full five-hour trip. But imagine the following: You are driving home from work, tune in to your favorite station, and are captivated by a broadcast of Horowitz' recording of a Scriabin sonata. You decide to buy the record, but when you play it at home you discover that those sounds of passing cars, chassis squeaks, distant horns, and puddle splashes that you filtered out of your consciousness in the car are actually recorded right on the disc! You are hearing the same sounds you heard in the car, but now how tolerant would you be? Not very, I'd wager.

The key seems to be acceptance. If you accept a particular noise, it may never become annoying; if you do not, it may irritate very quickly. While Felix Weingartner's acoustic recording of Beethoven's Seventh Symphony was apparently a godsend back in the '20s, its scratchy sound would turn off most listeners, used to high quality sound reproduction, today. But sophisticated music listeners have been swearing that they could hear no differences between live and recorded performances as far back as cylinder days. And even now some lucky antique-record fans seem to have built-in scratch filters between their ears and their brains.

Okay, so a pronounced phonograph wow or speaker buzz can get to most listeners. LF is supposed to be caused subliminally, by less obvious noise and distortion. And this is where I get lost. Not that I don't experience listener fatigue as much as my colleagues do—my problem is that I experience it too often. Like them, I do not use my audio equipment primarily for background music; rather I listen intently to the music being played. And, frankly, an hour and a half without a break is about my limit. I can be hearing my favorite music on a magnificent system, and after an hour or so of careful listening, I am bushed. In fact, even at a live concert or opera, the composer or performer had better have programmed an intermission before that long if he expects to keep me going. Fortunately, they nearly all do.

And what about the music? With enough intermissions, I can enjoy five hours of Wagner's *Götterdämmerung*, live, recorded, mono, stereo, or quad. On the other hand, with the exceptions of very carefully selected pairs, I find it difficult to listen to more than one Mozart symphony per concert.

How then, can I—or someone who listens as I do—tell if it is a particular audio system or component that is inflicting listener fatigue upon me? Should I listen to Haydn's trios through system A until I get tired, then play them again via system B, and see whether I get tired later or sooner the second time around? System B would be guaranteed to lose even if it were the Beaux Arts Trio live in my living room. (Would it be cheating to play different music for the second session? Maybe it's cheating not to.)

If the acceptance of a certain level of sound quality is the reason some listeners suffer from LF, then perhaps we must blame the high fidelity industry for having spoiled too many ears.

*Leonard Marcus*

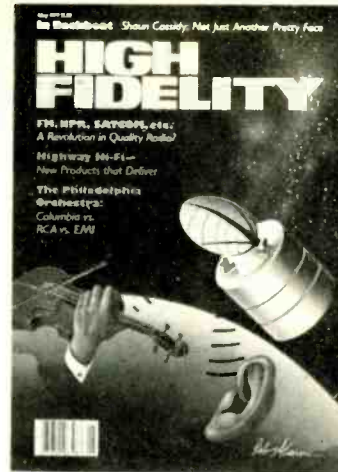


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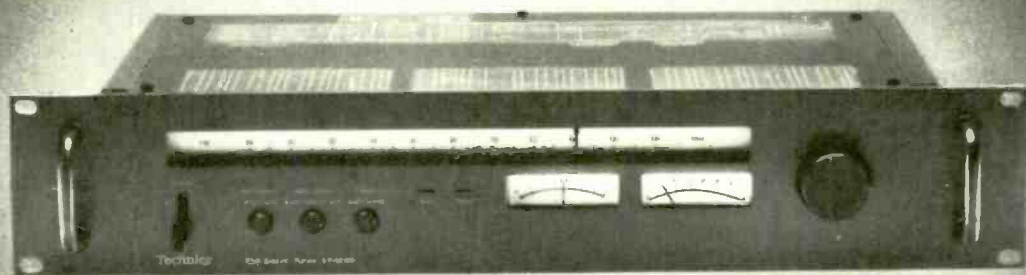
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# The Technics ST-9030 tuner. Purists would feel better if it cost over \$1,000.



To some, tuners that offer 0.08% THD, 50 dB stereo separation, a capture ratio of 0.8 dB and waveform fidelity should demand a price tag of over \$1,000. But with the ST-9030 this performance can be yours for less than half that price.

That's quite a feat for a tuner. But then the ST-9030 is quite a tuner. It has two completely independent IF circuits: A narrow band, for ultra-sharp selectivity and a wide band, for ultra-high separation and ultra-low distortion. It even selects the right band, depending on reception conditions, automatically.

Both bands give you the same extended flat frequency response. Because, unlike conventional tuners, the ST-9030 utilizes an electronic pilot cancel circuit that cuts the pilot signal, without cutting any of the high end. It's ingenious. And a Technics innovation.

The Technics ST-9030 has one of the quietest, most sensitive front ends of any tuner. With an advanced linear frequency 8-ganged tuning capacitor and 3

double-tuned circuits, plus dual gate MOS FETs in the 2-stage RF amplifier and balanced mixer circuit. What's more, there's a servo tuning circuit that locks into the tuned frequency, regardless of minor fluctuations. The result: Negligible drift distortion and maximum stereo separation.

Technics ST-9030. Compare specifications and prices. And you'll realize there's really no comparison.

THD (stereo): Wide—0.08% (1 kHz). Narrow—0.3% (1 kHz). S/N: 80 dB. FREQUENCY RESPONSE: 20 Hz—18 kHz +0.1, -0.5 dB. SELECTIVITY: Wide—25 dB. Narrow—90 dB. CAPTURE RATIO: Wide—0.8 dB. Narrow—2.0 dB. IMAGE and SPURIOUS RESPONSE REJECTIONS (98 mHz): 13.5 dB. AM SUPPRESSION (wide): 58 dB. STEREO SEPARATION (1 kHz): Wide—50 dB. Narrow—40 dB. CARRIER LEAK: Variable—65 dB (19 kHz). Fixed—70 dB (19 kHz, 38 kHz).

Technics ST-9030. A rare combination of audio technology. A rare standard of audio excellence.

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The turntable evolution comes full swing with the introduction of the new Quartz turntable series. We introduced the first quartz-controlled turntable in 1974, and we've been improving our designs ever since. Including:

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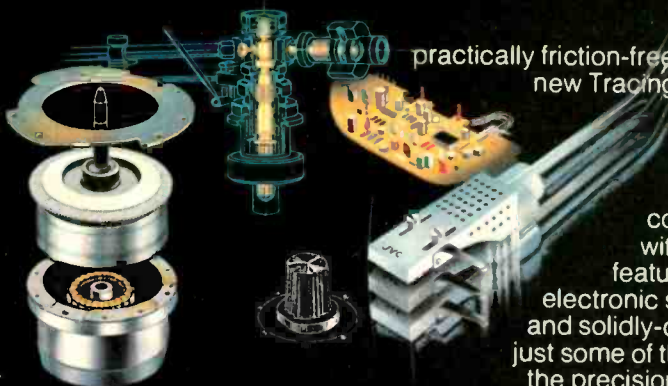
To detect minute variations in platter speed, and send corrective information to the electronic circuit controlling turntable rotation, it provides near-perfect speed accuracy. And, our Super Servo is factory-set for years of accurate, dependable use.

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For quick-start/stop and high-torque operation. Our powerful motor drive system and its companion speed-monitoring circuits reduce wow-and-flutter and speed drift nearly to the vanishing point.

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Our exclusive unipivot gimbal support holds the tone arm firmly, yet is



practically friction-free. We also developed a new Tracing Hold (TH) tone arm to provide stability and tracing accuracy needed for a cartridge to follow even the most complex record grooves without error. These, plus features like digital readout, electronic switching mechanisms and solidly-constructed bases, are just some of the reasons to consider the precision of JVC's Quartz-Lock series for your music system.

And you can choose from manual, semi-automatic or totally-automatic models—JVC's most comprehensive turntable line ever.

See them at your JVC dealer soon. JVC America Company, Div. of US JVC Corp., 58-75 Queens Midtown Expwy., Maspeth, N.Y. 11373. Canada: JVC Electronics of Canada, Ltd., Ont.

# JVC



QL-A7



QL-F4

COMING NEXT MONTH

Microcomponents are making this spring's consumer audio news, but just how well do they perform? Stay tuned: In June, we offer the initial lab/listening tests of a group of these glamorous miniatures, so you can judge for yourself whether in this instance good things come in small packages. Edward J. Foster takes us to the scene of **The Pickup/Preamp Confrontation**, where you will learn the sources of possible audible conflict between your preamp and your cartridge and what to do to restore harmony. Conrad L. Osborne's **Diary of a Cavpag Madman**, via the new Pavarotti recordings of these Siamese twins of opera, explores the very nature of performance and ruminates on its presence and absence in a number of recorded cases. In **BACKBEAT**, Ken Emerson encounters **Dire Straits**, the blazing British blues band, and lives to tell about it. There is a report from a unique Cuban jazz/rock festival, and Input Output's Fred Miller looks at the **Ursa Major Space Station**, a fascinating concert/studio digital-reverb and time-delay processor.

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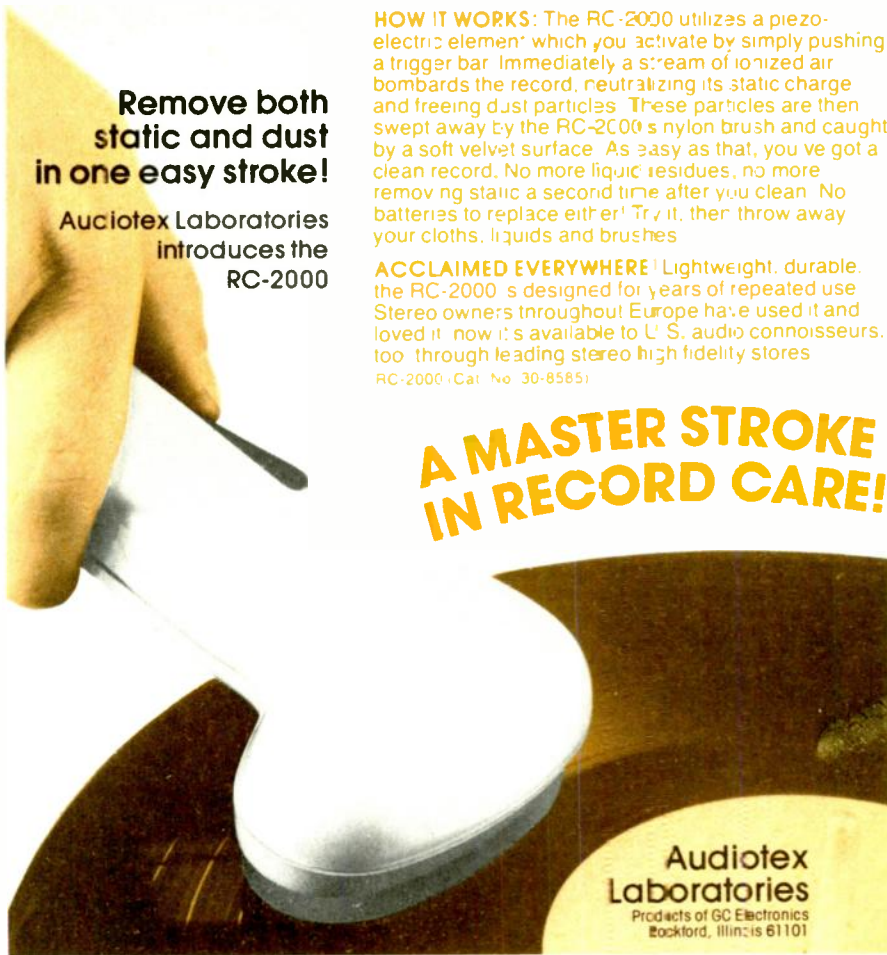
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Remove both static and dust in one easy stroke!

Audiotex Laboratories introduces the RC-2000



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**ACCLAIMED EVERYWHERE!** Lightweight, durable, the RC-2000 is designed for years of repeated use. Stereo owners throughout Europe have used it and loved it; now it's available to U.S. audio connoisseurs, too, through leading stereo high fidelity stores. RC-2000 (Cat. No. 30-8585)

CIRCLE 20 ON PAGE 105

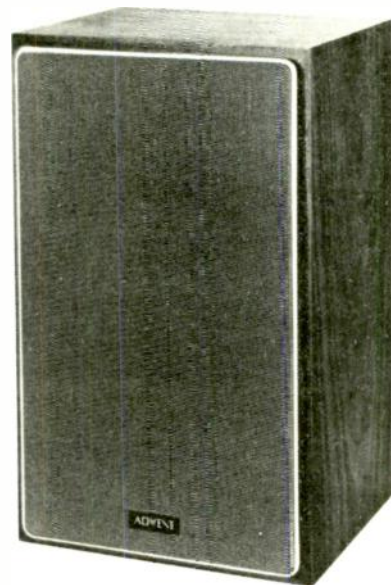
# The Advent/1

The Advent/1 is a smaller, less expensive version of this country's best-selling speaker system. It uses the same drivers as the New Advent Loudspeaker, and its overall sound quality is as close to the New Advent's as one speaker can come to another. (2½ dB less output at 30 Hz is the only difference worth quantifying.)

The price-performance ratio of the Advent/1 is surpassed by no other speaker. It sells for \$110 to \$129\*, depending on cabinet finish and how far it has been shipped.

For more information, please send in this ad.

\*Suggested prices, subject to change without notice.



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You get dynamics, fidelity, color and subtlety like you never dreamed of.

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Because the DT-30 is somewhat like a race horse.

It runs best under a great jockey.

It is more sophisticated, more complex, and more challenging than systems costing twice as much.

It has, for example, recording head azimuth

adjustment, so you can fine tune for optimum performance with any cassette.

It has internal standard oscillators, so you can make accurate and minute bias adjustments.

It has a 3-head structure, so that you can monitor what you're recording while you're recording.

Although a professional would be accustomed to this level of instrumentation, you may not be.

Just remember this. The DT-30 is only a machine. With time and care and devotion, you can master it. And produce tapes that are as good as any in the world.

Consider the features you have on your side.

A dual-capstan transport system that's guaranteed

to reduce wow and flutter by 30% or more.

An automatic spacing-pauser that adds a short blank space between each segment you are recording.

A peak-hold switch that freezes the dB indicator at its highest level, long enough for you to make adjustments.

We proudly introduce our potent, eager, demanding, sensitive, beautiful DT-30 cassette deck.

You may never take it as far as it can go.

But even half-way is better than most.

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## We build a speaker that sounds like music

It can accurately reproduce the 120+ dB peaks that are found in some live music. That's more than just being able to play music loud. It can accurately reproduce the music bandwidth—from below 25Hz to 20KHz. And the Interface:D's vented midrange speaker reproduces midrange sounds with the clarity and purity that allows precise localization of sound sources—both lateral and front-to-back.

The Interface:D is the only commercially available speaker we know of that can meet these criteria. Audition them at your Interface dealer.



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# Interface:D™

# Letters

## Whither Tape?

I have just finished reading Larry Zide's informative article on the state of metal-particle tape development ["Bits and Particles," February]. What is not absolutely clear, however, is whether Mr. Zide resolved one of the questions initially posed by the article: whether metal tape will make present cassette equipment obsolete and by what reasoning. One of the attractions of the cassette alternative is the availability of high fidelity on a more durable and less expensive medium than disc. If metal tape will cost twice as much as high-quality chrome, then consumer preference may not shift to it.

It is important to remember that, if the finest fidelity possible at any price were the sole criterion, we would all be using either reel-to-reel or discs exclusively.

Kenneth S. Hilton  
New York, N.Y.

*On the contrary, we think Mr. Zide did answer the question. He showed that, whatever the future of the metal-particle tapes themselves, present playback standards do not appear in danger of major change, and therefore present decks should retain their playback value even if prerecorded metal-particle tapes become the rule. But the premium price Mr. Hilton cites is a major reason for doubt that these tapes will sweep all before them like the proverbial new broom. Their advantages suggest that they will be in demand for the most exacting uses—and by the most exacting users—but their price appears to dictate that they will not make current technology obsolete for other uses and users.*

## Tapes for the Car

We enjoyed the article "Taped Programs for Your Car" [by Harold A. Rodgers, February]. The need for compression in the car has not gone unnoticed here; in fact, we have been recommending the DBX 118 for just that purpose. Please note that the DBX 119, mentioned in the article, and its predecessor, the 117, were discontinued several years ago. The 118, which can also serve as a limiter and peak limiter for recording very "hot" sources like direct discs, is the current model containing compression. The 128, which combines a 118 and a DBX noise-reduction system, can also be used.

Mary C. Warbasse  
Asst. Marketing Director  
DBX, Inc.  
Newton, Mass.

## Cosmic Responsibility

I found Leonard Marcus' editorial, "Bach Flipped, by Jupiter" [about the Voyager spacecraft, February], most interesting. His words caused me to think more deeply

about posterity and our debt/responsibility in that area. To present the musical art of the human race on one record is an awesome responsibility! How does one choose?

And who, in fact, did choose the music and performances to be included in this "message to the universe?" If, as Marcus said, "We are the true recipients," we can develop opinions concerning the success of the choices. But if by chance the record is ever played by some other beings, they will have no reference for comparison and will accept it as it is. Depending on which of these assumptions you make, the choice can mean much or very little.

Phil Shapiro  
Los Angeles, Calif.

*The music on the recording was chosen on the advice of a committee of musical scholars organized by Carl Sagan, who had the ultimate responsibility.*

## AM Ignored?

Your review of the McIntosh 4100 receiver [February] did not discuss the AM section, yet I see from the photo of the dial and your opening description that there is one. I hope McIntosh has not "ignored" it. I am still using a McIntosh MR-66 tuner, and it has the best AM section I have seen yet, except for the newer Dymek tuners. In spite of the overall poor engineering practices in use by most AM stations, a good tuner helps. Please don't ignore AM.

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

*Though we agree that if a manufacturer is going to include an AM section in a quality audio product he should take commensurate pains with it, the industry at large evidently doesn't. The theory seems to be that as long as you're including an RF section, you might as well throw in the AM capability as a "utility" item but that the attempt to make it high fidelity is sufficiently compromised by the parameters of AM broadcasting itself to make it useless. The vast majority of our readers seem to agree with that proposition since they very rarely even mention AM sections in their voluminous correspondence to us. We reply in kind to the extent that we have not made a practice of applying high fidelity standards to the AM sections of the products we test.*

*That in the Mac receiver did strike us as better than average for a stereo receiver. It did not seem spectacularly good—as good, for example, as it appears the Dymek tuners are—but without lab measurements (which, for the above reason, we don't undertake) the question of how good the Mac is can't really be answered.*

## Prima Donna Price

I must take an opposite stand to Dale S. Harris' critique of Leontyne Price's "Prima Donna, Vol. 4" [January]. The way the review reads, one would dismiss the album as poor and hardly listenable. Mr. Harris ap-

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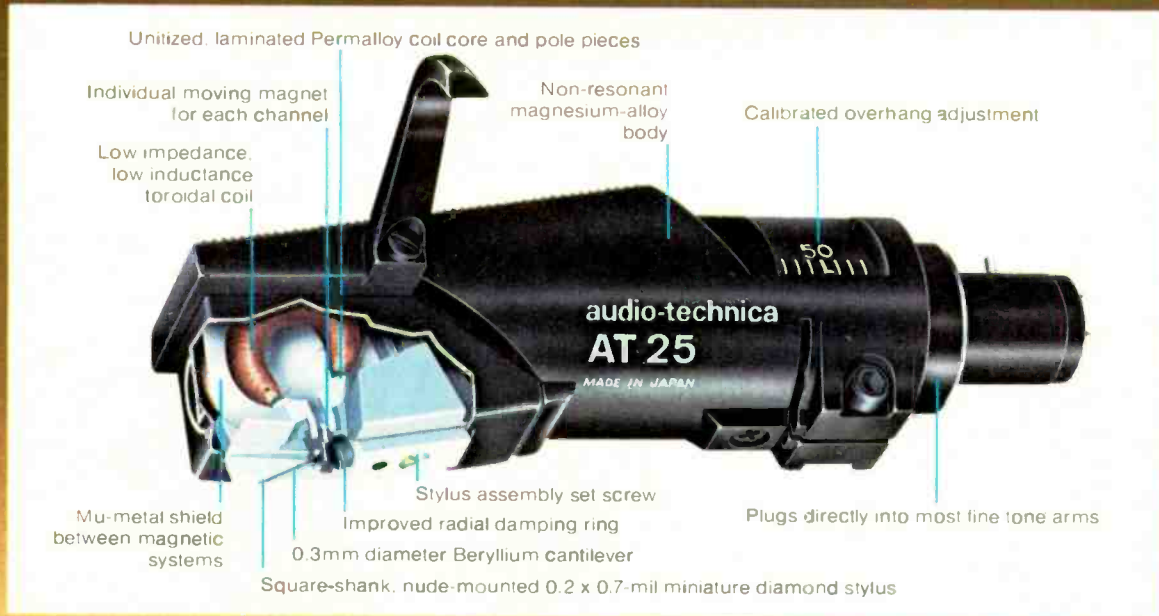
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pears to be scraping the bottom of the barrel and even digging into the wood itself in a vain attempt to find anything worthwhile about this disc.

His main criticism is of Price's rendition of "La luce langue" from *Macbeth*, which he describes as "puffed-up, hollow sound and . . . ugly, unresonant low-lying tone." Allow me to refer you to a letter of Verdi's that contains his much-quoted description of the kind of voice he wanted Lady Macbeth to have: "I want Lady Macbeth to be ugly and evil. . . and I don't want Lady Macbeth to sing at all. Lady Macbeth's voice should be hard, stifled and dark." In the same letter the composer wrote, "They must be acted and declaimed with hollow masked voices." The words Verdi chose mirror Mr. Harris'—maybe La Price doesn't approach her roles "in a rather generalized manner," after all.

What Mr. Harris dismisses as just another lackluster record turns out to be one of the best recital albums of 1978.

Steve Willis  
San Francisco, Calif.

Mr. Harris replies: Mr. Willis does not quote Verdi's letter accurately. When the composer asked for Lady Macbeth to be ugly and evil he was referring not to her voice, but to her looks: "Tadolini has a beautiful and attractive figure [emphasis mine], and I want Lady Macbeth to be ugly and evil."—*Letters of Giuseppe Verdi*, edited by Charles Osborne, p. 59.

Equally misleading is Mr. Willis' reference to "hollow masked voices." Here Verdi was referring to two specific moments in the score, not to the music of *Lady Macbeth* as a whole: "The two most important numbers in the opera are the duet between Lady Macbeth and her husband and the Sleepwalking Scene. If these two numbers fail, then the entire opera fails. And these numbers must definitely not be sung. They must be acted and declaimed in voice hollow and veiled; otherwise the effect will be lost."

Nonetheless, Verdi did indeed say in the letter from which I have been quoting: "Tadolini sings to perfection, and I don't want Lady Macbeth to sing at all. Tadolini has a wonderful voice, clear, flexible, strong, while Lady Macbeth's voice should be hard, stifled and dark."

Yet, as the most cursory examination of the score reveals, the role demands a formidable technique and a range that extends from B flat all the way up to D flat above the staff. Why, if Verdi didn't want the character to sing at all, is this so? The answer, I have no doubt, is to be found in his tendency to exaggerate in order to make his intentions clear (compare his overstated dynamic markings). As Julian Budden says about the Tadolini letter: "It is an argumentum ad hominem (or feminam) rather than a statement of fact, rather like Richard Strauss's instruction to perform Elektra as fairy music. In other words, to combat the narcissistic disposition of the Italian prima donna a touch of exaggeration was needed. The point was that Macbeth was first and foremost music-drama."

Clearly, Verdi was trying to ensure an

expressive rather than merely a well-sung portrayal of the role. As he says elsewhere in the letter: "Tadolini's voice is angelic; I want Lady Macbeth's to be diabolic." In my opinion, Leontyne Price's performance of the Macbeth aria on "Prima Donna" is neither well sung nor expressive of anything but her current vocal problems. In any case, "La luce langue" was written eighteen years after the Tadolini letter—in 1865, when he reworked the entire opera.

### For the Record

In "War Songs II: Music Goes AWOL" [January], Gene Lees states that Eugene McCarthy defeated Lyndon Johnson in the 1968 Democratic primary in New Hampshire. Not so. Johnson won 49% of the Democratic vote to McCarthy's 42%. (Republican write-in votes narrowed the margin, but Johnson remained the victor.) Of course, the results were in every sense save the numerical a victory for McCarthy, but facts are still facts.

Vivian Bakal  
Paterson, N.J.]

### Broken Consort Music

In her review of the London Early Music Group's "What Pleasures Have Great Princes" [December], Susan Thiemann Sommer says there have been no recordings of English broken consort music since Sidney Beck's. Happily, this is not so: David Munrow himself, as part of the Morley Consort, recorded seven pieces each on "Pleasures of the Court" (Angel S 36851) and "Musique à la Cour des Tudors" (Harmonia Mundi HMU 223); the Julian Bream Consort has ten selections on RCA LDS 2656 (reissued as LSC 3195), albeit on anachronistic instruments; and the Consort of Musicke included the five consorts attributed to John Dowland in its recordings of that composer's complete works (Oiseau-Lyre DSLO 533). But for my taste, the best of the lot is the Linde Consort's disc, "Altenglische Consortmusik" (Electrola Reflexe CO6330105).

Geoff Gaherty  
Toronto, Ont.

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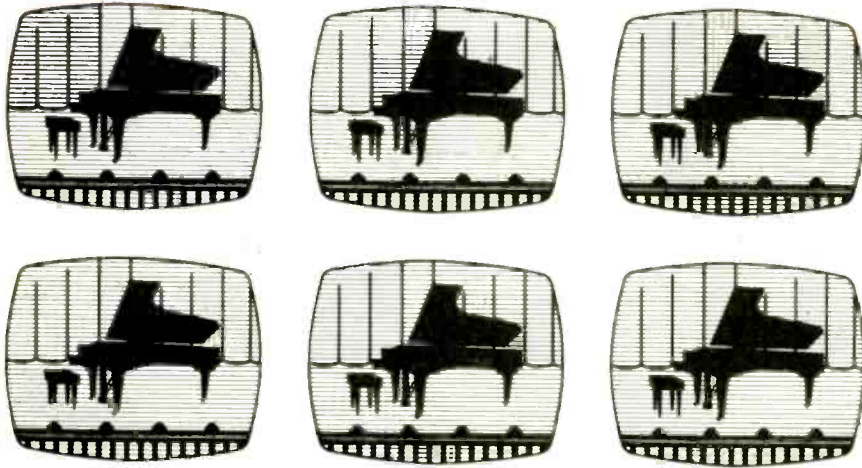
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## Richter's Sixteen Silent Minutes

by John Culshaw



Michael J. Coleman

LONDON—Watching Sviatoslav Richter playing Schubert on commercial television the other night took me back in a flash to Aldeburgh eighteen months ago, because I directed the cameras for the video recording on that occasion. The Maltings at Snape was packed to bursting point, but with the knowledge of Richter's aversion to television there was, until rather later than the last minute, some doubt about whether he would appear at all.

It all began when his agent said there would be no trouble if the cameras were invisible to the pianist, so my crew went to inordinate lengths to hide the monsters. Cameras and cameramen were draped in black and lurked behind foliage that the audience was meant to regard as decorative; the lights were kept to the minimum required to register any picture at all. We expected to reach the moment of truth in the afternoon, when Richter was scheduled to rehearse. Unfortunately—or perhaps fortunately—he didn't. Nobody could trace him anywhere, although it is quite a feat to disappear in a place as small as Aldeburgh. Eventually we found his wife, Nina Dorliak, who was in an awkward situation, for while she thought it important that the recital should be video-taped, she could not be party to a conspiracy. But she is a

practical lady and agreed to come to the hall to inspect the invisibility of the cameras and the level of lighting, both of which she found excellent.

The recital was to begin at eight and was being transmitted live by two radio networks. In the mobile television control van I had been given a "feed" from the radio continuity announcer so that I would know when to cue video tape immediately prior to Richter's entrance. At ten minutes to eight the hall was full, and Richter's gleaming Yamaha piano commanded the platform amid all the foliage and the invisible cameras. At five to eight Richter arrived and went to his dressing room, where he announced that he intended to play the entire recital from music and would need someone to turn the pages. The trouble was that any student qualified for such a task was already sitting somewhere in the auditorium. Exit a search party, which returned at one minute after eight bearing a suitable candidate, to whom Richter began to explain how and when he liked his pages turned. By that time the radio commentator was already on the air and beginning to run out of words to introduce the first item, while over the talk-back I was howling at my backstage assistant to make sure that the page turner did not sit himself down directly in front of one of my cameras.

At about 8:05, when the radioman was showing signs of despair, my assistant's voice came calmly over my headphones. "Richter's been out," he said, "and gone back. I think he's seen a camera." So that seemed to be that, for it had been agreed that we would sacrifice the video recording rather than jeopardize the public recital. At that moment the unfortunate radioman, who after all had no reason to know or care about anything except that he was live on two networks, had started to repeat himself for the third time. Then my assistant came on again.

"He hasn't seen a camera," he said, "but there's no music stand."

"No what?"

"No music stand on the Yamaha, and he can't play from the notes without it."

Exit the search party again, this time to look for the piano tuner, who in all innocence had assumed that Richter would play from memory and would not need a stand. He could not be found because, like anything that is brilliantly hidden, he was in the one place where nobody thought to look: He was buried in the audience, blissfully unaware of what was going on.

Meanwhile, somebody remembered that Benjamin Britten's Steinway was in storage beneath the stage and rushed off to detach its music stand. The radioman had by then decided that he was in the middle of a rerun of a Marx Brothers farce and was ad-libbing about anything that came into his head. The time was 8:13.

The Steinway music stand would not fit the Yamaha. But the sight of struggle to make it fit alerted the tuner in the audience. He made a dash for the exit and out to the backstage truck in which, several hours earlier, he had locked up the Yamaha music stand. When he carried it onstage the audience promptly cheered, further confounding the wretched radioman, whose listeners, along with him, assumed that the cheers were for Richter.

Then, suddenly, the great man appeared and took not the slightest notice of the lights or the cameras, whether he could see them or not; the page turner did not block the lens of camera 2. The recital was magnificent. Watching part of it again on television, it was almost impossible to recall the tension of those sixteen silent minutes. Yet I still shed a tear for the radioman; and if you think I'm making too much of a point, just try and ad lib to yourself for sixteen minutes about Schubert's Sonata in E minor, D. 566. There must be easier ways to a nervous breakdown. ●

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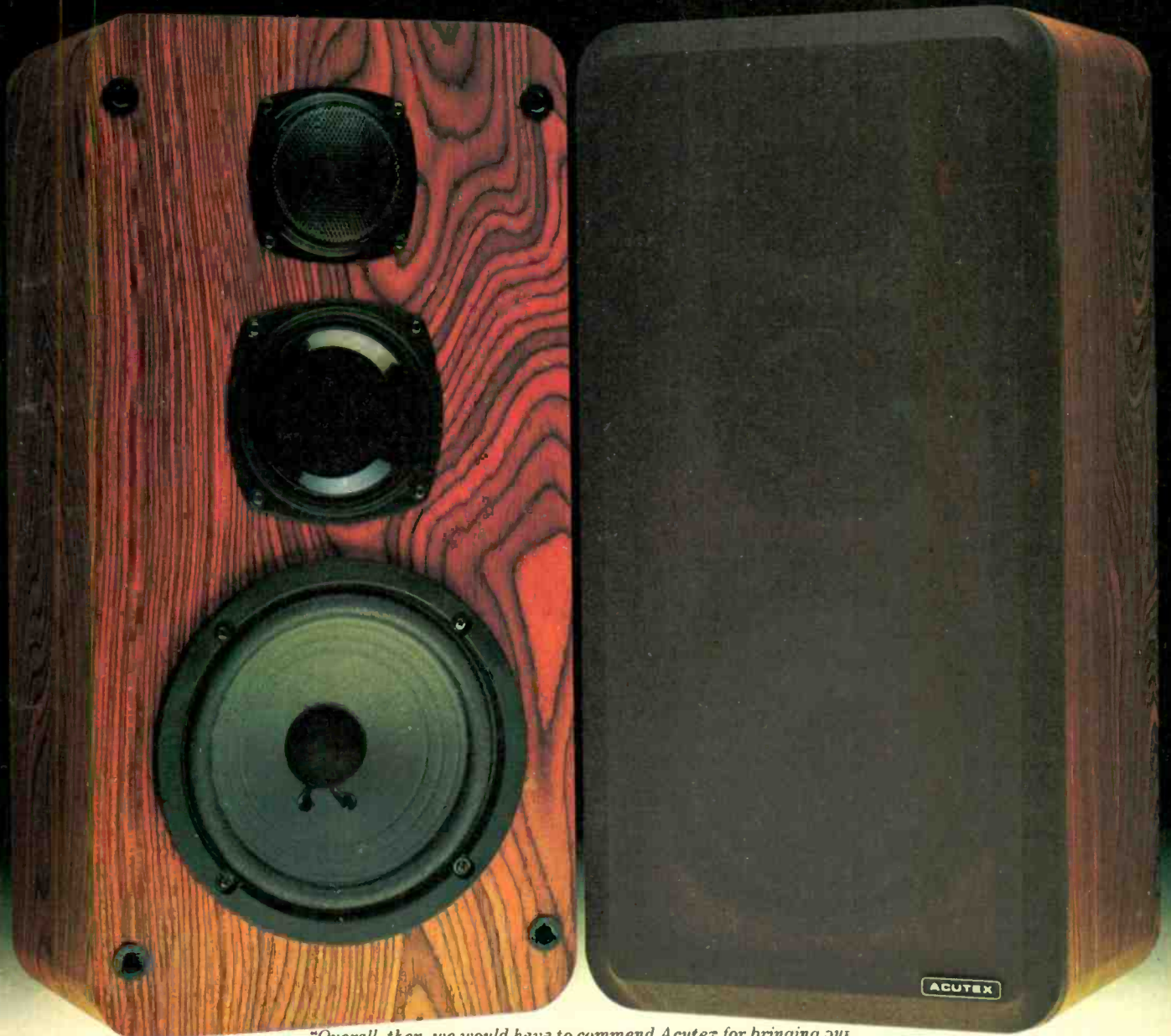
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L	1	V	2	U	3	H	4	A	5		W	6	O	7	O	8		I	9		ZZ	10	D	11	Y	12	S	13		
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		J	28	B	29	W	30	E	31	D	32	A	33		L	34	H	35	S	36	W	37	D	38	O	39	M	40	T	41
N	42			I	43	H	44		ZZ	45	P	46	L	47		V	48	A	49	K	50	D	51	M	52	B	53	W	54	
S	55	O	56	H	57			R	58	ZZ	59	L	60		A	61	F	62	W	63	J	64	Q	65	Y	66		O	67	
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D	108	W	109	L	110	U	111		B	112	ZZ	113	A	114	D	115		S	116	N	117	D	118		T	119	L	120		
W	121	B	122	S	123	U	124	R	125	A	126	H	127	K	128	V	129	O	130	ZZ	131		W	132	F	133	U	134	N	135
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H	176	ZZ	177	P	178	T	179	Y	180	X	181	O	182		A	183	D	184	L	185	Z	186		P	187	W	188	B	189	
		V	190	I	191	W	192	B	193	L	194	Q	195	F	196	C	197	O	198	Y	199		U	200	A	201	H	202	L	203
R	204	O	205		S	206	I	207		W	208	B	209	Q	210	H	211	G	212	E	213		F	214	U	215	H	216		
		S	217	R	218	J	219	T	220	W	221		O	222	N	223	H	224	M	225	W	226		H	227	L	228	O	229	
J	230	Z	231																											

**DIRECTIONS**

To solve these puzzles—and they aren't as tough as they first seem—supply as many of the Output words as you can in the numbered dashes following the input. Unless otherwise specified in the input, the Output consists of one English word. "Comp" means compound, or hyphenated, word.

Transfer each letter to the square in the diagram that bears the corresponding number. After only a few correct guesses you should begin to see words and phrases emerging in the diagram, which when filled in will contain a quotation related to music recordings or audio.

The words in the quotation are separated by darkened squares and do not necessarily end at the end of a row.

Try to guess at these words and transfer each newly decoded letter back to its appropriate dash in the Output. This will supply you with further clues.

A final clue: The source of the quotation—the author and his work—will be spelled out by the first letters in Output, reading down.

The answer to HiFi-Croctic No. 43 will appear in next month's issue of HIGH FIDELITY.

**INPUT**

- A. The March King (full name)
- B. See Word O. (2 wds.)
- C. "For \_\_\_\_\_ a jolly \_\_\_\_\_" (contr.)
- D. After *The*, Stravinsky opera
- E. With Word Y, Brazilian soprano (b. 1902); *Bohème* on *Odyssey*
- F. Bring into harmony
- G. Gradually slowing (lt. abbr.)
- H. Popular group: "Mirror Image" on Columbia (4 wds.)
- I. Type of counterpoint with the same thematic material
- J. Repeat from memory
- K. Wieslaw \_\_\_\_\_, tenor; Mozart *Requiem* on DG
- L. Ravel opera (3 Fr. wds.)
- M. German song
- N. See Word U. (2 wds.)

**OUTPUT**

- 76 156 173 114 126 33 139 61
- 69 183 88 18 201 5 49
- 193 209 122 29 105 53 112 136
- 14 167 189
- 147 103 197
- 98 51 32 11 89 38 158 115
- 108 184 118
- 81 161 213 31
- 62 153 214 196 96 133
- 26 212 168
- 102 202 176 68 224 57 93 216
- 127 21 211 44 4 227 141
- 151 35 75
- 143 207 43 28 9 154 191 83
- 97
- 230 219 134 64 172 23
- 82 50 22 162 145 128
- 203 228 60 185 194 27 150 47
- 34 137 17 120 100 1 110
- 52 40 225 104
- 135 223 117 90 165 42 78

**INPUT**

- O. With Word B, English-American folksong with cumulative text (3 wds.)
- P. Barbara \_\_\_\_\_, soprano; *Three-Cornered Hat* on Everest
- Q. Dutch conductor (full name)
- R. Bach's clavier (comp.)
- S. Trilogy of Puccini operas (2 lt. wds.)
- T. French minnesinger
- U. With Word N, Offenbach opera
- V. The \_\_\_\_\_, Russian composers
- W. Lecocq operetta (3 wds.)
- X. Hermann \_\_\_\_\_, baritone; *Fliegende Holländer* on Richmond
- Y. See Word E.
- Z. One of six piano pieces by Debussy (Fr.)
- ZZ. Cecile \_\_\_\_\_, composer (1857-1944); *Concertino for Flute on Coronet*

**OUTPUT**

- 67 94 229 39 73 56 198 140
- 130 8 24 171 182
- 155 178 187 166 85 46
- 65 144 195 205 222 160 7 106
- 210 72
- 146 174 70 19 58 95 125 218
- 204 152 84 107
- 36 170 116 13 206 138 79 55
- 123 217
- 25 179 159 119 41 71 220 87
- 124 149 200 215 3 157 111
- 48 129 190 2
- 109 188 226 208 37 148 121 16
- 91 30 99 175 63 221 77
- 192 6 54 164 132
- 181 86 20 169
- 66 12 199 74 180
- 15 101 142 186 231
- 10 59 113 163 45 177 80 131
- 92

# Superb\* Awesome\*\* Outrageous\*\*\*

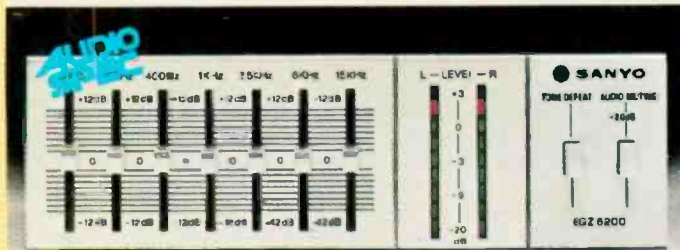
Great car stereo sound used to be an all-or-nothing affair. Either you blew a bundle, or you settled for second best. Now meet the Sanyo Expandables. Car components engineered to let you work your way up from "superb" to "outrageous." In steps that your budget can handle.



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## \*\*\*Step 3: "Outrageous."

If nothing less than the ultimate will do, plug in a Sanyo AUDIO/SPEC graphic equalizer between your radio/tape player and the power amp. With 7 bands of precise control, you can customize the sound to fit your taste and your car's acoustics. In seconds, you can actually "re-engineer" any recording to bring out any vocal or instrumental range. Hear it, and you'll be hooked!

The Sanyo Expandables are at better auto sound dealers now. Check out the features and the phenomenal sound, and start planning your Expandable system.

Then watch it grow on you.

The Sanyo Expandables: great sound that grows on you.



Sanyo Electric Inc., 1200 W. Artesia Blvd., Compton, CA 90220

Write for your free copy of our information-packed booklet, "How to buy car stereo (without getting taken for a ride)"

# BEYOND DC

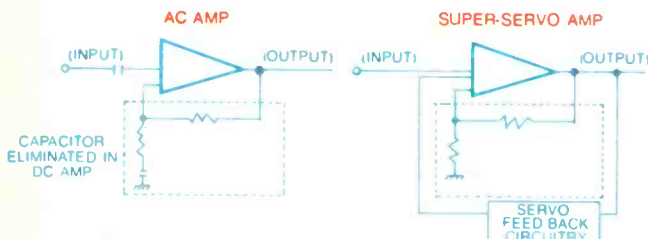


Another  
Step Closer  
to Perfection.

## ONKYO'S EXCLUSIVE SUPER SERVO INTEGRATED AMPLIFIERS.

Just when you think audio technology's reached its peak, along comes Onkyo, making it even better. Our latest is an improvement on the superb performance of DC amplifiers.

Super-Servo circuitry—another Onkyo exclusive—uses the extraordinary characteristics of operational amplifiers in a unique, negative feedback loop. Thus you get the benefits, particularly at the low (2Hz and below) frequencies not offered by other DC amps.



Going to DC amps was not the end. For Onkyo, it was the beginning.

While DC amplifiers increased bandwidth for better high frequency performance, spectrum analysis in Onkyo's labs found that very low frequency components below 2Hz, resulted from interactions with the amplifier's power supply. True, at 2Hz or less, you had to see it rather than hear it, but we felt that any unwanted component should be eliminated.

When we did, the result was three-dimensional imaging such as you've never heard. Sound you won't hear in conventional amplifiers. Or in other DC amplifiers. Only in Onkyo's Super-Servo amplifiers.

You have a choice of three, Super-Servo Integrated Amps:

**A-7040**-50 watts per channel, minimum RMS at 8 ohms, both channels driven from 20-20,000Hz with no more than 0.026% THD.

**A-7070**-70 watts per channel, minimum RMS at 8 ohms, both channels driven from 20-20,000Hz with no more than 0.02% THD.

**A-7090**-110 watts per channel, minimum RMS at 8 ohms, both channels driven from 20-20,000Hz with no more than 0.018% THD.

Talking about power is only part of it. Onkyo's Peak Power Indicator is an array of LED's which light up according to power output per channel, from the very bottom to, and over the top... calibrated in watts at 8 ohms.

Of course you get everything else you'd expect from Onkyo. Multiple inputs and outputs. Total protective circuitry for speakers and amplifier. Human engineered control placement with sound-shaping noise and filters. An immense, cool-running power supply.

Hear the brilliant audio quality of Super-Servo performance at your Onkyo dealer, or write for additional information. Super-Servo... another example of how Onkyo stays a step ahead of state-of-the-art.

Artistry in Sound

# ONKYO

**Eastern Office:** 42-07 20th Avenue, Long Island City, NY 11105 (212) 728-2970

**Midwest Office:** 935 Sivert Drive, Wood Dale, IL 60191 (312) 595-2970

**West Coast Distribution Center:** Damark Industries, Inc. 20600 Nordhoff Street, Chatsworth, CA (213) 998-6501

**Canada:** Sole Distributor, Tri-Tel Industries, Ltd., Ontario, Canada

# Video Topics

**Onward!** The latest round of "big news" in home video, as displayed at last January's trade show in Las Vegas, was not so much a question of new directions as of following up on old ones: portable versions of current video tape formats, smaller color cameras, more big-screen hardware, and so on. If that sounds like an anticlimax, the video industry itself is largely to blame. It has developed the bad habit of calling the world in to view its latest wonders long before they're ready for market; when the "real thing" finally comes along (which, for the home market, is when the real news is made), jaded news gatherers like ourselves find it difficult to stifle our yawns.

Among the least yawn-provoking lines, Quasar has added a program-mable home VHS deck (VH-5100), a 19-pound battery-portable VHS system (VH-5200), a color camera (VK-700, or VK-710 with zoom lens and electronic viewfinder), and a film-to-tape copying accessory (KT-502), adding up to a do-everything home video ensemble (when combined with a PR-6800 projection system or conventional receiver) that allows you to tape your vacation while the VH-5100 is recording your favorite shows at home, then assemble your own travel show from tape, movies, slides, commentary, and background music, dubbing over the soundtrack as necessary to make the show work. To our boggled mind, the question is: Which will you run out of first—ideas or money?

Even more elaborate, though less squarely aimed at the consumer, are some of the new goodies from Matsushita/Panasonic. There is, for example, the Picture Paper—a television set that receives additional information via a signal multiplexed onto the sound channel and delivers it in printed form (with color) on a sheet of paper through a slot in the front of the ensemble, rather like a large Polaroid picture emerging from the front of its newer cameras. Sheet size is 8.3 by 11.7 inches. That suggests European letter size (the U.S. standard is 8½ by 11), which may be very much to the point since Europe has been much quicker than the U.S. in adopting ancillary services on their TV carriers. In any event, the Picture Paper exists only as an operating prototype; introduction here—or anywhere—could be years away, according to the company.

Matsushita also offers an "electronic coloring book" (the sort of pen-controlled graphics that, via computers, have long been used in high-technology industries) and a system for making color slides from any sort of art—even black and white. Interesting, but hardly

one-in-every-living-room fare. The company's Ghost Eliminator, however, may prove to be another matter for those who don't rely on a cable service. It consists of an automatic antenna system that seeks out minimum-multipath orientation for the channel to which the receiver is tuned and an electronic unit that generates reciprocals of interfering signals to cancel them before they can degrade picture quality. Again, prices and marketing plans are not yet determined.

Sony, which is not new to large-screen TV, has announced two products: the \$3,500 KP-5000, with a 50-inch (diagonal) screen, and the \$4,000 KP-7200, with a 6-foot screen. Expected back in the field soon is Henry Kloss, founder of Advent and the moving force behind its original Videobeam projection system. He claims that the brightness (and/or size) and price of his new design, using what he calls a Novatron tube, will astonish us all.

He sees the video disc market as creating broad opportunities for the large-screen setups, and video discs do seem a major thrust. MCA's are said to be selling even to customers who haven't been able to buy Philips players for them yet, and Pioneer (working with MCA) has announced production of players to help fill the void. While the

MCA/Philips system is the only one actually being marketed, RCA, JVC, and Matsushita, in particular, continue to extol the competing virtues of their own. The Japanese video disc companies, in general, say they want a world disc standard in advance of marketing; perhaps the availability (however limited) of the Philips and Pioneer players will, by themselves, create that standard.

In the meantime, tape still rules the home-video-storage roost. Maxell is the latest company to enter the blank-tape market, with T-60 and T-120 cassettes for VHS. Fuji, which was involved in video tape long before it entered the audio field (and, of course, began as a film company), has added the Beta format to the VHS and U-Matic tapes it had been offering. Memorex's production of tapes for home recorders is expected to begin with VHS and include Beta before the end of the year.

**Corrucoopia.** We were astonished, frankly, when we looked into a publication called *The Videolog*. We had known that there are lots and lots of recorded video cassettes to be bought, but still we were floored by the scope of the volume, devoted to "Programs for Business and Industry." The publisher (Essette Video, Inc., whose order department can be reached at P.O. Box 978, Edison, N.J. 08817) offers two other *Videologs*: one of general interest and entertainment, one devoted to the health sciences. The business volume runs over 200 pages and details something in the neighborhood of 3,000 programs with all sorts of useful cross-references and specifics.

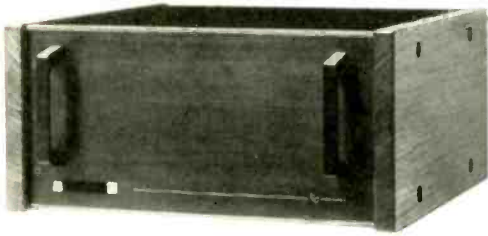
Of course the U-Matic cartridge was well established in industry and education before the more affordable Beta and VHS formats ever appeared, so the catalog can't be taken as an Index of the current home boom, but it is impressive. The general-interest volume costs \$20, the other two \$35 apiece.

**Capitulation?** Rumors, late last year, that Sony would begin producing cassettes for VHS decks had turned into unfounded allegations that it was planning to scrap the Beta system before Sony jumped in to stop the speculation. Though VHS has achieved a rousing success, the Beta format continues to sell. Sony is said to have produced a total of 1 million cassettes for it in 1978. About three-quarters of that total were made in Japan; the Sony plant in Alabama produces the rest. Projected total production for 1979 is about 1½ million units; only part of the increase is expected to result from plans to produce the VHS format.

Quasar film-to-tape copier



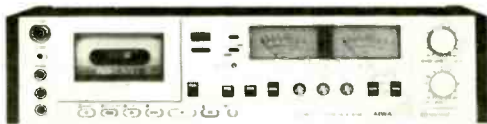
# Equipment in the News



## "Best of both worlds" in Infinity amp

The Infinity Hybrid Class A power amplifier combines vacuum tubes in the input stage with transistors in the output stage and is rated to produce 150 watts (21 $\frac{3}{4}$  dBW) per channel into an 8-ohm load with no more than 0.2% total harmonic distortion. The amp's front panel is bare except for a small readout panel that announces triggering of protection circuitry, DC offset, overheat, or standby. The Hybrid power amp is priced at \$4,050.

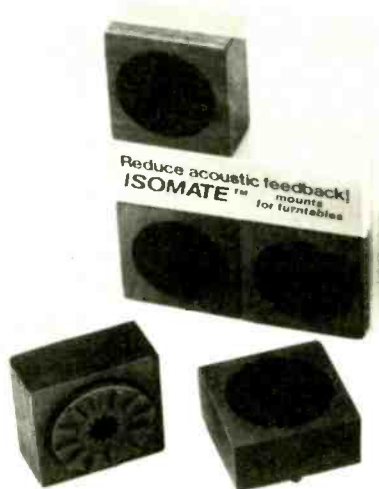
CIRCLE 137 ON PAGE 105



## Aiwa deck handles metal tape

Aiwa recently introduced its metal-compatible tape deck, the AD-6700U, a front-loader that features cue/review operation, multicolor peak LEDs, and a meter that shows remaining tape time. Provided with a full-function wireless remote control, it has a rated frequency response—with metal-particle tape—of 25 Hz to 13 kHz, +2, -3 dB at 0 VU; signal-to-noise ratio (again with metal tape) is rated at 67 dB. The AD-6700U sells for \$750.

CIRCLE 138 ON PAGE 105



## Accessory for bad vibes

Isomate turntable mounts from Enid Corporation are designed to reduce feedback by providing an extra stage of isolation. Placed under each turntable foot, the walnut blocks—which contain elastomeric suspensions—are said to allow an extra 10 dB of acoustic power without distortion. A set of the mounts costs \$12.95.

CIRCLE 139 ON PAGE 105



## SAE's parametric equalizer for home use

The SAE Model 180 stereo equalizer offers complete EQ control in each channel for high (1.2 to 15 kHz) and low (40 Hz to 1.2 kHz) frequencies, with a 32-dB range and selectable bandwidths. Each bandwidth control is variable from  $\frac{1}{3}$  to more than  $3\frac{1}{2}$  octaves. Also included are separate line attenuators for each channel and for switching the equalization to affect either the recording input or the playback output of a tape deck. Price of the Model 180 is \$250.

CIRCLE 140 ON PAGE 105

(more)



# The standard bearers.



## The high bias standard.

In the past few years, these fine deck manufacturers have helped to push the cassette medium ever closer to the ultimate boundaries of high fidelity. Today, their best decks can produce results that are virtually indistinguishable from those of the best reel-to-reel machines.

Through all of their technical breakthroughs, they've had one thing in common. They all use TDK SA as their reference tape for the high bias position. These manufacturers wanted a tape that could extract every last drop of performance from their decks and they chose SA.



And to make sure that kind of performance is duplicated by each and every deck that comes off the assembly line, these manufacturers use SA to align their decks before they leave the factory.

Which makes SA the logical choice for home use; the best way to be sure you get all the sound you've paid for.

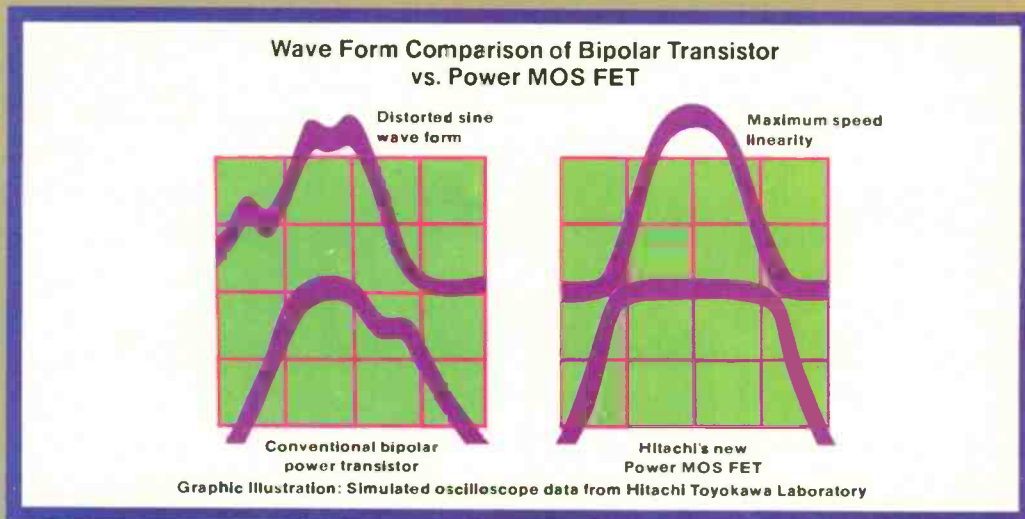
But sound isn't the only reason SA is the high bias standard. Its super-precision mechanism is the most advanced and reliable TDK has ever made—and we've been backing our cassettes with a full lifetime warranty\* longer than anyone else in hi fi—more than 10 years.

So if you would like to raise your own recording standards, simply switch to the tape that's become a recording legend—TDK SA. TDK Electronics Corp., Garden City, NY 11530.

**TDK**  
The machine for your machine.

\*In the unlikely event that any TDK cassette ever fails to perform due to a defect in materials or workmanship, simply return it to your local dealer or to TDK for a free replacement.

# The world's fastest power amplifier



## Hitachi Power MOS FET

Hitachi's HMA-6500 Stereo Power Amplifier with the incredible Power MOS FET offers ultra-high switching speed to dramatically reduce output and frequency distortion. At 50 watts output from 20 Hz to 20 kHz, there's no more than 0.02% total harmonic distortion. And the

HMA-6500 has such wide linearity that it refuses to distort even when confronted with the most intense dynamic peaks. Frequency response is ruler flat from DC to 100 kHz, with no crossover distortion.

Add the performance-matched HCA-6500 Stereo Control Amplifier and the FT-8000 Digital Synthesizer Tuner. Both are sleek and stylish performers. The HCA-6500 gives you total control without adding any audible noise or distortion. The FT-8000 is nothing short of an electronic miracle, with digital frequency readout, all-electronic front end, clock function and six station memory.

The HMA-6500, HCA-6500 and FT-8000 – the fastest and the finest from Hitachi.



 **HITACHI**  
The new leader

Audio Component Division, Hitachi Sales Corp. of America, 401 West Artesia Boulevard, Compton, CA 90220, (213) 537-8383, Extension 228

## Bang & Olufsen's sleek new deck

B&O's Beocord 5000 cassette deck loads from the top and has no dials or buttons: Functions are activated by keyboard-style touchplates. The combination record/playback head is demagnetized automatically. Among other electronic features of the Beocord are fade-in and fade-out functions. Finished in rosewood and polished steel with a smoked-acrylic lid, the 5000 costs \$595.

CIRCLE 141 ON PAGE 105



## Berning preamp from Precedent Audio

The Berning TF-10 preamplifier introduced by Precedent Audio is a rack-mount model that features passive phono equalization and remote-control muting of line outputs. Also incorporated in the TF-10 are three phono inputs, a calibrated high-level gain switch, and independent monitoring of all inputs. Rated frequency response is 10 Hz to 100 kHz, +0, -1 dB; phono equalization is said to be better than  $\pm 0.025$  dB from 20 Hz to 20 kHz. The Berning TF-10 preamplifier costs \$1,395.

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## Spectra Sound's graphic equalizer

A two-channel equalizer with ten octave bands per channel, the Model 1000B offers 10 dB boost or cut per octave from 31 Hz to 16 kHz and independent level controls for each channel. One of Spectra Sound's Professional Series, the rack-mounting equalizer claims very low distortion (IM and THD less than 0.008%) and noise (-100 dBm). The version with professional balanced connections sells for \$595, that with unbalanced connections for \$545.

CIRCLE 143 ON PAGE 105



## Hohner introduces the String Performer

Hohner's String Performer synthesizer offers a variety of effects and capabilities in addition to strings. The 61-note split keyboard can produce piano and clavichord voices as well as violin, viola, and cello in its polyphonic configuration, while the solo voices include brass, clarinet, and "outerspace." Separate sliders at the left of the keyboard adjust each voice independently. An octave transposer is built into the unit. The String Performer weighs 44 pounds, comes with a detachable music rack and hinged lid, and costs \$1,750.

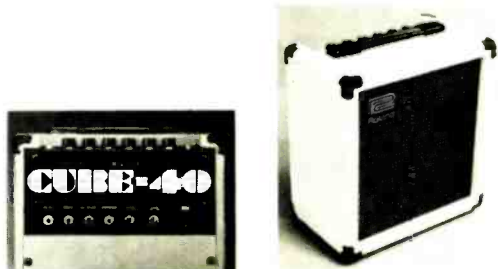
CIRCLE 145 ON PAGE 105



## Roland introduces compact stage amp

Picking up on the growing popularity of smaller amps, Roland is marketing the Cube-40, a full-range system that uses a 10-inch speaker and includes three separate tone controls, input and master volume controls, and reverb level control. It has a headphone jack for private listening and practice, PREAMP-OUT and POWER-AMP-IN jacks, and another for an external reverb footswitch. The Cube-40's list price is \$330.

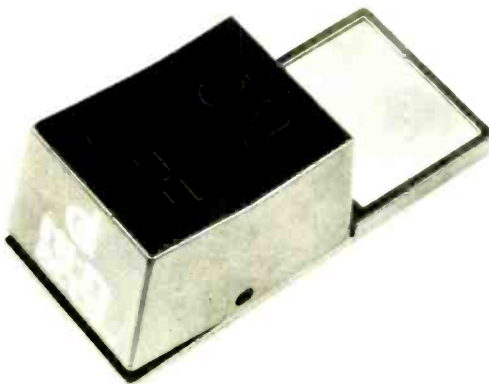
CIRCLE 150 ON PAGE 105



## Discwasher markets new accessories

The Hi-Fi Seer is a flashlight-and-mirror system that enables users to examine the back panels and other hard-to-see aspects of equipment without removing it from its shelf or rack. The device illuminates in three directions, measures just 2½ by 1 by 1 inches, and costs \$7.00. Other accessories from Discwasher include the tiered DiscKeeper record rack (\$65) and DC-1 pad cleaner, now available with DiscKits or separately for 69 cents.

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(more)



# Power!

## That's the Jensen Car Stereo Triax® II. That's the thrill of being there.

Power is right! 100 watts! Now, all the energy and intensity that went into the original performance comes through the Jensen Triax II 3-way speaker.

This incredible 100 watt capability gives the Triax II an unparalleled clarity of sound throughout the entire spectrum.

What gives the Triax II its great power handling and sound reproduction? For starters, the piezoelectric solid state tweeter with low mass and incredible power handling capabilities. It starts reproducing crystal clear high frequency signals at 6,000 Hz... and keeps going well past the range of human audibility.

The 6" x 9" woofer of the Triax II boasts a new large diameter barium ferrite 20 oz. magnet. Which means better heat dissipation and more efficiency for clearer, truer sound at higher listening levels.

A new high power 1½" voice coil on the Triax II translates into less distortion and the ability to achieve higher sound pressure levels.

The midrange unit of this remarkable speaker produces smoother sound with better transient response, less distortion and higher power handling... thanks to its large 2.3 magnet structure.

And the Triax II is fully compatible with the advanced bi-amplified power sources for outstanding clarity and separation.

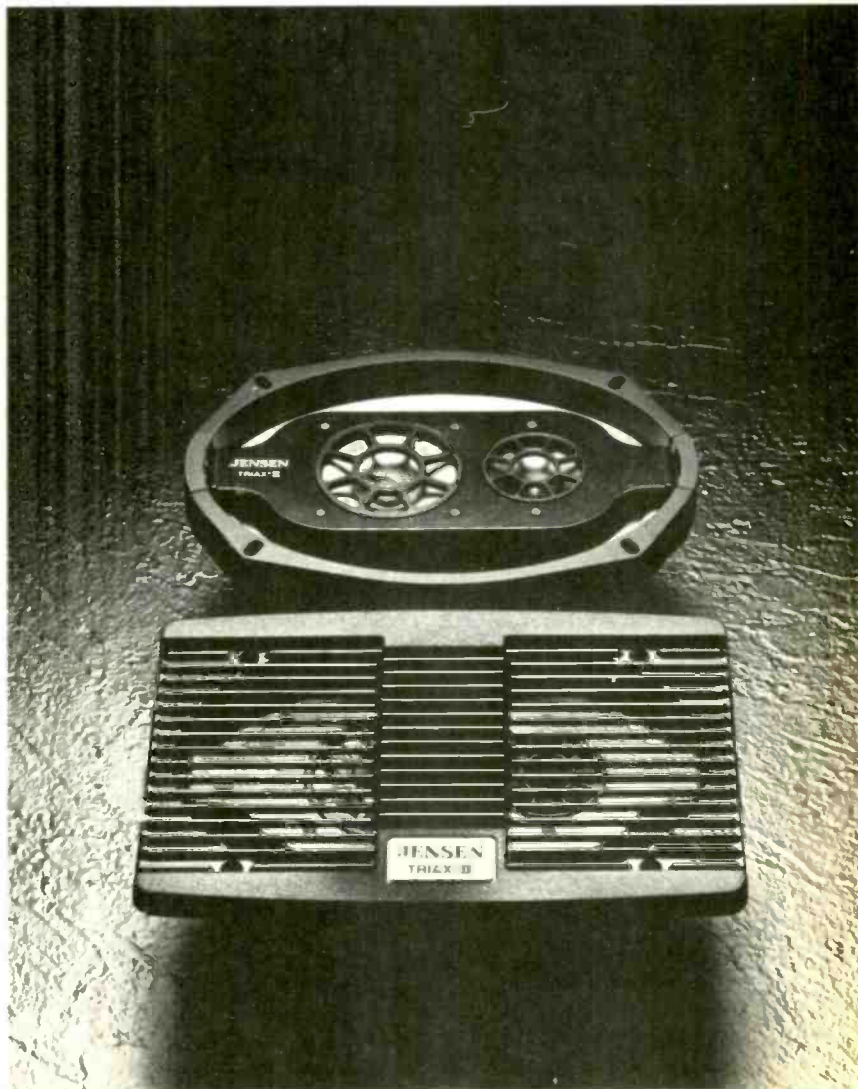
So go to the concert. Hear the Jensen Triax II. That's the thrill of being there.

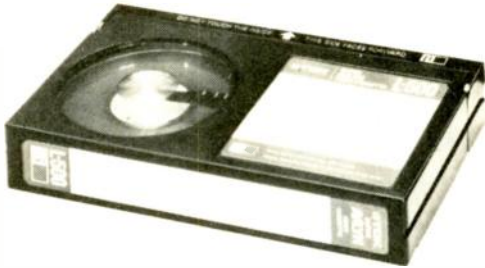
# JENSEN

The thrill of being there.

For more information, write Jensen Sound Laboratories,  
4136 N. United Parkway, Schiller Park, Illinois 60176.

® "Triaxial" and "Triax" are registered trademarks identifying the patented 3-way speaker systems of Jensen Sound Laboratories. (U.S. patent #4,122,315).





### SA Betamax tape new from TDK

TDK is marketing Super Avilyn Betamax-format video cassettes, using the same magnetic-particle technology as its SA audio tape and VHS cassettes. They are available in 60/30-minute (L-250) and 120/60-minute (L-500) lengths. L-250 is priced at \$14.95; L-500 costs \$19.95.

CIRCLE 144 ON PAGE 105



### A first: An analyzer/equalizer

The Spectrum Analyzer Equalizer from Audio Control aids the user in room-acoustic analysis, tape-recorder bias and/or EQ adjustment, and speaker "tuning." The unit has a ten-band LED display and a pink-noise generator. Pushbuttons control display changes, meter range, and mode (sound pressure level or real-time analyzer). A subsonic Tchebychev filter of 18 dB per octave is built into the equalizer section, which features center-detent slide pots in the ten octave bands from 32 Hz to 15.5 kHz. The Spectrum Analyzer Equalizer costs \$549. An Octave Equalizer, without the analyzer, is available for \$229.

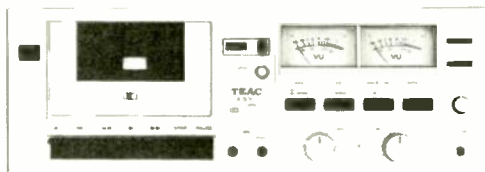
CIRCLE 149 ON PAGE 105



### Step up with Audio Interface transformer

The CST-80 stepup transformer from Audio Interface brings the output of a moving-coil cartridge up to a suitable voltage for a standard phono preamp input. The transformer comes in a 3-ohm version for low-impedance cartridges and a 40-ohm version for pickups of higher impedance. Rated frequency response of the 40-ohm model is a 20 Hz to 95 kHz, +0, -1 dB. Price of the CST-80 is \$300.

CIRCLE 146 ON PAGE 105



### Three-head cassette deck from Teac

Teac's A-300 cassette deck features a single-capstan transport and a mechanical tension control system said to ensure better tape-to-head contact and speed precision. The front panel has mike/line mixing, memory rewind, two-position bias and equalization selectors and a removable cassette door for ready access to heads for cleaning and demagnetizing. The A-300 costs \$429.

CIRCLE 147 ON PAGE 105



### More than before from Shure

Shure Brothers has introduced the SM-14 communications system consisting of a head-worn dynamic microphone with two earpieces, each of which can be plugged into a different source. Two communications channels—program material plus stage directions, for example—thus can be monitored at once, or one system can simply serve as a backup for the other. The mike's low impedance makes long runs of cable possible, and its mounting permits a wide variety of working positions. The SM-14 sells for \$135.

CIRCLE 148 ON PAGE 105

Never has one speaker system incorporated so many aspects of the state of the art.

## The Infinity Reference Standard 4.5



This is a system of breathtaking clarity and detail, yet capable of the awesome punch and power demanded by the finest contemporary digital and direct-to-disc recordings.

The Reference Standard 4.5 frees the intimate warmth of the human voice, the robust sheen of the strings, the fiery attack of the brass, the stab and snap of the bass. The speakers seem to disappear, revealing a concert stage breathing life, delicacy and fury. You hear the musicians, not the speakers.

How does the 4.5 work its musical miracles? The profoundly accurate bass and midbass are partly the result of a remarkable new cone material, polypropylene. It has dramatically less mass, yet significantly greater internal damping than paper cones or other exotic materials. Our polypropylene piston, combined with our exclusive Infinity/Watkins dual-voice-coil woofer principle creates bass frequencies with the snap and definition of the finest dipoles, yet retains the ultra-low frequency response (flat to 23 Hz) that has made Infinity famous.

The transparent crystalline treble issues from our world-acclaimed EMIT™ tweeters in dipole array. Midrange warmth, smoothness and unprecedented definition are the progeny of our lustrous new dipole EMIM™ Electromagnetic Induction Midranges. Like the EMITs, they employ powerful magnets of rare-earth samarium cobalt and etched voice-coils on low-mass diaphragms.



A separate electronic crossover/equalization unit allows you control over variable source material and room anomalies, either in single or bi-amp mode.

A remarkable technological story. And like all great stories, this one ends where it began: with the music. Which is the real reason you should spend \$3000\* on the Infinity state-of-the-art Reference Standard 4.5.

 **Infinity**

We get you back to what it's all about. Music.

For the nearest dealer's name and address, phone toll-free 800-423-5244, or from California, 800-382-3372.

\*Suggested system retail price, optional with dealer.

© 1979 by Infinity Systems, Inc.



## INTRODUCING THE EMPIRE EDR.9 PHONO CARTRIDGE. IT SOUNDS AS GOOD ON A RECORD AS IT DOES ON PAPER.

It was inevitable . . .

With all the rapid developments being made in today's high fidelity technology, the tremendous advance in audible performance in Empire's new EDR.9 phono cartridge was bound to happen. And bound to come from Empire, as we have been designing and manufacturing the finest phono cartridges for over 18 years.

Until now, all phono cartridges were designed in the lab to achieve certain engineering characteristics and requirements. These lab characteristics and requirements took priority over actual listening tests because it was considered more important that the cartridges "measure right" or "test right"—so almost everyone was satisfied.

Empire's EDR.9 (for Extended Dynamic Response) has broken with this tradition, and is the first phono cartridge that not only meets the highest technological and design specifications—but also our

demanding listening tests—on an equal basis. In effect, it bridges the gap between the ideal blueprint and the actual sound.

The EDR.9 utilizes an L. A. C. (Large Area Contact) 0.9 stylus based upon—and named after—E. I. A. Standard RS-238B. This new design, resulting in a smaller radius and larger contact area, has a pressure index of 0.9, an improvement of almost six times the typical elliptical stylus and four times over the newest designs recently introduced by several other cartridge manufacturers. The result is that less pressure is applied to the vulnerable record groove, at the same time extending the bandwidth—including the important overtones and harmonic details.

In addition, Empire's exclusive, patented 3-Element Double Damped stylus assembly acts as an equalizer. This eliminates the high "Q" mechanical resonances typical of other stylus assemblies, producing a flatter response, and lessening wear and tear on the record groove.

We could go into more technical detail, describing pole rods that are laminated, rather than just one piece, so as to reduce losses in the magnetic structure, resulting in flatter high frequency response with less distortion. Or how the EDR.9 weighs one gram less than previous Empire phono cartridges, making it a perfect match for today's advanced low mass tonearms.

But more important, as the EDR.9 cartridge represents a new approach to cartridge design, we ask that you consider it in a slightly different way as well. Send for our free technical brochure on the EDR.9, and then visit your audio dealer and listen. Don't go by specs alone.

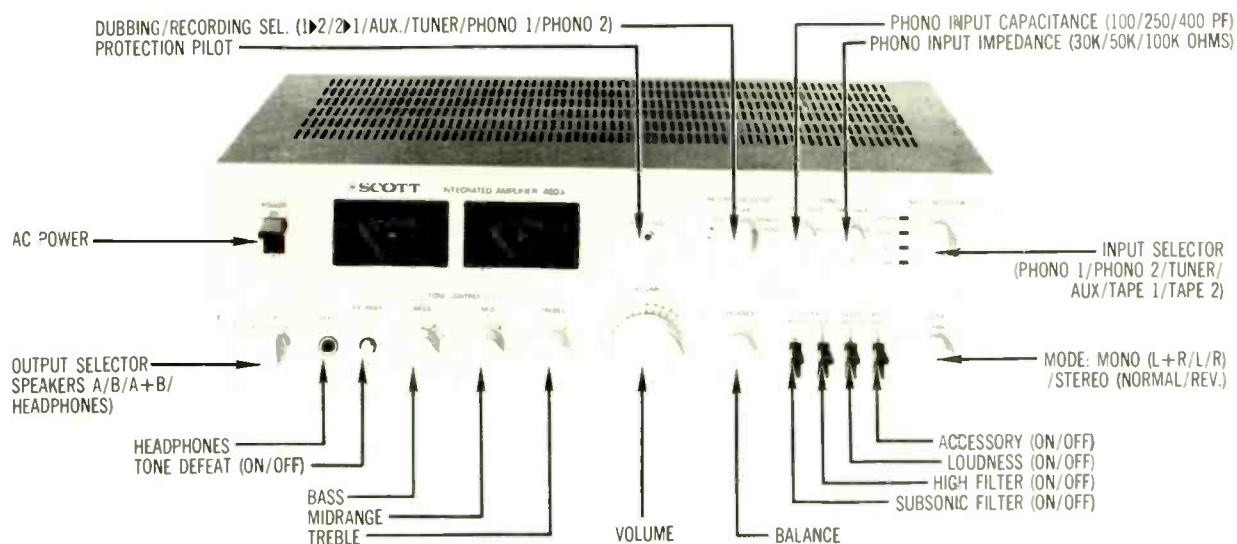
That's because the new Empire EDR.9 is the first phono cartridge that not only meets the highest technological and design specifications—but also our demanding listening tests.

Empire Scientific Corp. **EMPIRE**  
Garden City, N.Y. 11530



# New Equipment Reports

Preparation supervised by  
Robert Long and Edward J. Foster  
Laboratory data (unless otherwise noted)  
supplied by CBS Technology Center  
and Diversified Science Laboratories



## A Feature-Filled Integrated Amp

**Scott 480A** stereo integrated amplifier, in metal case. Dimensions: 17 by 5½ inches (front panel), 14¾ inches deep plus clearance for connections. Accessory AC outlets: 2 switched (220 watts total). Price: \$499.95. Warranty: "limited," three years parts and labor. Manufacturer: H. H. Scott, Inc., 20 Commerce Way, Woburn, Mass. 01801.

Standing at the top of Scott's integrated-amplifier line, the 480A is loaded with features—among them the RECORDING SELECTOR switch, which functions independent of the INPUT SELECTOR. The latter chooses the input fed to the amp section and speakers; the former determines which will be recorded on the two tape decks for which the 480A makes provision. Thus, not only can you dub in either direction between the two decks while listening to another source (a common provision), but you can record a disc while listening to an FM broadcast—an all too rare capability.

In addition to the complement of controls normally found on an integrated amp, the 480A offers an assortment of cartridge loads via two front-panel switches affecting the PHONO-1 input. A choice of two gain settings (differing by 6 dB) is available on the PHONO-2 circuitry via a back-panel slide switch. The amp's output-power rating—85 or 55 watts per channel—also is switchable on the back panel. (The latter is not, in our view, a very useful feature, but it's there.) An acces-

sory loop that can be engaged via the ACC switch provides patching for a noise-reduction system, equalizer, or the like without tying up a tape-monitor circuit. The MODE switch also offers more than the usual choice. Output power is monitored by two meters calibrated in both dBW and watts, into an 8-ohm load. The range extends from -30 to +20 dBW (0.001 to 100 watts).

With all its bells and whistles, the control panel of the 480A presents an imposing front to the world. The control arrangement is reasonably logical, but most users will require some period of adaptation before they feel at home with it. The

**REPORT POLICY** Equipment reports are based on laboratory measurements and controlled listening tests. Unless otherwise noted, test data and measurements are obtained by CBS Technology Center, a division of Columbia Broadcasting System, Inc., and Diversified Science Laboratories. The choice of equipment to be tested rests with the editors of HIGH FIDELITY. Samples normally are supplied on loan from the manufacturer. 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; HIGH FIDELITY, CBS Technology Center, and Diversified Science Laboratories assume no responsibility for product performance or quality.

## Scott Model 480A Integrated Amplifier

Manufacturer's rated power 19¼ dBW (85 watts)/ch.

Power output at clipping (both channels driven)  
L ch 20 dBW (102 watts)  
R ch 20 dBW (102 watts)

Dynamic headroom (at 1 kHz) 1½ dB

Frequency response +0, -¼ dB, 10 Hz to 20 kHz  
+0, -3 dB, <10 Hz to 75 kHz

RIAA equalization +¼, -½ dB, 20 Hz to 20 kHz

Input characteristics (re 0 dBW (1 watt); noise A-weighted)

	Sensitivity	S/N ratio
phono 1	0.27 mV	79 dB
phono 2—high	0.27 mV	79 dB
phono 2—low	0.54 mV	78 dB
tuner, aux	15.5 mV	84½ dB
tape 1, 2	15.5 mV	84½ dB

Phono overload (clipping point, at 1 kHz)  
phono 2—high; phono 1 335 mV  
phono 2—low 670 mV

Harmonic distortion (THD + N, 20 Hz to 20 kHz)  
at 19¼ dBW (85 watts) output <0.022%  
at 10 dBW (10 watts) output <0.024%  
at -¾ dBW (0.85 watt) output <0.021%

Intermodulation distortion  
into 8 ohms <0.025%, -10 to 20 dBW (0.1 to 98 W)  
into 4 ohms <0.075%, -6 to 20½ dBW (0.25 to 110 W)  
into 16 ohms <0.026%, -12¼ to 18 dBW (0.06 to 64 W)

Damping factor (at 50 Hz) >100

Subsonic filter -3 dB at 21 Hz; 12 dB/octave

High filter -3 dB at 8 kHz; 12 dB/octave

RECORDING SELECTOR and INPUT SELECTOR are of identical shape and have similar markings (though only the latter sports illuminating indicators for major sources). The knobs have rather sharp edges, and the rotary switches have very definite detents; taken together, these factors impart a rough feel to the controls.

**On the bench**, the 480A hurdles its specifications easily, with ¾ dB of power to spare on a continuous basis and 1½ dB dynamically, suggesting that this amp is capable of providing power bursts of almost 120 watts (20¾ dBW) when called upon to do so. Harmonic distortion (THD + N) is safely below an already tight (0.03%) spec in all measurements, and at 10 kHz and below it doesn't exceed even half the spec.

In every other regard the amplifier proves equally adept. Response is close to flat, and the phono-input circuitry defies overload with any cartridge we have tested—despite a signal-to-noise ratio that is better than average. Both the infrasonic and high-cut filters are pleasingly sharp and have well-chosen break points.

Our aforementioned cavils about the cosmetics aside, in fact, the Scott leaves little to be desired, as the test data suggest. We find that we confine our use of the tone controls to the first two positions on either side of center. Rarely would one find a tonal imbalance requiring more boost or cut; should the need arise, however, the reserve is there. The filters are particularly noteworthy in performance. The infrasonic filter can be left in the circuit at all times; it has no discernible effect on the music but serves as a safeguard against ultra-low-frequency disturbances. The high-cut filter does dull the transients while removing some high-frequency hiss, but it doesn't totally muffle the sound the way many high filters do.

The Scott 480A affords most of the control flexibility to be expected in separate preamps, with some to spare. Its amplifier performance is very good, and so is its price. Obviously, it's an integrated amp that, should you be shopping for one, commands serious consideration.

CIRCLE 132 ON PAGE 105

## The Hall-Effect Head Is Here

**Hitachi D-7500** stereo cassette deck in metal case. Dimensions: 17 by 6⅞ (front panel; 18¾ inches wide with supplied handles), 10 inches deep plus clearance for connections. Price: \$700; optional remote-control unit (RB-2000), \$50. Warranty: "limited," three years parts and labor (one year on head, DC motor, and belts). Manufacturer: Hitachi Corp., Japan; U.S. distributor: Hitachi Sales Corp. of America, 401 W. Artesia Blvd., Compton, Calif. 90220.

For several years, we have been teased with the prospect of the first cassette deck with a so-called Hall-effect playback head that introduces an elegant "directness" into signal recovery. Conventional playback heads respond to the rate at which the magnetic pattern on the tape changes—not to the magnetic flux strength itself. The sensitivity (or output) of such a head is directly proportional to frequency over much of the audio range, which is to say that the output signal level is very much smaller at low frequencies than it is in the mid-band, and the playback amplifier must be equalized to compensate for this peculiarity. Hence the gain is very much higher at low frequencies, increasing both the signal and the

noise. The boost increases as the frequency decreases, but only until the amplifier runs out of steam—then low-frequency response drops off. Many decks do not make it much below 50 Hz.

A Hall-effect head responds directly to the magnetic flux—essentially to DC without equalization so that, even with the tape stopped, it would produce an output proportional to the magnetic flux it "sees." Evidently the problems of producing such a playback head in the cassette format have been solved; in Hitachi's D-7500 it is combined with a separate conventional recording head in a single housing. The D-7500 is, therefore, a true three-head deck with off-tape monitoring.

The advantage of the Hall-effect head is immediately apparent in the record/play response curves. Response remains uniform to nearly 20 Hz. As with conventional playback heads, the new design is subject to "head bumps," and minor ones show up in the 60- and 120-Hz regions. These aside, the response at -20 dB is flat, typically within ±1 dB, from 25 Hz to 15 kHz on all three tapes we used in testing (Maxell UDXL-II ferricobalt "chrome," Sony ferrichrome, and Maxell UDXL-I ferric), with the "chrome" providing a bit more high-fre-

# tech talk:

0.04% WRMS (JIS C5521) wow and flutter. -70 db (DIN 45539 B) rumble.  $\pm 0.06\%$  speed deviation.

# explained.

Those are turntable specifications above. Measurements relating to motor noise caused by rotation of the platter, and sound distortion caused by speed deviation. In this particular case, the numbers indicate that wow, flutter and rumble are so minimal your ear can't hear it. And that's something you can prove to yourself—just by giving this MCS Series<sup>®</sup> Direct Drive Turntable a trial run.

The reason you won't hear any wow, flutter and rumble is simple. We've designed this fully automated, multi-play turntable with the most advanced features. A DC servo motor assures constant speed. Direct drive gives you extremely quiet operation, and

excellent signal to noise ratio—because the platter is actually part of the motor. All of which helps to eliminate distortion.

If it still seems complicated, just listen to the sound of MCS. It says more than all the tech talk in the world.

The MCS Series<sup>®</sup> 6700 Direct Drive Turntable with Shure<sup>®</sup> cartridge, \$219.95.

Full 3-Year Warranty on speakers. Full 3-Year Warranty on receivers, turntables, tape decks, tuners and amplifiers. If any MCS Series<sup>®</sup> component is defective in materials and workmanship during its warranty period, we will repair or replace it—just return it to JCPenney.

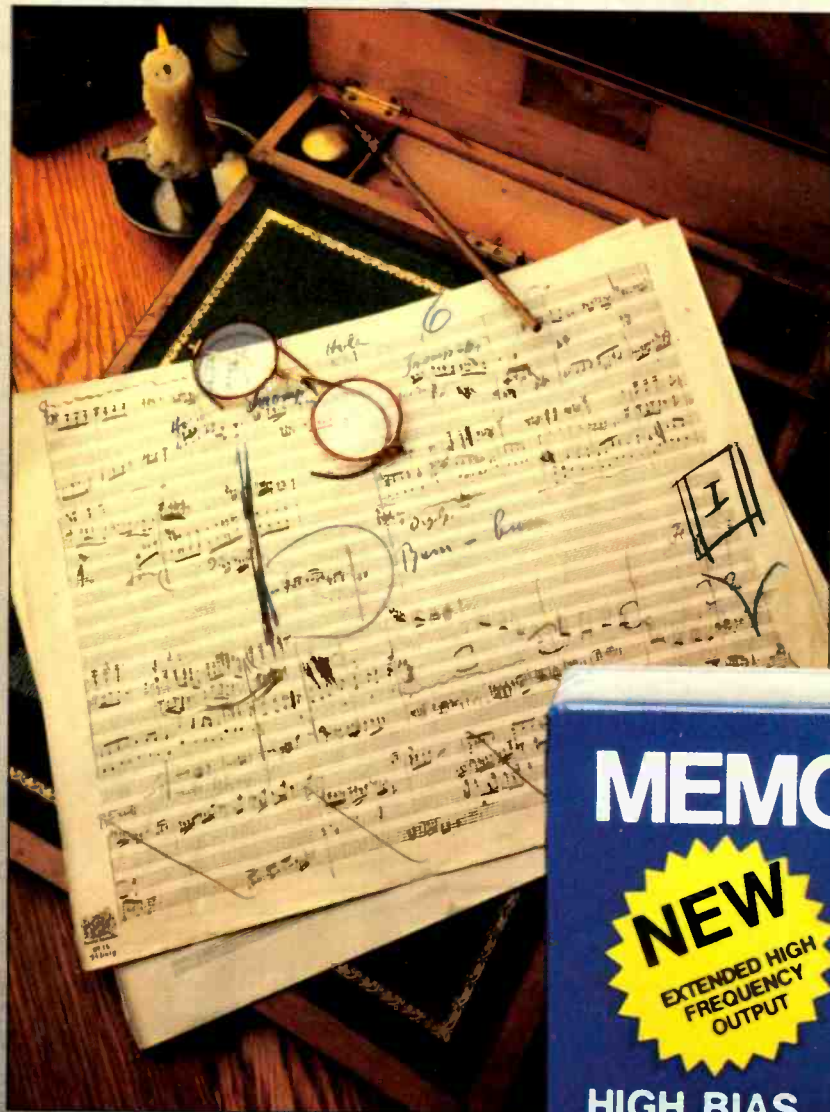


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IT MAKES EVERYTHING CLEAR.

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# WHICH NEW HIGH BIAS TAPE WINS WITH MAHLER'S FOURTH SYMPHONY?



Original manuscript sketch for the first movement of Gustav Mahler's Fourth Symphony. Courtesy of The Newberry Library, Chicago.

Choose eight measures of Mahler's Fourth that are really rich in the high frequencies. The type of passage that high bias tapes are designed for.

Record it on your favorite high bias cassette, using the Chrome/CrO<sub>2</sub> setting. Then again on new MEMOREX **HIGH BIAS**.

Now play back the tapes.

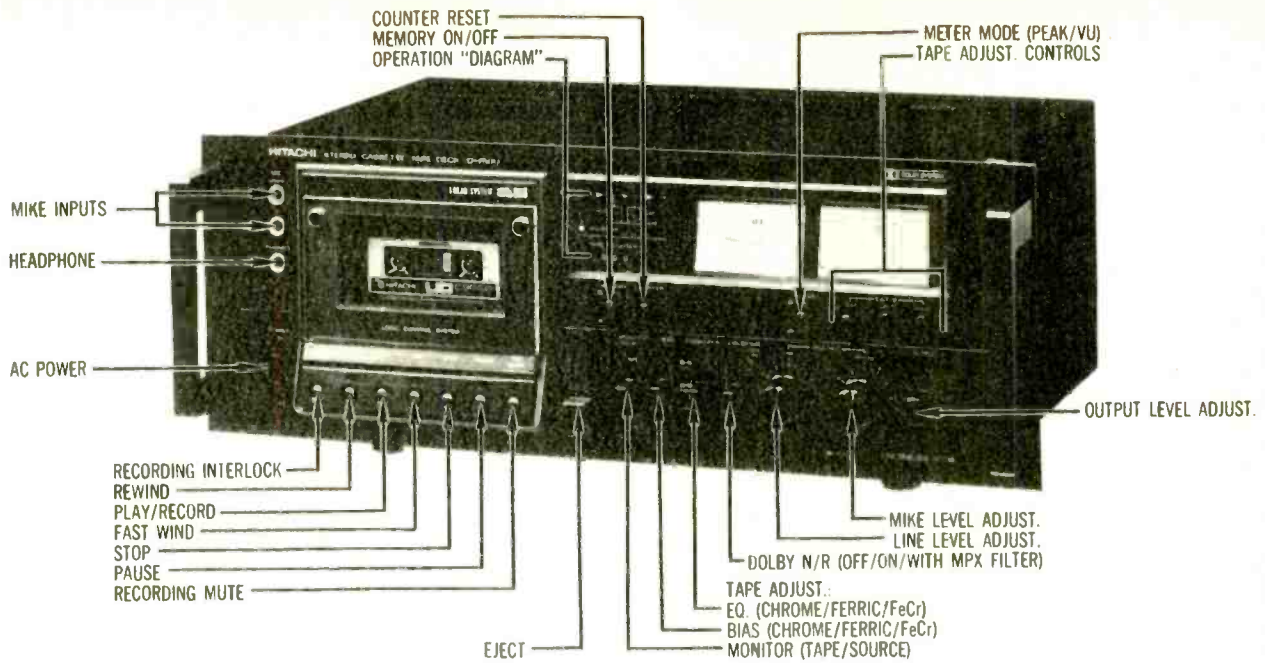
We're convinced you'll have a new favorite.

New MEMOREX **HIGH BIAS** is made with an exclusive ferrite crystal oxide formulation. No high bias tape delivers greater high frequency fidelity with less noise, plus truer response across the entire frequency range.

In short, you can't find a high bias cassette that gives you truer reproduction.

**MEMOREX**  
Recording Tape and Accessories.  
Is it live, or is it Memorex?



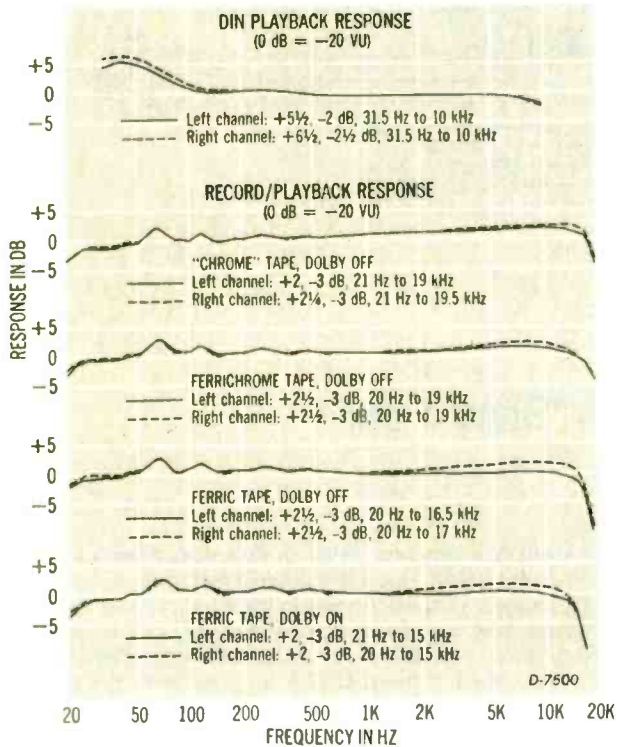


quency response than the other two. Response to the standard playback test tape is almost as good; once you allow for the difference in bass EQ between the Philips reference and the de facto playback standard now used, it amounts to +1¼, -2 dB on the left channel, +2¼, -2½ on the right.

The signal-to-noise ratio is adequate with the ferric tape (and undoubtedly better with the more exotic tape formulations using 70-microsecond playback equalization), and the Dolby circuitry does reduce the high-frequency noise by

the rated 10 dB. The D-7500 seems to have some propensity for hum pickup: In the lab, the 60-Hz component was 9 dB above the average low-frequency noise and the 120-Hz component 5 dB above it. But we did not find these hum components obvious in our listening tests.

When recording over a previous program, the slate wipes



### Hitachi D-7500 Cassette Deck

Speed accuracy	0.27% fast at 105 VAC exact at 120 VAC 0.23% slow at 127 VAC
Wow and flutter (ANSI)	playback: 0.045% record/play: 0.050%
Rewind time (C-60 cassette)	110 sec.
Fast-forward time (same cassette)	110 sec.
S/N ratio (re DIN 0 VU, Dolby off; CBS weighting)	playback L ch: 53¼ dB R ch: 54¼ dB record/play L ch: 49¼ dB R ch: 49¼ dB
Erase (333 Hz at normal level)	72 dB
Channel separation (at 333 Hz)	record left, play right: 29 dB record right, play left: 28 dB
Sensitivity (re DIN 0 VU)	line input L ch: 110 mV R ch: 113 mV mike input L ch: 0.50 mV R ch: 0.49 mV
Meter action (re DIN 0 VU)	VU mode L ch: 4¼ dB high R ch: 4¼ dB high peak mode L ch: 4¼ dB high R ch: 4¼ dB high
THD (at -10 VU)	<0.70%, 50 Hz to 5 kHz <0.28%, 50 Hz to 1 kHz
Maximum output (re DIN 0 VU)	L ch: 0.82 V R ch: 0.82 V

very clean: Erasure is an exceptional 72 dB. Numerically, channel separation is well below what we are used to seeing in cassette decks, but we seldom have access to program material that would make this "deficiency" restrictive. Sensitivity and output level are compatible with other gear. The meters produce essentially the same reading from a steady tone whether they are set for PEAK or VU, and they are calibrated with generous headroom. Even with music signals, we find relatively little difference in meter indication when comparing the PEAK and VU modes. We prefer PEAK (despite the manual's recommendation to the contrary) since with it the meters seem a trifle more responsive.

**Mechanical performance** meets our relatively high expectations. The D-7500's logic transport can be remotely controlled. In normal operation, commands are entered via a seven-button keyboard; green LEDs indicate rewind and fast-forward modes and red ones the pause and recording mute. The PAUSE acts more quickly than those on typical solenoid decks, though it does not produce the seamless "edits" that the best mechanical pause features afford.

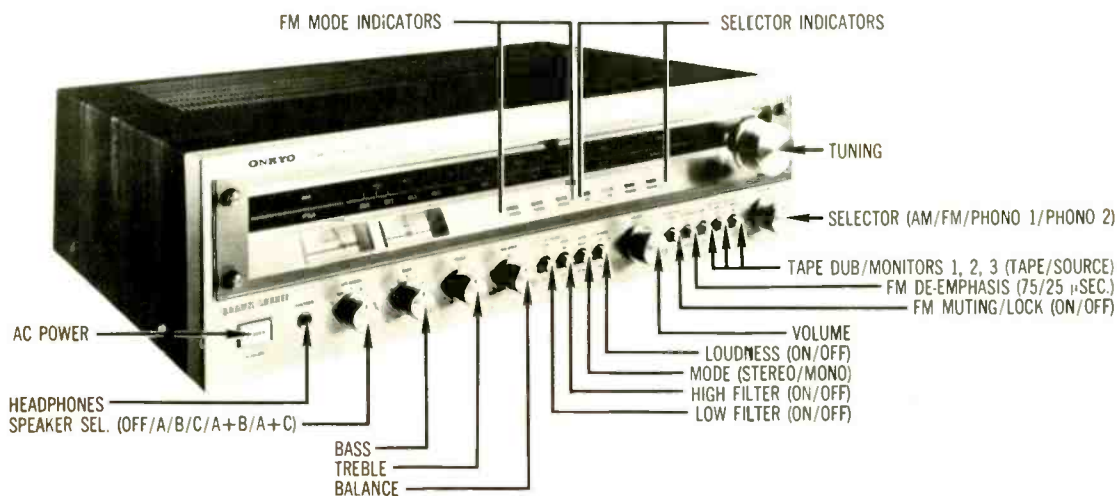
An illuminated diagram on the faceplate displays the signal "flow"—from input to record head to tape to play head to output in the tape-monitoring mode, or from input directly to output through a SOURCE arrow when this routing has been selected. With the monitor switch in TAPE, the play-head indicator blinks when the tape is being played and glows

steadily in PAUSE. If SOURCE is selected, that arrow blinks while the tape is running and remains illuminated when the tape stops. This visual diagram is especially welcome, because the owner's manual is poorly written.

For each of the tapes we used, we reset the Dolby calibration via the controls and test signal provided. We find the performance with Maxell UDXL-II clearly superior to that available with either UDXL-I or the ferrichrome. FeCr may offer a slightly lower noise floor but—when recorded at "normal" levels and with the Dolby circuit on—produces dull transients and a rather confined and roughened sound. At very low levels, the highs come back to life, but recording at these levels is problematic given the limited range of the Hitachi meters. Performance with UDXL-I is somewhat brighter than with ferrichrome, but again full high-frequency response is achieved only at fairly low recording levels where the noise floor intrudes. UDXL-II affords the best of both worlds. The recordings are quiet and retain the brilliance and sparkle of the original even when the meters occasionally hit the zero mark.

Those who appreciate advanced technology for its own sake are sure to regard the Hall-effect head as an intriguing concept, and, for now, the D-7500 is the only place to get it. It finds itself in an attractively flexible deck (thanks, in particular, to Hitachi's two-heads-in-one design) that—given the right choice of tape—will deliver record/play quality that is virtually indistinguishable from the original.

CIRCLE 131 ON PAGE 105



## A Receiver with a "Silky Feel"

**Onkyo TX-4500 Mk. II** stereo FM/AM receiver, in walnut-grain vinyl-clad metal case. Dimensions: 21¼ by 6 inches (front), 14 inches deep plus clearance for controls and connections. AC convenience outlets: 1 switched (100 watts max.), 2 unswitched (200 watts max. total). Price: \$479.95. Warranty: "limited," three years parts, two years labor. Manufacturer: Onkyo Corp., Japan; U.S. distributor: Onkyo U.S.A. Corp., 42-07 20th Ave., Long Island City, N.Y. 11105.

It is some time since we tested an Onkyo electronics component, and it seems that the company has upgraded its cosmetics, as well as its electronics, in the interim. From the glass faceplate over the tuning dial to the array of silky-smooth pushbuttons, this strikes us as distinctly more elegant than its predecessors. If the electronic improvements seem to us less striking, it is partly because we believe the race for ever-lower steady-state distortion specs (in which the whole indus-

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of the room, as well as directly to you. The result? A proper balance of reflected and direct sound...like that you hear at a live performance.

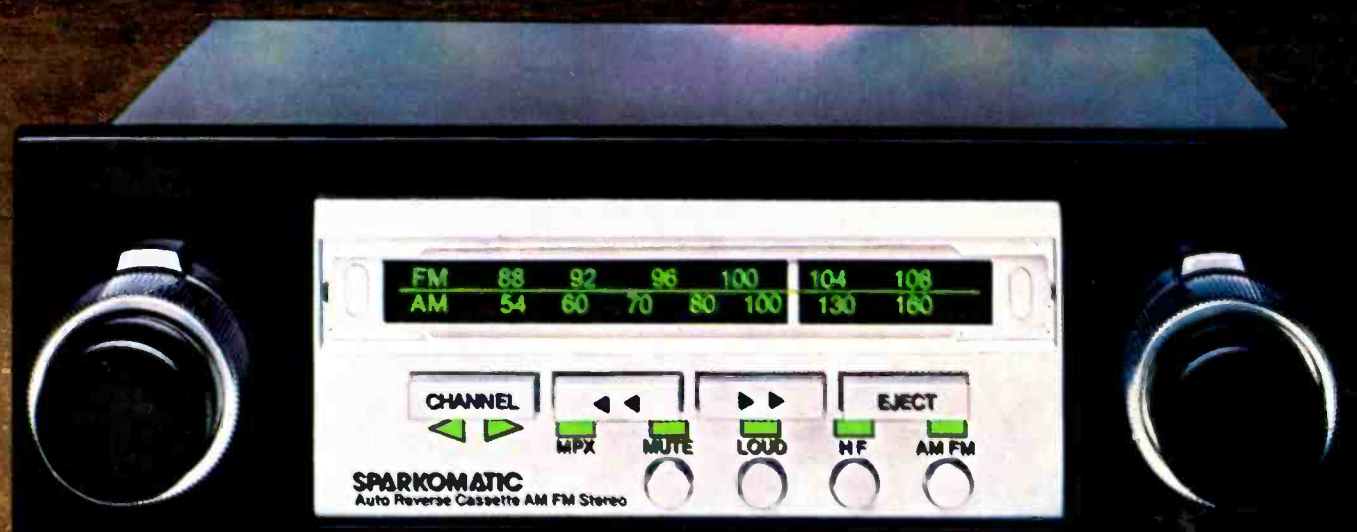
Plus, the Bose 601 can be driven with amplifiers from 20 to 150 continuous watts per channel.

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## THE SPARKOMATIC SOUND. CAR STEREO FOR THE TRAVELIN' MAN WITH EARS OF EXPERIENCE.

Until now, comparing car stereo to home stereo was like night to day. Auto sound equipment was completely in the dark. Powerless to produce serious audio reproduction. Hopelessly lacking in high fidelity specs. For a travelin' man with *ears of experience*, this was the pure "pits".

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Sparkomatic's SR 3300 High Power AM/FM Stereo with Auto Reverse Cassette has some other impressive high fidelity touches as well. Like *feather touch* electronic controls and sophisticated tape handling capabilities. All told, a component-looking package that delivers faithful high fidelity pleasure in its *purist* form.

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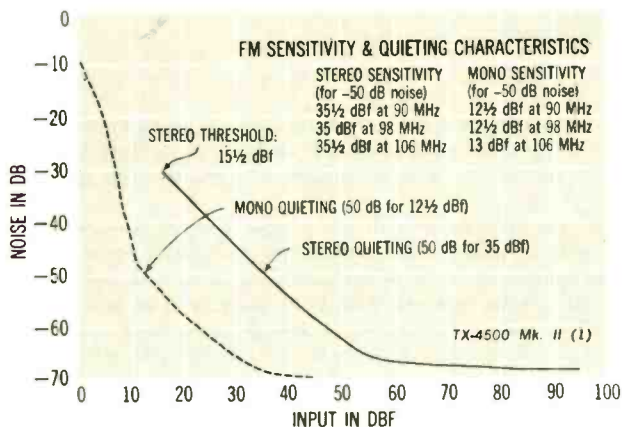


try is so deeply embroiled) to be a question of lily-gilding and partly because we regard some of the improvements in the TX-4500 Mk. II as "corrections" in former inconsistency of performance standards.

Admittedly, this is a largely subjective consideration, and one on which disagreement is likely to exist. In our point of view, early Onkyo receivers were superb in some ways, no better than so-so in others. Since the "weakest link" theory applies, in our view the performance goodies were seriously compromised. Not so with the present model. All the lab findings in the tuner section represent either a solid par for current quality designs or audibly "perfect" behavior. For example, we carry quieting curves only to -70 dB of noise because this level is inaudible and further improvement means nothing, in our judgment; therefore, while some tuners manage better than the Onkyo's 70½-dB mono signal-to-noise ratio, they do not sound any better in this respect.

The amplifier section is quite hefty, with 1 dB of clipping headroom and 1¼ dB of dynamic headroom over the rated 17¾ dBW (60 watts) per channel—for an equivalent of 73 watts on steady signals and about 80 on musical peaks. (The manual's claim of an "enormous reserve of output power" does seem overstated, however.) All of the harmonic distortion measurements and all of those for IM except toward the upper end of the 4-ohm power range are below 0.1%—and most well below it. The phono section is quiet, reasonably flat, and supplied with plenty of headroom. Thus the basics of the receiver are all excellent and well matched.

The ancillary features of the TX-4500 Mk. II raise some questions, the answers to which depend on the way in which the receiver will be used. The tone controls, which share the silky feel of the other controls, have a fairly wide adjustment range: approximately ±15 dB at the extremes of setting and frequency. Still, particularly with these detented controls, subtler shades of adjustment might be achieved if the range were not so extreme. And the bass control has considerable effect into the midrange; we would have preferred that it concentrate its attention on the deep bass. The low filter, too, has an unusu-



#### NEW MEASUREMENT STANDARDS

In making comparisons between current reports and those published in the past, readers are cautioned to pay particular attention to the reference levels and similar test criteria cited. S/N ratios for electronics, in particular, are measured very differently now that we have adopted salient features of the new IHF amplifier-measurement standard. While we believe that the new technique (which also implies a saner approach to loading of all inputs and outputs) will result in measurements that more perfectly reflect audible, in-use effects, they cannot be compared directly to the numbers resulting from the former, more conventional lab measurements.

ally high turnover frequency—taking out lots of rumble but, at the same time, shaving some underpinning from the music. Both it and the high filter have fairly steep slopes and therefore are more effective than the 6-dB "filters" (which, in reality, sound more like tone controls) that still show up in some receivers.

A study of the front-panel features—which include niceties

### Onkyo TX-4500 Mk. II Receiver

#### Tuner Section

Capture ratio	¾ dB		
Alternate channel selectivity	77½ dB		
THD + N	L ch	R ch	mono
80 Hz	0.30%	0.36%	0.12%
1 kHz	0.28%	0.27%	0.07%
10 kHz	1.0%	0.70%	0.15%
IM distortion	0.055%		
19-kHz pilot	-62 dB		
38-kHz subcarrier	-64 dB		
S/N ratios (at 65 dBf)			
stereo	67½ dB		
mono	70½ dB		
Frequency response			
L ch	+ ½, -3 dB, 22 Hz to 15 kHz		
R ch	+ ½, -3 dB, 22 Hz to 15 kHz		
mono	+ ½, -3 dB, 20 Hz to 15 kHz		
Channel separation	>44 dB, 60 Hz to 1.2 kHz		
	>34 dB, 20 Hz to 10 kHz		

#### Amplifier Section

Manufacturer's rated power	17¾ dBW (60 watts)/ch.	
Power output at clipping (both channels driven)		
L ch	18¾ dBW (73 watts)/ch.	
R ch	18¾ dBW (73 watts)/ch.	
Dynamic headroom (at 1 kHz)	1¼ dB	
Harmonic distortion (THD + N; 20 Hz to 20 kHz)		
at 17¾ dBW (60 watts)	<0.090%	
at 10 dBW (10 watts)	<0.090%	
at -2¼ dBW (0.6 watt)	<0.090%	
Intermodulation distortion		
into 8 ohms	<0.06%, -8¼ to 17¾ dBW (0.13 to 60 W)	
into 4 ohms	<0.2%, -6 to 18½ dBW (0.25 to 70 W)	
into 16 ohms	<0.02%, -5 to 16 dBW (0.3 to 40 W)	
Frequency response	+ 0, -¾ dB, 14 Hz to 20 kHz	
	+ 0, -3 dB, 10 Hz to 77 kHz	
RIAA equalization	+ 1, -½ dB, 20 Hz to 20 kHz	
Input characteristics (re 0 dBW (1 watt); noise A-weighted)		
	Sensitivity	S/N ratio
phono 1, 2	0.38 mV	73½ dB
tape 1, 2, 3	17.60 mV	79 dB
Phono overload (clipping)	230 mV at 1 kHz	
High filter	-3 dB at 5.7 kHz; 12 dB/octave	
Low filter	-3 dB at 58 Hz; 12 dB/octave	
Damping factor (at 50 Hz)	44	

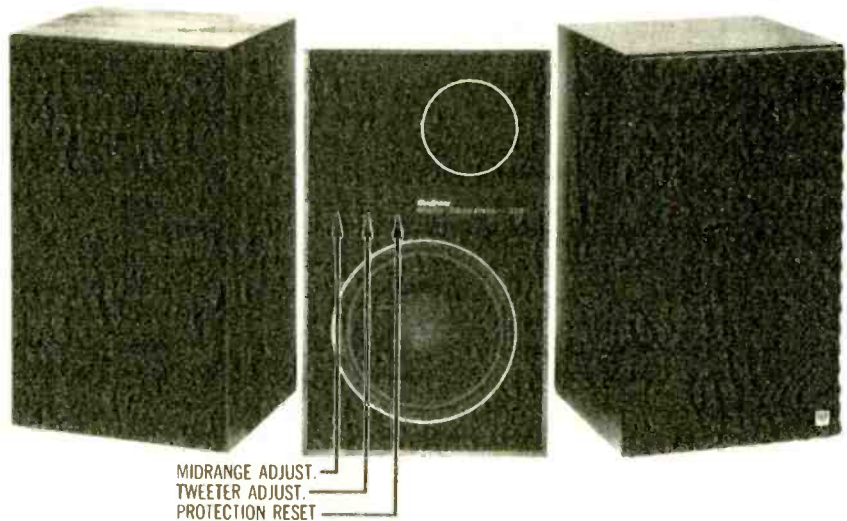
like Dolby-FM equalization—will turn up no AUX input selector. The manual suggests use of a tape input for that purpose, and of course outboarded equipment like equalizers might also be attached to the tape connections. Which tape connections is important, since there is no dubbing switch as such to control which tape output feeds which tape inputs; the main selector feeds tape 1, which feeds tape 2, which feeds tape 3. You can remove elements from the chain, but not reorder them. This also means that dubbing can't be undertaken while you're listening to the phono or tuner selections.

In this receiver, as in past Onkyo products, the tuner locks automatically to the station (assuming the lock/muting button is in the appropriate position) when your hand leaves the tuning knob. An unusual aspect of this feature is a three-position back-panel sensitivity switch that adjusts the action of the tuning knob's sensor. The ensemble performs very well (as the lab data testifies) with moderate to strong signals, less well in fringe areas where the muting and lock may have to be

defeated to prevent frequent and annoying "dither" between mute and unmute on borderline stations. A weak station with a much stronger adjacent-channel neighbor, which we use as a test case, comes in in stereo on the TX-4500 Mk. II only when it is detuned away from the stronger one; some receivers will not pick it up in stereo at all, but others (with better adjacent-channel selectivity at low signal strengths) do get it in stereo with less distortion than such detuning introduces.

In essence, the receiver is very urbane in personality—conceived more as a graceful embodiment of the sonic "good life" than as an instrument for a listening laboratory. The seeker after weak, distant stations, the avid tape recordist given to complex dubbing projects, and the phono-cartridge-loading fanatic, for example, all will want to look elsewhere for the special features to suit their needs. But those with access to what might be called good but standard input signals and ancillary equipment will experience this receiver's design at its best and should be delighted by it. **CIRCLE 135 ON PAGE 105**

## A Moderate-Priced "Bookshelf" Speaker



**Ultralinear Model 228** speaker system in simulated walnut-grain cabinet. Dimensions: 14 $\frac{1}{8}$  by 24 $\frac{3}{4}$  inches (front), 12 $\frac{1}{4}$  inches deep. Price: \$229.95 (\$189.95 suggested minimum retail); with walnut-veneer cabinet (Model 228-W), \$259.95 (\$219.95 suggested minimum retail). Warranty: "limited," five years parts and labor. Manufacturer: Ultralinear Loudspeakers (Division of Solar Audio Products, Inc.), 3228 E. 59th St., Los Angeles, Calif. 90058.

**Straightforward and traditional** are words that describe the Ultralinear 228, a three-way bookshelf-sized speaker system that eschews the Thiele-alignment vogue in favor of the "classic" acoustic-suspension enclosure. For its price, the 228 features drivers of robust dimensions: a 12-inch woofer, 6-inch midrange driver, and 1-inch Mylar-dome tweeter. Continuous level controls are provided at each crossover point (specified as 700 and 4,500 Hz), and a circuit breaker protects the system from long-term power levels above 18 dBW (65 watts). Each of these controls is readily accessible behind the removable grille screen.

The crossover points barely make their presence known in the impedance curve, which is notably uniform throughout the spectrum. Nominal impedance measures close to Ultralinear's 8-ohm rating. Resonance occurs at a rather high 78 Hz, where the impedance reaches a maximum of 22 ohms. It

drops a little below 6 ohms from about 5 kHz up, but from the shape of the curve we'd say that paralleled pairs of Ultralinear 228s could easily be accommodated by the average power amp.

The midrange control affords a typical adjustment range; the tweeter control offers roughly the same boost but almost total suppression of the upper partials at its extreme cut position. Lab measurements show both controls to be less than "neat" in their behavior, with boost and cut curves trading places at some frequencies and considerable interaction between the two ranges. Thus what you hear, rather than any rules of thumb, must determine what settings will be most desirable.

When the controls are set at their nominal midpoints, the average omnidirectional response in the anechoic chamber is within  $\pm 4$  dB from 50 Hz to 12.5 kHz with the exception of a substantial (+7 dB) peak at resonance. Looked at another way, the omnidirectional response slopes gradually (at about 1 dB per octave) from resonance to above 12.5 kHz but is within  $\pm 2$  dB over this range. Below resonance, the free-field response drops off steeply.

True to its design, the 228's circuit breaker disconnects the speakers when they are fed just over 18 dBW (65 watts) for any period of time. The trip point seems well chosen: The speakers show signs of distress when fed more than 17 dBW

# In a class by itself.



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There are few stereophones of any kind that can match the full-bandwidth performance of the Koss Pro/4 AAA. That's because the Triple A's oversized voice coil and extra large diaphragm reproduce recorded material with a lifelike intensity and minimal distortion never before available in dynamic stereophones.

With a frequency response from 10 Hz to 22 kHz, a highly efficient element and a perfect seal for low bass response to below audibility, the Triple A lets every note blossom to its fullest harmonic growth. You'll hear so much more of your favorite music, you'll think you're listening to a whole new recording.

Unlike other stereophones, the ear-cushions developed for the Pro/4 Triple A represent a breakthrough in both comfort and acoustical engineering. Through extensive studies on how stereophones are actually worn, Koss engineers were able to reduce lateral pressure with a direct contour Pneumalite® earcushion that not only offers soft pliable comfort, but also creates an ideal environment for minimizing the linear excursion of the driver. Thus, the driver is able to produce any volume level without distortion. So you'll hear all the fundamental and harmonic frequencies exactly as they were recorded.

In addition, Koss has designed a

special Pneumalite® dual suspension headband that creates a feeling of almost weightlessness even over periods of extended listening. It makes wearing the Triple A's as pleasureable as listening to them.

Why not stop in at your audio specialist and see why the Koss Pro/4 Triple A belongs in a class by itself. Or write for our free, full-color catalog c/o Virginia Lamm. Better still, listen to a live demonstration of the incredible Sound of Koss with your favorite record or tape. We think you'll agree that when it comes to the Pro/4 AAA and other Koss Stereophones and CM loudspeakers: hearing is believing.

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**hearing is believing™**

(56 watts) continuously at 300 Hz, and sonic output at this input level (109 dB) is adequate for most home applications. This last figure confirms what the lab's pink-noise test demonstrates: that, despite the acoustic-suspension design, this speaker's efficiency is roughly up in the range associated with vented designs.

Generally speaking, the 228's distortion consists more of second harmonics than of third—which, of course, is preferable to the reverse. Distortion rises very abruptly below the 78-Hz resonance, perhaps due as much to the rapid falloff of the fundamental as to the increase in generated harmonics. Suffice it to say that, at the 0-dBW level, the distortion increases from 1.75% at 70 Hz to greater than 10% at frequencies below 50 Hz. At higher frequencies, the distortion ranges from 0.25% to 1.75%. At higher levels (corresponding to 100 dB SPL at 1 meter at 300 Hz) the distortion roughly doubles and exceeds 10% below 60 Hz. Again, the second harmonic predominates.

The Model 228 reproduces 300-Hz tone bursts quite well. At 3 kHz, however, the speaker requires a cycle or two before its response builds to full output, and there is a strong "echo" 2 milliseconds after the primary sound has been reproduced.

**In the listening room**, the location of the Ultralinear 228 has a strong effect on tonal quality. When it is placed near the floor and wall, the bass resonance seems reinforced and drums tend to sound boomy and tubby. We prefer the 228s raised at least 18 inches above floor level and several feet from the wall, which helps considerably to smooth the lower register. We also prefer the reproduction with the midrange control set slightly above and the tweeter slightly below the respective "flat" positions.

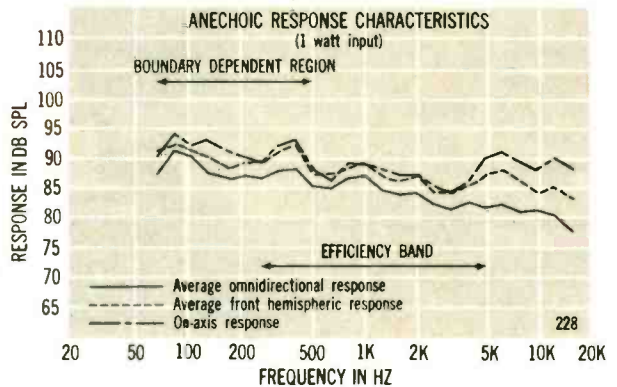
The 228 strikes us as somewhat abler for pop and rock reproduction than it is for the classics. The low-frequency distortion revealed in the laboratory is more apparent when listening to "traditional" instruments than when the speaker is reproducing sounds that are synthesized or aided electronically, which have an indefinite character to begin with. And, of course, the addition of harmonics goes largely unnoticed in percussive sounds such as drumbeats.

The stereo imaging, at its best, is quite good in both width and depth. The position of the speakers vis-à-vis the listener seems to be quite critical in achieving this optimum, and small changes in listener position create disconcerting shifts in the spatial image—partly, perhaps, as a result of the beaminess suggested by the divergence of the three anechoic response curves above 4 kHz or so. Transient response is good at the

highest frequencies but less than noteworthy in the midrange (as we might suspect from the 3-kHz tone-burst response). Midrange and treble clarity is adequate provided that the speaker is not driven to excess by material of complex texture.

Though we prefer the sound of the Ultralinear 228 when it is reproducing pop or rock, our preference is a slight one. The 228 will take a wide variety of music in stride with reasonable assurance. Ultimately, the choice of a loudspeaker is a subjective one, and one that is best made by personal audition. And at this price, the 228 should attract many auditioners.

CIRCLE 133 ON PAGE 105



### Ultralinear Model 228 Loudspeaker System

Average omnidirectional output, 250 Hz to 6 kHz  
85 dB SPL for 0 dBW (1 watt) input

Continuous on-axis output at 300 Hz  
109½ dB SPL for 17½ dBW (56 watts) input

Pulsed output at 300 Hz  
112 dB SPL for 20½ dBW (115 watts) peak

"Nominal" impedance 7.8 ohms at 120 Hz

Approximate tweeter control range (re "flat")  
± 5 dB above 3 kHz (see text)

Approximate midrange control range (re "flat")  
± 3 dB, 1 to 6 kHz (see text)

## Manufacturer's Comment

**We invite rebuttal from those who produce the equipment we review. The comments printed here are culled from those responses.**

**Avid M-330 loudspeaker system (March 1979):** We believe that too many loudspeaker manufacturers have neglected the importance of cabinet/grille diffraction effects. The careful integration of the grille system, cabinet, and drivers to minimize unwanted secondary diffraction effects can result in measurable and audible improvements in imaging, smoothing of frequency response, and uniformity of dispersion. We are pleased, but not surprised, that your listening tests generally confirm these improvements.

The samples you tested were among the first produced, and—while your lab data generally agree with the measurements made on production units in our laboratories—there are some important discrepancies with respect to midbass distortion and the response curve above 4 kHz, where we note no significant dips or rolloff until 18 to 20 kHz.

JEFFERY M. ALLEN  
Avid Corporation

**HF replies:** And while we're on the subject of that report, we'd like to call readers' attention to a typographical error it contains. The graph shows omnidirectional response to be within ± 2½ dB to 4 kHz—not to the text's 40 kHz, which obviously is beyond the limit of testing.



# Dawn of a new age in separates.

The Nikko NA-590 Integrated Stereo Amplifier and the NT-790 AM/FM Stereo Tuner. We designed them specifically for those who want professional quality and the new low-profile look in a home stereo system.

There was a time when the only way to get a high quality sound system was to purchase expensive, bulky professional electronics. But now, Nikko delivers all the precision, accuracy, flexibility and reliability of professional components — and at a reasonable price.

The NA-590 is both a low-distortion amplifier and a full-function pre-amplifier. It will drive most home loudspeakers accurately at comfortable listening levels. The NA-590 delivers 35 watts per channel, minimum RMS, both channels driven into 8 ohms 20 to 20,000 Hz with no more than 0.05% total harmonic distortion.

The NA-590 features a subsonic filter to reduce distortion caused by turntable rumble or warped records, loudness contour, a professional-type attenuated volume control, and exclusive Nikko protection circuit breakers. Its LED function indicators, ultra-thin styling and profes-



sional appearance will be at home in any listening environment.

The NT-790 AM/FM Stereo Tuner utilizes Nikko sophisticated circuitry, plus LED tuning indicators, FM high blend (to eliminate background hiss), and T-Locked FM automatic fine tuning for low distortion, high signal stability and wide frequency response. The NT-790 also

features professional matte finish, ultra-thin profile and optional kit for rack mounting.

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## Nikko Audio

For those who take their stereo seriously.

# We'd sell even more Dual turntables if they didn't last quite so long.



At a time when "planned obsolescence" is an unhappy fact of life, it may be reassuring to know that Dual turntables continue to be produced with the same dedication and manufacturing precision that has made Dual so highly respected throughout the world.

Dual turntables are made in the legendary Black Forest where meticulous craftsmanship remains a way of life. And the company is still owned and personally managed by the family that founded it more than three-quarters of a century ago.

But more than tradition is responsible for Dual's leading position in a lineup of some fifty competitive brands. The performance provided by Dual's precision engineering has always exceeded the demands of either the record or cartridge.

For example: the tonearms of every current model, including our least expensive one, are mounted in four-point gyroscopic gimbals, a design widely acknowledged as the finest suspension system. Bearings are machined and finished to specifications that exceed the demands of aerospace components. And frequently ignored problems such as those caused by resonance are solved by our exclusive anti-resonance filters. (Dual engineers have earned more than seventy international patents related to record playback equipment.)

The manufacturing process is of the same high order. For example: every fifth step is a quality-control check. Fully assembled turntables undergo separate and lengthy mechanical, electrical and acoustical examinations. Later, quality-control auditors open and recheck one out of ten finished, packed and sealed models in order to inspect the quality of the quality control.

Perhaps this explains why such Dual classics as the 1009 and 1019 (produced in the early 1960's) are still in service. If you still own one of these models, you may find it's worth more in trade today than you originally paid for it.

If you insist on the finest in turntables—as we do—ask your audio dealer to demonstrate one of our new Duals. He will be pleased to do so. After all, reliability is as important to him as it is to you.

The Dual CS1237, illustrated, is priced at less than \$180. Other Dual turntables are priced up to \$440. For a complete description of all Dual turntables, please write to United Audio at the address below.

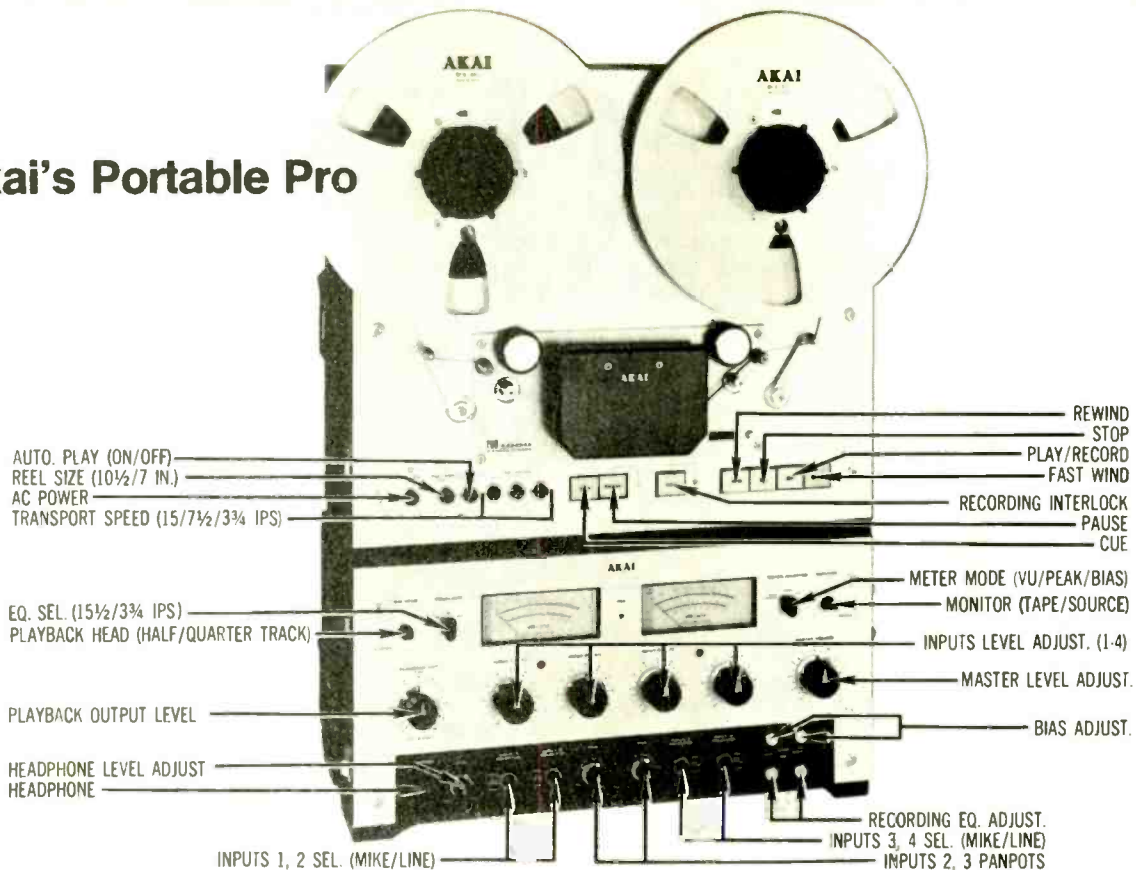


*For the life of your records*

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## Akai's Portable Pro



**Akai Pro-1000** three-speed (15, 7½, and 3¾ ips) half-track stereo open-reel tape deck with quarter-track stereo playback head and reel capacity to 10½ inches, in carrying cases. Dimensions: transport unit, 18 by 16¼ inches (front panel), 8½ inches deep plus head nest, etc.; electronics unit, 18 by 9 inches (front panel), 9½ inches deep plus controls; front case lids, 2¾ inches deep. Price: \$1,995; RC-18 remote control, \$57.75. Warranty: "limited," one year parts and labor. Manufacturer: Akai Electric Co., Ltd., Japan; U.S. distributor: Akai America, Ltd., 2139 E. Del Amo Blvd., Compton, Calif. 90220.

The distinction between "pro" and "semipro" is a little hazy in the 1000; in designing it, Akai seems not to have been thinking about professional studio use (though it may well be in demand for home studios of one sort or another) nor about amateur field recording (though it will be right at home in broadcast location work or on the road with a musical group). Yet it is something more than we normally associate with the semipro format.

With the two lids in place, the separate transport and electronics units are the picture of rugged utilitarianism; with the lids removed, the satiny brushed aluminum of the faceplates almost suggests that walnut cases are in order, but the "professional" controls (for the four-in, two-out mixer, for example) dominate those that make concessions to the home user (such as the switch to choose quarter-track playback). And a look at the back of the electronics package confirms the work-before-play priorities: The mike inputs are Cannon-style balanced three-pin jacks, though all the line connections are home-style (not phone) pin jacks. All four mixer inputs offer the choice of line, mike, or attenuated-mike (-20 dB) modes; only inputs 2 and 3 are fitted with pan pots, while 1 and 4 feed the left and right channels, respectively.

An interesting feature of the electronics' back panel is a pair of output jacks from the mixer section so that it can be used independently with another deck. There also is a full set of recording and playback jacks for interconnection with a noise-reduction system (Dolby, DBX, or whatever) plus a bypass switch. We used the deck without noise reduction; we also passed up a full-function accessory remote control that plugs into a multipin jack on the transport. Also out of the ordinary are the tape adjustments: a pair of small knobs that adjust bias in each channel (using the appropriate mode and calibration scales on the meters) and another that tweaks recording equalization above about 3 kHz (with a maximum total adjustment range of about 3 dB at 7.5 kHz and 6 dB at 12 kHz).

These controls could be "tuned" with a pink-noise generator and so on; the manual makes no mention of such procedures, relying instead on a simple table of settings for popular tape types. As usual with imported products, tapes from American producers (except 3M) are ignored. For this and other reasons, we wish that the manual had been produced here. Though its scope is more comprehensive and its English much more comprehensible than in most Japanese manuals, the deck's complexities cry out for a yet higher order of communication. Some users doubtless will see Akai's almost total avoidance of American terms of measure as a case in point. Indeed, in most instances reels are identified without even the metric units—simply as Size 17 (17 centimeters, or 7 inches) or Size 26 (the 10½-inch NAB size). Their sensibilities may continue to take offense at the markings, but even the most doggedly antimetric among us should assimilate the "new" designations soon enough.

The playback metering works exceptionally well. It responds to the output-level controls, which are independent in

the two channels. Since both have center detents at the "normal" position, they can be used as a reference for actual recorded levels. But when these controls are turned up or down, the meters will continue to monitor output level. If a running check on recorded level is needed in playback, the controls can be left at the detents and the listening or dubbing level adjusted elsewhere in the system. They do not control the output of the source feed-through, incidentally: just the output from the playback heads. Also a nice detail are the outer-ring friction "stops" by which maximum rotation can be preset on the mixer knobs. The friction clutching allows you to twist the knob past this maximum if you want to, but with normal handling the stop is quite positive.

Among the nice touches on the transport are the CUE button, which allows monitoring from a hand-rocked tape for editing, and the PAUSE, which delivers marginally faster startup than the regular PLAY button. Both are competitive in quickness with the startup on many cassette decks (thanks, in part, to the dual-capstan drive, no doubt), though the far greater mass of open-reel systems probably always will give the cassette format a significant edge for so-called electronic editing. Physical splicing is, of course, far easier with open

reels. The Pro-1000 aids the process with a flipup head cover for maximum visibility of and access to the heads.

**There are four stereo heads:** from the left, quarter-track playback, half-track erase, half-track recording, and half-track playback. (Unlike most decks—pro or home—of a decade ago, it has no provision for independent operation of the two channels in any mode; mono recordings must perform be put on both tracks of the stereo pair, using up as much tape as stereo recordings of the same speed.) Operation is, mechanically and electrically, very quiet. The open-reel format's much greater headroom above the reference 0 VU gives it about 10 to 15 dB more dynamic range (depending on the tape) than cassette decks of comparable S/N ratio figures, and even with the tape running the sounds emitted by the transport normally are swamped by ambient room noise within a few feet of the deck.

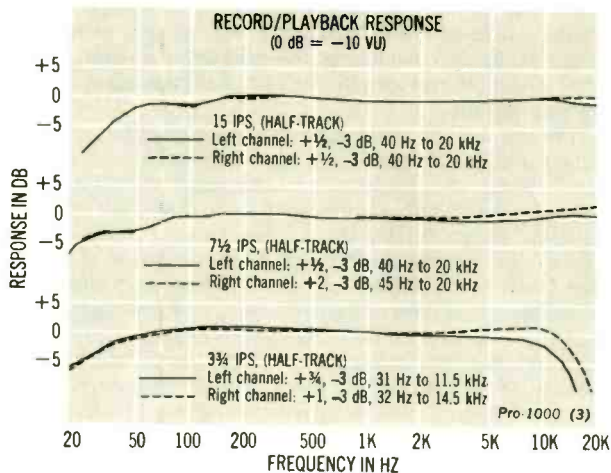
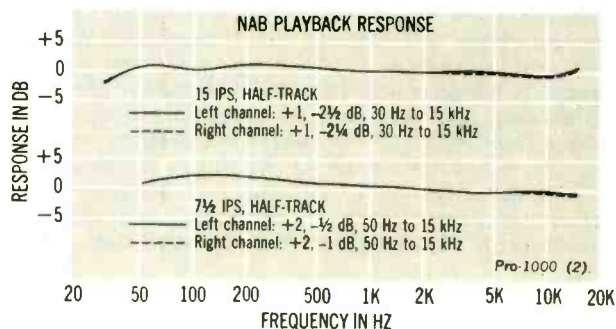
Response, measured with Scotch 206 tape for the record/play curves, is more than adequately flat in all speeds and about par in bandpass. Speed accuracy is well controlled at 3¾ and 7½ ips, though it is about 1% (our arbitrary dividing line between excellent and good) at the top speed. The latter, however, exhibits the best wow measurements; the two slower speeds are, again, merely good.

Playback quality at all three speeds and with either head delivers audibly fine reproduction within the limitations of the chosen format. (Remember that half-track stereo intrinsically offers about 3 dB more dynamic range than quarter-track stereo—all other things, as they say, being equal.) With average-quality source material, both 7½ and 15 ips offer ear-perfect replication; the slowest speed, predictably, introduces some audible hiss, but the subtle tradeoffs of the higher speeds are unappreciable without superb-quality input signals, if then.

The bias/EQ adjustments and metering options are gen-

### Akai Pro-1000 Open-Reel Deck

Speed accuracy	
at 15 ips	0.92% fast at 105 VAC 1.02% fast at 120 VAC 1.17% fast at 127 VAC
at 7½ ips	0.25% fast at 105 VAC 0.38% fast at 120 VAC 0.48% fast at 127 VAC
at 3¾ ips	0.25% fast at 105 VAC 0.44% fast at 120 VAC 0.53% fast at 127 VAC
Wow & flutter (ANSI)	
at 15 ips	playback: 0.030% record/play: 0.040%
at 7½ ips	playback: 0.070% record/play: 0.100%
at 3¾ ips	playback: 0.080% record/play: 0.125%
Rewind time (1,800 ft., 7-in. reel)	92 sec.
Fast forward time (same reel)	91 sec.
S/N ratios, half-track (re Ampex 0 VU; CBS weighting)	
playback	L ch: 61½ dB      R ch: 61½ dB
record/play	L ch: 55½ dB      R ch: 56 dB
S/N ratio, quarter-track (re Ampex 0 VU; CBS weighting)	
playback	L ch: 58 dB      R ch: 58½ dB
Erasure (400 Hz at normal level)	75 dB
Channel separation (at 400 Hz)	
record left, play right	54 dB
record right, play left	52½ dB
Sensitivity (re Ampex 0 VU, at 7½ ips)	
line	L ch: 85.0 mV      R ch: 83.5 mV
mike	L ch: 0.27 mV      R ch: 0.32 mV
Meter action (re Ampex 0 VU)	
VU	L ch: ¼ dB high      R ch: ¼ dB high
peak	L ch: 7¼ dB low      R ch: 7 dB low
Harmonic distortion (THD; at -10 VU)	
at 15 ips	<0.32%, 50 Hz to 5 kHz
at 7½ ips	<0.42%, 50 Hz to 5 kHz
at 3¾ ips	<0.29%, 50 Hz to 5 kHz
Maximum output (re Ampex 0 VU)	
	L ch: 0.80 V      R ch: 0.87 V





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The world's first pure power DC receivers, the Sansui G-line, redefined the limits of musical fidelity. Sansui's capacitor-free DC amplifier design (patent pending) with super-high slew rate, ultra-fast rise time, and full transient response, makes music sound much more true-to-life.

Now Sansui does it again. With the new G-7500 and G-5500. Using the same exclusive DC circuitry, all others are trying to imitate, these new models offer more watts per dollar than ever before.

The **G-7500** delivers 90 watts per channel, min. PMS, both channels into 8 ohms from 20 to 20,000Hz with no more than 0.025% total harmonic distortion, at a suggested retail price of only \$620.

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The FM sections further enhance Sansui's reputation for tuner excellence. Pinpoint selectivity and ultra-sensitivity to even the weakest signals guarantee pure and clean reception, always. And always with maximum stereo separation.

Let your franchised Sansui dealer demonstrate the comprehensive, human engineered features and controls. There's nothing in the world with quite the same feel as the Sansui click-stop attenuator and ultra-smooth tuning knob.



Now look carefully at the graceful styling, with elegant rosewood veneer cabinet. It is setting the trend for all other receivers.

For the best receiver values, the world is now turning to the newest DC by Sansui, the G-7500 and G-5500. Shouldn't you turn to Sansui, too?



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# The Fisher ST460. You will probably never use all its capabilities.

The Fisher ST460 Studio Standard® speaker system was not intended for casual listening.

So if all you want is background music with dinner or soothing sounds to relax to, save your money.

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At the Fisher speaker factory in Pennsylvania, our master engineers designed the ST460 to respond with utmost accuracy to the demands of any musical signal. From throbbing chest-pounding disco rhythms, to the explosive transients of symphonic music. From the scream of a lead guitar to the delicate timbre of a harpsichord. The ST460 handles it all so effortlessly that you may forget you're listening to speakers, instead of a "live" performance.

The beautiful walnut-grain vinyl ST460 enclosure houses a massive Fisher Model 15130 15" woofer, two Fisher Model 500 cone midrange drivers, and a special Fisher Model 350 horn tweeter. Power is delivered to the drivers through a sophisticated minimum-phase crossover network with presence and brilliance controls accessible on the front panel. System response is essentially flat from 40 to 20,000 Hz, and the 130 watt



level is with low distortion, then its performance at lower levels will be that much more impressive.

So if your decor can handle 30" high cabinets, and your budget can handle \$399.95\* price tags, make it a point to experience the sound of a pair of ST460's. You'll find them at selected audio dealers or the audio department of your favorite department store.

power capacity allows a pair of ST460's to generate disco sound levels of up to 112 dB in a typical living room.

Do you have to have this kind of performance? Possibly not. But if a speaker can achieve these

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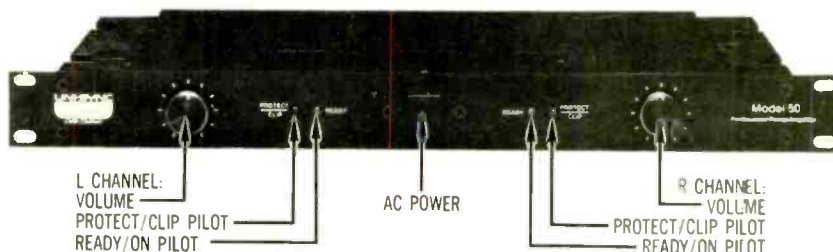


ST460

une aids in optimizing recorded quality, though the speed with which the meters must move over the long scale (-40 to +5 dB) in the peak mode makes their action difficult for the eye to follow at first. Our initial impression was that slower decay would help in this mode; perhaps it would, but in only a few hours of use we learned to cope quite well with the hair-trigger needle and eventually abandoned the relative sluggishness of the conventional VU action for most purposes.

Viewed among the many open-reel decks that we have considered in these pages over the years, the Pro-1000 has two capabilities that particularly impressed us: the ease with

which splice editing can be done on it, and the degree to which the transport—with its dual capstans and dual tension arms—tames the problems of playing very old tapes that are no longer truly flat. These may seem like esoteric problems to some users, but the deck's success with them is, to us, an index of good intrinsic design. They are, moreover, tests that many otherwise good home or semipro decks frequently flunk. Response and distortion numbers (and the Akai's are good) are by no means the end of the story; in overall design, Akai has, in our opinion, thought through the problems and priorities of this genre to a very satisfactory solution.



## A Professional Amp of Moderate Power

**Uni-Sync Model 50** stereo power amplifier (strappable for mono use), in metal rack-mount case. Dimensions: 19 by 1¾ inches (front panel), 10¼ inches deep plus clearance for connections. Price: \$379. Warranty: "limited," three years parts and labor. Manufacturer: Uni-Sync (a BSR company), 742 Hampshire Rd., Westlake Village, Calif. 91361.

That oft-abused word "professional" means what it says when applied to this Uni-Sync amp. Not only is it ruggedly constructed and designed for rack mounting, but its connections all presuppose professional applications. From the three-prong grounded AC plug to the balanced (XLR-type) or unbalanced (phone-jack) inputs and hefty binding posts with banana-plug sockets at the speaker terminals to the back-panel bridging switch for mono operation, every fitting seems single-mindedly tailored to the monitor-amp trade. Yet unlike many true professional amps that have won favor in the home through their exceptional capabilities (names like McIntosh, Crown, Phase Linear, and BGW come to mind), this one does not go for raw power as such.

The Model 50 does its moderate-power work efficiently. There is a bit more dynamic (music) headroom above rated output than we are used to seeing in the lab data, and over most of the operating range in both frequency and power, distortion is no more than one-twentieth of the 0.1% THD rating or one-half of the 0.01% IM rating. When strapped for 8-ohm mono operation, the amp has an even more impressive amount of "elbow room": CBS measured 21¾ dBW (150 watts) for about 0.05% THD at clipping, while the spec says 110 watts (20½ dBW) for 0.08% THD.

The front panel is equally efficient. Red LEDs for each channel come on during the brief warmup muting or to indicate clipping, green ones to indicate normal operation. Aside from the level controls and on/off pushbutton, that's it: no bells, whistles, or gingerbread. The listening, too, is utterly non-sense. As you might assume from the specs and measurements, whatever goes in comes out unaltered in any appreciable way short of clipping. The only fault of our listening sample was a slight mechanical buzz (emanating, presumably, from the power transformer) that could be somewhat

annoying in a really quiet room but was totally masked while any music was playing.

The Model 50 is, in a word, a dandy and very compact power amp for pro and semipro applications where extra heft isn't called for (in which case, the companion Model 100, with the predictable power rating, might fill the bill). The need for special connectors may put off the regular home user a bit; still, in the home market's headlong race for astonishing power (and distortion) specs, it's getting hard to find a really good, simple, moderate-power model. And that's exactly what the Model 50 is.

CIRCLE 134 ON PAGE 105

### Uni-Sync Model 50 Power Amplifier

Manufacturer's rated power 17 dBW (50 watts)/channel

Power output at clipping (both channels driven)  
 L ch 17½ dBW (57 watts)  
 R ch 17½ dBW (57 watts)

Dynamic headroom (at 1 kHz) 2 dB

Frequency response ±¼ dB, <10 Hz to 20 kHz  
 +¼, -3 dB, <10 Hz to 70 kHz

Input characteristics (re 0 dBW (1 watt); noise A-weighted)  
 Sensitivity 154 mV S/N ratio 84 dB

Harmonic distortion (THD + N; 20 Hz to 20 kHz)

at 17 dBW (50 watts) output <0.026%  
 at 10 dBW (10 watts) output <0.019%  
 at -3 dBW (0.5 watt) output <0.030%

Intermodulation distortion

into 8 ohms <0.013%, -8½ to 17½ dBW (0.13 to 60 W)  
 into 4 ohms <0.038%, -6 to 18½ dBW (0.25 to 72 W)  
 into 16 ohms <0.013%, -12½ to 15½ dBW (0.06 to 36 W)

Damping factor at 50 Hz 190



# Too Hot to Handle

I don't like to rain on anyone's parade, but Technics claims in an ad in your magazine [January] that its new turntable, the SL-1000 Mk. II, has the world's first titanium tonearm. That just isn't so. The SME 3009 Series III tonearm is made of titanium and has been on the market for nearly a year.—Thomas Coane, Wallingford, Conn.

The Technics SL-1000 Mk. II actually was introduced in this country about a year before the SME tonearm and was available in Japan for some time before that.

Recently I updated my stereo equipment and own a Pioneer SX-1250 receiver (160 watts per channel), PL-570 turntable, CT-F9191 cassette deck, and two HPM-100 speakers (100 watts each), plus Audio-Technica's AT-15SA cartridge and AT-706 and AT-703 headphones. I have also hooked up my ten-year-old Jensen 30 watt speakers. When both sets of speakers are on, they sound okay, but am I losing anything or am I doing any damage to either speakers or receiver?

Also Pioneer recently put out a \$250 tuner (TVX-9500) that connects to the aux input of the receiver to reproduce TV sound through the system. In the interim, I had picked up a small unit for \$10—the TST, from Parallax Industries in San Francisco. It is connected the same way and claims to do the same thing. Although I have no way of comparing the two, I do know that the TST does work and have heard and controlled it through my receiver and taped one program. Would the Pioneer tuner be worth the difference in price, and—more important—is the TST doing any damage to my other equipment?—George Leeder, North Bergen, N.J.

The Pioneer SX-1250 receiver is rated at 160 watts (22 dBW) per channel when driving 8-ohm loads, 200 watts (23 dBW) when driving 4-ohm loads. The HPM-100 loudspeakers carry an 8-ohm rating. Provided that the impedance of your Jensens is at least 8 ohms, you should be just fine. The proof of the pudding is that the sound is okay.

According to our files, the Parallax TST is

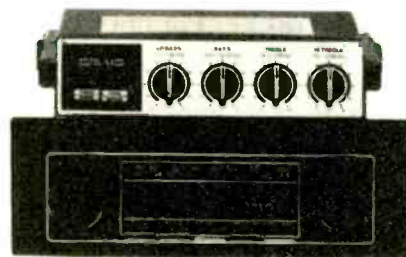
an adapter (listing at \$14.95) to feed signals to a stereo system from the earphone output built into some TV receivers. The Pioneer TVX-9500 is a full-scale tuner that supplies everything from antenna input to audio output without dependence on the possibly poor circuitry built in your TV set or its inclusion of an earphone output. We doubt that the Parallax could damage your equipment.

I am concerned about the -20-VU level at which frequency responses of stereo cassette decks are measured. I know of nobody that records at -20. To avoid a high hiss level, most recording enthusiasts tend to record at -10 dB or higher. At 0 dB all of the high frequency material rolls off sharply somewhere between 3 to 8 kHz, depending on the machine. May I suggest that your test reports also include a -10-dB reference level frequency response ( $\pm 3$  dB)? This is a more faithful reading for future tape recorder buyers.—George A. Allegado, San Francisco, Calif.

Even with synthesizer rock (which can have much more high-frequency energy than acoustic instruments produce), levels at 10 kHz and above are seldom less than 20 dB below maximum midrange levels, so the ability to record these frequencies flat at -10 VU has little meaning. And at -10 VU the frequency response curve will depend more on the tape than on the machine. In our tests of tapes, we do subject them to even more severe overload than recording at -10 VU would represent. But in testing decks, we

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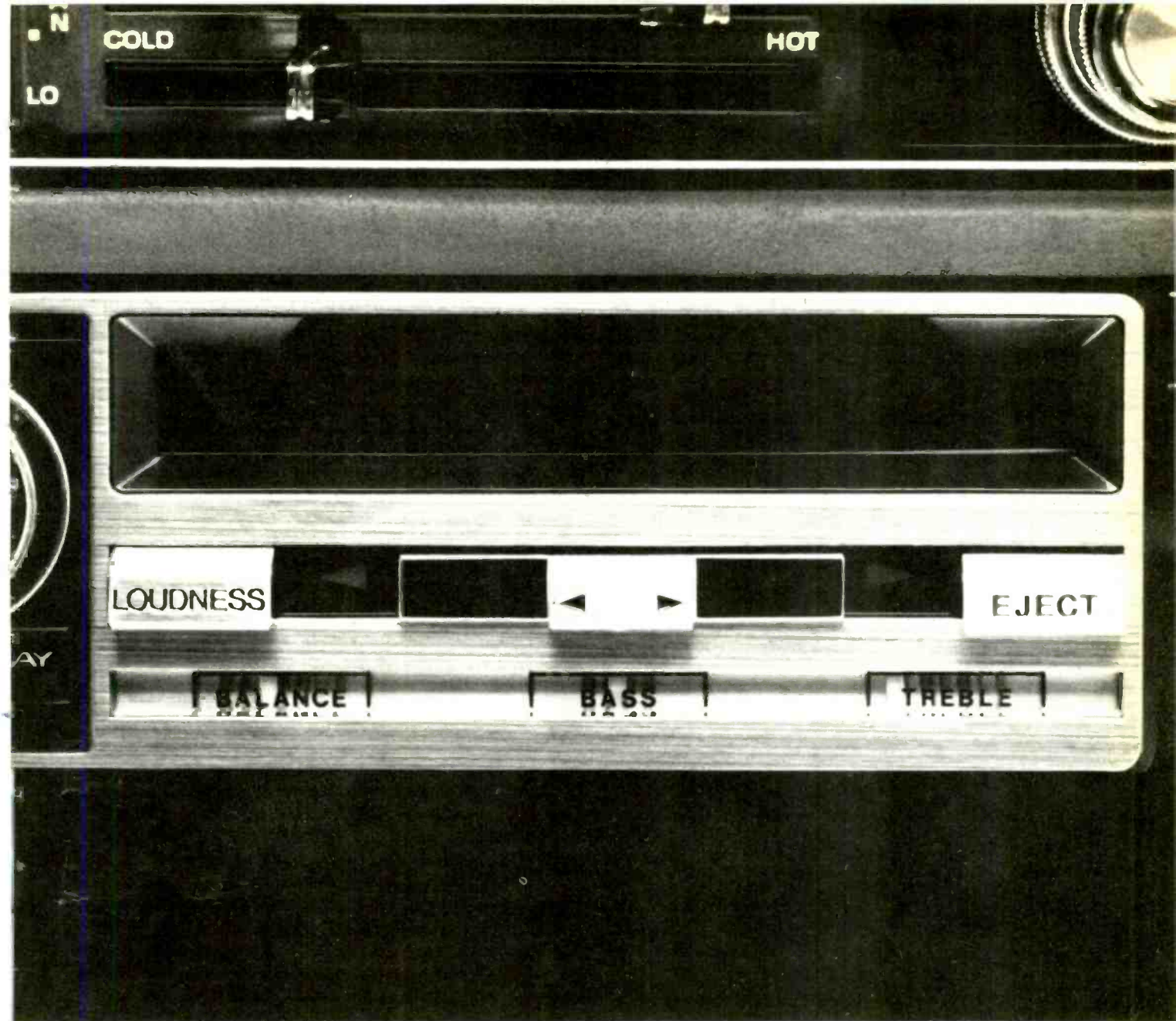
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confine ourselves primarily to levels at which the tape is not prone to misbehavior; any inaccuracies of response can then be charged to the machine.

I have a pair of ESS amt-3 speakers that I am driving with a Phase Linear 700B amp. My listening room is very large (irregularly shaped but about 25 by 22 by 12–25 ft. high), with a lot of open space to other rooms. I listen to a lot of electronic music, and like my music very loud. The speakers are hanging from the ceiling, aimed at the prime listening area.

Of course, the amplifier loafs driving these speakers, but I found I was constantly blowing speaker fuses. This I took to mean that the speakers were incapable of delivering the sound pressure levels I required in this envi-

ronment, so I obtained a second pair of amt-3s, which I placed on the floor, also aimed at the prime listening area. (I also have a pair of smaller speakers for rear ambience but don't believe this is related to the problem.)

Since the 700B should not be driven into loads of less than 4 ohms, according to Phase Linear, and since the amt-3s are rated at 4 ohms, I connected the speakers in series, even though I suppose they are now undamped. This has eliminated the fuse-blowing problem, and the system plays as loud as desired (the amplifier still loafs). I've achieved a flat response with an equalizer and have only one problem left: I can't seem to phase the speakers. I've tried connecting a switch in the line so I can reverse phasing instantly and tried A/B comparisons with both

test tones and musical material. When phasing is reversed, the change in the character of the sound is quite dramatic, but neither position seems preferable—nor any louder. This is true regardless of whether I'm trying to phase the two series-connected speakers of one channel or trying to phase the left channel to the right. Stereo imaging is very poor. What is wrong and what can I do?—T. E. Hlavac, San Francisco, Calif.

As you seem to suspect, your speakers are partially out of phase. This happens because you are using two speakers for each channel and the path lengths from each one to the listening position are different and the radiation from one speaker is delayed with respect to the other. The net result is cancellations at some frequencies, reinforcements at others (the so-called comb-filter effect), and an unstable stereo image. You can probably improve the situation by placing the two speakers reproducing the same channel as close together as possible and (if you can manage it) with the tweeters arranged in a vertical line.

Most tonearm manufacturers talk about how their arms track records perfectly. But we all know that pivoted arms won't track the record perfectly because the record was pressed from a master that was cut by a stylus moving straight across the record. My suggestion is to redo the cutting lathes with the cutter mounted on a tonearm like almost all turntables have. This will enable consumers to enjoy the quality of a properly tracked record without having to go to an esoteric turntable. This modified cutting head would follow the slight curve and the angle at which the playing stylus moves across the record. I can see no technical reason why it would not work. Besides cost, could there be a problem in changing over to this method? If cost is the only reason, maybe enough of us could sway the record manufacturers to change their method to benefit the majority.—Chris Belcher, Raleigh, N.C.

Oh, a little knowledge. . . . We suspect that if you tried to design your dream child (which, incidentally, is substantially the arrangement used for some tacky home disc-cutting equipment decades ago), you'd find plenty of technical problems. For one, cutter heads are heavy. How would you support it adequately from way back at the pivot? Any vertical vibration would be cut into the groove. And how would you advance the cutter with adequate precision? When you've solved these problems—and there undoubtedly are more—what would you have accomplished? A well-designed pivoted arm has negligible tracking error across a 12-inch LP; certainly it's not the limiting factor in reproduction.

HIGH FIDELITY is seeking a full-time staff member for its Great Barrington, Massachusetts, office. This key position in the audio-video department calls for thorough technical grounding in electronics, knowledge of the consumer audio market, and the ability to research audio subjects and to write clearly and compellingly about them. Some editing or writing experience a must. Address the editorial director in the Great Barrington office, stating qualifications and salary requirements, and enclosing writing samples. Equal opportunity employer M/F.



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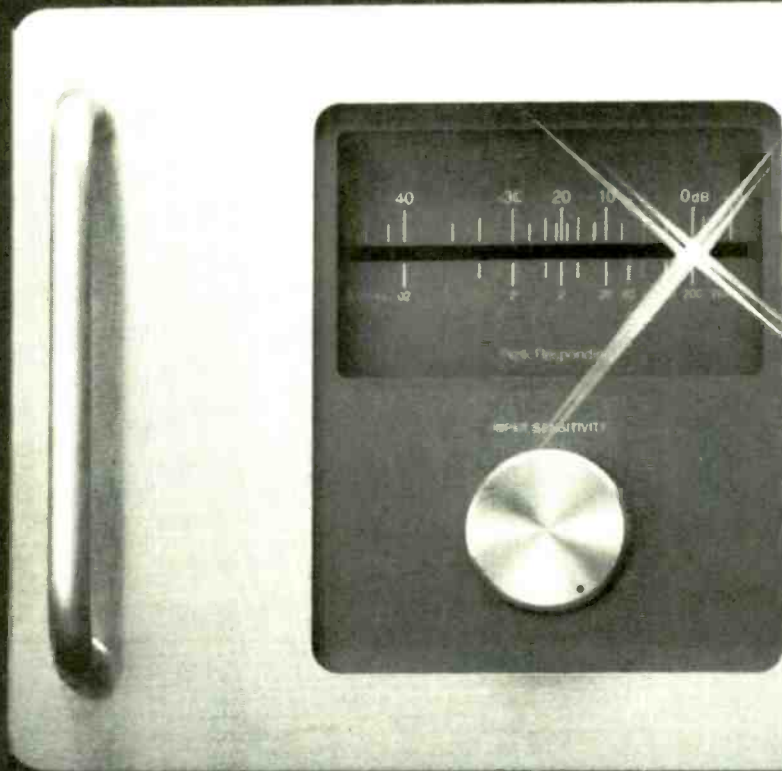
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CIRCLE 23 ON PAGE 105

# BEFORE YOU THROW OUT A GOOD TURNTABLE OR SPEAKER SYSTEM CONNECT WITH A GREAT AMPLIFIER. THE PHASE 400 SERIES TWO.



*Phase Linear*

Model 400 Series Two  
Audio Standard Amplifier

Some speakers sound fine, until you hit a low passage. Then they turn to mud, or rattle at you like a cheap turntable. Chances are, that muddy, distorted sound is in fact, the result of an inadequate amplifier stretched to its limits. Clipping.

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## ACCURACY YOU CAN HEAR

To improve accuracy, the new 400 Series Two utilizes an advanced BI-FET input stage. This integrated

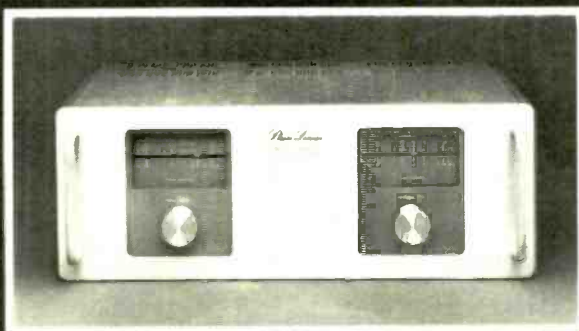
circuit keeps the output virtually identical to the input. Distortion and noise are reduced to virtually inaudible levels. Beautiful music in beautiful music out.

## ACCURACY YOU CAN SEE

You might have some questions about the 400's instantaneous LED output meters. Conventional-style VU meters are slow in comparison because they have to move the mass of the needle. The LED's

move at lightning speed, accurately monitoring the output voltage with scales for 8 and 4-ohm impedances. For accuracy, the meter contains 32 gradations plus 4 fixed flashers to alert you to clipping. You have a visual safeguard, in addition to the Electronic Energy Limiters to prevent damage from overloads.

See your Phase dealer about the Phase 400 Series Two. We think you'll recognize accuracy when you hear it. And when you see it.



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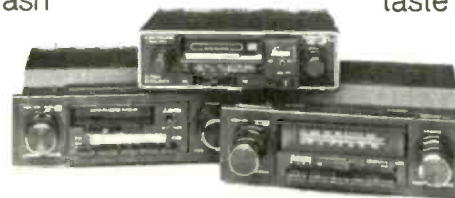
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Under-Dash Cassettes, one Under-Dash 8-track, and an ambitious array of quality car hi-fi speakers complete the line. Mitsubishi transcends the ordinary. Ready to extend your limits? Look into the entire line of car audio component separates. Get a taste of Mitsubishi Car Audio...

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# Whither Good Radio?



RCA

by John K. Major

**An insider probes the institutions and people who determine what you hear on quality FM and suggests that the coming satellite linkup may revolutionize it.**

"GOOD" RADIO has come a long way since Lee de Forest's historic broadcast of Enrico Caruso in *Cavalleria rusticana* and *I Pagliacci* from the Metropolitan Opera House on January 13, 1910. But for many its halcyon days occurred during the years just before World War II, even though radios were scarcely high fidelity by today's standards and FM, LP records, tape, and stereo were unknown to the general public.

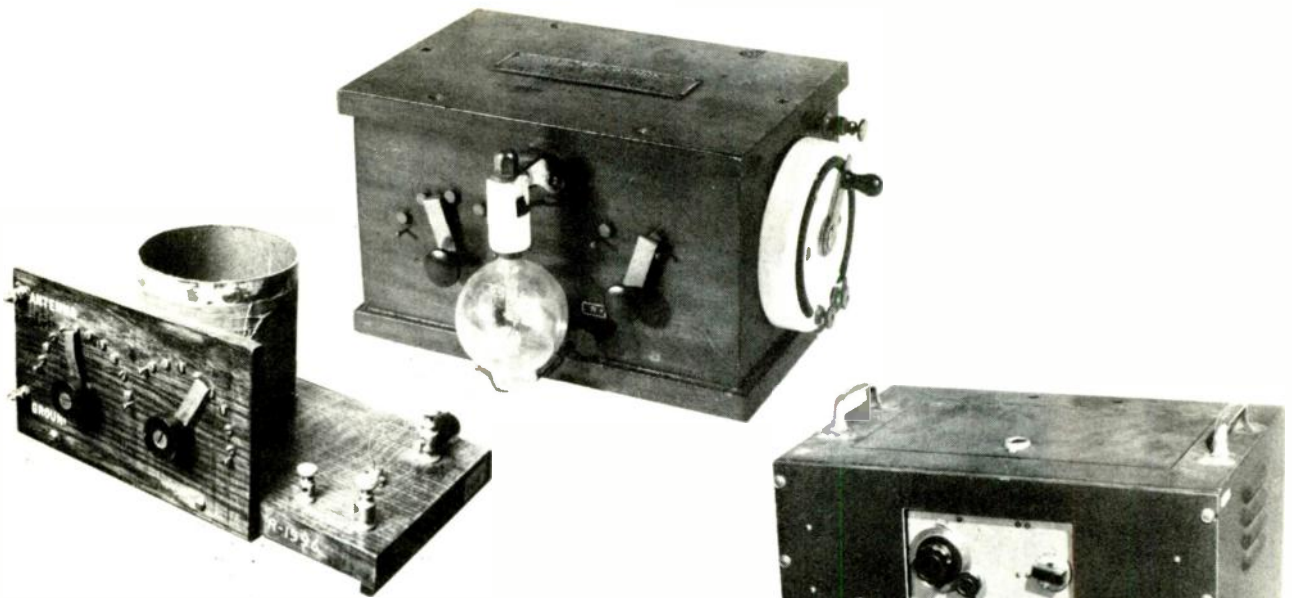
Network stations in the Thirties and early Forties offered a rich menu to their listeners. During a typical week one could hear the NBC Symphony under Arturo Toscanini, the New York Philharmonic on CBS, the Philadelphia Orchestra under Eugene Ormandy or Leopold Stokowski on Mu-

tual, the Metropolitan Opera's *Auditions of the Air* and its Saturday matinees with Milton Cross, *Ford Sunday Evening Hour* with the Detroit Symphony, and many others

Radio networks grew in the Thirties to take advantage of national advertising and to share interconnection costs and programs. For example, Mutual, now the largest national network, was incorporated in 1934 to contract with its member stations to air advertisers' programs and to contract with the American Telephone and Telegraph Company for the costly leased telephone lines to carry broadcasts from coast to coast. It originally linked only four stations: WOR and WGN, the strongest independents in the New York and Chicago markets, respectively; WLW in Cincinnati, the most powerful station in the country at that time with 500,000 watts; and WXYZ in Detroit, an independent station in what was then the fourth largest U.S. market.

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*Dr. Major, onetime physics professor and dean of the New York University Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, has been general manager of WONO, Syracuse, and now directs research and marketing at WFMT, Chicago.*



On the following pages, pictorial highlights of the radio as a cultural artifact. Top: a radio detector/receiver, c. 1912, sporting De Forest's audion; above: a simple crystal set, c. 1921; right: Armstrong's FM receiver, 1937 model.

Photos courtesy of Smithsonian Institution

All network and most local programming was live in the early years. Tapes had not yet appeared on the scene, although some programs were distributed on sixteen-inch, 33-rpm discs called "electrical transcriptions"; recorded music and programs had to be explicitly identified as such. When television arrived, radio's most popular features migrated to the new medium and their time slots were given to Top 40 record shows. As a result, local disc jockeys soon replaced network personalities. While the once-sovereign radio networks offered such services as short and frequent newscasts, talk, sportscasts, and other special events that required the immediacy of live coverage, each station now determined its entertainment format.

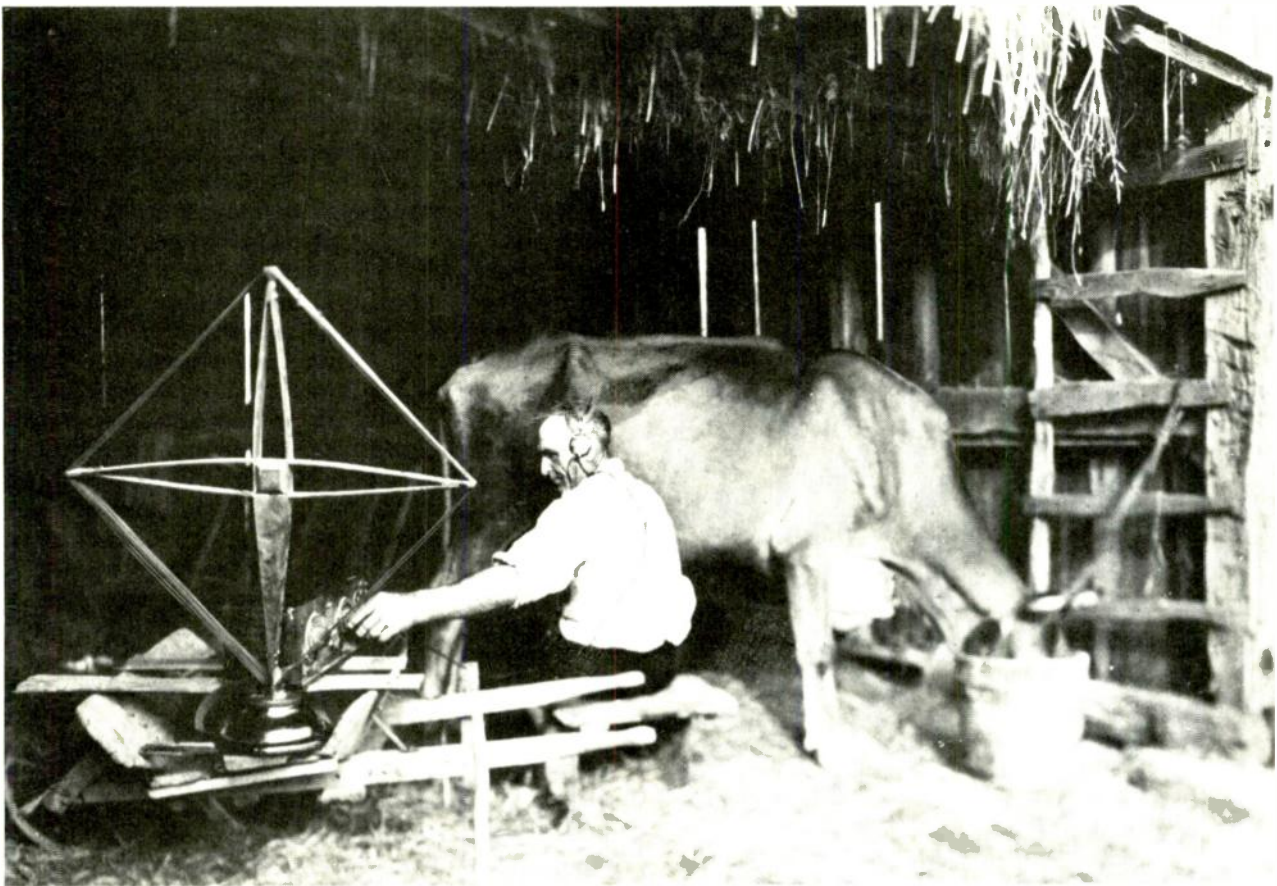
After World War II, when FM stations began to proliferate, classical music became the first major format to take advantage of the new high fidelity medium. But as the industry grew and station owners began to realize that there was money to be made in more commercial formats, listeners found fewer spots on their dials where they could hear the classics. Today the dominant formats are rock, country, and a genre variously characterized as background, "beautiful," or—less elegantly—wallpaper and elevator music.

What has happened to classical music programming? Despite a long downward slide, it has survived and has begun to regain some of its lost ground. A hard core of classical stations kept the faith, and many have been financially as well as

artistically successful. In recent years fewer commercial stations have abandoned the classical format, and noncommercial stations are growing in numbers and in time devoted to classical music. According to *Broadcasting Yearbook*, during the past five years the number of FM stations designating themselves classical has increased nearly two and one-half times, from eighty in 1973 to 195 in 1978. (The number of classical AM stations has remained more or less the same: 30 then, 27 now.) While these figures must be taken with a grain of salt, they at least indicate that a great many more broadcasters want to be counted among the classical stations.

Several stations that have faced financial problems critical enough to lead them to consider a change in format have come up against an extraordinary show of loyalty and determination from their listeners. Here are a few cases:

- When WONO in Syracuse was about to change hands in 1971 and listeners learned the new owner (who had promised to keep the classical format) proposed to sell the record library, they formed the Friends of WONO and halted the transfer. During the next six years, they contributed more than \$166,000 in donations and proceeds from ben-



Courtesy Library of Congress

In the Twenties, as in the Seventies, people took their radios everywhere—but had more to carry.

efit concerts to keep the station classical.

- When WNCN in New York announced in 1974 that it would switch to rock, some 20,000 listeners pledged \$500,000 within two weeks. The WNCN Listeners' Guild and another group called Classical Radio for Connecticut sought help from the courts, petitioned the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to deny renewal of the station's license, and urged a Chicago group headed by Ray Nordstrand and Charles Benton to file a competing application for its frequency. (Nordstrand said he agreed to enter the fight because he was angered by the claim of William F. Buckley Jr., chairman of Starr Broadcasting, which owned WNCN, that classical music radio could not be commercially successful.) In the end, Starr sold the station to GAF, which agreed to keep the format and invested \$1 million in construction and equipment. WNCN is now in the black—as a classical station.

- WEFM in Chicago, founded by the inventor of FM, Major Edwin Armstrong, was sold by Zenith Radio Corporation in 1972 to General Cinema, which announced a change to rock after thirty-two years of classical programming. The Citizens Committee to Save WEFM was responsible for keeping the format, under court order, until Febru-

ary 1978. A deal finally allowed the format change but required that the new owner spend more than \$200,000 to upgrade classical programming at two other Chicago stations.

- WTIC in Hartford abandoned classical programming for "standard popular" music in 1977, after more than twenty-five years, claiming it was losing money. Classical Radio for Connecticut—veterans of the WNCN battle—filed a petition to deny renewal of the license on the grounds that the station had given up an "economically and technologically viable" format and deprived listeners of diversity in programming. One affidavit showed that WTIC ranked first among all fine-arts stations in the country in its cumulative share of listeners and compared its claimed 1976 expenditures of \$581,000 with the \$186,000 spent that year by the typical FM station and the \$124,000 spent by a fine-arts station in a comparable market. The case is pending.

Not all such protesters' efforts have been successful, of course. And they have been made all the more difficult because the lines of authority are unclear. Despite frequent decisions by federal courts of appeal remanding cases to the FCC for consideration, the FCC maintains that it can't and



Courtesy of Smithsonian Institution

Traveling salesmen spread radio's gospel far and wide . . .

shouldn't be involved in regulating program formats. Its position is that the marketplace should determine which kinds of programming survive. The Supreme Court may ultimately be asked to decide the issue.

As one might expect, serious urban listeners are usually more fortunate than rural audiences in finding a fine-arts station on their radio dials. New York, Chicago, and San Francisco, for example, offer listeners a choice of two competing commercial classical FM stations, plus a number of college and other noncommercial stations. (New York, in fact, has two fine-arts AM stations, noncommer-

cial WNYC and the New York Times's WQXR.) True, there are commercial stations in Albuquerque and Newport News that play classical music most of the time, but in most smaller markets such programming is usually the exclusive province of noncommercial stations.

However you see the relations between commercial and noncommercial concert music broadcasters, they clearly compete more with each other for listeners and for corporate financing than they do with the local country and western, Top 40, or wallpaper music outlets. The competition, in fact, can be intense. In Los Angeles, for example, KFAC until recently had a monopoly as the only powerful classical station, with different programming on FM and AM (the latter's format being characterized as a "Top 40 approach" to classical programming). Then in 1976, KUSC at the University of Southern California switched to a classical format, established the goal of becoming the No. 1 concert and arts FM station in the country, and with government and university funding, boosted its power. Its outstanding programming and improved signal have attracted many new listeners in the region.

Commercial station executives have at times accused their noncommercial rivals of unfairness—offering "advertising" at cut rates while relying on public support from taxes and tax-deductible contributions to stay on the air. Of course, local advertising is the lifeblood of every commercial station. Legally, the only advertising that a noncommercial station can offer is in its program guide, which, like any other publication, is unregulated. But acknowledgment on the air of those who make a program possible—whether an individual, corporation, or foundation—is mandated by law. Is there any real difference between identifying an underwriter and advertising his business? Some argue that such identification alone is tantamount to advertising.

In 1971 the major fine-arts stations formed the Concert Music Broadcasters Association to work toward common goals: sharing information on programming, pooling audience research, publicizing the experiences of successful advertisers, trying to persuade classical record companies to supply recordings free or at nominal cost, trying to lower fees paid to music licensing organizations, and other projects. Eventually, however, the needs and priorities of commercial and noncommercial stations were found to diverge—the latter, for instance, had little use for seminars in selling advertising. In 1977 the CMBA's executive committee decided to limit membership to commercial stations, and the noncommercial broadcasters formed their own Music Personnel Conference. Even though there is often fierce competition between public and commercial stations specializing in serious programming, the two groups have

developed a symbiotic relationship, with commercial stations selling a significant number of programs to their noncommercial colleagues.

Noncommercial, educational, or "public" broadcasting has grown rapidly as the government has helped finance stations operated by nonprofit organizations such as high schools, colleges, community foundations, and local government bodies. Congress created and funds the Corporation for Public Broadcasting in order to support public radio and TV. To qualify for CPB money, a radio station must broadcast at least eighteen hours a day with at least 3,000 watts of power (250 if AM), employ at least five full-time, year-round professional staff members, operate on an annual budget of \$80,000 or more, and have at least one adequately equipped studio and a control room.

A recent report from the Carnegie Commission on the Future of Public Broadcasting, which President Carter said would serve as a "focal point" between the government and the noncommercial broadcasters, recommended an increase in funding for public broadcasting (including TV, which gets the lion's share) from some half a billion dollars (of which the federal government contributes a third) to \$1.2 billion (with the government contributing half). Part of the additional revenues would come from a tax on commercial broadcasters for their use of public airwaves. At the same time, in an attempt to "insulate" programs from political pressure and to ensure that the funds go into programming rather than administration, the commission recommended the replacement of CPB by two new entities: a Public Telecommunications Trust, which would manage the money, and a Program Services Endowment, which would develop programs for radio and television and which, it is hoped, would be as resistant as possible to pressures from the government that finances it.

There is, of course, one major programming service for noncommercial radio. In 1970, ninety public radio stations founded National Public Radio to produce, acquire, and distribute programs to them. It, like noncommercial television's Public Broadcasting Service (PBS), is financed to a great extent by CPB and governed by a board of directors comprising both station representatives and public members. NPR has more than 200 affiliates now, the vast majority being FM stations. Each pays a \$1,500 membership fee the first year and \$3,530 yearly thereafter. An average affiliate will program NPR shows about 20% of the time.

If the large television networks have a New York or Hollywood flavor, NPR's flavor is Washington, D.C. Its production center there enables it easily to offer its affiliates coverage of congressional hearings and conferences and other Washington-based events. Additionally, it weekly distributes some 35 hours of information programs, including *Options*



... and even Southampton (L I) debutantes soon succumbed

in *Education*, *National Town Meeting*, and the award-winning daily news magazine *All Things Considered*, and 16 hours of cultural programs such as *Voices in the Wind*, *International Concert Hall*, *Folk Festival U.S.A.*, and *American Music Sampler*. Decentralization of program sources was a basic principle from the beginning, and NPR relies on its members and other stations to contribute about half the programs it distributes.

NPR offers only eight hours of classical music per week, including the Metropolitan Opera's *Auditions*, broadcasts of the San Francisco Opera and the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, and



The "high fidelity" era of the Fifties made AM/FM receivers, like Harman Kardon's above, a familiar sight in advertising.

such special events as the performances of La Scala Opera Company on its first American tour—all of which are exclusive to noncommercial stations. Affiliates that have chosen a classical format must supplement these few hours with programs produced locally, syndicated nationally, or drawn from NPR's tape library.

Through national syndication, subscription concerts of the "big five" symphony orchestra—Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, New York, and Philadelphia—and many others are regularly taped, duplicated, and distributed nationwide. Most of these broadcast tapes are produced by fine-arts stations: Boston and New York by Boston's WCRB, the Chicago Symphony and Lyric Opera by WFMT, Cleveland by WCLV, Philadelphia by WFLN, New York City Opera by WNCN, San Francisco Opera and Symphony Orchestra by KKHI, to mention a few. The newest are the Milwaukee Symphony and the Houston Grand Opera, both distributed by WFMT. WCLV also syndicates a series of musical programs taped at Baldwin-Wallace College, the Cleveland Institute of Music, Kent State University, Oberlin College, and the University of Akron; these tapes, financed by the institutions, are available to stations without charge. For fourteen years the Library of Congress has taped its live performances of chamber music groups for subscribers. Parkway Productions, in Bethesda, Maryland, offers tapes of the Baltimore, St. Louis, and San Francisco Symphonies, as well as a variety of other fine-arts programming total-

ing about forty hours a week, to stations and cable television systems.

Many stations use a library of outstanding features combining music and commentary, such as Karl Haas's *Adventures in Good Music*, syndicated to more than sixty stations by WCLV, Cleveland, and *First Hearing*, produced by WQXR in New York and distributed by Parkway Productions. A large collection of productions by foreign broadcasters is available, often without charge. The Salzburg, Vienna, and Bregenz music festivals are distributed by the Broadcasting Foundation of America, a nonprofit educational institution in New York that also provides a variety of programs on the other arts, science, education, and travel, as well as news analyses and press reviews from abroad. Other countries import programs from the U.S. as well, incidentally: The BBC regularly broadcasts concerts by the Boston and Chicago Symphonies, sometimes live.

Who pays for these programs? Three patterns have developed in financing the broadcast rights and the costs of duplication and distribution. The first is full sponsorship: The sponsor pays for all production and distribution costs, as well as for any program time on commercial stations. For many years Texaco has sponsored the Met's Saturday matinees in this way; Allstate Insurance supports the Chicago Lyric Opera, and Tenneco the Houston Grand Opera.

The second method is barter: The sponsor assumes production and distribution costs in return

for several announcements during the program. The show itself is free to those who broadcast it, but a commercial station must carry the commercials; on the other hand, time is provided for local advertising sold by the station. This is the arrangement used by Exxon for its New York Philharmonic broadcasts, Amoco for the Chicago Symphony, Pioneer Electronics for the New York City Opera, and Allis-Chalmers for the Milwaukee Symphony.

The third is straight purchase (or rental): Unlike the first two procedures, here the station must pay for the program. The Boston Symphony, Boston Pops, Cleveland, Philadelphia, and virtually all of the feature programs are available for a fee that often depends on the size of the market. For example, the cost to the ninety-five subscribing stations of the weekly Cleveland Orchestra tapes ranges from \$30 to \$150. Each station generally must find its own local sponsor or underwriter, although some paid-for programs, such as those from the Library of Congress, prohibit sponsors.

Fine-arts stations are offering more and more creative local programming, often with music broadcast live. Each year WNCN broadcasts the fourteen concerts by the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, in addition to a year-long series of live chamber concerts from midtown Manhattan. And WFMT, besides broadcasting live the opening nights of the Lyric Opera, presents two live noontime concerts each week from downtown Chicago and tapes local artists for *Music in Chicago* and *Profiles*.

Another popular use of classical radio has been stereo simulcasts with televised concerts. Many *Great Performances* presentations on PBS have had vastly improved sound as a result of such combinations, as did the Chicago Symphony telecasts last winter. A network of two dozen concert music radio stations last fall simulcast Vladimir Horowitz' recital on NBC-TV.

Classical stations have traditionally been in the forefront of technical advances in sound and radio. After all, classical music requires a wider dynamic range and thus a better signal-to-noise ratio than pop music. Home audio equipment is now so advanced that it reveals deficiencies in the broadcast signals of many FM stations, which have been hard pressed to keep up with the state of the art.

None of the new technologies appears to be more significant than satellite transmission. As PBS already does with its television outlets, NPR and Mutual are working to connect their stations across the country by satellite, instead of by land lines and terrestrial microwave. In January the FCC approved the satellite linkup of NPR member stations, probably to take effect some time next year.

How does it work? Briefly, a communications satellite (such as Westar or Satcom) is launched in a "geosynchronous" orbit, rotating with Earth

### "A Refreshing Alternative"

Last June a one-man classical-music radio station had its license renewed against long odds: It had failed, according to the Federal Communications Commission, to ascertain community problems and needs and to propose news or public affairs programming to meet those needs—all contrary to the rules of the FCC. The station also faced a challenge for the same frequency from a well-financed group active in state politics.

Since 1964, Simon Geller has run WVCA, a 3,000-watt FM station in Gloucester, Massachusetts, as its owner, manager, program director, announcer, and chief engineer, broadcasting about eighty-five hours a week. He has been unable to afford any help. From 1971 through 1976, his income after expenses totaled only \$11,708, of which all but about \$300 came from contributions from devoted listeners to his *North Shore Concert Hall*.

When Geller's license came up for renewal in 1975, the FCC received two other applications for the channel—from a religious group, which was turned down, and from a company jointly headed by a Massachusetts politician and by a former news director at a Medford station. Geller could not afford a lawyer. His short, plaintive letters to the FCC were in stark contrast to the polished, documented, and convincing missives filed by his opponent's experienced Washington attorneys. The rival application promised not only coverage of four times the area and seven times the population served by WVCA, but longer broadcasting hours with a staff of six providing a wide variety of music—including folk, jazz, and thirty-six hours weekly of classical music—and public affairs programming responsive to every community need.

Though WVCA carries no news and next to no public affairs programs, at the commission's three-day public hearing in Gloucester thirty-five area residents testified that the station is indeed a "service" to the community. One witness asserted that virtually no one in Gloucester "gives more to the community ... for less return" than Simon Geller.

The decision went in his favor. The FCC's administrative law judge, John H. Conlin, observed: "To its listeners the station is a priceless resource and a refreshing alternative to the stereotyped formats which, in their view, dominate the radio dial. Though by commission definition it is almost entirely 'entertainment,' the testimony establishes that WVCA's classical music programming also conveys moral and spiritual values and is, in the minds of various witnesses, an educational force as well."

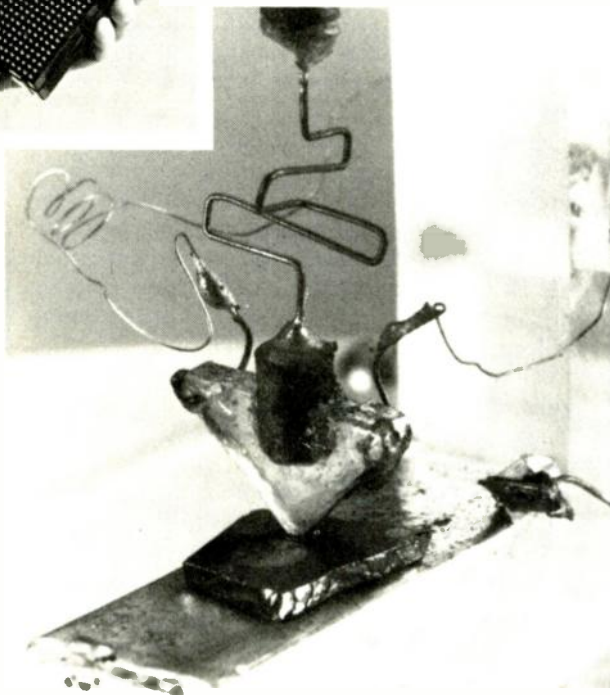
22,300 miles above a fixed point on the equator. It houses from twelve to twenty-four "transponders," devices that receive a signal, amplify it, and transmit it back to Earth on another frequency. Depending on the satellite's transmitting antenna, the signal can be focused on an area as small as Alaska or over the entire U.S.

The station transmitting to the satellite is called an "uplink," and the receiving station a "downlink." Most uplinks are major installations located at strategic points across the country. (United Video of Tulsa, however, has applied to the FCC for permission to operate a portable uplink mounted on a flatbed trailer truck.) Downlinks are becoming smaller and simpler: NPR will use receiving antennas, or dishes, only fifteen feet in

Bottom: one of the first transistors assembled at Bell Laboratories in the late Fifties, and one of the first transistorized radios it made possible. Directly below: a prototype of the "downlink" to be used by National Public Radio.



Courtesy of NPR



Courtesy of Bell Labs

diameter, and Mutual proposes equipping each of its affiliates with a ten-foot dish in a setup costing less than \$10,000.

A satellite relay is cheaper, higher in quality, and more reliable than the usual land lines. Quality and reliability are far superior because the signal is relayed at only one point—the satellite—instead of at a hundred or more land repeater stations. And its costs are independent of distance, unlike those of connections by wire or microwave. Four high fidelity audio channels relayed by satellite will, Mutual estimates, cost less than a single low fidelity audio channel sent by land to each affiliate. This is sure to have a major impact on classical stations. With distribution costs so low and audio quality so high, there is a distinct possibility of a coast-to-coast commercial fine-arts network like those just authorized for public stations.

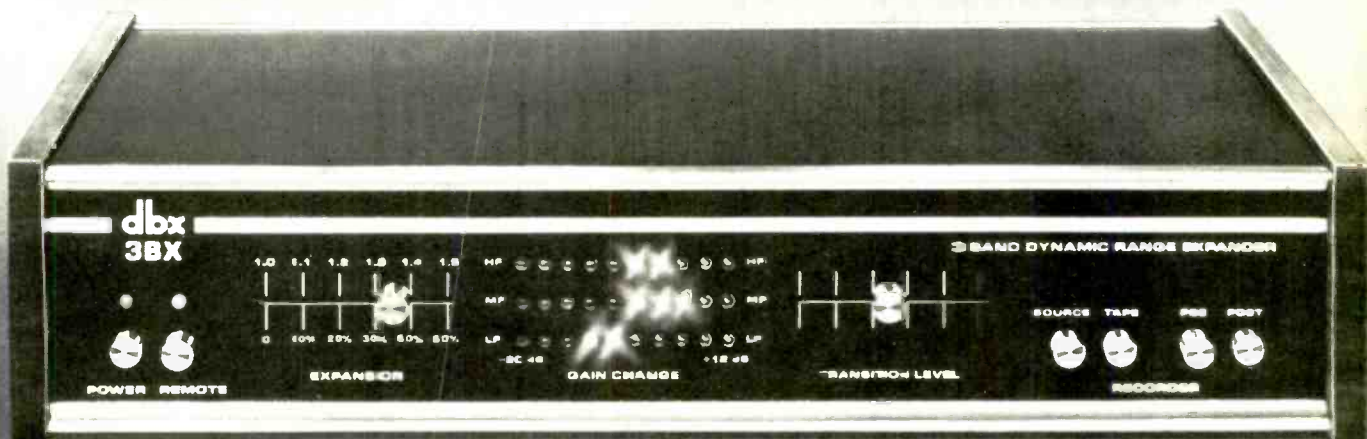
Fine-arts audiences may also benefit from cable, or community antenna television. Originally, CATV enabled a community with poor TV reception to share the cost of a single strategically placed antenna and associated equipment. Cable has made little headway in many metropolitan areas, simply because reception and programming have been adequate—and the cost of underground cabling prohibitive. These systems now make available an extraordinary variety of programming: first-run movies (Home Box Office, Showtime, etc.), live sports events, specials, news—much of it relayed by satellite exclusively for cable subscribers and not otherwise broadcast.

Some cable systems have found it profitable to offer subscribers audio services as well—classical music in particular. When the new "Qube" two-way cable system in Columbus, Ohio, asked its audience what audio they would like, the vote was overwhelmingly for classical music. Tulsa Cable TV not only plays classical tapes twenty-four hours a day for its subscribers (along with three other musical formats), but also provides the fine-arts programming from WRR-FM in Dallas, relayed by United Video, a microwave common carrier. Lincoln Center has announced that by 1980 it will offer a pay-TV service to cable systems nationwide—via satellite—with eighty-four hours a week of stereo concerts, operas, and other performances, some live. The center expects the service to make up its deficit.

Radio stations that have retained the classical format are deeply committed to it, and the growing support of advertisers and underwriters, improved technology and broader programming have been big factors in enabling them to sustain themselves. But the temptation to switch to formats that seem more profitable remains. Ultimately the key to the continued survival and growth of fine-arts stations is audience support and increased recognition of that support by sponsors and underwriters.



# Restore the impact of "live" ...easy as 1-2-3.



No matter how accurate your stereo system is, it's only as good as the records and tapes you play on it—and they leave much to be desired. The recording process does some terrible things to live music, and one of the worst is robbing it of dynamic range, the key element which gives music its impact.

Fortunately dbx has developed a whole line of linear dynamic range expanders which can restore lost dynamic range.

**1BX.** The 1BX is the most sophisticated one-band expander on the market. Its RMS level detector incorporates an infrasonic filter to prevent mistracking caused by turntable rumble and record warp.

**2BX.** The 2BX divides the frequency spectrum into two bands and expands each separately. It doesn't allow the bass to influence the vocals or midrange instruments, and in strongly percussive music, that's important.

**3BX.** The 3BX is the state-of-the-art, but with the introduction of the 3BX-R Remote Control option, it's more flexible and more fun than ever. The 3BX divides music into three frequency bands. Low bass will not influence the midrange. And midrange crescendos will not boost low level highs, so operation is virtually inaudible. For complex musical material, the 3BX is the best way to restore dynamic range.

All dbx expanders have design features in common. All utilize true RMS level detection. All feature a program-dependent release time, for natural, life-like sound. All are true stereo expanders that maintain rock-solid stereo imaging. And all dbx linear expanders have a pleasant benefit—up to 20 dB of noise reduction.

The 3BX is still the standard. But now there is a family of dbx expanders designed to bring any system one step closer to "live."

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The Supersystem KP-88G  
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It doesn't mix noise with music. Ever.

And for good reason.  
Dolby.\*

We've taken the same noise reduction system known to professional recording studios for years and put it on the road. And into a deck that already had the most impressive reproduction specs in the business.

What does all this mean in stereo talk? A signal-to-noise of 60 dB. And a wow and

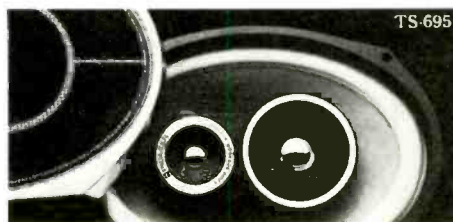
flutter of less than 0.13%.  
(WRMS)

In music that means sound as clear as a bell.

Team that with one of our GM-120 amplifiers and a set of TS-695 speakers and you get music that's both strong and beautiful.

And to top it off, it's Pioneer. One of the world's most respected audio manufacturers.

But let your ears decide for themselves.



Take a listen to the Supersystem KP-88G at your Pioneer dealer.

If you buy it and you're still hearing strange sounds, pull off the road.

\*Dolby is a registered trademark of Dolby Laboratories, Inc.

## SUPER SYSTEMS BY PIONEER®

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# CAR STEREO: Dawn of the High Fidelity Era

by Robert Angus

A YEAR AGO, the phrase "highway hi-fi"—though it was on everyone's lips—was more of a promise than a reality. Today, that promise is being realized, and things are taking place inside the little world of car stereo that you'd never have believed possible then. From what turned up at the Winter Consumer Electronics Show, this is what you'll be seeing in vehicles this summer:

- A selection of audiophile-feature cassette decks with tape switches and Dolby—including a two-speed model.
- Microcomponents, originally designed for the living room, adapted for use in vans and boats.
- A new version of quadriphonics—or, if that's not to your liking, new time-delay systems—designed specifically for cars.
- In speakers, still more offspring from high fidelity parents.
- The introduction of TV audio into the car.
- And more new equalizers, preamps, power amps, complete head ends, and other electronics.

If you're old enough to remember the beginning of the "audio" era in the early 1950s, that's about the state of the car stereo art. Mobile-sound buffs have passed through the initial do-it-yourself phase and the first generation of high fidelity car components. The current phase is one of combined innovation and refinement—the introduction of new ideas and technology while making last year's ideas work.

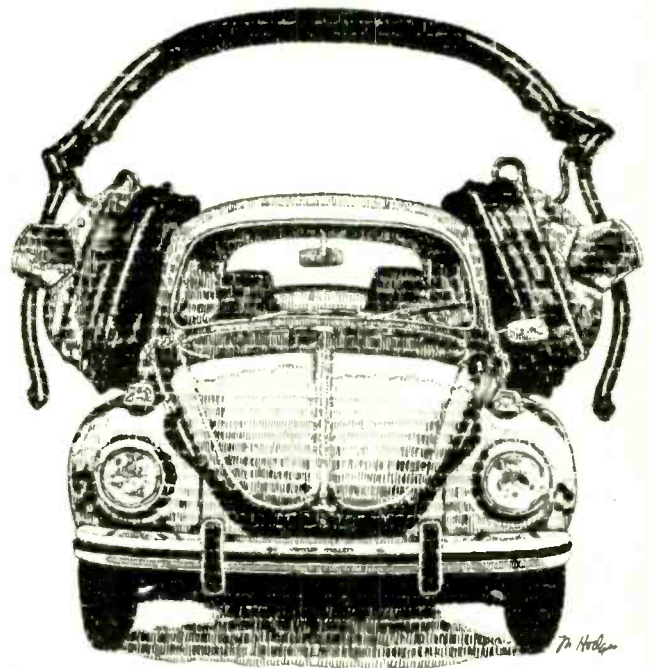
Metal-tape technology is a case in point. In one sense, every car cassette player now on the road and on dealers' shelves is capable of coping with metal tape, since the really difficult job—that of recording on the new tape—is not involved. A number of manufacturers have grasped this simple truth and proclaimed their playback-only car decks "metal-tape ready." Some go this simplistic approach one better by including proper equalization (the 70-microsecond curve originally devised for chrome) for the new tape.

B.I.C.'s C-1 car cassette deck, its first highway component, goes still further. The \$250 deck is the first two-speed cassette player for the car. Since there aren't any cassettes recorded commercially

at 3 $\frac{3}{4}$  ips, this feature is mainly of value to people who own a B.I.C. two-speed home deck, so that they can enjoy their homemade super-fi cassettes in the car as well. The C-1, incidentally, includes a 24-watt amplifier.

You've been reading elsewhere in these pages about microcomponents, those dictionary-sized power amps, preamps, tuners, and receivers that match the performance (but may exceed the price) of medium-range audio equipment. Although they're intended for the living room, bedroom, or study, their compact size and capable performance make them increasingly attractive for mobile use in applications where AC power is available—which means recreational vehicles, larger power boats, and some vans.

In addition to the typical micro separates from such companies as Mitsubishi and Technics (discussed in the new-components preview article last month), Randix and Rotel offer receivers with tiny



companion bookshelf speakers. The Rotel RV-555 system, for example, costs \$310 and contains a 20-watt AM/FM receiver that measures 11¼ by 8½ by 6 inches. An optional 24-volt DC converter (\$100) that plugs into the cigarette lighter drives the system. (Rotel says the receiver soon will be available separately). The Rotel speakers, like many minis offered by such component companies as Ultra-linear, ADS, Braun, and JVC, originally were designed for home listening—as extension speakers. But once power to drive them found its way into vehicles, they moved in and began multiplying.

The addition of subwoofers, to form complete speaker systems with the minis, began last year in the home. This year, thanks to Visonik, it has spread to the car with the four-piece Auto-Sub costing \$400: a 7-inch S-600 bass unit requiring an enclosure of at least ½ cubic foot, a pair of David 5000 satellite speakers, and an AS-1000 amplifier. The two-way acoustic suspension satellites are rated to handle up to 50 watts over the range between 50 Hz and 25 kHz. The AS-1000 couples two 35-watt channels for the satellites with a 70-watt channel for the subwoofer. Crossover is at 160 Hz.

Pioneer Electronics' most striking contribution to the car this year isn't a new speaker or power amp (although it has a wide assortment of both) or even high fidelity, but a sort of electronic whoopee cushion that lets you feel the bass. The \$70 Bodysonic cushion fits against the small of your back; a matching \$80 amplifier feeds it with bass impulses, which the cushion transmits to your spinal column.

Remember quadraphonics? Well, they're back—at least for cars, and at least in the plans of car-stereo designer Jim Fosgate, who has teamed up with Tate Electronics to introduce the latest incarnation of SQ. According to Fosgate, his Tetra 1 four-channel amplifier/equalizer uses the latest SQ IC chip to yield a minimum 35 dB of channel separation with less than 0.05% distortion. The result is an amplifier that claims 50 watts per channel from 20 Hz to 20 kHz without exceeding the decoder's distortion spec. Fosgate says Tetra will do anything a good digital time-delay system can do and do it better. Although the system is designed for cassettes or broadcasts of SQ recordings from Columbia, Angel, and other companies, Fosgate claims it will derive quadraphonic effects from other matrixed or stereo material.

If most audiophiles consider four-channel as an idea whose time has passed, they tend to regard time-delay systems as an idea whose time is coming. Last fall, Sound Concepts launched a mobile version of its analog time delay, the \$300 (\$340 with remote control) Model 1060 Concert Machine. The 1060 extracts ambience information from the music played through the front speakers, processes it through the delay system, and distributes it to the car's back speakers. Delay time can be varied from 10 to 70 milliseconds; power output to

the back channels is 7 watts into 3.2 ohms with distortion of less than 1% at clipping. Signal-to-noise ratio is claimed to be greater than 64 dB.

Fujitsu Ten, a company that seemingly came out of nowhere last year with an extensive and complete line of head-end units and car components, added its own version of time delay this year with the RV-130EX-1. For \$180, you get 2,048 stages of delay—enough, Fujitsu Ten says, to re-create virtually any type of listening environment inside virtually any moving vehicle. A three-position adjustable time control delays signals to a pair of rear-channel speakers by 500, 1,500, or 3,000 milliseconds. At the same time, a window display in the readout panel shows the normal audio signal in red and the chosen delay in green over it. The RV-130EX-1 boasts a frequency response of 50 Hz to 12 kHz with a claimed S/N ratio of better than 50 dB.

Recently I mentioned to a British friend the intrusion—local law permitting—of television, in the form of the Roadstar 2141, into the tidy world of highway entertainment, asking if he'd like to have one. "Whatever for?" he replied. "The only time I can get away from the dashed thing is when I'm motoring." If you don't feel that way, the 2141 is a \$270 in-dash AM/FM/cassette ensemble that throws in the audio portion of the television band.

Sony has a system that delivers a color picture either off the air or from a portable Betamax deck for \$1,800. There's even a rack to hold the SL-300 AC/DC deck and the KV-5100 5-inch TV portable. If that picture isn't big enough, you can substitute virtually any Sony battery-portable receiver. It's even possible to add a color camera (HVC-1000, \$1,400) or a PCM adapter for the ultimate recorded sound quality. You may not be able to fit all this under the dash of your Volkswagen, but this system is designed primarily for RVs, boats, and the rear seats in those stretched Mercedes and Cadillac limousines—certainly not for drivers in transit.

Jensen, a company that pioneered good-sounding loudspeakers for do-it-yourself audiophiles in the early 1950s, was one of the first home component makers to plunge into car stereo with speakers that sounded better than the \$5.00 replacement models available three or four years ago. Since then, it seems as though half the major home-speaker manufacturers have jumped in with drivers and systems of their own. Latest to do so is Infinity Systems, whose InfiniTesimal costs \$175. It contains a dual-voice-coil woofer with a 5-inch polypropylene cone rated down to 65 Hz and an electromagnetic-induction tweeter in an enclosure that measures 11 by 6½ by 5½ inches. According to the company, the speaker will respond to as little as 10 watts of power or handle as much as 65 watts.

Dahlquist, a leader in the current trend toward phase adjustment through driver positioning, has entered the automotive field with the three-way ALS-3 system. Priced at \$250 per pair including all mounting hardware, the speakers are expected to

find their way into homes as well. Dahlquist says the ALS-3 is efficient enough to be driven by the amps built into typical auto equipment without a booster, but will handle inputs up to 30 watts. The impedance is 4 ohms.

Epicure, which entered car-stereo speakers last year, has another model—the LS-35 (\$75 per pair)—and the LCS level-control system (free with the speakers or \$40 by itself). The LS-35 is a 3½-inch full-range driver designed to augment rear-deck systems and help overcome road noise at driving speeds. Ferro-fluid is used to increase power-handling capacity. The LCS permits proper balancing of front and rear speakers to accommodate rear-seat passengers as well as those up front. It is rated to handle up to 60 watts per channel.

Nothing daunted, Jensen has updated its offerings in a Series II. There's a \$70 tweeter/midrange module that consists of a 2-inch midrange cone and 2-inch piezoelectric tweeter occupying a total space of 3 by 5½ by 1½ inches. It claims frequency response between 1.2 and 40 kHz, ±5 dB. A 5¼-inch full-range model, the Coax II, is priced at \$90. Mounting depth is 2¼ inches, and there's a 2-inch piezo tweeter inside the 5-inch woofer. Frequency response (again, ±5 dB) is rated between 90 Hz and 40 kHz. A 6-by-9-inch coaxial rated at 90 watts consists of an oval woofer and 3-inch tweeter; it costs \$100 and is designed for rear-deck mounting. The Triax II is another 6-by-9 system, this one costing \$140 and claiming a power-handling capability of 100 watts. There's a long-excursion oval woofer, 3-inch midrange cone, and 2-inch piezo tweeter; mounting depth is 3¾ inches.

Craig—an old hand at car stereo and a name not unknown in audio circles—has two new speakers as well. The 5½-inch R-732 is a \$100 full-range unit; the R-772, a 6-by-9-inch bass-reflex system for rear-deck mounting, has yet to be priced. Sanyo has added many models to its already comprehensive line. In addition to speakers, its Audio/Spec series features such items as graphic equalizers, sendust alloy heads and Dolby noise reduction in its premium tape equipment, digital tuner displays, power displays, and amps rated at up to 50 watts per channel without biamping in the high-spec, \$250 PA-6120, whose biamped-tweeter outputs add 10 watts to each side.

ADS, vanguard producer of home/auto mini speakers, has introduced a \$200 stereo amplifier (actually the circuitry that powered the back channels in the company's original home ambience device) called the Power Plate 100. Emphasizing that it is designed to work primarily with real-world, 4-ohm speakers (not just resistors), ADS rates it at 50 watts per channel, 20 Hz to 20 kHz, at less than 0.08% distortion, with noise 90 dB below rated power. The circuitry includes protection against reversed line-voltage polarity, shorted output, overload, overheat (despite massive heat sinking), and speaker overload. The pancake shape allows

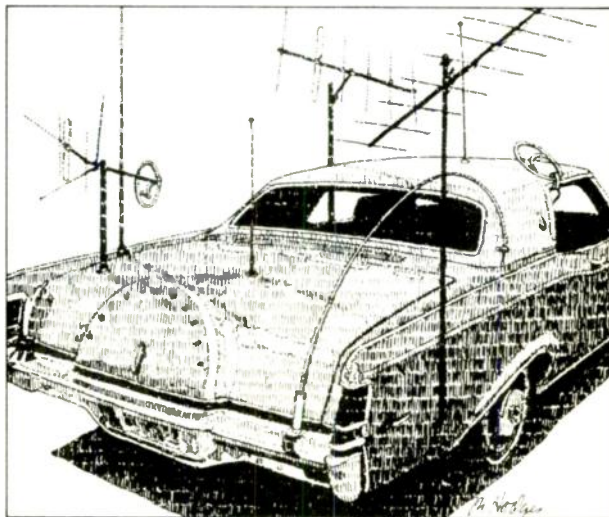
the amp to be stowed beneath the seat of most cars.

Among some of the season's other interesting product debuts are electronics from Clarion, Realistic, Sparkomatic, Grundig, Panasonic, and Royal Sound. The latter has abandoned home equipment altogether in favor of a growing line designed for maximum performance in mobile applications of all sorts. It has extended its warranty to three years, which it believes is a "first" in this field.

Clarion's GT-501E is a \$250 stereo FM/AM tuner with electronic scanning and a Clean Z circuit designed to reduce ignition, high-voltage-line, and neon-sign noise. For \$190 more, you can enjoy the companion cassette deck, GD-501E, which claims a S/N ratio better than 64 dB and wow and flutter of 0.11%. The GE-501E five-band graphic equalizer (\$55) and an integrated 15-watt-per-channel control amp, the \$135 GA-502E, complete the series.

The ESO Series 70 amp and Series EQ PA equalizer/preamp—\$178 and \$204, respectively—are Grundig's latest car component offerings. The former claims 35 watts per channel from 20 Hz to 20 kHz with no more than 0.2% THD. Radio Shack's Realistic brand is a relative newcomer to car componentry, although for years the company has been supplying standard radios and cassette units for cars. There are two five-band equalizer/boosters, an \$80 30-watt model containing front/rear balance control and tape/radio switch, and a \$100 model offering 40 watts with illuminated power meters, fader control, and tape/radio switch. Panasonic's latest is the CQ-8700 AM/FM tuner/preamp/deck with auto reverse and Dolby, electronic tuning, digital clock, a five-station memory, and a price tag of \$680. Sparkomatic has two lines. A broad range of electronics—including AM, FM, digital-clock, cassette, and eight-track features in various combinations—was announced late last year. The companion line of loudspeakers runs from standard coaxials up to the three-way SK-525 system.

Happy motoring. ●



# If you're happy with your car stereo, it's probably because you don't know any better.

You can blame Detroit for pulling the wool over your ears.

They put an FM radio and tape deck in your dashboard and told you it was "stereo."

It wasn't.

They only gave you the start of a stereo system.

The rest of it, you get from us.

It's called the Fosgate system.

And it makes your car sound as good as your living room. Maybe better.

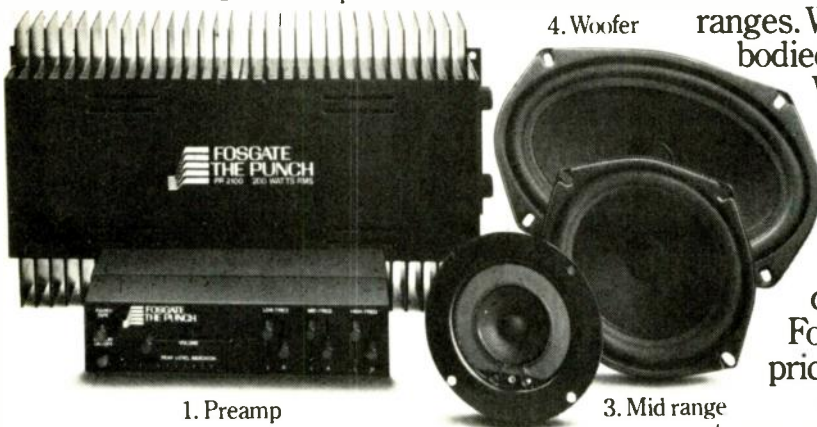
Take our Punch 2100 for instance.

Power amp, preamp, and your choice of speakers.

The power amp gives you 100 watts RMS per channel. The kind of power you need for clean, high fidelity playback on the highway.

With less than .05% THD, you'll hear no distortion all the way from 20 HZ to 20 KHZ.

2. Power amp



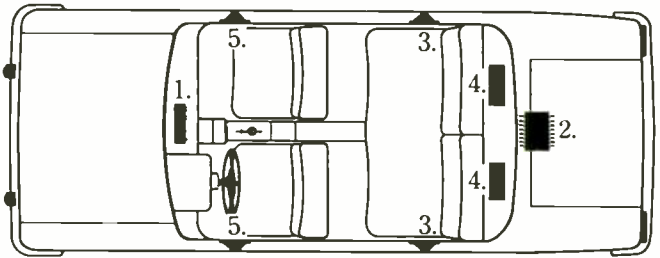
1. Preamp

5. Tweeter

3. Mid range

4. Woofer

The preamp has LED readouts. And an active equalizer circuit with 216 different ways to shape the sound to your personal taste.



For your car, we make components good enough for your home.

When it comes to speakers, very few can handle the power of the Punch.

None can do it for the reasonable price of Fosgate's speakers.

When your Fosgate system is installed, you can crank up the volume so it literally vibrates your rear-view mirror.

With rich, well-defined bass. With brilliance and clarity in the mid and high ranges. With accurate separation and full-bodied imaging.

Without audible distortion.

Even the most demanding audiophile would be impressed.

Hear what you've been missing all these years. Visit any respectable car stereo dealer and listen to the four Fosgate systems in four different price ranges.

Once you know what real car stereo sounds like, you'll never be happy with anything less than Fosgate.

## The Fosgate System

It's as far as you can go in car stereo.

CIRCLE 17 ON PAGE 105

# THE UNTAMED PHILLY

by Herbert Kupferberg

Once exclusively Columbia's, twice exclusively RCA's, the Philadelphia Orchestra is now recording for EMI as well. Are Sheffield and Telarc next?

For the more you 'ave known o' the others  
The less you will settle to one.

—RUDYARD KIPLING

LIKE A ONCE-CONSTANT LOVER suddenly discovering the pleasures of playing the field, the Philadelphia Orchestra has abandoned its traditional policy of recording for only one company at a time. Its recordings are being made available on three American labels—Angel, Columbia, and RCA. And it would surprise no one, least of all the orchestra's management, if others were added later. Says manager Joseph Santarlasci: "The time of exclusivity in the music business is ending, not only for us, but for other orchestras too. We hope and expect to continue our present affiliations, but we've also had other inquiries."

The Philadelphia had been strictly a one-label orchestra ever since 1917, when it was first lured into the studios of the Victor Talking Machine Company in Camden, New Jersey, to record Brahms's *Hungarian Dances*, Nos. 5 and 6, under Leopold Stokowski. Between 1968 and 1976, it had an exclusive contract with RCA, and it will keep turning out records for that label, though on a reduced scale. Meanwhile, Columbia will go on marketing the whopping catalog of recordings amassed during the twenty-five-year period, ending in 1968, when it was the orchestra's sole outlet.

In March, the Philadelphia entered a state of recording bigamy, if not yet profligacy, when EMI issued on the Angel label the first three of ten recordings it is making with the orchestra: Sibelius' *Four Legends* conducted by Eugene Ormandy and, under Ormandy's heir apparent, Riccardo Muti, Beethoven's *Symphony No. 7* and Stravinsky's *Firebird Suite* backed with Musorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*.

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Herbert Kupferberg's books include *Those Fabulous Philadelphians: The Life and Times of a Great Orchestra* and *The Mendelssohns: Three Generations of Genius*.

Angel's appearance on the scene inaugurates what might be called the Battle of the Halls. The celebrated Philadelphia Sound has been enregistered in a variety of sites during its long history, including the Academy of Music (its home auditorium) and the old Broadwood Hotel, which later became the Philadelphia Athletic Club. For many years RCA, like Columbia before it, has utilized the seventh-floor ballroom of an old hall on Broad and Race Streets, now the Shriners' Scottish Rite Cathedral, though most people continue to refer to it as Town Hall. EMI, however, is holding its sessions in the old Philadelphia Metropolitan Opera House, a huge 4,100-seat auditorium built by Oscar Hammerstein in 1908, during his war with New York's Metropolitan Opera Company. The orchestra has performed and recorded before in the Old Met, as it is known, for Stokowski used to give occasional concerts there and made his acclaimed recording of Schoenberg's *Gurre-Lieder* (re-released as RCA Victrola AVM 2-2017, May 1977) on its stage in 1932.

EMI began looking for a new site only after it found that it wasn't getting good results at Town Hall. "We recorded Hindemith's *Symphonic Metamorphoses of Themes by Weber* there with Ormandy," Angel's John Coveney says. "We used the equipment as we found it, already in place. We found the recording unsatisfactory and scrapped it."

RCA officials, who expect to continue working in Town Hall, suggest that perhaps EMI's British engineers didn't know how to use the site properly. "You have to know the hall," says RCA producer Jay David Saks. "and it's possible that they didn't. Many great recordings have been made in Town Hall."

In any event, with engineer John Kurlander, Coveney set out on a tour of Philadelphia on a rainy October day in 1977. After visiting fifteen proposed places and rejecting them all for one reason or another, they gloomily headed back to the center of the city. Coveney spotted the immense

Old Met, and, without knowing what it was or had been, they entered. They found that the building, which is currently used as a church and evangelical center, had just the resonances and reverberation times they needed.

Working amid the religious pictures and icons in the auditorium, EMI's engineers since early 1978 have taped all but one of the projected LPs at the Old Met. In addition to the Sibelius, Ormandy has directed Hindemith's *Symphonic Metamorphoses* and *Concert Music for Strings and Brass*, Bartók's *Music for Strings, Percussion, and Celesta* and the *Miraculous Mandarin Suite*, and Tchaikovsky's *Violin Concerto* and *Sérénade mélancolique*, with Itzhak Perlman as soloist. And besides the performances already released, Muti has conducted the Beethoven Sixth Symphony and Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*.

As glad as EMI is to have the services of Ormandy, it was Muti who was the key to the British company's move upon Philadelphia. Many expect the thirty-six-year-old Italian, now principal guest conductor of the Philadelphia, to take over the podium from the seventy-nine-year-old Ormandy in a year or so. From EMI's standpoint, that would indeed be a case—to use Figaro's happy image in *The Barber of Seville*—of the cheese falling on the macaroni, for it has an exclusive contract with Muti through 1981 and obviously would be in a unique position to record him with his own orchestra. And Coveney says that Muti, whom EMI regards as "the hottest young conductor around," is especially enthusiastic about both the sound and the working conditions of the Old Met.

Ormandy, who has made nearly 3,000 recordings since he began with the Minneapolis Symphony back in 1934, also likes working there, though he stops short of favoring it over Town Hall. "It really doesn't make any difference to us," he says with genial diplomacy. "Each hall has its own qualities, and . . . I like both very much. The Old Met is a marvelous hall. But I just heard a test pressing RCA sent me of Tchaikovsky's *Manfred*—his Seventh Symphony, so to speak—that we made in Town Hall, and that was marvelous too. In fact, I never before heard such a recording, the sound is so good. So the halls are really more important to the engineers than they are to us."

The orchestra members in general seem similarly ambivalent. In fact, when asked where they would prefer to record, most unhesitatingly chose the Academy of Music, the orchestra's home ever since it gave its first concert in 1900. Acousticians

have found it too dry for recording, although RCA briefly tried making records there in 1968 by electronically enhancing the hall's reverberation.

To the management as well as the musicians, the locale of the recordings is of far less importance than the quantity. Under the Philadelphia's current labor contract, each of the 106 musicians is guaranteed an annual recording minimum of \$1,500. And recording royalties have long been a vital source of funds for the Orchestra Association. So the decision to divide recording activities between two companies was made purely on economic grounds, with the objective of maintaining both the players' guarantee and the orchestra's income.

When RCA's contract expired in 1976, it decided to reduce its Philadelphia output from a minimum of eight records a year to a minimum of four. "We don't have twenty-five years of back recordings earning money for us as Columbia does," explains Thomas Z. Shepard, RCA a&r director and former Columbia executive. "And even though on an individual basis we hold our own, for the amount of money it takes to make a record today, there is not that much of a profit to be made.

"Recording an orchestra like the Philadelphia in a given work costs a minimum of \$25,000 just in musicians' fees, and when you count the conductor, any soloists, engineering, editing, mixing, and everything else, it can go up to \$50,000 or \$60,000. The rule of thumb used to be that, to break even on a \$50,000 expenditure, you had to sell 50,000 records. Probably you need more than that now, because record prices haven't gone up as much as costs. It's rare that we go beyond 40,000 sales on a Philadelphia record. In the fullness of time, these records will earn out and get their investment back. But for now we felt we had to cut down our guarantee."

The orchestra's board of directors accordingly proposed nonexclusivity, permitting RCA to cut back on its schedule while inviting another company to take up the slack. RCA accepted, with three conditions: that it have first call on Ormandy's services, that it have first refusal on repertoire to be recorded, and that it be permitted to record the orchestra with a guest conductor. "They asked us whom we had in mind," recalls Shepard, "and we suggested James Levine, who is exclusive with us and who had already guest-conducted some concerts. It was fine with them, so we're in business."

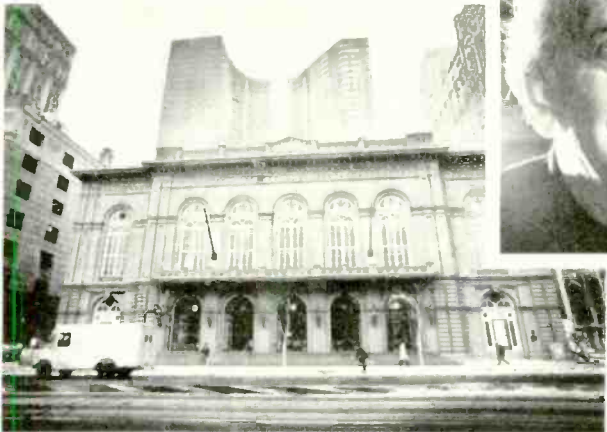
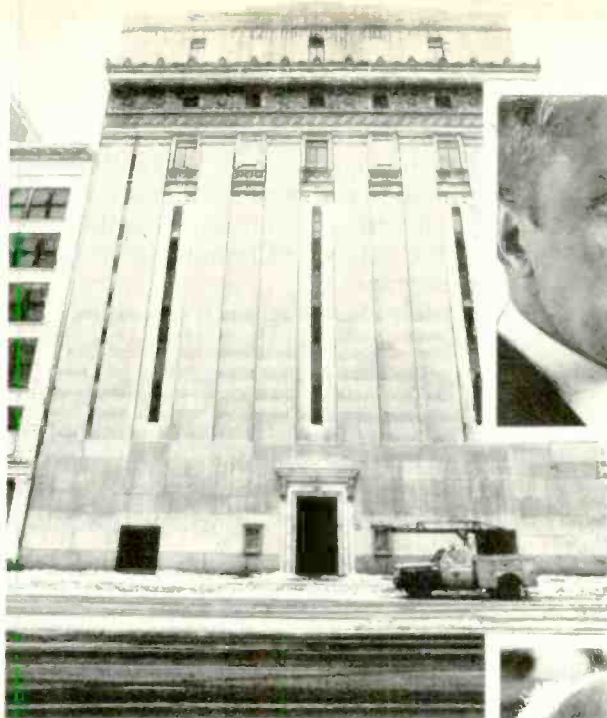
While both RCA and Angel will be releasing

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Facing page: the Philly's stables and its trainers. From top left, the Scottish Rite Cathedral (Town Hall), where both Columbia and RCA have recorded the orchestra; the Academy of Music, its home for concerts; and two views, on-stage and exterior, of the Hammerstein Metropolitan Opera House as it appeared to EMI's John Coveney when he stumbled upon it as a prospective

recording site in 1977. Insets: three generations of Philadelphia conductors—Stokowski, Ormandy, and Muti. From top right, the interiors of the Academy of Music, the Met, and the Scottish Rite Cathedral suggest the acoustical differences that may be audible in the recordings made in each—though at least one close observer claims otherwise.





Photos of recording spaces by George W. Gardner; Eugene Ormandy courtesy RCA Records; Riccardo Muti by Clive Barde/Angel.

recordings regularly in the months ahead, neither is likely to make anywhere near as much money from them as Columbia, which hasn't taped a Philadelphia performance for eleven years. Its catalog, spanning the first two decades of the LP era, not only covers much of the basic repertory, but practically blankets the rest of the field, from Alfvén to Webern. When an ensemble changes affiliation, it customarily agrees not to repeat for the next five years anything it already has recorded for its old label. Accordingly, Columbia embarked on a frenzied orgy of recording just prior to the Philadelphia's shift to RCA.

Thomas Frost, Columbia's a&r director, relates: "When stereo came in, all the companies started to re-record everything. In the decade from 1958 to 1968 we built a tremendous catalog of Philadelphia Orchestra records. This catalog is selling today with virtually undiminished vigor—as a whole, it's selling as well as it did ten years ago. Last year, worldwide, we sold 400,000 Philadelphia LPs, most of them in the United States. We're re-releasing some of the earlier stereos on the Odyssey label at a lower price. The public still is buying, so obviously we did something right."

Columbia had so many records in the can, Frost says, that there still are a few that have yet to be issued. The most substantial of these is a performance of Saint-Saëns's *Carnival of the Animals*, with Claude Frank and Lillian Kallir as pianists; there also are shorter pieces by Haydn, Ibert, Mendelssohn, Weber, and others.

Frost was in charge of the recordings made through most of that busy poststereo decade, and most of them were recorded in Town Hall, which he not unnaturally regards as a highly satisfactory locale. "Recording is a very special process, and an orchestra has to play differently than in the concert hall," he explains. "There are a few exceptions, like the Boston Symphony, that record at home, but basically you need a more live acoustic environment than the concert hall—one that gives you more reverberation. The sound you get is better for recording purposes, but it also makes it more difficult for the conductor and the instrumentalists to hear. They must make adjustments.

"Also, the sections of the orchestra are more separated from each other, though not a great deal more. The percussion instruments, for instance, must be farther away. Certain music records better in certain halls. We made the Berlioz Requiem and 'The Glorious Sound of Christmas' in the Philadelphia Athletic Club, which was spacious enough for the chorus and had a live sound. But it turned out to be too live for Haydn and Mozart.

"How do you choose a recording site? Well, you can tell right off if the size is right and the materials okay—that there's a wood floor and not too much absorbent material like curtains around. Then you clap your hands while you shout and see

how long the echo rings. For recording, you look for an echo of 2 to 2½ seconds in the midrange frequencies. Ideally the time should be even from top to bottom, but the high frequencies don't have as high a reverberation rate, and as you get lower the sound can get muddy. I definitely think there is a difference in the hall sound that is discernible to the average consumer."

Of the Philadelphia musicians themselves, Frost says, "It's easier recording them than others. Not only are they, man for man, among the best in the world, but they're a very congenial group, which is not true of every orchestra. Ormandy is one of the most cooperative of all conductors, and he has a special talent for making an orchestra sound good on records. He's just a dream to work with because he doesn't let his ego interfere."

The Philadelphia listings in the latest edition of the SCHWANN ARTIST ISSUE (just published) occupy over four full pages, more than any other American orchestra. And there seems no reason to expect that margin to dwindle. But the question of its future affiliations remains up in the air. The contracts with both RCA and Angel expire this year—the former this month, the latter in September. RCA appears well satisfied with sharing the orchestra and shows every sign of wanting to continue the arrangement. As for Angel, East Coast director Tony Caronia says that no decision has been made at EMI headquarters in Britain, but he takes note of Muti's contract. It seems clear that much will depend on the question of Muti's ascendancy to the No. 1 spot.

Perhaps the most intriguing prospect is that, with the tradition of exclusivity shattered, the Philadelphia Orchestra may soon begin considering other recording outlets. Santarlasci reports that inquiries already have been received from Sheffield, the Los Angeles direct-to-disc producer, and Telarc, the Cleveland digital recording group. And interest was expressed a couple of years ago by Deutsche Grammophon. Although James Frey, vice president of DG's classical division in the U.S., says that no talks are going on "as of now," they could resume.

If another company does enter the picture, we may add still another recording site to the Philadelphia saga. As it is, comparison shoppers should find much to occupy them in measuring the Old Met versions of the Philadelphia Sound against those of Town Hall.

It's just conceivable, though, that the difference will be less than you might think. Says Shepard with a faint smile: "I remember a Columbia recording of Respighi's *Feste romane* that was made at three different places, the Academy of Music, the Philadelphia Athletic Club, and Town Hall. The engineers put it all together, and I defy you to tell me where one leaves off and another starts."

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# The New Releases



Breitkopf and Härtel

## Clementi's Mysterious Symphonies

by Paul Henry Lang

CHERUBINI, THAT ENIGMATIC Italian residing in Paris and composing in the purest classical style, and his friend Muzio Clementi, residing in England, another quasi-Viennese classic, present a most difficult task to the critic and the historian. Clementi was born four years before and Cherubini four years after Mozart, and both outlived Beethoven; though in their lifetimes they were very popular, today they are little known and have become musicians' musicians.

In this regard Clementi, whose work we are considering here, is even more puzzling than Cherubini. Born in 1752 in Rome, he was taken at the age of fourteen to England by a maecenas and, like Handel, settled in that country until his death in 1832. At the time of Beethoven's birth he had already composed piano sonatas that carried his name all over Europe, as did the phenomenal pianism he exhibited in many concert tours.

It was during one of these tours in 1781 that the famous keyboard duel between Clementi and Mozart took place at the Vienna court. For once, Mozart demonstrated a fierce and unseemly jealousy. "He plays well," writes the younger master, "but hasn't a penny's

worth of feeling and taste . . . a mechanic . . . a charlatan." (Nevertheless, he did not disdain to borrow the theme from Clementi's B flat Sonata for the overture to *The Magic Flute*.) Mozart was certainly unjust, because the deep pathos of Clementi's adagios, his neat and always inventive formal schemes, and his impeccable craftsmanship bespeak both feeling and taste. Indeed, his highly expressive playing, attested to by such of his many pupils as Cramer, Field, Kalkbrenner, and Meyerbeer, earned him the sobriquet of the "father of piano playing."

Haydn, Beethoven, Schumann, and just about everyone else except Mozart had boundless admiration for his music and were deeply indebted to him. Haydn's late piano sonatas are unimaginable without Clementi's influence; Beethoven's *Waldstein*, to mention one example among many, was clearly modeled on Clementi's Op. 34, No. 1 (1795). We can safely state that Clementi was among the founding fathers of the classical piano sonata, ahead of the great Viennese trio; Beethoven not only admired Clementi's inventive and scintillating sonatas, but placed them above those of Mozart.

In 1786, Clementi gave up the career of a virtuoso and became a music dealer, publisher, and manufacturer of instruments, especially pianos. Once more he excelled in every one of these ventures and became a rich man, but the successful businessman did not stop composing and teaching. It is regrettable that Clementi is largely known only for his sonatinas, which almost to this day have been favorite teaching material. Inquisitive music lovers should dip into his sonatas, from which they will derive a great deal of pleasure, and if they cannot play them—they are difficult—they should at least acquire the few recordings available. (Too bad that Horowitz' old but excellent recording of some Clementi sonatas is no longer listed in SCHWANN.)

Now we come to a baffling problem. In his time, Clementi was especially famous for his symphonies; he was one of the founders of the London Philharmonic Society, and his symphonies were performed everywhere to great applause. But what has become of them?

The earlier ones, except for two published in 1787, are lost, and of the others, constantly mentioned in contemporary reports from all over Europe—there must have been a dozen—only four are extant, three of them incomplete. The Library of Congress purchased these, together with single movements and fragments, at an auction in 1917, but for sixty years nothing was done with this material by competent scholars. Alfredo Casella did publish two from the collection, but that amiable gentleman is famous for his cavalier meddling with departed composers' scores, so his editions must be discounted.

Enters Pietro Spada, who has "edited" the four Washington symphonies and who, together with Harry Halbreich, is responsible for the historical vignette and the analyses in the booklet accompanying Erato's premiere recording. This account, in French, flowery to the point of being hysterical (though a little muted by the English translation), does not inspire confidence. We read that Clementi's symphonies "anticipate Mendelssohn, Schumann—even Brahms and Verdi[!]" . . . "one of the supreme masterpieces of the genre" . . . "a musicological event [Spada's edition] the like of which occurs once or twice a century" . . . "markedly in advance of Beethoven," and other such nuggets. To his credit, however, our flamboyant editor/author/composer honestly tells us what he did with—and to—the scores, which is more than can be said about most of those who venture to assume the role of co-author with a great master.

Symphony No. 4 is complete, No. 2 fairly so. In No. 1, the exposition of the opening Allegro is missing and was "reconstructed" from the recapitulation by Spada, while the finale was pieced together by reconciling two extant versions. The first Allegro of No. 3 has no exposition either, and the first part of the development section is also missing, so Maestro Spada used portions of one of Clementi's overtures to fill the void, a procedure resembling plastic surgery more than editing.

This sort of thing is hard to justify, of course, but then, how else can such torsos, which have excellent finished movements, be made available for performance? Judging from the general effect, Spada did not do badly, but no critic can offer a reasoned analysis of Clementi on the basis of the results. However, it can be said that what we hear in these performances is very pleasant music, demonstrating that the famous composer of utterly idiomatic piano sonatas was no less at home in

the symphonic genre; there are fascinating things in these incomplete symphonies, and the orchestral writing is remarkably advanced.

My guess is that at least the first two Washington symphonies are eighteenth-century works that Clementi would not release but kept polishing and updating for perhaps two decades. This can be seen from the thematic, formal, and especially from the developmental features; the more venturesome harmony and orchestration may have been added at subsequent reworkings. Yet while the style is thus somewhat compounded, the various elements are skillfully integrated—the few rough spots may well be Spada's sutures.

We must also remember that by the time Clementi performed these works Beethoven had already composed eight of his symphonies, and Clementi must have been reluctant to challenge that formidable competitor, though they were on good terms. At any rate, these two symphonies are well worth hearing even in their current form. No. 1's Andante is a very fine canonic piece and its finale exhilarating. No. 2 also has an attractive slow movement and a bustling finale, and both have elegant minuet/scherzos.

It is another matter with the remaining works. No. 3, though a torso and impossible to date, must be a nineteenth-century work; Clementi, perhaps to express his gratitude to his adopted country, uses "God Save the King" as a theme, and his symphonic elaboration of the tune is masterly, particularly the sly hints at it in the final rondo.

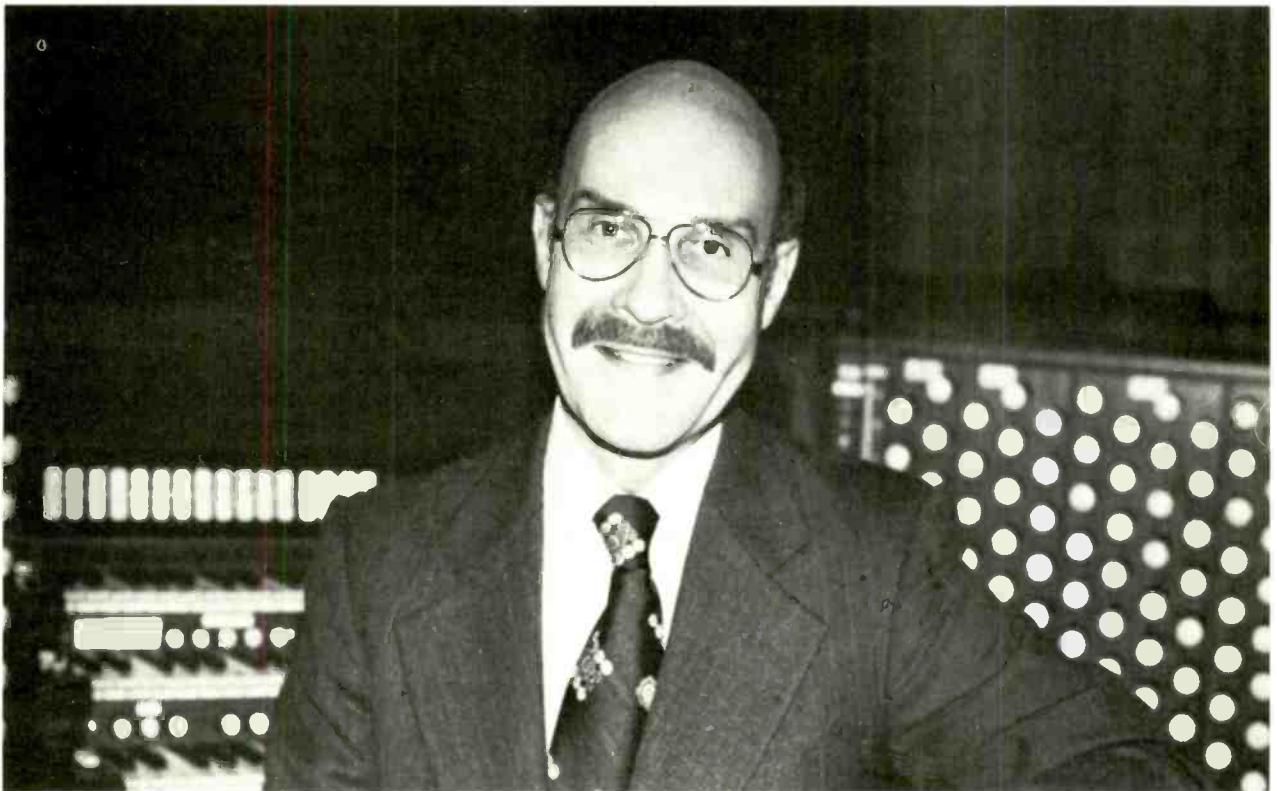
No. 4, the one complete work and perhaps the last symphony created by our elusive composer, is an impressive Romantic symphony despite the remaining classical clichés. The majestically mysterious introduction leads to a spanking Allegro with a most accomplished development section and an ingeniously varied reprise. The second movement is distinguished by gracefully fluent polyphonic writing in a fantasylike construction; the minuet/scherzo is equally capricious, full of new ideas nicely connected and elaborated and with a delightful trio. The work ends with a witty and very effective sonata rondo—a sort of tarantella. Clementi's textures are always clear and euphonious, his rhythm is bracing, his counterpoint is strong. Though canonic episodes are frequent, there is nothing "learned" about his polyphony, and his orchestration is admirable.

Our bemused annotators go off the deep end when they declare that "one would have to look as far into the future as Busoni to find anything at all like it." (The only thing Clementi and Busoni had in common was that each had an Italian father and a German mother.) But the Fourth is patently among the best of the fine—if all but unknown—symphonies of the Beethoven-Schubert era (among the least-explored areas in musical history); it could become a repertory item.

Claudio Scimone's performances are commendable; apparently this style suits him much better than the baroque. The Philharmonia plays well, and, apart from a few muddy tutti's, the sound is good.

**CLEMENTI:** Symphonies (4; ed. Spada). Philharmonia Orchestra, Claudio Scimone, cond. [Pierre Lavoix, prod.] ERATO STU 71174, \$17.96 (two discs, manual sequence; distributed by RCA Records).

Symphonies: No. 1, in C; No. 2, in D; No. 3, in G (*Great National*); No. 4, in D.



Frederick Swann, organist of New York's Riverside Church

## Vista Captures Sizzle and Thunder

*Recordings of organs in New York and Washington are the first fruits of British producer Michael Smythe's venture across the Atlantic.*

by Scott Cantrell

OBSERVING THE GROWING CATALOG of European organ recordings, I've long wished that someone would take up the task of recording outstanding instruments in America. Almost none of G. Donald Harrison's finest organs can be heard on truly satisfactory and generally available discs—nor can one enjoy the sounds of such significant newer instruments as the Beckeraths in Pittsburgh and New Haven, the Flentrops at Oberlin and Duke, the Kern in Dallas; then too, there are some distinguished organs by such native builders as Brombaugh, Fisk, and Sipe.

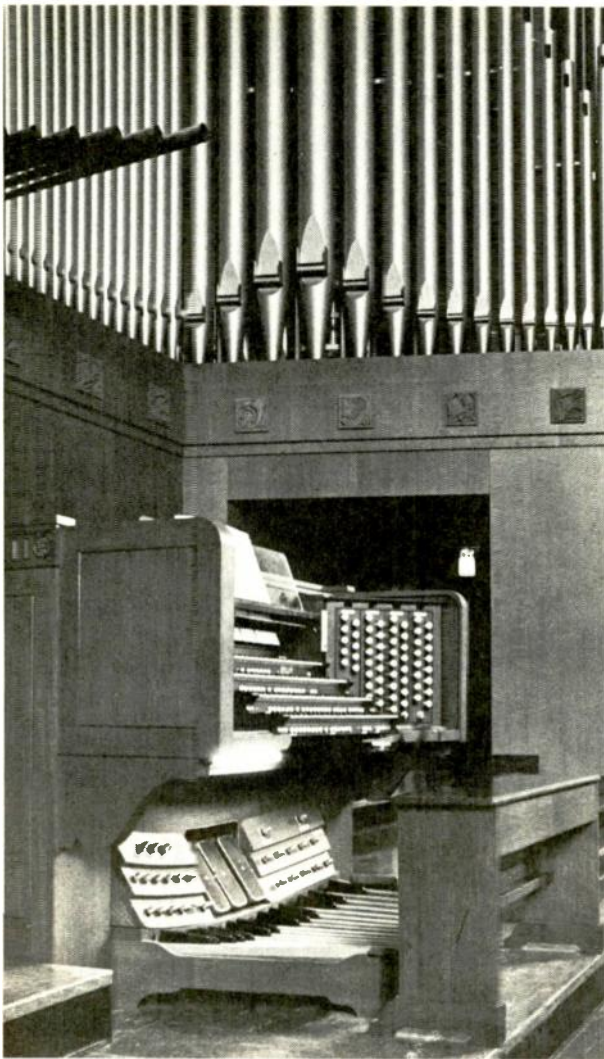
Therefore I was delighted when the indefatigable British producer Michael Smythe indicated his interest in doing some American organ recordings, and we now have three discs representing his first efforts. While neither of the organs recorded here seems to me representative of the finest the country has to offer, each in its own way is an exciting instrument, and more American Vistas are on the horizon.

For sheer sound quality, "Music from Riverside, Vol. 1" is the most exciting of the lot. Every nuance—from

the thunder of the 32s to the sizzle of the cymbel mixtures, from the soft murmur of celestes to the ear-shattering éclat of the full organ—has been captured with startling realism. Frederick Swann, who has been organist of New York's Riverside Church since 1957, is widely (and justly) recognized as an accomplished musician, and his performances here reveal all the customary aplomb.

I can't really get excited about the Sifler *Despair and Agony of Dachau*—the polemics of its title seem counterproductive to an appreciation of the work's intrinsic musical values—but the rest of the program is both stimulating and enjoyable. Sowerby's *Passacaglia* is welcome, as is the colorful Pentecost piece *Fanfare to the Tongues of Fire* by Larry King (organist and choirmaster of Trinity Church, Wall Street). The latter work, by the way, was commissioned to commemorate the installation of Riverside's new Trompeta Majestatis stop, for which my enthusiasm is qualified.

For all the undeniable musicality of Swann's playing, I can't help wondering why he (like many another or-



Organ at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception

Rem Newsphoto

gan.st) feels compelled to disregard Franck's very specific and logical registration instructions. Does he really think his "magic lantern" effects in the last page of the A major *Fantaisie* represent an improvement? Why, too, the huge slowing of the pulse in bar 29 of the Reger toccata? These small points detract from my enjoyment of the otherwise magnificent performances.

The two discs from Washington's National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception capture an organ sound that to my ears has much less allure. The acoustic is lavish indeed (Riverside's is only fair), but even this does not wholly compensate for the diffuse and sometimes coarse sound of the 1964 Möller gallery organ (the smaller instrument in the chancel is not used for either disc). Part of the aural unpleasantness must be attributed to the slightly out-of-tune condition of the organ, but part is surely due to some aspect of the recording, which lacks the sharp focus of the Riverside disc.

This is not, I should point out, a simple reflection of the two different acoustical settings. The distortion levels on the Shrine discs are noticeably higher, and the microphone placement does not entirely solve the difficult problems of balance and blend posed by this par-

ticular organ. I would not belabor the point had I not heard a really satisfying recording of this instrument, but anyone who has Marilyn Mason's recording of the Dupré *Chemin de la Croix* (produced for the Shrine a few years ago by Mark Custom Recordings) will share my disappointment.

Robert Grogan's anthology of French organ music is hardly helped by the little-bit-of-this, little-bit-of-that program. Grogan's playing seems well controlled and eminently musical, and he projects a strong personality in such works as the Saint-Saëns *Improvisation*, but the dizzying sequence of bits and pieces is too fragmented to produce a satisfying musical experience.

Eileen Morris Guenther's "Litanies" program, while more diverse in certain respects, makes a more convincing aesthetic entity, and I very much like the exuberance of her playing. She does a particularly fine job of achieving the obsessive rhythmic drive that Alain clearly wanted in his *Litanies*, and her relatively brisk tempo imparts a nice feeling of momentum in the Franck B minor *Choral*. As with Swann's performance of the A major *Fantaisie*, however, I would have preferred closer attention to the composer's registration directions. (Why are the swell reeds withdrawn in bars 80-113 when Franck clearly indicates they should remain on until bar 114? Is this sort of change any more justifiable than playing a Couperin *grand jeu* movement on foundation stops?)

Listeners familiar with the Duruflé *Prélude et fugue sur le nom d'Alain* will be surprised by the lively tempo maintained throughout the fugue. According to Guenther, "this change reflects the current wishes of the composer as communicated to this performer in a private conversation," and this is hardly the first time Duruflé has had second thoughts about his compositions. With the possible exception of the Paine *Concert Variations* on "Austria" (which seem an utter waste of time to me), everything here is well worth hearing, and the performances are nothing if not engaging.

I must express my appreciation for the complete stop lists and other information about the organs included on inserts with each of these releases. I wish other record companies were as conscientious in this matter as Vista.

**FREDERICK SWANN:** *Music from Riverside, Vol. 1—The Organs*, 1978. Frederick Swann, organ of the Riverside Church, New York. [Michael Smythe, prod.] VISTA VPS 1070, \$7.98.

**FRANCK:** *Fantaisie in A*. **KING:** *Fanfare to the Tongues of Fire*. **REGER:** *Toccata, Op. 59, No. 5*. **SIFLER:** *The Despair and Agony of Dachau*. **SOWERBY:** *Symphony in G: Passacaglia*. **SWANN** (arr.): *The Agincourt Hymn*.

**ROBERT GROGAN:** *Te Deum Laudamus: French Organ Music*. Robert Grogan, organ of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington, D.C. [Michael Smythe, prod.] VISTA VPS 1075, \$7.98.

**ANON:** *Verses on the Te Deum*. **BOËLY:** *Réveillez-vous, pastoraux*. **L. COUPERIN:** *Fantaisie*. **DANDRIEU:** *Fugue sur "Ave maris stella"*. **DUPRÉ:** *Six Antiennes: Lumen ad Revelationem*. **FRANCK:** *Andantino poco mosso; Andante cantabile* (arr. Vierne). **GUILMANT:** *Sonata No. 1: Pastorale*. **MESSIAEN:** *La Nativité du Seigneur: Desseins éternels*. **RAISON:** *Trio en passacaille*. **SAINT-SAËNS:** *Improvisation*. **TOURNEMIRE:** *L'Orgue mystique, Suite 51: Fantaisie sur le Te Deum; Guirlandes alléluïatiques*. **WIDOR:** *Symphonie romane, Op. 73: Final*.

**EILEEN MORRIS GUENTHER:** *Litanies*. Eileen Morris Guenther, organ of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington, D.C. [Michael Smythe, prod.] VISTA VPS 1076, \$7.98.

**ALAIN:** *Litanies*. **BACH:** *Cantata No. 29: Sinfonia* (arr. Dupré). **M. CORNETTE:** *A la venue de Noël*. **DAQUIN:** *Noël étranger*. **DURUFLÉ:** *Prélude et fugue sur le nom d'Alain*. **FRANCK:** *Choral No. 2, in B minor*. **PAINE:** *Concert Variations on "Austria"*.

(All distributed by German News Co.)



# Schumann Lieder—Familiar and Obscure

From Fischer-Dieskau, Schreier, and a pair of vocal quartets comes a wide-ranging sampling from the composer's large catalog of songs.

by David Hamilton

THE ANNOTATIONS of song collections don't often explain the basis on which the repertory was selected; we are left to infer that from internal evidence. Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau's choice certainly suggests that he is recording nearly all the Schumann songs a man might plausibly sing, while Peter Schreier has evidently limited himself to a selection he feels is both representative and particularly suited to his voice and style. The latter course gives the listener more consistent pleasure, the former a more comprehensive coverage of the literature—without, however, being truly complete. As long as these packages are conceived as solo operations, that's inevitable—we really don't want to hear Fischer-Dieskau singing *Frauenliebe und Leben*, even were the set thus made complete. And it also means that the singer extends himself to a number of songs for which his voice and style are not especially suited: "Talismane," for example, wants a firmer and richer sound than he now commands (though he made something quite impressive of it twenty-five years ago, on Decca DL 9935).

In fact, Fischer-Dieskau has been at the Schumann business for quite some time, though relatively few of those earlier recordings are now available. This first volume of what will presumably be his valedictory survey of this literature offers the novelty of ten songs he has never recorded before (one of them, "Die rote Hanne," appears to be a first recording by anyone). All the songs in this box are from Schumann's great *Liederjahr*, which began in February 1840; these fifty-eight songs, however, by no means exhaust the output of that year. A Fischer-Dieskau/Eschenbach version of the Heine *Liederkreis*, Op. 24, was issued several years ago (DG 2530 543, coupled with the *Myrthen* songs included in the new set), and that, along with *Dichterliebe* and the Kerner songs, Op. 35, will probably fill a good part of Vol. 2.

In one sense the most interesting part of the project is presumably still to come, for to date Fischer-Dieskau has recorded only thirteen of Schumann's post-1841 songs, and none at all from the final period of song writing in Düsseldorf (1851), about which there is much critical disagreement. The late songs have not been much recorded (a Telefunken set by Bernard Kraysen, issued recently in England, contains many "first recordings," but it hasn't turned up here as yet). While some of them are certainly weak, there seems no reason why they should not all be properly recorded and circulated at least once.

Schreier's four-disc survey isn't limited to the works of 1840, but he doesn't venture into the Düsseldorf songs either. His eighty-seven titles are certainly otherwise

representative; the Heine *Liederkreis* and *Dichterliebe* were coupled on a fifth disc released in western Europe by DG. Although only one of the songs in this series appears to be otherwise unrecorded ("Mädchen-Schwermut"), there are probably a few others that are to be found only in Fischer-Dieskau and Schreier recordings. Unless you are an assiduous collector of European imports and historical reissues, you will probably find some unfamiliar songs in either series: from Op. 40, for instance, "Muttertraum" and "Der Spielmann," fine examples of Schumann's spectral vein (in both sets), or the companion songs to the well-known "Meine Rose" in the group of Lenau settings, Op. 90 (in Schreier only).

For Fischer-Dieskau, this is the third time round on some of these songs, notably the great Eichendorff *Liederkreis*, Op. 39. His first recording of that, with Gerald Moore, goes back about twenty-five years and has long been unavailable. In many ways, though, it remains quite satisfactory, the rich, warm voice capturing well the chiaroscuro of this subtly allusive cycle-without-a-story; the scale is intimate, the expressivity specific yet not fussy. Its successor (also with Moore, still listed as Angel S 36266) is drawn on a much broader scale—possible in theory but in practice difficult with this particular voice. The singing is often blustery, puffed up in tone and vehement of accent; atmosphere—and sometimes the musical line—has been sacrificed in the cause of "drama."

Now, in the new version with Christoph Eschenbach, Fischer-Dieskau pulls back somewhat from the inflated conception of that second recording, yet without recapturing the *Innigkeit* of the first one; these performances still seem overstressed, the quiet songs often short on repose, the lively ones less than spontaneous. One is impressed by the musicianship, the intellectual force—but not won over, not drawn into the half-lights of Eichendorff's world.

In all his recordings of Op. 39, Fischer-Dieskau has elected to transpose four songs from Schumann's original keys, rather than moving the entire cycle down a fixed amount. This matters, for there is both symmetry and sense in the composer's sequence. Schreier, naturally more comfortable in the original tenor tessitura, follows the score—until the final "Frühlingsnacht," which he unaccountably lifts a semitone from the cycle's "tonic" (F sharp). Though upsetting, this only disturbs one juncture between songs (out of eleven), whereas Fischer-Dieskau puts six of these intersections out of joint. (In the Kerner songs, Op. 35, Schreier also makes a single change of key—and again, even so, his recording is more faithful to the score than any other I know. None of the other opus groupings recorded here, I

think, is organized on this basis, so transpositions matter much less—though if you are concerned with hearing the piano parts in the original registers, naturally Schreier makes fewer transpositions overall than Fischer-Dieskau.)

I wouldn't want to generalize from the comparison of Fischer-Dieskau's three versions of Op. 39. For one thing, his vocal condition seems to vary: for example, better in Op. 27 and Op. 39 than in Op. 25 and Op. 30. And Eschenbach, a very fluent pianist, is also inconsistent: The rocky, overaccented opening phrase of the first Venetian song in Op. 25, for example, belies the gondola's silent gliding over the water. Most of his work is intelligent, if without quite the special flair that I found in Daniel Barenboim's playing for Fischer-Dieskau's Wolf series.

The Eichendorff *Liederkreis* is perhaps the least impressive part of the Schreier series; his direct, somewhat plain style does not conjure up the "alter Duft aus Märchenzeit" that belongs here. On all matters of musicianship and diction, though, he is in the same league as his older colleague, and the control he can muster for the wide range (in both pitch and dynamics) of "Stille Tränen" is really impressive. Schreier's direct, open-faced manner is most engaging in the folk-style songs; in more passionate material, it can occasionally verge on the bumptious. Norman Shetler's shipshape playing is not notable for rhythmic verve, but shares some of the singer's straightforwardness; I miss the imagination and sparkle that Walter Olbertz has brought to other Schreier song records.

If any verdict on these two projects must be equivocal—leaving the prospective buyer to weigh his own interests in terms of repertory against the limitations of the performances—that on the Electrola *Liederspiele* set seems to me less problematic. And this although the material is decidedly novel; these groups have rarely been recorded intact (and some of the songs, including the three by Clara that are part of Op. 37, haven't ever come to my attention on records before). I'll admit that the two ladies do some nice solo singing and that Nicolai Gedda is trying—but to listen to some of the ensemble pieces is to wonder whether one hasn't wandered into a piano rehearsal for a Lortzing opera at a provincial German theater. Everybody emotes so strenuously, in such an operatic style, and Erik Werba bangs away so insensitively at the piano that I could find very little pleasure here; this set is only for those who must have a record of every scrap of Schumann. (It isn't even entirely authentic, eschewing the original four-hand piano parts for Op. 138, while Walter Berry's solo song in that group is transposed out of Schumann's key.)

The Musical Heritage Society disc of Opp. 74 and 101 can be praised for better intentions—these people have the scale of the pieces correctly gauged, and the tenor has a pleasant voice and style. Alas, good intentions aren't enough; the ladies are variously uncertain, the voices don't blend well, and the overall impression is of competent amateurs, whose deficiencies are tolerable on first hearing but very hard to take repeatedly.

Deutsche Grammophon provides full texts and translations, Eurodisc neither, Electrola only German texts (though the historical essay is given in English); Musical Heritage gives paraphrases in English only.

**SCHUMANN:** Songs, Vol. 1. Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, baritone; Christoph Eschenbach, piano. [Cord Garben, prod.] DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2709 074, \$26.94 (three discs, manual sequence).

Myrthen, Op. 25: No. 1, Widmung; No. 2, Freisinn; No. 3, Der Nussbaum; No. 5, Sitz' ich allein; No. 6, Setze mir nicht; No. 7, Die Lotosblume; No. 8, Talismane; No. 13, Hochländers Abschied; No. 15, Mein Herz ist schwer; No. 16, Ratsel; No. 17, Leis' rudern hier; No. 18, Wenn durch die Piazzetta; No. 19, Hauptmanns Weib; No. 21, "Was will die einsame Träne?"; No. 22, Niemand; No. 24, "Du bist wie eine Blume"; No. 25, Aus den östlichen Rosen; No. 26, Zum Schluss. Fünf Lieder und Gesänge, Op. 27: No. 1, "Sag' an, o lieber Vogel mein"; No. 2, "Dem roten Roslein gleicht mein Lieb"; No. 3, Was soll ich sagen!; No. 4, Jasminstrauch; No. 5, "Nur ein lächelnder Blick." Drei Gedichte, Op. 30: No. 1, Der Knabe mit dem Wunderhorn; No. 2, Der Page; No. 3, Der Hidalgo. Drei Gesänge, Op. 31: No. 1, Die Löwenbraut; No. 3, Die rote Hanne. Sechs Gedichte, Op. 36: No. 1, Sonntags am Rhein; No. 2, Ständchen; No. 3, Nichts Schöneres; No. 4, An den Sonnenschein; No. 5, Dichters Genesung; No. 6, Liebesbotschaft. Zwölf Gedichte aus "Liebesfrühling," Op. 37: No. 1, Der Himmel hat eine Träne geweint; No. 5, Ich hab' in mich gesogen; No. 8, Flügel! Flügel! um zu fliegen; No. 9, Rose, Meer und Sonne. Liederkreis, Op. 39 (complete), Fünf Lieder, Op. 40: No. 1, Marzveilchen; No. 2, Muttertraum; No. 3, Der Soldat; No. 4, Der Spielmann; No. 5, Verrätene Liebe. Romanzen und Balladen, Op. 45: No. 1, Der Schatzgraber; No. 2, Frühlingfahrt. Lieder und Gesänge, Op. 77: No. 1, Der frohe Wandersmann.

**SCHUMANN:** Songs. Peter Schreier, tenor; Norman Shetler, piano. [Eberhard Richter, prod.] EURODISC 88311, 88312, 88313, and 88314 KK, \$8.98 each (distributed by German News Co.).

88311 KK: Myrthen, Op. 25: No. 17, Leis' rudern hier; No. 18, Wenn durch die Piazzetta; No. 26, Zum Schluss. Fünf Lieder und Gesänge, Op. 27: No. 5, "Nur ein lächelnder Blick." Sechs Gedichte, Op. 36: No. 2, Ständchen. Romanzen und Balladen, Op. 45: No. 2, Frühlingfahrt. Romanzen und Balladen, Op. 53: No. 2, Loreley; No. 3, Der arme Peter. Spanisches Liederspiel, Op. 74: No. 7, Geständnis. Lieder und Gesänge, Op. 77: No. 3, Geisternahe; No. 5, Aufträge. Liederalbum für die Jugend, Op. 79: No. 4, Frühlingssgruss; No. 7, Zigeunerliedchen (2); No. 13, Marienwürmchen. Drei Gesänge, Op. 95: No. 2, An den Mond. Lieder und Gesänge, Op. 96: No. 1, Nachtlid. Minnespiel, Op. 101: No. 1, "Meine Töne still und heiter"; No. 4, "Mein schöner Stern." Spanische Liebeslieder, Op. 138: No. 3, O wie lieblich ist das Mädchen; No. 5, Flutenreicher Ebro; No. 7, Weh, wie zornig ist das Mädchen. Vier Gesänge, Op. 142: No. 3, Mädchen-Schwermut. 88312 KK: Myrthen, Op. 25: No. 1, Widmung; No. 2, Freisinn; No. 5, Sitz' ich allein; No. 6, Setze mir nicht; No. 8, Talismane; No. 25, Aus den östlichen Rosen. Fünf Lieder und Gesänge, Op. 27: No. 4, Jasminstrauch. Drei Gedichte, Op. 30: No. 1, Der Knabe mit dem Wunderhorn; No. 2, Der Page; No. 3, Der Hidalgo. Fünf Lieder, Op. 40: No. 1, Marzveilchen; No. 2, Muttertraum; No. 3, Der Soldat; No. 4, Der Spielmann; No. 5, Verrätene Liebe. Lieder und Gesänge, Op. 51: No. 1, Sehnsucht. Sechs Gedichte und Requiem, Op. 90: No. 1, Lied eines Schmiedes. No. 2, Meine Rose; No. 3, Kommen und Scheiden; No. 4, Die Sennin; No. 5, Einsamkeit; No. 6, Der schwere Abend; No. 7, Requiem. 88313 KK: Myrthen, Op. 25: No. 3, Der Nussbaum; No. 7, Die Lotosblume; No. 21, "Was will die einsame Träne?"; No. 24, "Du bist wie eine Blume." Sechs Gedichte, Op. 36: No. 4, An den Sonnenschein. Liederkreis, Op. 39 (complete), Lieder und Gesänge, Op. 51: No. 3, Ich wand're nicht. Lieder und Gesänge, Op. 77: No. 1, Der frohe Wandersmann. Drei Gesänge, Op. 83: No. 3, Der Einsiedler. Fünf Lieder und Gesänge, Op. 127: No. 2, Dein Angesicht. Vier Gesänge, Op. 142: No. 2, Lehn' deine Wang'; No. 4, Mein Wagen rollet langsam. 88314 KK: Zwölf Gedichte, Op. 35 (complete), Zwölf Gedichte aus "Liebesfrühling," Op. 37: No. 1, Der Himmel hat eine Träne geweint; No. 5, Ich hab' in mich gesogen; No. 8, Flügel! Flügel! um zu fliegen. Lieder und Gesänge, Op. 96: No. 2, Schneeglöckchen; No. 3, Ihre Stimme. Fünf Lieder und Gesänge, Op. 127: No. 1, Sängers Trost.

**SCHUMANN:** Liederspiele. Edda Moser, soprano; Hanna Schwarz, alto; Nicolai Gedda, tenor; Walter Berry, baritone; Erik Werba, piano. [Helmut Storchmann, prod.] EMI ELECTROLA 1C 165 30692/3, \$17.96 (two discs).

Zwölf Gedichte aus "Liebesfrühling," Op. 37: No. 1, Der Himmel hat eine Träne geweint (T); No. 2, Er ist gekommen in Sturm und Regen (S; by Clara Schumann); No. 3, O ihr Herren (S); No. 4, Liebst du um Schönheit (S; by Clara Schumann); No. 5, Ich hab' in mich gesogen (T); No. 6, Liebste, was kann denn uns scheiden? (S, T); No. 7, Schön ist das Fest des Lenzes (S, T); No. 8, Flügel! Flügel! um zu fliegen (T); No. 9, Rose, Meer und Sonne (T); No. 10, O Sonn', o Meer, o Rose! (T); No. 11, Warum willst du And're fragen (S; by Clara Schumann); No. 12, So wahr die Sonne scheint (S, T). Romanzen und Balladen, Op. 64: No. 3, Tragödie (A, T). Spanisches Liederspiel, Op. 74: No. 1, Erste Begegnung (S, A); No. 2, Intermezzo (T, B); No. 3, Liebesgram (S, A); No. 4, In der Nacht (S, T); No. 5, Es ist verraten (S, A, T, B); No. 6, Melancholie (S); No. 7, Geständnis (T); No. 8, Botschaft (S, A); No. 9, Ich bin geliebt (S, A, T, B); Anhang: Der Contrabandiste (B), Minnespiel, Op. 101: No. 1, "Meine Töne still und heiter" (T); No. 2, "Liebster, deine Worte" (S); No. 3, "Ich bin dein Baum" (A, B); No. 4, "Mein schöner Stern" (T); No. 5, "Schön ist das Fest des Lenzes" (S, A, T, B); No. 6, "O Freund, mein Schirm, mein Schutz" (A); No. 7, "Die tausend Grusse" (S, T); No. 8, "So wahr die Sonne scheint" (S, A, T, B). Spanische Liebeslieder, Op. 138: No. 1, Vorspiel (piano); No. 2, Tief im Herzen trag' ich Pein (S); No. 3, O wie lieblich ist das Mädchen (T); No. 4, Bedeckt mich mit Blumen (S, A); No. 5, Flutenreicher Ebro (B); No. 6, Intermezzo: Nationaltanz (piano); No. 7, Weh, wie zornig ist das Mädchen (T); No. 8, Hoch, hoch sind die Berge (A); No. 9, Blaue Augen hat das Mädchen (T, B); No. 10, Dunkler Lichtglanz, blinder Blick (S, A, T, B).

**SCHUMANN:** Spanisches Liederspiel, Op. 74; Minnespiel, Op. 101. French Vocal Quartet (Christiane Issartel, soprano; Janine Fourrier, alto; Bernard Plantey, tenor; Michel Piquemal, baritone); Monique Bouvet (in Op. 74) and Marielle Rousseau (in Op. 101), pianos. MUSICAL HERITAGE SOCIETY MHS 3832. \$5.20 (\$3.95 to members) plus \$1.25 shipping (Musical Heritage Society, 14 Park Rd., Tinton Falls, N.J. 07724).

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# Classical

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Angel



Walter Gieseking—a well-structured performance of the Emperor in 1944 stereo

**H BEETHOVEN: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 5, in E flat, Op. 73 (Emperor).** Walter Gieseking, piano, Berlin Radio Orchestra, Arthur Rother, cond. VARESE-SARABANDE VC 81080, \$7.98 (stereo) [recorded 1944].

**Comparisons:**

Gieseking, Walter/Vienna Phil. Turn THS 65011  
 Gieseking, Karajan/Philharmonia Odys. 32 16 0029  
 Gieseking, Galliera/Philharmonia Sera. S 60069

This performance, released here for the first time, was recorded on tape and in genuine stereo during the last months of World War II. It should be remembered that the potential for multichannel recording existed long before it became a home reality: the German Radio was experimenting along those lines in the Thirties, and of course the 1939 *Fantasia* soundtrack was in nine-channel format. Everything considered, the sound is pretty fair. While there is heavy background hiss, constriction on top, and more impressive mass than detail, on the whole the sound has the big-hall spaciousness characteristic of the German engineering of its time.

The performance is interesting. Rother's orchestral framework is sturdy, traditional, and quite decently played. Gieseking's playing is less dainty than his prewar version with Walter and technically more assured than his LP readings with Karajan (a leaden, brutal account) and Galliera. This pearly, keen-edged, well-structured performance aptly puts the Emperor in its historical perspective, on the path leading from Mozart's K. 271, 467, and 503 to Liszt's E flat and its virtuoso brethren. H.G.

**BIZET: Carmen.**

Micaela  
 Frasquita  
 Mercedes  
 Carmen

Ileana Cotrubas (s)  
 Yvonne Kenny (s)  
 Alicia Nafe (s)  
 Teresa Berganza (ms)

Don Jose Remendado  
 Escamillo Dancaire  
 Morales Zuniga

Placido Domingo (t)  
 Geoffrey Pogson (t)  
 Sherrill Milnes (b)  
 Gordon Sandison (b)  
 Stuart Harling (b)  
 Robert Lloyd (bs)

Ambrosian Singers, London Symphony Orchestra, Claudio Abbado, cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2709 083, \$26.94 (three discs, manual sequence) Tape: ●● 3371 040, \$26.94.

**Comparisons:**

Troyanos, Domingo, Solti Lon OSA 13115  
 Horne, McCracken, Bernstein DG 2709 043  
 Bumbry, Vickers, Fruhbeck de Burgos Ang SCL 3767  
 De los Angeles, Gedda, Beecham Ang SCL 3613

Fritz Oeser's so-called "critical new edition" of Carmen made available, for the first time, some very attractive music that Bizet had cut before the opera's opening night in 1875. It also represented a significant corruption of the text of this classic opera, introducing into currency many inferior readings from earlier stages of the work's genesis, not to mention some arbitrary alterations by the editor himself. I have sung this song before in these pages (reviews of the Maazel and Bernstein recordings of the Oeser edition, January

1972 and July 1973, respectively), so I will try to be concise this time; readers in search of greater detail may look out Winton Dean's reviews of the Oeser score (*Musical Times*, November 1965) and of the Bernstein recording (*Musical Newsletter*, IV/3), to which I am greatly indebted.

Oeser's pervasive corruption of the opera's musical text has evidently not yet been fully grasped by impresarios and conductors, for we have here a new recording (based on a stage production at the 1977 Edinburgh Festival), the sixth to be issued in the last ten years—and the fourth to make use of the Oeser edition. To be sure, the conductors of these recordings do not accept Oeser's text wholesale. It's not always clear whether this is the result of contact with the critical literature or simply of healthy musical instinct. Solti was apparently made aware of the problem by the London musical press after a stage production he conducted at Covent Garden. In the case of the Metropolitan Opera production that preceded the Bernstein recording, we learn from Harvey E. Phillips' *The Carmen Chronicle* that the decision to use Oeser was taken very early on, but there is no discussion of the question, no justification offered. (It's evident from his later comments that the book's author was unaware of the edition's controversial status.)

Both these conductors, and Abbado as well, have the wit to restore the familiar form of the wonderful melody that accompanies Carmen's exit after the *Habanera* and, later, her re-entry after the fight in the factory, of which Oeser prints an earlier, markedly inferior form. But only one of them (Abbado) has gotten around to fixing up the similarly inferior Oeser version of the opening ritornello of the Card Scene. Small points, perhaps—but one of Carmen's chief delights is the profusion of ele-

**Explanation of symbols**

**Classical:**

- B** Budget
- H** Historical
- R** Reissue

**Recorded tape:**

- Open Reel
- 8-Track Cartridge
- Cassette

gant and charming details such as these.

There are bigger matters involved. All three of our conductors see that the standard version of the Act III finale is greatly superior to the one given by Oeser (but just before that, none of them restores Bizet's effective improvement of letting Escamillo begin his off-stage refrain unaccompanied). In the Act IV finale, at the point when José stabs Carmen, Oeser offers, not even an earlier Bizet version, but his own pastiche of rejected material. Here our three conductors react differently. Solti does the sensible thing, reverting to Bizet's own final version. Bernstein doctors the Oeser score, devising a comparable, if different, awkwardness. Abbado (who earlier in the last act has followed Bizet's final cuts and used the simpler definitive off-stage choral parts) plays Oeser as written. Comparison demonstrates inescapably the superiority—nay, the genius—of Bizet's own solution.

But what kind of insanity is this, whereby a palpably fraudulent concoction, with absolutely no foundation in the historical evidence, is being taken seriously by respected musicians? So much so that one of them (Bernstein), evidently unhappy with what he's playing, feels called upon to "improve" the fraud, rather than simply throwing it out the window and playing the cor-

rect music! The pernicious effect of uncritical acceptance of the printed note has never been more glaring—nor the damage that can be done by irresponsible, distorted scholarship.

To return to our recording, Abbado generally follows Oeser pretty closely, as closely as Bernstein in most matters. A curious exception is the José/Escamillo duet, of which Bernstein made an unrecognizable hash; Abbado gives us the shorter form made standard by the Choudens scores published after Bizet's death—an abridgment that may even have been made by Bizet himself during the opera's initial run. (The complete long form of this duet is to be heard in the Frühbeck de Burgos and Solti recordings.)

The most circumspect user of the Oeser edition is in fact Solti, who omits several passages included by the other two and gives his reasons in an accompanying essay. But even this circumspection does not prevent his recording from incorporating various corruptions, such as those noted above, because he has hold of the wrong end of the stick. Imagine a stage director who finds some rationale behind the First Quarto's famously garbled text of *Hamlet* and wishes to reflect, say, its sequence of events in a new production. Would he hand

out the Quarto text as a working script and try to patch up the corruptions as he went along? Hardly; he would start with the reasonably clean Folio text and modify it. And the right way to perform *Carmen*—at least until we get a proper critical edition—is to begin with the standard Choudens material, supplementing it with insertions from Oeser when necessary.

All of this, it should be pointed out, has nothing to do with the question of spoken dialogue vs. Guiraud recitatives. (In fact, Oeser's score includes the recitatives, a concession to the publisher's sales department.) After all, the Opéra-Comique was playing the dialogue version long before Oeser was born: its 1950 recording conducted by André Cluytens (last heard from on Pathé-Marconi FCX 35020/2) preserves a musical text closer to Bizet's 1875 score than any of the Oeser-based recordings. Its only superior in that respect is the Frühbeck de Burgos set, which restores the Morales pantomime near the start of Act I (a piece added during rehearsals to upgrade the role of Morales, but probably dropped during the initial run) and the full José/Escamillo duet, as well as including much more of the dialogue. If you want to hear Bizet's *Carmen*, as distinct from Guiraud's or Oeser's, then the Frühbeck recording is presently your only choice, and not a bad one.

Still, some of the alternatives that Oeser makes available are attractive, notably the brief canonic episode for strings during the changing of the guard and the contrasting section for the cigarette chorus; neither of these holds up the action seriously—as, by contrast, does the longer version of the Fate motif after the *Habanera*, which Solti wisely abjures. On the whole, Solti's recording incorporates about as much restoration of omitted material as seems to me desirable, and also as generous a helping of the spoken dialogue as any recording, more than Abbado and much more than Bernstein (see Conrad L. Osborne's review in these pages, December 1976). On textual grounds, the London set is the choice among Oeser-edition recordings.

Of course few of us buy recordings purely on textual grounds; a really compelling performance would attract us even were it played from a corrupted text. The new Abbado recording does not seem to me to be such a performance, for all the care and skill that has clearly gone into it. Much of the time, indeed, it suffers from the same abstracted quality that Osborne complained of in the Solti performance; somehow, *Carmen* is being played and sung here, but it is not being *experienced*.

With rare exceptions, the orchestral playing is expert; entrancing in the quiet precision supporting Carmen's "Non, tu ne m'aimes pas," elegant in the solo work of that little canonic interlude I mentioned earlier. But there's no swagger in the rhythms. The toreador's refrain passes by in the Prelude making very little impression; the *Chanson bohème* moves at a good clip but never dances; the Quintet is fleet and precise but uneventful. There's a shortage of inflection: The ascending repeated phrases at the end of the third entr'acte are played in a curious deadpan way, as if the piece were really already over and they

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## Critics' Choice

The most noteworthy releases reviewed recently

- BACH:** Brandenburgs Nos. 2, 5; Cantata No. 202. Battle, Levine. RCA ARL 1-2788, March.  
**BACH:** French Suites. Leonhardt. ABC/SEON AX 67036/2 (2). Inventions; Sinfonias. Leonhardt. ABC/SEON AX 67037, March.  
**BEETHOVEN:** Piano Sonatas Nos. 28–32. Pollini. DG 2709 072 (3). Sonatas Nos. 9, 10, 18. Hungerford. VANGUARD VSD 71252, Feb.  
**BEETHOVEN:** Symphony No. 6. Jochum. ANGEL S 37530, Apr.  
**BRAMMS:** Songs. Ameling, Baldwin. PHILIPS 9500 398, March.  
**BRAMMS:** String Quartets (3). Alban Berg Qt. TELEFUNKEN 26 35447 (2), Apr.  
**BRUCH:** Violin Concertos Nos. 1, 2. Accardo, Masur. PHILIPS 9500 422, March.  
**CHOPIN:** Preludes, et al. Ashkenazy. LONDON CS 7101, Apr.  
**COPLAND:** Appalachian Spring Suite. **IVES:** Three Places in New England. D. R. Davies (chamber versions). SOUND 80 DLR 101 (3M digital recording), March.  
**DEBUSSY:** Preludes, Book I. Michelangeli. DG 2531 200, March.  
**DOHNÁNYI:** Chamber Works. HNH RECORDS 4072; HUNGAROTON SLPX 11624, 11853, March.  
**DVOŘÁK:** Cello Concerto. Perényi, Oberfrank. HUNGAROTON SLPX 11866, Feb.  
**FRANCK:** Symphony in D minor. Cantelli. RCA ARL 1-3005, March.  
**MAHLER:** Symphony No. 5; Symphony No. 10: Adagio. Levine. RCA ARL 2-2905 (2), Feb.  
**PUCCINI:** Madama Butterfly. Scotto, Domingo, Maazel. COLUMBIA M3 35181 (3), Feb.  
**PUCCINI:** Turandot. Caballé, Freni, Carreras, Lombard. ANGEL SCLX 3857 (3), March.  
**RACHMANINOFF:** Piano Concerto No. 3. Pokorna, Pinkas. SUPRAPHON 1 10 1950, Apr.  
**RZEWSKI:** The People United Will Never Be Defeated! Oppens. VANGUARD VSD 71248, Apr.  
**STRAUSS, R.:** Don Quixote; Don Juan. Haitink. PHILIPS 9500 440, Apr.  
**STRAUSS, R.:** Ein Heldenleben. Kempe. SERAPHIM S 60315, Apr.  
**VERDI:** La Battaglia di Legnano. Ricciarelli, Carreras, Manuguerra, Ghiuselev, Gardelli. PHILIPS 6700 120 (2), Apr.  
**VERDI:** Otello. Scotto, Domingo, Milnes, Levine. RCA CRL 3-2951 (3), Feb.  
**VIVALDI:** Concertos, Op. 9 (*La Cetra*). Brown. ARGO D99D 3 (3), Apr.  
**ZELENKA:** Orchestral Works. Camerata Bern. ARCHIV 2710 026 (3), March.
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Clive Barada/Columbia

Ileana Cotrubas and Plácido Domingo—still not making the case for the Oeser Carmen

Guiraud's *Carmen*: the Beecham. These last two items should stand higher among a listener's priorities than any of the Oeser recordings. D.H.

**CHOPIN: Etudes (24), Opp. 10 and 25.** Sequeira Costa, piano. [Zdeněk Zahradník, prod.] SUPRAPHON 1 11 2188, \$8.98.

Sequeira Costa is a Portuguese virtuoso whose 1972 recording of Ravel's *Gaspard de la nuit* (Supraphon 1 11 0850) displayed a formidable granitic integrity and an impressive grasp of Ravel's patterns, though I can see why some listeners felt that poetry and color were slighted.

Something similar happens with the Chopin etudes. Costa's clear articulation puts the filigree in high relief, with a sonority more diamondlike than silken. Color is underplayed, but not contrast—in dynamics, chord playing, and voice leading. In view of the cool emotional climate, the rubato that in some etudes verges on finickiness, and the whiff of Teutonic sobriety, the recordings by Pollini (DG 2530 291), Vásáry (DG 136 454), and Ashkenazy (London CS 6844) may be safer recommendations. But Costa's dauntless execution and provocative outlook present this challenging material with seriousness and penetrating analysis. This is playing of high profile, admirably served by Supraphon's reverberant but detailed sound. H.G.

**CLEMENTI: Symphonies (4).** For a feature review, see page 73.

**DONIZETTI: Don Pasquale.**

Norina	Beverly Sills (s)
Ernesto	Alfredo Kraus (t)
A Notary	Henry Newman (t)
Dr. Malatesta	Alan Titus (b)
Don Pasquale	Donald Gramm (bs-b)

Ambrosian Opera Chorus, London Symphony Orchestra, Sarah Caldwell, cond. [John Willan, prod.] ANGEL SBLX 3871, \$16.98 (two discs, automatic sequence). Tape •• 4X2X 3871, \$16.98

**[R] DONIZETTI: Don Pasquale.**

Norina	Anna Maccianti (s)
Ernesto	Ugo Benelli (t)
A Notary	Augusto Frati (t)
Dr. Malatesta	Mario Basiola Jr. (b)
Don Pasquale	Alfredo Mariotti (bs)

Maggio Musicale Fiorentino Chorus and Orchestra, Ettore Gracis, cond. [Otto Gerdes, prod.] DG PRIVILEGE 2726 084, \$13.96 (two discs, manual sequence) [from DG 138 971/2, 1965]

**Comparisons**  
Sciutti, Oncina, Corena, Kertész Lon. OSA 1260  
Saraceni, Schipa, Badini, Sabajno Sera. IC 6084

Neither the new Angel set nor the reissued DG set helps to bring us closer to a really first-rate recording of this wonderfully charitable comedy. London's *Don Pasquale* is not outstandingly successful in capturing the mixture of high spirits and delicate sentiment that so distinguishes the opera. The performance, moreover, is unequally cast. So is the old Sabajno-conducted version on Seraphim, in which Tito Schipa does the only distinguished singing.

The new Angel performance has some

didn't matter, rather than as purposive steps toward an approaching goal. (The solo flute playing in this piece is, incidentally, one of the few defects in the orchestral work.)

As in the Solti recording, Plácido Domingo contributes the most committed performance, though he sounded in marginally better voice (or, perhaps, was placed in a more comfortable acoustical ambience) on the earlier occasion. Even his spoken dialogue—in accented but perfectly clear French—is lively and convincing, and his singing is consistently musical, very powerful in the climaxes. Sherrill Milnes makes a sturdy, unsubtle Escamillo; he is very ill at ease in the dialogue.

The booklet reprints a long letter from Teresa Berganza setting forth her conception of the role of Carmen—one that we may regard as somewhat naive. "Carmen is not a prostitute: she works in a factory to earn enough to keep herself and earn sufficient money to enable her to visit her mother." Well, that's what she tells José (in a passage of dialogue omitted from this recording, though included in Solti's), right on the heels of a barefaced lie about being herself a Navarraise; it sounds to me like part of the same con job.

But Berganza's assumptions of gentility are, in a recording, less important than her singing—and although some might describe this as "restrained" or "tasteful," to me it sounds mostly pallid. And not through interpretive choice; the voice is just too limited for the assignment. The lower register has to be puffed up artificially to carry its weight, and there's little variety of tonal color, though the ornaments are sung with real facility. The obvious precedent is Conchita Supervia—another Spanish mezzo also noted as a Rossini singer—but there

really is no comparison, for Supervia was colorful, verbally charming, and invariably vibrant (I'm not referring to that famous vibrato!), without ever suggesting anything sluttish.

Nor is Ileana Cotrubas' the right voice for Micaela; the tone is hard pressed on top, tremulous down below, wooden in the middle, and all the good intentions in the world cannot hide that. In the other roles, only Robert Lloyd's Zuniga is vocally and stylistically distinguished; the others are recognizably British. Good marks to the boys' chorus, from George Watson's College; the Ambrosians do well also. The sound is clear but rather hard, more like a studio than an opera house.

All of this doesn't make for much competition with Solti's cast—which after all shares the strongest point of the DG cast (Domingo), adding a potentially better Escamillo (José van Dam—though he doesn't realize all of that potential superiority) and two vocally superb ladies (Tatiana Troyanos and Kiri Te Kanawa), plus a capable and idiomatic French supporting cast. (Of course, for something completely different, there's the Bernstein set: plenty of commitment and swagger, but drawn on a pervasively inflated scale—at the end, you know you've heard a performance, but you wonder whether the composer may not have been Richard Wagner instead of Georges Bizet.)

To wrap this up in a neat bundle: There are no great recorded performances of the Oeser *Carmen*, though Solti's makes a good reference edition if you want to hear the additional music. There are no great recorded performances of Bizet's final version either, though Frühbeck's is good enough to argue that version's superiority and integrity. There is a great recorded performance of

virtues: excellent orchestral playing, and, one or two questionable moments aside, good conducting from Sarah Caldwell, who in her recording debut keeps everything moving and does so for the most part in exactly the right spirit. In Alfredo Kraus, she has the best Ernesto on discs since Schipa. Kraus, a fastidious artist, phrases with great sensitivity. The purity of his line is something to marvel at throughout and nowhere more so than in the last-act serenade. Equally notable is the feeling he shows for the dramatically appropriate weight and color of tone. Only in the difficult cabaletta to "Cercherò lontana terra" (wisely omitted by Ugo Benelli in the DG set) does he not sound well within his capabilities—the final interpolated high D flat, in particular, being a mistake.

So, I fear, is the casting of Beverly Sills in an ingenue role at this stage of her career, when she is incapable of producing a steady stream of sound in any part of the voice. In fleet passages she is listenable; in sustained music she is not. But it must be said that her vocalism here is hardly worse than her artistry. This Norina, alas, is very much like the one seen recently at the Met—coarse and clumsy, less a characterization or a portrayal than a running gag. For the pretended artlessness by means of which "Sofronia" tricks Don Pasquale into marrying her she adopts an unsupported white tone just shy of the correct pitch. At the end of the laugh that introduces the cabaletta to "So anch'io la virtù magica" she interpolates an "Oooh!" Only a Sills fan determined out of loyalty to forgive every vocal insufficiency and every interpretive excess could, I imagine, enjoy this Norina.

Alan Titus and Donald Gramm are both unobjectionable. Of the two, Gramm is the more vocally at ease. Titus' rather nasal baritone lacks variety of timbre and has a woefully undernourished lower range, so that in the play-acting duet with Norina at the end of Act I, for example, his voice fades away as soon as he gets down to a mere middle E in the bass staff. He is also technically unequipped to deal with Malatesta's fioritura. Like Gramm, he has a winning personality, but in neither case is this enough for what are among the ripest roles in opera buffa, and as a consequence the comic scenes in which Gramm and Titus figure lack vivacity and charm.

Angel's recording is first-rate. The pressings I listened to, though quiet, were marred by imperfections that caused the stylus to stick at several points. Text and translation. Good notes by Philip Gossett.

The DG performance is highly respectable. Free from excess and outright failure, it is also without distinction or character. Ettore Gracis is a capable conductor and Anna Maccianti a fluent and often attractive Norina, though her top notes are by no means commendable. The rest are well routine, and the enunciation of everybody in the cast is excellent. One would be relieved to encounter a performance so lacking in offensiveness in the opera house these days. The fourteen-year-old sonics hold up well, and the DG pressings are superb. Italian text with multilingual translations and notes.



Sarah Caldwell  
A recording debut with Don Pasquale

Eugene Cook

The Angel set, like the London, is uncut; DG makes the "standard" theater cuts.

D.S.H.

**HANDEL:** Alexander's Feast. Felicity Palmer, soprano, Anthony Rolfe Johnson, tenor; Stephen Roberts, bass; Stockholm Bach Choir, Vienna Concentus Musicus, Nikolaus Harnoncourt, cond. TELEFUNKEN 26.35440, \$17.96 (two discs, manual sequence).

Comparison  
Deller / Orana Concert Choir Van. SRV 282/3, HM 50/1

Though there is no evidence that the gentle St. Cecilia was a musician, somehow she did become the patron saint of music and a great favorite with painters, poets, and musicians. The saint's day, November 22, was observed throughout Europe with musical rejoicing; in England, which had a St. Cecilia Society since 1683, many odes, among them such masterpieces as Purcell's and Handel's first *Ode for St. Cecilia's Day*, were composed for these occasions. That the second-century Christian martyr is usually depicted playing beautiful Renaissance or baroque organs should not worry us any more than do the Dutch soldiers in their baroque accouterments guarding Christ in the paintings of the great masters of the seventeenth century; in the arts such anachronisms are immaterial.

Dryden's ode, *Alexander's Feast*, set by Handel and known as his second *St. Cecilia Ode*, is great poetry, but its anachronism is a bit dizzying. While the subtitle reads "The Power of Music," which is of course the St. Cecilia theme, the poet goes back all the way to Plutarch for his subject, one of Alexander's triumphs. His hero is Timotheus, a famous singer of antiquity; utilizing such figures as Alexander, Darius, the celebrated courtesan Thais, and Bacchus, he evokes at will a series of strong and contrasting emotions.

How did this classical poem become an ode to St. Cecilia? By suddenly, at the very end of the piece, invoking the Christian

martyr: "At last divine Cecilia came," offering competition to Timotheus, but one is not quite sure who is the winner. Chrysanther, the distinguished nineteenth-century Handelian scholar, called this unexpected turn "a *salto mortale* from antiquity to Christendom." It does not matter; the verses are fine, rich in pictorial words—something that always aroused Handel's imagination. The result is an incomparable masterpiece, one in which Handel has on his "singing robe." There are no thunderous hallelujahs; the arias, mostly in dance rhythms, run the gamut from the noble to the sensuous, from the tender to the warlike, all of them lyricism at its best. Purcell's impact is clearly if subtly in evidence, but for once Handel did not borrow anything from his seraphic predecessor.

Telefunken's new recording is faithful to the spirit of the magnificent ode; it is intimate, with no false accents and none of those interpolated vocal sallies that nowadays are considered the hallmark of authenticity in baroque music. The soloists could not be better suited to their tasks. Soprano Felicity Palmer, gloriously on pitch, sings with many fine nuances; tenor Anthony Rolfe Johnson is a master of clear, melodious delivery in which every word is distinctly enunciated; bass Stephen Roberts complements the cast perfectly. The superlatively trained Stockholm Bach Choir (Anders Ohrwall, director) is a particular joy to hear. Notably attractive is the close relationship of the choral pieces with the solos.

This being a Vienna Concentus Musicus production, much attention is given to historical accuracy. The "original instruments" are well played, but there aren't enough of them. Ten violins, two violas, two cellos, and a lone bass fiddle add up to a much smaller group than was Handel's usual theater orchestra; the ensemble is noticeably weak in the viola and bass parts. At times Handel demands divided violas, which gives us one instrument to the part!

I don't know where Nikolaus Harnoncourt gets his idea of such a chamber-music-like complement of players; we know the composition of Handel's orchestras. Also, Handel clearly planned the gradual increase of the volume of sound, and by the time we arrive at the climactic end he has built up an orchestra consisting of strings, recorders, oboes, bassoons, horns, trumpets, drums, and of course harpsichord and/or organ. That the orchestra still sounds well (except in the pianos, which have little body) is largely due to the skill of the recording engineers, who can work miracles with their microphones. This can be done in recordings, but at a live performance in a concert hall it would not work.

For the sake of comparison, I played Alfred Deller's old Vanguard recording (now in the budget-priced *Everyman and Historical Anthology of Music* series) and immediately forgot my mild objections to the Telefunken. Deller shows little flexibility, and while he produces a fuller orchestral sound and his bass is solid, the dynamics are most of the time on the same level, the whistling organ pumping in "volume"—true pianos are rare. His soloists and chorus are



good (yet inferior to Harnoncourt's classy singers); because of the rather forward and open sound, they are a bit noisy, though musically so. Harnoncourt creditably varies his continuo—here it is the harpsichord or the theorbo, there a discreet organ—while Deller uses only the organ, overbearingly. Deller's brief substitution in the last number of his own countertenor voice for that of the prescribed tenor is uncalled for; it reminds one of Alfred Hitchcock's fleeting appearances in each of his films.

Interestingly, though not surprisingly, the lack of an experienced professional conductor is felt in both recordings. Among other things, the pace in both is a little too steady, especially in the purely instrumental portions (the intelligent singers compel the necessary flexibility in their numbers), and neither body distinguishes sufficiently between slurred "rollers" and the melodic ones where every note must be heard. Since these usually appear as upbeats, a conductor with a precise baton can control them, but when the musicians are left to their own judgment they are apt to slur the upbeats in order to arrive safely together at the next downbeat.

In sum, the excellent Telefunken edition of this engrossing work is recommended with pleasure. P.H.L.

**B LALO: Works for Solo Instrument and Orchestra.** Ruggiero Ricci, violin; Laszlo Varga, cello; Marylène Dosse, piano; various orchestras and cond. [Heinz Jansen and Felix Margue, prod.] VOX QSVB 5150, \$11.98 (three QS-encoded discs).

**Violin:** *Symphonie espagnole*, Op. 21 (Bochum Symphony Orchestra, Matthias Kuntzsch, cond.); *Concerto in F*, Op. 20; *Guitarre*, Op. 28; *Concerto russe*, Op. 29; *Romance-Sérénade*; *Fantaisie-Ballet*; *Fantaisie norvégienne* (Luxemburg Radio Orchestra, Louis de Froment, cond.); **Cello:** *Concerto in D minor* (Stuttgart Philharmonic Orchestra, Siegfried Kohler, cond.); **Piano:** *Concerto* (Stuttgart Philharmonic Orchestra, Kuntzsch) [from CANDIDE CE 31102, 1978].

**B SAINT-SAËNS: Works for Violin and Orchestra.** Ulf Hoelscher, violin; New Philharmonia Orchestra, Pierre Dervaux, cond. [David Mottley, prod.] SERAPHIM SIC 6111, \$11.94 (three discs).

**Concertos**, No. 1, in A minor, Op. 20; No. 2, in C, Op. 58; No. 3, in B minor, Op. 61; *Introduction and Rondo capriccioso*, Op. 28; *Romance in D flat*, Op. 37; *Le Déluge*, Op. 45; *Prelude*; *Romance in C*, Op. 48; *Etude en forme de valse*, Op. 52, No. 6 (arr. Ysaye); *Morceau de concert*, Op. 62; *Havanaise*, Op. 83; *Caprice andalou*, Op. 122; *La Muse et le poète*, Op. 132 (with Ralph Kirshbaum, cello).

**VIEUXTEMPS:** *Concertos for Violin and Orchestra*: No. 4, in D minor, Op. 31; No. 5, in A minor, Op. 37; Itzhak Perlman, violin; *Orchestre de Paris*, Daniel Barenboim, cond. [Süvi Raj Grubb, prod.] ANGEL S 37484, \$7.98. Tape: ● 4XS 37484, \$7.98.

Edouard Lalo (1823-92) has been fairly well represented on records, but except for the *Symphonie espagnole* few of his works are really well known, much less appreciated for their innovations in orchestral coloring, their idiomatic expertise, and the establishment of a quintessentially French symphonic tradition outside the overpowering cult of Wagnerism. I've become more and more conscious in recent years, as I hear unfamiliar and rehear familiar works by Lalo, of just how stimulating and rewarding they can be.

Vox's comprehensive collection of Lalo's concerted compositions is particularly valuable for the only current recording of the piano concerto of 1888 (also available on a Candide single disc, coupled with Pierné's Op. 12 *Concerto*) and for the first recordings known to me of four works, all composed for the violinist Sarasate: the brief *Romance-Sérénade* of 1880, the three-movement miniature-concerto *Fantaisie norvégienne* of 1880 (the first treatment of the Norwegian melodies, collected by Sarasate, later used in the better-known orchestral *Rapsodie norvégienne*), the little genre piece *Guitarre* of 1882, originally for violin and piano, and the *Fantaisie-Ballet*, a reworking of themes from the *Namouna* ballet of 1882.

Ruggiero Ricci is his customary bravura self in the four novelties as well as in the larger violin works: the *Symphonie espagnole*, the 1872 *Concerto in F*, and the 1883 *Concerto russe*. Laszlo Varga, onetime principal cellist of the New York Philharmonic, is a more sober, more restrained, but also more eloquent soloist in the magnificent cello concerto of 1876. And Marylène Dosse is the competent if sometimes over-insistent soloist in the less immediately approachable piano concerto. The soloists are not helped by the routine, often coarse-toned orchestral accompaniments, but the recording, while variable, is for the most part effectively vivid.

Except perhaps for Varga's, none of the Vox performances of the larger Lalo works challenges my favorites—Henryk Szeryng's *Symphonie espagnole* (Philips 6500 195), Jean-Pierre Wallez' violin concertos (Peters International PLE 005), and Leonard Rose's cello concerto (Columbia M 30113). Perhaps we can look forward to something like Seraphim's new Saint-Saens set, which supersedes the violin portion of a similar Vox set of that composer's concerted works (QSVB 5134, January 1976).

Violinist Ulf Hoelscher, still in his thirties, has been previously represented in the domestic catalog only by off-the-beaten-path concertos—Korngold's (Angel S 36999, June 1974) and Richard Strauss's (S 37267, October 1977). In the Saint-Saens works, he displays a truly magisterial technique (especially notable for the invariable bull's-eye intonation), immaculate musical taste, and the rare ability to give full conviction to Romantic expressiveness without slipping into the abyss of sentimentality.

Saint-Saens' Third Violin Concerto, *Introduction and Rondo capriccioso*, and *Havanaise* have of course been recorded many times, but the aforementioned Vox set has been the only ready source for the first two concertos, the Op. 48 *Romance in C*, the Op. 62 *Morceau de concert*, and the Op. 122 *Caprice andalou*. Hoelscher and conductor Pierre Dervaux plunge much deeper below the polished surfaces than the more flamboyant Ricci and Vox's so-so conductors. And for good measure they add that once-popular Victorian-era tearjerker, the prelude to the oratorio *Le Déluge*. Ysaye's bravura arrangement of the *Etude en forme de valse* (originally for piano solo), and two works I've never encoun-

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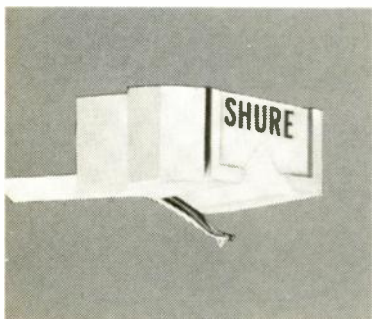




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CIRCLE 47 ON PAGE 105

tered before, the songful Op. 37 *Romance* in D flat and the extraordinary Op. 132 *La Muse et le poète*. This late work (1909—a full half-century after the First Violin Concerto!) is more emotionally outspoken than one would expect from the elegantly sophisticated Saint-Saëns: Hoelscher is ably partnered in this poignant performance by the American cellist Ralph Kirshbaum.

EMI's vibrant recording provides an ideal setting for the performances, but my copy, at least, is not ideally pressed, with an especially noisy Side 1.

A logical companion to Vox's Lalo and Seraphim's Saint-Saëns is Angel's disc of two of the six violin concertos by their Belgian elder Henri Vieuxtemps (1820-81). If Vieuxtemps's name suggests to you (as it long has done for me) only fiddle fireworks, you'll be startled into the realization of how inadequate that half-true characterization is. The fervor that both soloist Itzhak Perlman and conductor Daniel Barenboim bring to the Fourth Concerto makes Berlioz' admiration seem wholly justified. It's a noble and dramatic work, which I've never heard more effectively performed.

In Vieuxtemps's more often heard Fifth Concerto, even Heifetz' incomparably elegant 1962 recording (RCA LSC 2603) is now made to seem overrestrained and its accompaniment far too subservient. The excitement and absolute security of the performances is matched by EMI's warm, rich, wide-range, lucidly detailed recording.

R.D.D.

**MOZART:** Songs (complete). Elly Ameling, soprano; Meinard Kraak, tenor; Dalton Baldwin, piano and organ; Benny Ludemann, mandolin. PHILIPS 6747 483. \$17.96 (two discs, manual sequence).

Mozart was not one of the great art-song composers. To listen to his complete songs is to realize very clearly that he regarded the genre as a modest one and that, except on rare occasions, he brought to it simply a straightforward lyricism, without complications of either a musical or a psychological nature. The exceptions, like "*Das Veilchen*," "*Als Luise die Briefe*," "*Das Lied der Trennung*," and "*Abendempfindung*," do not affect the overall judgment. Yet such is the charm of his musical personality, such the richness of his powers of melodic invention, that one can play straight through these thirty-nine pieces with a delight that hardly falters. Few of them run deep, yet there is nothing here of the perfunctory or merely slick. The songs, which follow one another chronologically, range from the eleven-year-old composer's "*An die Freude*" to the folksonglike ditties of his last months. In between come French ariettes, an Italian *canzona*, and, surprisingly, a pair of German hymns. This set, the only one available, is very welcome, since it rounds out our knowledge of the composer.

A lot of it is very well performed. At her best, Ameling is the ideal artist for this assignment, being straightforwardly lyrical in manner as well as intelligent and musical—she uses appoggiaturas in "*Ridente la calma*" and decorates the repeat of the first section in exemplary fashion. For "*Die Alte*" she adopts an amusing and vivid old

woman's timbre. Sides 2-4 are on the whole good, though only rarely does Ameling sound comfortable all the way through a song. Clearly, during the time these records were made she was having trouble with her top, which sounds thin and squeezed. (Conversely, the opening of "*An Chloë*" is too low for her as arranged here.) The greater part of Side 1, however, is hard to listen to and should in my opinion have been remade. Ameling sounds vocally debilitated: Her high notes are strained, a lot of phrases are inadequately supported, and her tonal production is distinctly laborious.

Two of Mozart's songs are inescapably male—"Meine Wünsche" ("I wish I were the Emperor") and "*Lied beim Auszug in das Feld*" ("Song on Going to the Wars")—and are appropriately assigned to a tenor, here Meinard Kraak, the possessor of a remarkably ugly voice. Benny Ludemann's mandolin accompaniment in "*Die Zufriedenheit*" and "*Komm, liebe Zither*" is expert. Best of all is Dalton Baldwin, who plays both piano and (in the hymns) organ with beauty and great skill. The recording is warm, but a little close for my taste. Philips' pressings are superb. A blessing, then, but a mixed one. D.S.H.

**MOZART:** Vocal Works. Judith Blegen, soprano; Mostly Mozart Orchestra, Pinchas Zukerman, violin and cond. [Andrew Kazdin, prod.] COLUMBIA M 35142. \$7.98. Tape. ●● MT 35142. \$7.98.

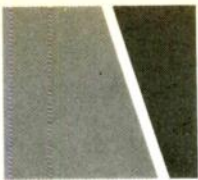
Exsultate, jubilate, K. 165. Concert Arias. Vorrei spiegarvi, oh Dio!, K. 418 (with Leonard Arner, oboe), Non temer, amato bene, K. 490 (with Zukerman), Il Re pastore, K. 208. L'amerò, sarò costante (with Zukerman).

Enthusiasm for this record might be both specific and general—the first because it contains the best recording I know of "*Vorrei spiegarvi, oh Dio!*," an exceptionally ravishing Mozart concert aria; the second because it's the first domestic recording of Mozart by one of his most distinguished contemporary exponents, Judith Blegen. (Her Susanna graces the Barenboim/Edinburgh recording of *Figaro*, but that has been available here only as an import, HMV SLS 995.)

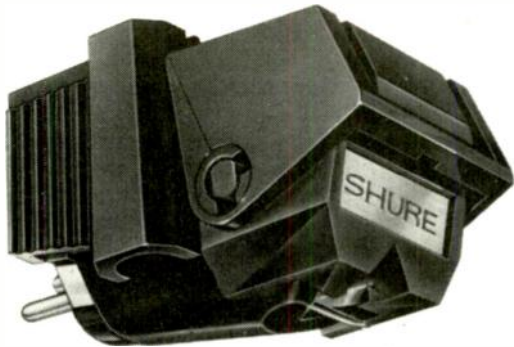
"*Vorrei spiegarvi*" was written for Mozart's sister-in-law, Aloysia Weber. In the adagio section, solo oboe and soprano contend and echo over a background of pizzicato strings, enhanced by a seductive dotted figure in muted violins; the concluding allegro is urgent and difficult. Blegen sets this all forth with unflinching sweet tone, instrumental purity of line and intonation, and a winning directness. Mme. Weber owned a top E, and so does Miss Blegen (which gives her an edge over the previous "best" recordings, by Maria Stader).

Also relatively unfamiliar is "*Non temer, amato bene*," the aria Mozart wrote to open Act II of *Idomeneo* in the 1786 private revival. Though sung by Idamante, who in this performance was changed from a castrato to a tenor, Mozart's manuscript of this aria is written in the soprano clef and has usually been sung by sopranos, for the interplay of vocal line with violin obbligato seems to work better in the higher octave. (It has never, I believe, been recorded by a

Continued on page 90

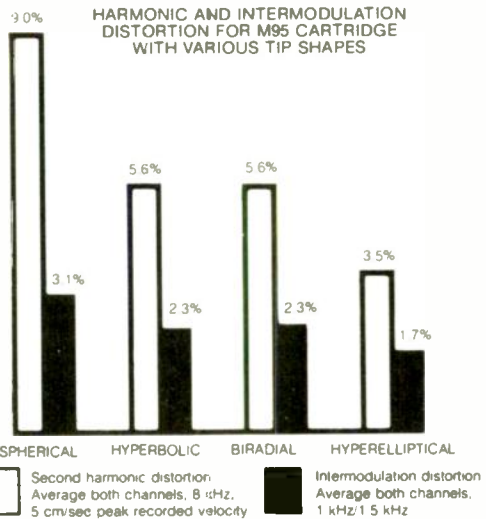


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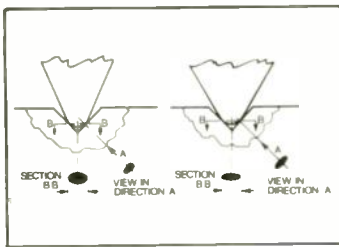
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# “Don’t Tell Rudi!”

When Rudolf Serkin was chosen *MUSICAL AMERICA*'s Musician of the Year last December, the editors were faced with a problem. The pianist's legendary devotion to music has been accompanied by a modesty and fierce temperament just as legendary. Serkin might attend a ceremony to honor, say, Mozart or Casals, but he would never show up at one to honor Serkin.

Sampson Field, president of the New York Philharmonic and—more to the point—chairman of the board of Serkin's beloved Marlboro Music School and Festival, had an idea: Ambush the musician at a Marlboro board meeting. Would *MUSICAL AMERICA* be willing to go



Unaware of the impending ambush, Serkin greets chief conspirators Robert Saudek, left, and Sampson Field.



Who, me? The pianist shows his surprise as he is accosted by HF editor Leonard Marcus with the plaque.

Marta Casals Istomin, widow of cellist Pablo Casals and now wife of pianist Eugene Istomin, chats with Fleming.



The animated prizewinner shares his delight with Metropolitan Opera president Frank Taplin . . .



along with such a presentation? Our editors were captivated by the idea.

A board meeting had been scheduled in New York for December 12, the morning after the pianist's annual Carnegie Hall concert. It was to be held in the library of the Museum of Broadcasting, whose director, onetime TV producer Robert Saudek (Leonard Bernstein's shows), was also on the Marlboro board. Field explained his proposal to Saudek. The editors and board members would arrive a bit early to lie in wait for the guest of honor. When Serkin arrived, he would be greeted, presented with the award, and congratulated

by all before he got to the library. Saudek agreed. "Don't tell Rudi!" Field warned, but Saudek, concerned that the deception might upset the pianist, thought he should be forewarned. No, insisted Field, "Rudi loves surprises." And besides, did Howard Hunt give Richard Nixon the opportunity to veto Watergate? Of course not.

Before Serkin's arrival on Monday morning, there was a feeling of tension. What would the musician's reaction be? There was no need to worry. As the accompanying photographs by Steve Fenn make clear, he was delighted.



All smiles: The Musician of the Year with HF editorial director Robert Clark, Marcus, MA editor Shirley Fleming, and Field.



Serkin proudly exhibits the award to his wife.

... and T. Roland Berner, chairman of Curtis-Wright.



In foreground, from left, William Schwann, of record catalog fame, attorney Irving Moskowitz, and Marlboro administrator Anthony Checchia examine the award.

tenor, nor is it included in any of the "complete" *Idomeneo* recordings.) A proficient piece, it seems perfunctory by comparison with the better-known, more expansive setting of the same text that Mozart made later the same year "for Mselle [Nancy] Storace and myself," the obbligato instrument that time being piano. Though some sopranos offer the entire recitative to K. 490, including a dialogue for Ilia and Idamante, Blegen sensibly skips this, beginning at "Venga la morte."

The other pieces are well known, of course, and they are here sung with comparable musicality, security, and charm: there is a smile in this voice, especially winning in the slow movement of *Exsultate, jubilate*. Style is also in evidence: ample, though far from slavish, application of the grammatical appoggiatura, discreet ornamentation of repeated material, cadenzas and lead-ins (in the *Re pastore* piece, one for singer and one for violin). On the debit side must be noted a certain scruffiness in the orchestral playing (though less than one frequently encounters at the Mostly Mozart concerts). Leonard Arner's obbligato in "Vorrei spiegarvi" is competent, but I wish he had phrased, in the adagio, the way Mozart asks instead of showing off his breath control. Zukerman fiddles well and knows how to give his soloist some breathing space: I am not quite convinced by his tempo modifications in K. 490.

Good recordings of Mozart's difficult concert arias are rare, and to be treasured: this is one such. Texts and translations are included. D.H.

**RACHMANINOFF:** *Symphony No. 2, in E minor, Op. 27.* Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, Edo de Waart, cond. PHILIPS 9500 309, \$8.98.

**Comparisons**  
 Previn/London Sym  
 Temirkanov/Royal Phil

Ang. S 36954  
 Ang. S 37520

De Waart's uncut reading balances well the strengths of my prior favorites, Previn's and Temirkanov's. His tempos are as mercurial as the latter's, though he makes more of the shift in the opening movement from the Largo introduction to the main Allegro moderato. De Waart is less expressively yielding than Temirkanov, however, and his third movement sings with less surging passion. Previn too brought a soaring lyricism and world-weary resignation to the first and third movements; by comparison De Waart will strike some listeners as merely dispatching the music efficiently.

The new recording, however, will appeal to you if you found Temirkanov hysterical in his abandon or Previn overly cautious. The scherzo benefits from De Waart's persistent accentuation and sinuous rhythm (note the blunt fatefulness of the closing brass chorale), and the finale is bitingly pungent. Part of this is thanks to closer mixing of winds and Philips' tighter overall ambience, with particular solidity below. The Rotterdam Philharmonic hasn't the tonal gloss of the two British orchestras, but its discipline and accuracy are hard to fault.

A.C.

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**SCHUBERT:** *Alfonso und Estrella.*

Estrella	Edith Mathis (s)
A Girl	Magdalena Falewicz (s)
Alfonso	Peter Schreier (t)
Bodyguard Leader	Eberhard Buchner (t)
A Youth	Horst Gebhardt (t)
Troila	Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (b)
Mauregato	Hermann Prey (b)
Adolfo	Theo Adam (bs-b)

Berlin Radio Chorus, Berlin State Orchestra, Otmar Suitner, cond. [Christfried Bickenbach and Helmut Storchmann, prod.] ANGEL SCLX 3878, \$24.98 (three SQ-encoded discs, automatic sequence).

Handel, Haydn, and Schubert became three very popular, widely loved, and much studied composers whose operas remained for a long while all but unknown except to a small band of enthusiastic champions. Yet operas form the largest item in the output of all three. Both Handel's and Haydn's principal activity was being director of and composing for a busy and important opera company. Schubert's relationship with the theater, on the other hand, was one of almost unquenchable hope. From 1812, when he was fifteen, to 1823 he nearly always had an opera on the stocks. He composed two full-scale romantic grand operas, *Alfonso und Estrella* and *Fierrabras*, and about a dozen other stage pieces. Only the one-act Singspiel *Die Zwillingsbrüder* and the plays-with-music *Rosamunde* and *Die Zauberharfe* reached the stage in his life.

Anyone who knows Schubert needs no telling that these operatic scores—the bulk of the complete edition—must be a rich treasure house of beautiful music. Last year, the Schubert sesquicentennial year, some of these treasures were revealed. Philips produced an anthology, "Schubert on the Stage" (9500 170), with Elly Ameling as its star. Before that, Electrola (German EMI) had produced, in Munich performances, three of the short operas—*Die Zwillingsbrüder* (1C 065 28833), *Der vierjährige Posten* (1C 065 30742), and *Die Verschworenen* (1C 065 30743)—which are available here through Peters International. I hope to write about them later. In Berlin, East and West artists and East

and West record companies collaborated on a recording of *Alfonso und Estrella*, and the Electrola set has now been taken up and is pressed in this country by Angel.

*Alfonso* was composed in 1821–22, with the Kärntnerthortheater in mind. Domenico Barbaja—that great impresario who engaged Rossini and Donizetti as house composers in Naples, who launched the careers of Mercadante and Bellini—had just taken over its management. He revived *Fidelio* with Schröder-Devrient (later the first Adriano in *Rienzi*, *Senta*, and *Venus*) as Leonore: that was a success, and he asked Beethoven for another opera. He commissioned *Euryanthe* from Weber, and that was less of a success. *Alfonso und Estrella* never reached the stage at all. Rossini fever, which had been raging in Vienna for a while, reached new heights in 1822, when the composer himself visited the city, and the Viennese had ears for little else.

The things usually said against *Alfonso*—that it has a poor libretto, and that Schubert's sense of dramatic pacing is faulty—are true, but need qualification. The score sounds many echoes: of Gluck, Mozart, Beethoven, Weber, and Rossini. They struck me forcibly when I heard *Alfonso* last year, done in Detroit, under Antal Dorati, in concert performance. Listening to the opera again, on this Angel recording, I began to hear more clearly its individual and essentially Schubertian character. Schubert's aim, I think, was to unite something of the high seriousness of Gluck, Cherubini, and Spontini, the directness of Beethoven, the picturesqueness of Weber, and the ready charm of Rossini. Beyond that, he had a clear vision of the kind of opera he wanted to achieve. More than one recent writer has pointed to the influence on him and his librettist, his friend Franz von Schober, of Ignaz von Mosel's *Essay on the Aesthetics of Dramatic Composition*, which called for a historical (or mythological) plot, uncomplicated and slow-moving action, and music that expressed ideas rather than concrete images.

The "ideas" of *Alfonso* are reconciliation and forgiveness. Alfonso, rightful heir to the Spanish throne, and acclaimed as such in the finale, lives in exile in the mountains with his dispossessed father. There he

meets—and falls in love with—Estrella, the daughter of the usurping king. In the penultimate number, the two fathers, both baritones (here Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau and Hermann Prey), meet, and sing a noble duet, which ends: "The supreme joy that earth can offer is loving forgiveness on an enemy's breast." There is a villain, the bass Adolfo (Theo Adam), who leads a rebellion: he, too, is forgiven at the end. These people are not so much individual human beings as abstractions. They express themselves at length, and do not shun repetition.

But the music is beautiful. In the theater, one might wish that the characters would stop spouting and get on with some dramatic action; but on the phonograph one can enjoy the arias in their "heavenly length," as one does any long Schubert movement. When Alfonso and Estrella meet, they embark on what has been called one of the longest love scenes before *Tristan*: it consists of a duet, an aria for Alfonso, another duet, an aria for Estrella, and another duet. It does seem a needlessly protracted sequence (though in fact it lasts only 16½ minutes). In Act III, Estrella sings, in succession, a duet with Adolfo, a trio with him and Alfonso, and then three duets with Alfonso. This is also undramatic. So, in Act II, is the sequence of a long, repetitive bass aria with male-voice chorus in 4/4 followed by a long, repetitive baritone aria with male-voice chorus in 4/4.

It is this kind of structure, rather than any inherent weakness of plot, that keeps Alfonso off the stage. That, and also Schubert's undramatic way of persisting with the same motif or the same figuration for page after page after page, through harmony after harmony, as in instrumental movements. The score of *Alfonso* is, if you like, too thoroughly composed and worked out for its own theatrical good. But the music is filled with life, with charm, with Schubertian invention and Schubertian excellence. And its arrival on disc is very welcome—an event of importance for all Schubertians.

The performance is of superior quality, if not exactly inspired. Fischer-Dieskau seems to have struck a bad vocal patch during the sessions, for he is sometimes unsteady and sometimes uneasy: William Parker, in the Detroit performance, sang more securely. Hearing Prey and Fischer-Dieskau together, as the rival kings, is curious: in the reconciliation duet, they hand the same phrase one to the other, and then join in chains of thirds, like Norma and Adalgisa. Predictably enough, Fischer-Dieskau inflects the words more strongly; Prey is plainer. Adam's pitching has its dubious moments, especially in his first duet with Estrella, but he is impressive in an extended "vengeance" aria.

Peter Schreier, in one of the title roles, is the most consistently reliable singer—not magical, but a decent stylist with a good voice. Edith Mathis, in the other, is charming to begin with, but she too develops pitch problems, and toward the end of long sequences of numbers in which Estrella is active her higher notes lose definition and clarity. Elisabeth Söderström, in Detroit, made more of the role, brought more color to it and found more musical character.

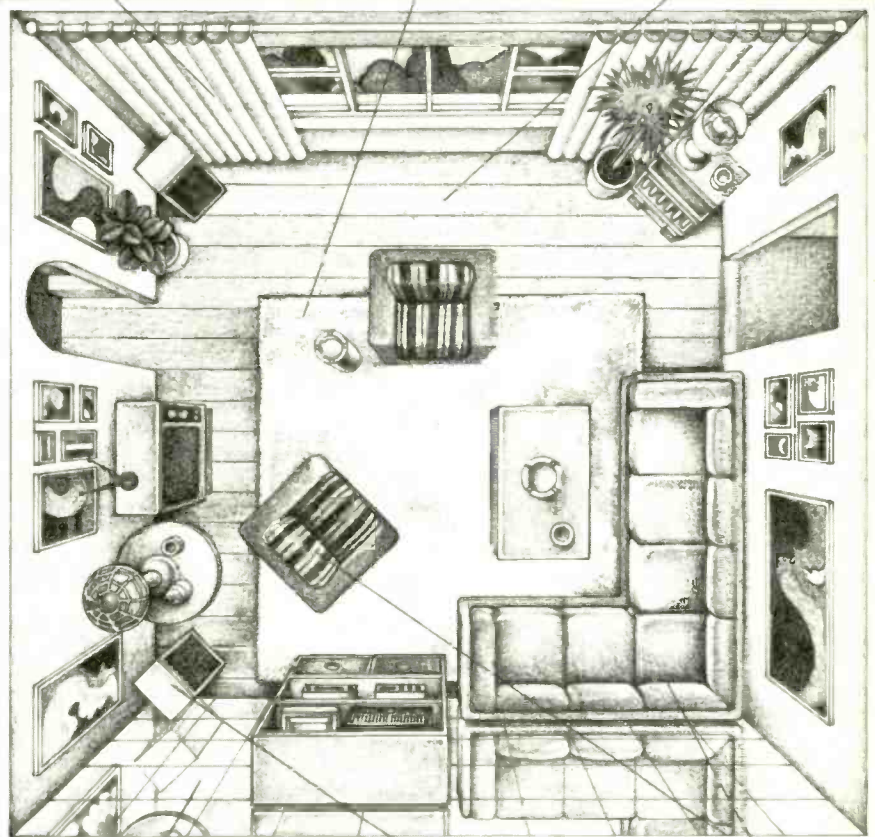
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CIRCLE 66 ON PAGE 105

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straight-through concert or radio performance, or a studio assemblage over many sessions, I do not know, but there does seem to be a sense of tiring toward the end. And this is not surprising, for it is a strenuously written piece for the executants. The players of the Berlin State Orchestra, however, stay marvelously fresh—even the second violins and the violas, who for many pages on end have to scrub away at repetitious figuration or in tremolos. (The same thing happens in some of Schubert's finest instrumental works, and compassion for the players often mingles with a listener's joy in the music; no wonder orchestras used to jib at playing the "Great" C major Symphony.)

The opera is given uncut, and it lasts 2 hours 44 minutes. In Detroit, Dorati made fairly extensive cuts, and they were not for the good of the whole. One wants all verses of Estrella's arias; Adolfo's extended vengeful outburst, establishing key after key, needs all its limbs to make its full effect. Schubert's sense of proportion was unconventional, but he knew what he was at. Despite the temperate things said above, I must stress that the set provided 164 minutes of sustained enjoyment; and there were several things I then went back to with delight: the romantic start of Act II, for example, the song of the Cloud Maiden (movingly done by Fischer-Dieskau), which is in the picturesque vein of Rossini's *Tancredi* (first heard in Vienna in 1816). Each listener will find his own favorites. *Alfonso* is an opera that grows on one. The "faults" are evident from the start. Each rehearing reveals new merits.

The recording is clear, sometimes a shade "overchanneled," as in the women's chorus of No. 6. Sometimes *t's* and *d's* come out with exaggerated emphasis. Voices and orchestra are in good balance. Otmar Suitner's conducting is filled with real feeling for the score; this is just about the best thing I have ever heard him do. In the accompanying leaflet, there is a persuasive short essay by Walther Dürr tracing the schematic pattern of the drama: opposed worlds shown, one after the other, in Act I; again in Act II, but now "on a new and higher plane," with the long central encounter of Alfonso and Estrella preparing for the climaxes and resolution of Act III. Somewhat absurdly—almost as if to mock Schubert's treatment of the text—the repetitions of the setting are printed out in full in the libretto. The line "Ihm winkt der Väter Thron" is printed twelve times over; the two lines of Estrella's entry in Act II become thirteen lines.

A.P.

**SCHUBERT: Symphonies (8).** Die Zauberharfe, D. 644; Overture. Rosamunde, D. 797; Nos. 2, 9. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan, cond. [Michel Glotz, prod.] ANGEL SE 3862, \$39.98 (five SQ-encoded discs, manual sequence).

Symphonies, No. 1, in D, D. 82; No. 2, in B flat, D. 125; No. 3, in D, D. 200; No. 4, in C minor, D. 417 (*Tragic*); No. 5, in B flat, D. 485; No. 6, in C, D. 589; No. 8, in B minor, D. 759 (*Unfinished*) [from S 37058, 1975]; No. 9, in C, D. 944.

**SCHUBERT: Symphonies (8).** Overtures in the Italian Style: in D, D. 590; in C, D. 591. Dresden State Orchestra, Wolfgang Sa-

wallisch, cond. PHILIPS FESTIVO 6770 015, \$34.90 (five discs, manual sequence). Tape: ●● 7650 014, \$20.94.

**SCHUBERT: Symphonies: No. 4, in C minor, D. 417 (*Tragic*); No. 8, in B minor, D. 759 (*Unfinished*).** Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Carlo Maria Giulini, cond. [Gunther Breest, prod.] DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2531 047, \$8.98. Tape: ●● 3301 047, \$8.98.

R

**SCHUBERT: Symphony No. 9, in C, D. 944.** Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, Eugen Jochum, cond. [Karl-Heinz Schneider, prod.] QUINTESSENCE PMC 7100, \$3.98 [from DECCA DL 79993, 1958].

B

**SCHUBERT: Symphony No. 9, in C, D. 944.** Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Thomas Schippers, cond. [Marc Aubort and Joanna Nickrenz, prod.] TURNABOUT QTV 34681, \$4.98 (QS-encoded disc).

Whether considered numerically or stylistically, the standard "complete" Schubert symphony cycle suffers hole-in-the-middle syndrome: the enormous gulf between the charming first six symphonies and the two bona fide masterpieces. I'm sorry that neither cyclist in this batch relaxed his purism enough to include the missing link, the incomplete Symphony No. 7, in E, of 1821. It was recorded, in Weingartner's performing edition (whose orchestration perhaps smacks too much of Berlioz), by Franz Litschauer and the Vienna State Opera Orchestra on an early Vanguard mono disc; it would be useful to have a new version with a major orchestra and up-to-date sound.

Denis Vaughan, a Beecham protégé, recorded the first Schubert symphony cycle with his Orchestra of Naples for RCA in the early 1960s, and since then only a handful of conductors have undertaken the problematical assignment. With the cycles of Menuhin (Angel), Kertész (London), and Maag (Turnabout) more or less out of the catalog, and with Mehta's (London) still in the works, the field is left to Böhm (on DG single discs) and the new entrants. Of course there are numerous separate recordings, among which I cherish such items as Georg Ludwig Jochum's Nos. 1 and 3 (Monitor MCS 2121), Van Beinum's bubbly No. 6 (in Philips' Van Beinum set, 6768 023, April), and the Toscanini/Philadelphia No. 9 (in RCA CRM 5-1900).

Sawallisch's set, making its first American appearance in Philips' midpriced Festivo series, was recorded more than a decade ago, but its sonics are if anything superior to Angel's new Karajan recording in presence and definition. Angel's sound is certainly more than satisfactory, and I discovered that, on my equipment at least, a sharp bass reduction alleviated much of my displeasure, putting the orchestral choirs in sharper focus. With a conductor like Karajan, who tends toward homogeneity of articulation with special emphasis on legato, engineers must be careful not to further subdue what bite and sharpness remain. The more incisive reproduction of recent Karajan recordings partially explains why I have enjoyed them more than many of the more generalized-sounding older ones.

The early Schubert symphonies are new to Karajan's discography (he has made two





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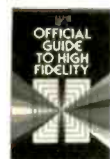
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CIRCLE 56 ON PAGE 105

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prior recordings each of the *Unfinished* and "Great" C major), and they are among the finest things he has done. The exquisitely tapered wind/string ensemble, the courtliness of the phrasing, the subtle coloration of all choirs are very much apropos to this repertory. I do have quibbles: the occasionally portentous minuets (that of the First Symphony, especially), the overly big orchestral sound (aggravated by the reverberant, bass-heavy reproduction), Karajan's inclination to subdue the intensity of motivic writing in favor of dovetailed, even phrasing. But with so high a proportion of outstanding performances, this set can be given an unguarded recommendation.

No. 2 gets an absolutely winged traversal, with the kind of orchestral lift and exquisitely subtle virtuosity I remember from Cantelli's account with the NBC Symphony. No. 4 too blooms in this darkly colored, intensely Beethovenian reading, and here, as in No. 2, Karajan's deliberate pacing of the Menuet enables him to fit in the contrasting trio section with engaging lilt and no uncomfortable gear-shifting. No. 6 equals Van Beinum's for refinement, although I prefer the latter's heady mirth to Karajan's moderation. No. 3 is made to sound like a much bigger work than usual, the conductor revealingly emphasizing the finale's kinship to the "Great" C major.

As for the "Great" C major itself, I am happy to report that Karajan has preserved intact the excellent features of his ten-year-old DG version (139 043) and added weight, breadth of phrase, and emotional involvement. (He also has added a full complement of repeats in the scherzo—a mixed blessing.) The first-movement introduction moves tautly, with just a trace of quickening at the very end to move the pulse into the Allegro, which goes at something like the same pulse but without the rigid calculation of Giulini's perverse reading (DG 2530 882, July 1978). The Andante con moto is taken at a rapid *alla marcia*, building to an imposing climax. Momentum and weight are excellently carried over into the last two movements. This is one of the symphony's finest modern versions, though neither it nor Karajan's DG account quite equals Toscanini's essentially similar but more characterful Philadelphia performance.

Karajan's *Unfinished* (first issued in 1976, with Haydn's Symphony No. 104) is broad and inflected but maintains a sense of urgency along with the dark, ripe sound of the orchestra. Only in No. 5 does his refinement seem excessive: the strings at the very beginning are mincingly delicate, and are those diminuendos at the end of the first movement's exposition and recapitulation really necessary? The *Zauberharfe* Overture, by contrast, is sheer magic: Karajan's measured gait and symphonic emphasis quell some of its customary rollicking perkiness but more than compensate in the sophisticated mastery attained. (The end, once again, reminds me of the "Great" C major's first-movement coda, a relationship I had never pondered at length.) The two numbers from *Rosamunde* are consummately rendered.

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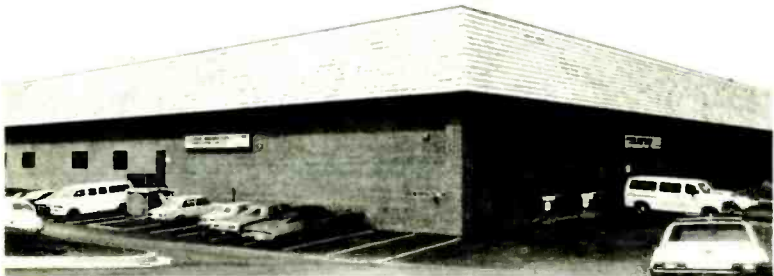
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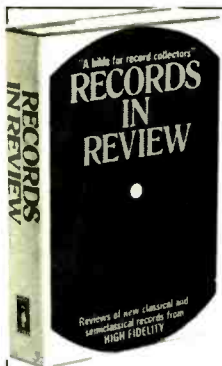
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solid, warm string tone with firm underpinning in the bass, which remains in better focus, more solid and compact, than in the Karajan recordings. Attacks and releases are more explicit; woodwinds, brass, and timpani punctuate with more asstringency. The interpretations are honest and disciplined—sturdier than those of the more effect-conscious Karajan, though often less subtle.

No. 4 is a virtual tie with Karajan, brisker and even fiercer but with welcome repose. Sawallisch's No. 5—a trim, vital, unprecious reading in the manner of Toscanini and Fischer-Dieskau—is decidedly more to my taste than Karajan's. Nos. 1 and 3 too are tight and robust, making up in thrust what they lack in Karajan's exquisite molding. (I much prefer Sawallisch's faster tempo for No. 1's third movement.) The overly disciplined No. 2 is less successful: The strings in the first movement have a machinelike brilliance that lacks playful scamper; the variation movement needs more lilt and character; the third movement shrinks in stature at its frenetic pace, requiring a drastic slowdown—to something near half tempo—for the trio; the galloping finale too sounds driven rather than ebullient.

But it is in the last two symphonies that Sawallisch really disappoints. The *Unfinished*, for all its sensibility, lacks mystery. There is little sense of reading between the lines; the pianissimo clarinet solos in the second movement sound aggressively direct instead of world-weary. In the "Great" C major, Sawallisch gives us the worst of both worlds: His reading has the "conventional" hauling about of tempos (the slow introduction and second movement, the unpleasant accelerando into the first movement proper, the rhetorical holding back for the strings at the first-movement coda), yet at the same time it throttles the melodic exuberance that ordinarily accompanies such a wayward approach. The Andante in particular sounds listless, neither a grim march nor an exalted tone poem. Nor do I enjoy Sawallisch's perfunctory, legato accentuation of the unison Cs near the end of the finale. (This Ninth, incidentally, is also available as a Festivo single disc, 6570 054.)

Giulini's new Chicago Symphony coupling of the Fourth and *Unfinished* is both distinguished and controversial. His 1962 *Unfinished* with the Philharmonia (never issued here, but just reissued in England as HMV Concert Classics SXLP 30278, with the Brahms *Haydn* Variations) was considerably faster in the first movement—its lyricism tempered by a sinuous urgency. But in its softer, almost Brucknerian way the new account maintains its contour admirably, even through passages that are ritarated rhetorically; inclusion of the first-movement repeat, omitted before, adds to the impression of monumental breadth. Giulini's interpretation of the Fourth gives full play to its *Tragic* subtitle: the strings virtually sigh the first movement's principal theme. For all the performance's introspection, its emphasis on the music's full-blown Romantic elements slights the ascetic classicism lurking beneath the surface. Karajan's approach is not dissimilar, but Giulini



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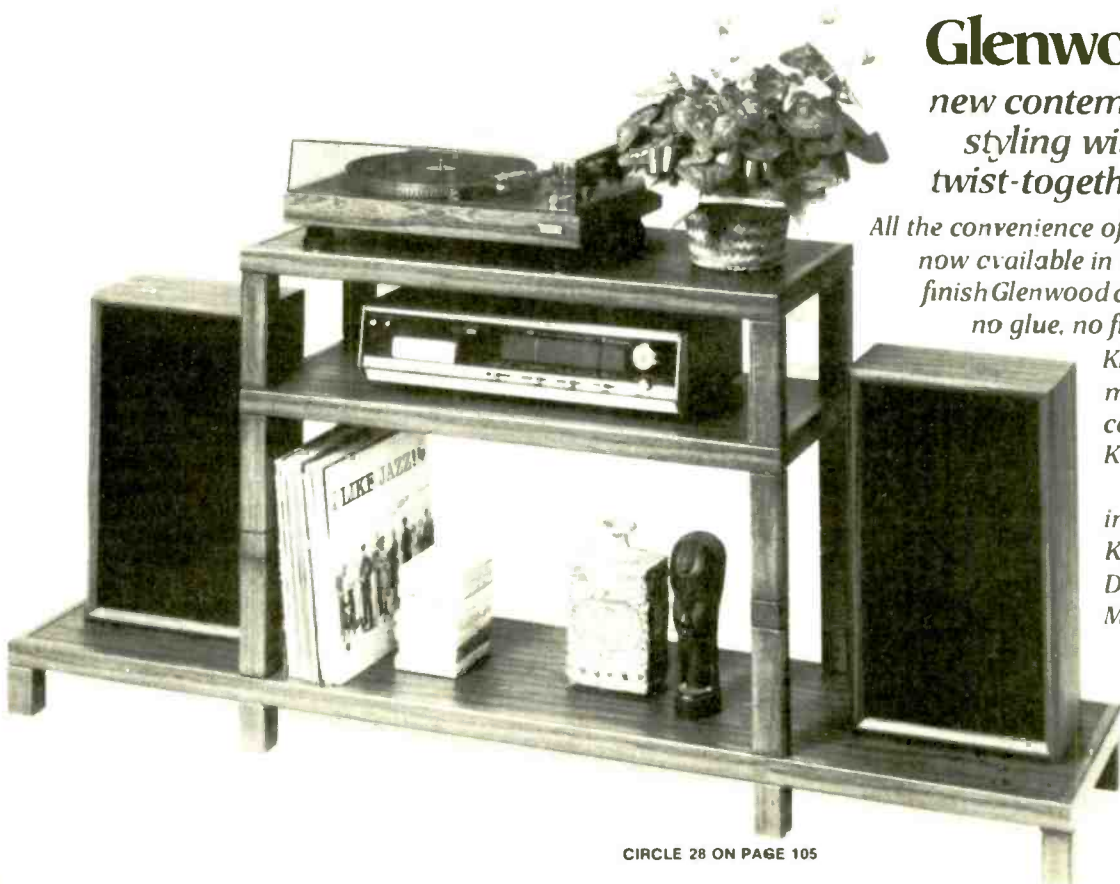
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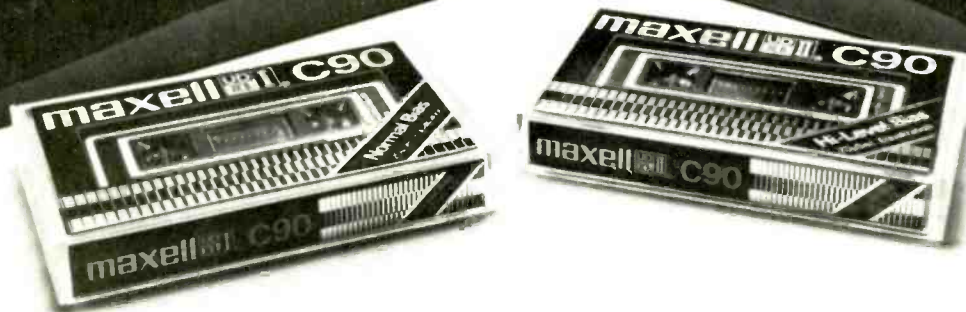
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goes so far that the symphony begins to sound misshapen.

Schippers and Jochum both are heard to great advantage in the "Great" C major, though it would be hard to imagine more disparate interpretations. Jochum's performance is "traditional" as concerns tempo shifts, but his treatment of detail is so sensitive, so fresh-sounding that I forgot my general antipathy to such an approach. Textures are crisp, light, felicitous—they could almost come right out of *Der Freischütz*. The Quintessence reissue makes the sound slightly shrill, but I find this disc altogether refreshing in its unhackneyed, chamber music lightness.

Schippers' Turnabout account is a fitting memorial—a provocative, even eccentric interpretation of enormous conviction. The first-movement introduction begins massively, and Schippers remains implacable in his measured tread, even slowing up more for rhetorical points; then he hits the Allegro directly at something like double tempo. He takes the second theme group at a much-reduced clip, and sparks fly as he abruptly moves back and forth between these wildly contradictory pulses. (Of course there is an inevitable problem in the development, when elements from the two thematic groups come together.) Somehow Schippers makes it all work, and the remaining three movements are gloriously—and uncentrically—played. The Cincinnati Symphony sounds as good as it ever has on records—warm, sleek, altogether first-class—and the recording is boldly sonorous. H.G.

**SCHUMANN:** Songs. For a feature review, see page 77.

**SIBELIUS:** Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in D minor, Op. 47\*; Karelia Suite, Op. 11. Patrice Fontanarosa, violin\*; Orchestre National de France, Yoav Talmi, cond. [Ivan Pastor, prod.] PETERS INTERNATIONAL PLE 074, \$7.98.

Fontanarosa's thick, wide vibrato gives his tone a rasping edge where the clear, lustrous bite of a Heifetz would be aesthetically more appropriate. The French violinist does cultivate some attractive color effects, and his forthright, rhythmic fiddling especially suits the concerto's third movement.

Another plus is the conductor's fine control and penetrating ear for details in Sibelius' scoring. Talmi does not seem interested in lushness, but he maintains crisp rhythmic attacks and so delineates his generally broad tempos that they seem both taut and majestic. The divided string writing and snarling brass punctuations have incisive clarity, and the always problematic balances between solo instrument and orchestra are well solved, as for example the woodwind figures against solo arpeggiations in the first-movement recapitulation. This is a sturdy, sympathetic account of the concerto.

The *Karelia* Suite is even better, thanks to Talmi's sense for shapely coherence and the orchestra's disciplined response. The soft figurations from the low strings in the

"Ballade" and the wide dynamic range in the somewhat broader than usual "Alla marcia" are particularly memorable. The sound is bright and forceful. H.G.

**STRAUSS, J. I AND II:** Orchestral Works—See Recitals and Miscellany: Rudolf Kempe: Music of Vienna.

**SWEELINCK:** Harpsichord Works. Ton Koopman, harpsichord and virginal. TELEFUNKEN 36.35360, \$26.94 (three discs).

Although this handsome boxed set is labeled "Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck. Folge 1" there is no indication as to the planned extent of the coverage of Sweelinck's music. If the first release is an indication of the quality we are to expect, this should be a distinguished enterprise, shedding some much-needed light on a composer whose profound influence on northern European keyboard music particularly lasted long after his death.

Sweelinck's extant keyboard output comprises some seventy pieces, of which twenty are represented here. The precise instrument for which each of the pieces was written cannot always be determined with certainty—while the chorale settings most likely were intended for the organ and the secular song variations for harpsichord or virginal, the fantasias and toccatas (over thirty in number) may well have been

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played on whatever keyboard instrument was at hand—but with the possible exception of the *Fantasia chromatica* everything included in this album sounds convincing enough on the stringed keyboard instruments used. These four instruments (harpichords by Ruckers, Van der Biest, and Gheerdinck and a virginal by Willem Kroesbergen after Ruckers) are quite as authoritative as one could wish, and although the undue proximity of the microphones sometimes makes for excessive plucking and jack noise, the recorded sound is good.

Harpichordist Ton Koopman first came to my attention with a record devoted to Frescobaldi, Rossi, Domenico Scarlatti, and

Sweelinck (Telefunken 6.42157, December 1977). I was much impressed with his playing then, and in general I find these new performances similarly creditable. I am particularly impressed by his attention to the details of old fingering techniques, for the resultant variety in phrasing and articulation gives new life to figurations that with a more modern legato approach can seem insufferably tedious. He also has a good sense for contexts in which discreet ornamentation can enhance the music's impact, and yet he knows when to let Sweelinck's notes speak for themselves. Some may object to the rather pronounced tempo fluctuations in such pieces as the *Fantasia*

*chromatica* and the *Fantasia Ut Re Mi Fa Sol La*, but Koopman makes a persuasive case for his literal interpretation of the designation "fantasia," and he does capture some of the freshness with which Sweelinck's music must have struck its first hearers.

Telefunken has failed to provide a readable English version of the admittedly convoluted German program notes (the notorious Frederick Bishop's translation is a quagmire of obfuscation worthy of Howard Cosell), and we are told almost nothing about the instruments recorded here. S.C.

**TCHAIKOVSKY:** *The Sleeping Beauty*, Op. 66. National Philharmonic Orchestra, Richard Bonyngé, cond. [Richard Beswick, prod.] LONDON CSA 2316, \$23.95 (three discs, automatic sequence). Tape: ●● CSA5 2316, \$23.94.

Comparison:  
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For some years, André Previn's excellent traversal of *The Sleeping Beauty* (Angel, March 1975) has been the only uncut version of the score available on records. Now it has been joined by a second uncut version, also excellent but so astonishingly different as once again to teach one the important lesson that when it comes to music there can be no such thing as a single definitive performance.

In this most sumptuous of ballet scores Previn is brilliant and dramatic. Richard Bonyngé lyrical and elegant. A direct comparison reveals that in fast or energetic passages Previn is prepared to sacrifice clarity of articulation and limpidity of texture for the larger goal of expressivity. Bonyngé, on the other hand, is prepared to forgo energy for beauty of tone and phrasing. His is an approach that stresses the cantabile aspect of Tchaikovsky's music. It is warmer and more affectionate than Previn's. It lingers over details and achieves some wonderful coloristic effects.

Not that Bonyngé fails to pay attention to the dance impulsion that pervades this score. The coda to the Act II vision scene, for instance, is wonderfully lively (and, as it happens, rather too fast for stage performance), and the transition to waltz tempo in the Act III *Pas berichon* is finely managed. Bonyngé's, admittedly, is a less thrilling performance than Previn's, but it is more elegant and reflective—it runs some thirteen minutes longer—and thus supplies an element fundamental to this work, which is as much courtly spectacle, an act of homage to the aristocratic past, as it is a fairy tale. Since Bonyngé's orchestra plays no less well than Previn's, I can only recommend prospective buyers to follow their inclination. Ideally I would say that any lover of this inexhaustible music—the summit of classical ballet scores—ought to have both sets.

London's helpful notes do not clear up the confusion about the *Bluebird/Princess Florine pas de deux* (which is described here, and in the notes to the Previn recording, as a *pas de quatre*) nor about why the scene for *Cinderella* and *Fortuné* should be listed twice. London's recording is ap-

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**VIEUXTEMPS:** Concertos for Violin and Orchestra, Nos. 4-5—See Lalo: Works for Solo Instrument and Orchestra.

## Recitals and Miscellany

**YURI EGOROV:** At Carnegie Hall. Yuri Egorov, piano. [Klaas A. Posthuma, prod.] PETERS INTERNATIONAL PLE 121, \$7.98. Tape: ●● PCE 121, \$7.98 [recorded in concert, December 16, 1978].

**BACH:** Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue, in D minor, S. 903. **MOZART:** Fantasy in C minor, K. 475. **CHOPIN:** Fantasy in F minor, Op. 49. Etudes: in G flat, Op. 10, No. 5; in E, Op. 10, No. 3.

Yuri Egorov is the twenty-four-year-old Soviet émigré pianist (now living in Amsterdam) whose failure to place at the Van Cliburn Competition provoked a group of private citizens to raise a sum of money on his behalf equivalent to the first prize they felt he should have won. His Alice Tully

Hall debut in January 1978 was one of the most astonishing piano recitals it has been my pleasure to attend, and his return appearance last winter, which I did not hear, apparently elicited similar enthusiasm, to judge from the reviews by Andrew Porter in *The New Yorker* and others.

Perhaps Egorov works his alchemy only in person, but, for whatever reason, I am less swayed by this partial recording of that concert. Many of the things that initially attracted me remain: his basically warm sound (though the closely miked recording puts a metallic edge on fortes), the instinctive feeling for rubato and timing, the intelligence. What do not come across here are the fire, the sense of daring, the emotional generosity.

The Bach Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue is slightly romanticized, which is acceptable enough in this extraordinary and atypical piece, but there is constraint. First piece on the program, perhaps? In any event, I have heard other pianists bind the long lines of the fantasia together more compellingly and hold the fugue together with more cumulative structure. The Mozart C minor Fantasia can reveal which pianists know the Mozart operas; my guess is that Egorov doesn't. His performance begins promisingly but remains solemn where a ray of light should appear and fails to gather sufficient fury in the demonic episodes. It's all a little bland and tentative.

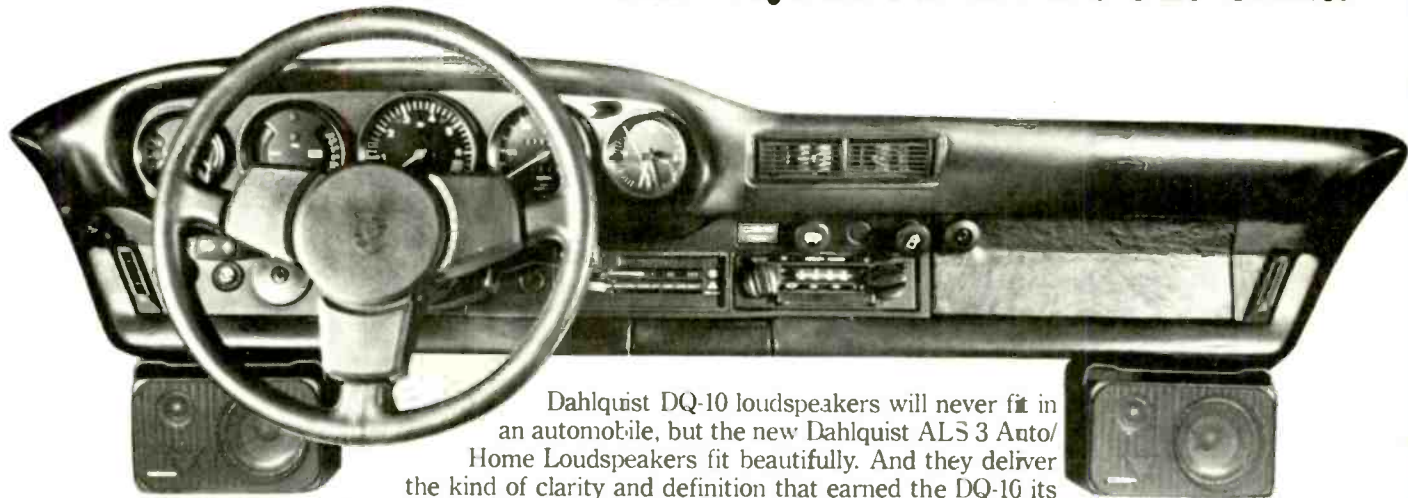
The introduction of the Chopin Fantasy reveals more of the same inhibition—as if Egorov planned his liberties after rigorous practice with the metronome. There are certainly fine things in the performance—for example, the way he goes straight on into the strettos and the unsentimental honesty of many passages. But there ought to be more heroic ring to the B major chorale section, and, again, the cumulative line could be stronger. The G flat Etude of Op. 10 is played at top speed, with sensational digital accuracy and a spectacular octave cascade at the end, but where is the grace, the charm? The E major Etude is toyed with in provincial fashion, but the middle outburst is arresting.

Two works from the recital are omitted from the recording. In Schumann's Fantasia, an audience member shouted "Beautiful!" during a rest in the first movement and shattered the pianist's concentration. And Liszt's *La Campanella*, an Egorov specialty (done fabulously well at the January concert) played as an encore, was not passed for release: the pianist felt he could do it better another time.

Even if this disc disappoints, there can be little doubt of Egorov's basic gifts. It will be fascinating to watch his development. H.G.

**B** **RUDOLF KEMPE:** Music of Vienna. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. Ru-

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**R** STRAUSS, J. I AND II: Orchestral Works. Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra, Ferenc Fricsay, cond. DG PRIVILEGE 2535 134, \$6.98. Tape: ●● 3335 134, \$6.98 [from DG 136 238, 1961].

Here are two prime examples of the incalculable value of reissues in giving a new lease on life to programs inadequately appreciated the first time around and to ad-

mirable conductors whose recording careers were cut cruelly short.

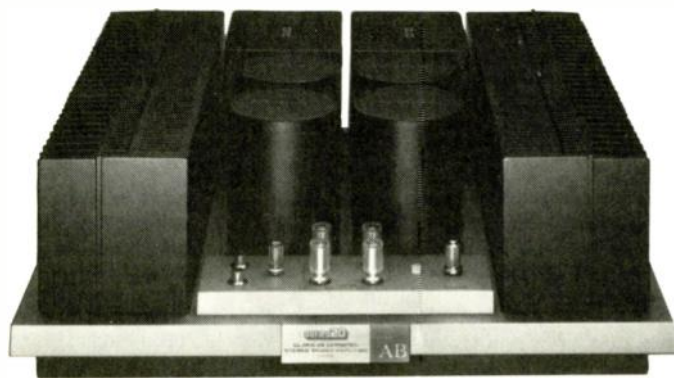
Long before Rudolf Kempe succeeded Clemens Krauss and Fritz Reiner as the pre-eminent Richard Strauss exponent, he was an accomplished interpreter of the Austrian Strausses—indeed of Viennese dance and operetta music in general. But at the time the material now reissued on Seraphim first appeared in the U.S., as two separate discs, Kempe's name carried relatively little weight with American record buyers, and it's doubtful that either program—the Capitol "Life in Vienna" and the Angel "Treasures of Vienna"—ever achieved much circulation in this country. They well

warrant a second chance, especially at a budget price, both for their own lively attractions and for their illumination of Kempe's earlier recording career.

The earlier disc shows its age a bit in some high-end shrillness, but few recorded versions can match the tautly-controlled verve and panache of these performances of the overtures to Heuberger's *Opernball*, Reznicek's *Donna Diana*, and Johann Strauss II's *Fledermaus*; or of Lehár's *Gold and Silver* and Josef Strauss's *Music of the Spheres* Waltzes and Johann I's *Radetzky* March. The second disc in the double-fold Seraphim album, more sweetly yet no less brightly recorded, is devoted exclusively to the Strausses: Josef's lovely *Dynamiden* Waltz and more familiar works by Johann II—the *Emperor* and *Tales from the Vienna Woods* Waltzes, *1001 Nights Intermezzo*, and the *Leichtes Blut* and *Im Krupfenwald'l* Polkas.

Among Strauss family programs of the early Sixties, one of the most idiomatic and empathic was the one now resuscitated on DG's Privilege label, with the Hungarian-born Ferenc Fricsay and the Berlin Radio Symphony. It contains the elder Johann's *Radetzky* March and his son's *Blue Danube*, *Emperor*, and *Tales from the Vienna Woods* Waltzes, *Fledermaus* Overture, and *Annen, Eljen a Magyar*, and *Tritsch-Tratsch* Polkas. These authoritative, well-varied performances still rank among the best, and only the slightest touch of sonic coarseness betrays the recordings' age.

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**H** ELISABETH SCHUMANN: Recital. Elisabeth Schumann, soprano; various accompaniments. SERAPHIM 60320, \$3.98 (mono) [from HMV originals, 1926-38].

**B** BACH: Notebook for Anna Magdalena Bach: Bist du bei mir. BRAHMS: Nachtigal, Op. 97, No. 1. HANDEL: Joshua: Oh! had I Jubal's lyre (in German). HEUBERGER: Der Opernball: Im chambre séparée. MAHLER: Des Knaben Wunderhorn: Wer hat dies Liedlein erdacht? MENDELSSOHN: Auf Flügeln des Gesanges, Op. 34, No. 2. MOZART: Exsultate, jubilate, K. 165: Alleluja. Il Re pastore, K. 208: L'amorè, sarò costante. OFFENBACH: Les Contes d'Hoffmann: Barcarolle (in English). REGER: Maria Wengenlied, Op. 76, No. 52. SMETANA: The Kiss: Cradle Songs (in German). SCHUBERT: Der Hirt auf dem Felsen, D. 965. ZELLER: Der Obersteiger: Sei nicht bos. Der Vogelhandler: Wie mein Ahn'l zwanzig Jahr'.

This record is essentially the same as EMI's HQM 1187, first issued in Britain on the HMV label about ten years ago. The only differences between the discs are that Seraphim omits one item altogether (Bach's "Es ist vollbracht," with oboe obbligato by Leon Goossens), changes the order of the selections (for the better, as it happens), and eliminates the leaflet of texts and translations. There is actually yet another difference: Seraphim provides inadequate jacket copy, adapted—without acknowledgment,

**Unreserved grand-opera boxes.** The steady flow of complete-opera musicassettes continues unabated. And if the variety of their box sizes presents some shelving problems, that's a small price to pay for the inestimable advantage of full notes-and-texts booklets.

The biggest package of all (same as that for the corresponding disc edition) is favored by Angel/Seraphim operas, currently exemplified by Seraphim 4X3G 6090 (\$14.94, three cassettes). This is a resurrection, as unexpected as it is welcome, of the c. 1955 mono version of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* starring Victoria de los Angeles, Giuseppe di Stefano, and Tito Gobbi with the Rome Opera House Chorus and Orchestra under Gianandrea Gavazzeni. Not to be confused with the better-known De los Angeles/Bjoerling/Sereni/Santini stereo version of 1960 (currently Angel 4X3S 3604), the earlier recording stands up remarkably well and of course will be indispensable for De los Angeles and Di Stefano aficionados.

Puccini's later but never as popular American opera, *La Fanciulla del West*, demands—perhaps more than any other music-drama—a complete suspension of disbelief. But given that, it can be a singularly powerful work, not least for some of Puccini's finest orchestral writing. Unavailable on tape since the 1958 Tebaldi open-reel recording on London went out of print, the gap is filled at last by the current Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, version starring Carol Neblett, Placido Domingo, and Sherrill Milnes, which is tautly conducted by Zubin Mehta and robustly recorded with notably vivid presence by Deutsche Grammophon (3371 031, \$26.94, three cassettes).

My personal favorite of the latest operas, however, is strictly speaking an oratorio, one of those baroque-era masterpieces considered to be impossible to revive successfully. Nikolaus Harnoncourt proves that notion to be nonsense in the first truly complete recording of Handel's mighty *Belshazzar*, enlisting such fine soloists as Felicity Palmer, Paul Esswood, and Robert Tear, with the Stockholm Chamber Chorus and Vienna Concentus Musicus playing period instruments (Telefunken 4.435326, \$35.92, four cassettes). Insatiable purists may whine about some of Harnoncourt's accentual mannerisms and the use of a mixed rather than all-male chorus; even I find disconcerting the rapid shifts between harpsichord and organ

by R. D. Darrell

## The Tape Deck

in the continuo part. But these are negligible drawbacks to the joy of hearing one of the most gripping Handelian music-dramas beautifully sung and well-nigh ideally recorded.

**Symphonic sets from Steinberg and Karajan.** It's good to be reminded of the late William Steinberg's valuable recorded legacy by the restoration to print of his complete Beethoven symphony series, which won so much attention in the original Command recordings of 1962-66. Now they're back on tape (as well as discs) in a Sine Qua Non boxed limited edition (C 145/5, \$24.90, five cassettes). If the once sensational sonics are no longer as startling, they still are remarkably vivid, "live," and resonant, while Steinberg's generally high-voltage readings still are mightily invigorating.

The newest Karajan/Berlin Philharmonic boxed sets (\$17.96, two cassettes each) are in the ongoing Bruckner symphony series: No. 5 in B flat (3370 025) and No. 8 in C minor (3370 019). Karajan's highly contrasted readings may not be to every Brucknerian's taste, but the magnificent orchestral playing is captured in sonics of exceptional weight and dynamic range. In any case, there is no current competition for this Fifth and the only other existing taping of the Eighth is the more relaxed Karl Böhm/Vienna Philharmonic version available only in DG's 1978 box with the Bruckner Seventh.

### What's in a (Haydn symphony) name?

The virtues of clarity, poetic grace, sophisticated wit, and zestful relish commanded so well by the Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields under Neville Marriner are exactly those, along with Philips' most transparent recording, needed for Haydn's symphonies. Witness the current first batch of nicknamed works in six Philips musicassettes (\$8.98 each): *Philosopher* and *Schoolmaster*, Nos. 22 and 55 (7300 560); *Mercury* and *Fire*, Nos. 43 and 59 (7300 524); *Funeral* and *The*

*Passion*, Nos. 44 and 49 (7300 561); *Maria Theresia* and *The Queen*, Nos. 48 and 85 (7300 536); *Surprise* and *Miracle*, Nos. 94 and 96 (7300 594); *Military* and *Drum Roll*, Nos. 100 and 103, (7300 543). Except for some channel-level imbalance in my review copy of the Mercury Symphony, everything here closely approaches delectable perfection—except, of course, for listeners who still insist on the larger-scaled, solemnly serious treatments long considered the only proper ones.

### Pianism: new, renewed, and restored.

The promising young Polish pianist Krystian Zimerman daringly makes his tape debut in four of the Mozart sonatas that so mercilessly expose the performer: Nos. 2, 3, 9, and 10 (respectively, K. 280, 281, 311, and 330), DG 3301 052, \$8.98. The youngster's decidedly "modern" approach—involving precise articulation, minimal pedaling, and unmannered straightforwardness—may seem too austere to romantically minded listeners, but for others it is a model of truly Mozartean lucidity and grace and an artistry free from all artfulness. And the audio technology here matches the interpretations' gleaming transparency.

Nothing in Misha Dichter's several RCA Victor recordings in the late '60s prepared me for his return, as a matured artist of uncommon sensibility as well as polished technique, in the first of a series of Philips releases (7300 591, \$8.98). The hackneyed Beethoven *Moonlight* and *Pathétique* Sonatas never have sounded fresher! In the far more complex Op. 101 Sonata, Dichter is no-less lucid and illuminating. Admirable too, if less unusual, is his all-Liszt recital (Philips 7300 639, \$8.96) topped by his enchantingly limpid playing of two song transcriptions, *Die Lorelei* and *Liebesbotschaft*; also included are *Mephisto* Waltz, No. 1, and Hungarian Rhapsodies, Nos. 11 and 14.

RCA Red Seal's Horowitz Collection musicassette series (\$7.98 each) continues to bring back mono triumphs of the '40s and '50s: the legendary Brahms Second Concerto with Arturo Toscanini and the NBC Symphony (ARK 1-2874); the great Schubert B flat Sonata with Chopin's First Scherzo and a Brahms Intermezzo and Waltz (ARK 1-2873); the pioneering Barber and Prokofiev Seventh Sonatas (ARK 1-2952); and a Chopin Vol. 2 that includes the Op. 61 Polonaise Fantasia, Op. 52 Ballade, No. 4, Op. 60 Barcarolle, and Op. 22 *Andante spianato et Grande polonaise brillante* (ARK 1-2953). ●

it should be said—from John Freestone's original essay for HQM 1187. Thus, unlike their British counterparts, American record buyers are kept in the dark about the language in which Schumann performs the Smetana aria and about the fact that she whistles, as well as sings, Zeller's "Wie mein Ahn'! zwanzig Jahr" and that the latter comes from an operetta. But it is the absence of texts that, in my opinion, is crucial here: I find it hard to see how any listener who does not know what words Schumann is singing can fully appreciate either this material or the soprano's often extraordinary way with it.

As the recital itself immediately reveals, Schumann had a distinctive voice. It is usually described as silvery, and up to about 1930—after which the top notes tended to whiten excessively—it was of exquisite timbre throughout its range. For some tastes, it may possibly seem somewhat backward in placement, and it had distinct limitations, being small, weak at the bottom, and limited in coloristic span. Nevertheless, she knew how to use it to maximum advantage. She could project as vividly as any singer of her time an entire world of feeling or, for that matter, of high spirits. The cadenza to the much truncated "L'amerò, sarò costante," in which she doubles the violin part, is a perfect illustration of her most outstanding vocal attribute: her ability to combine almost instrumental linear clarity with utterly personal phrasing, the latter showing itself in subtle gradations of rubato, attack, and emphasis.

Among the treasurable performances here are the Brahms, Mahler, Mendelssohn, and Reger songs, the operetta arias (though her English-language version of "Wie mein Ahn'! zwanzig Jahr," which can be heard on Rococo 5333, is even better vocalized), and the Smetana. (The latter described on the jacket as "Cradle Song" is actually a scene consisting of two cradle songs, one traditional, the other original.) The Bach aria is touchingly heartfelt, but the pieces by Handel and Mozart call for a florid technique Schumann did not command. In its time the Offenbach duet she sings with herself was regarded as something of a marvel. Nowadays it sounds less engaging—and in this transcription drops in pitch during the final bars. In "Der Hirt auf dem Felsen," for all that it is a celebrated performance, she is below par, uneasy on top, sketchy below, and strenuous throughout; the music, in any case, is severely cut, and the pianist lacks distinction.

A record, nonetheless, to buy and to treasure. Some details—like the delicious lift on "kichern" in the line "Die Veilchen kichern und kosen" ("The violets giggle and talk of love") from "Auf Flügeln des Gesanges," or the rapturously breathed word "süssen" ("sweet") in the second line of Heuberger's "Im chambre séparée"—are likely to stay in one's memory for a long time. D.S.H.

**RENATA SCOTTO AND PLACIDO DOMINGO:** Operatic Duets. Renata Scotto, soprano; Placido Domingo, tenor; National Philharmonic Orchestra, Kurt Herbert Adler, cond.

[David Mottley, prod.] COLUMBIA M 35135, \$7.98. Tape: ●● MT 35135, \$7.98.

**GIORDANO:** Fedora. E lui! E lui! **GOUNOD:** Roméo et Juliette. Va, je t'ai pardonné. **MASCAGNI:** I Rantzau. Giorgio si batte. **MASSENET:** Manon. Toi! Vous!

The jacket notes to this record refer to Giordano's *Fedora* as "a verismo potboiler." That is not what the quality of the Act II duet, "E lui! E lui!," suggests to me. With its gradual and precisely gauged crescendo of emotion and its skillful deployment of voice and orchestra, it is surely deserving of greater praise. The situation, no doubt, will strike some as melodramatic: The vengeful *Fedora* draws from Loris the admission that he killed her fiancé but then discovers that the latter had been making love to Loris' wife; confronted by proof of Loris' truthfulness *Fedora* changes her opinion of him; by the end of the duet they have fallen into one another's arms. The source of Giordano's libretto is a play by Victorien Sardou, whose *La Tosca* (set to music by Puccini at the very time, 1898, when *Fedora* was launched in the opera house) is similarly overripe. Clothed in music, however, the scene from *Fedora* catches one up in emotional suspense, especially when put across by singers like Scotto and Domingo. Here and in the similarly enjoyable—and rarely heard—duet from Mascagni's *I Rantzau* they are utterly convincing, not to say thrilling, singing with irresistible ardor and persuasiveness.

They would be even better with a better conductor. Kurt Herbert Adler in these circumstances is something of an impediment, checking the music's lyrical flow and robbing it of much of its fundamental liveliness. He is even worse in the *Manon* and *Roméo et Juliette* duets, imposing on them an all too typically Austro-German sentimentality that almost brings the music to a complete halt. He gets some gorgeous sounds out of the National Philharmonic Orchestra, but in these selections a more translucent orchestral texture is surely preferable. He also removes from them all sense of rhythmic definition, a crucially important quality in this kind of French music.

Under Adler's unfortunate influence, Scotto, so fine in the Italian selections, does not so much sing the notes as fondle them. There are so many nuances and subtle details in her performance that *Manon* and *Juliette* sound more limp than impassioned. Domingo, who now finds it extremely hard to modify the flood tide of his refulgent sound, is unable to take advantage of such interpretive excesses, even if he wanted to, but even upon him Adler has a dampening effect. Scotto's French is excellent. Domingo is good, but he does not seem to be able to distinguish between nasalized vowels.

Good sound. Texts and translations, commendably enough, but, as is so often the case with Columbia, very carelessly presented. Quite apart from some egregious misspellings, there is a chunk missing from the text of *Roméo et Juliette*. D.S.H.

**VISTA AMERICAN ORGAN RECORDINGS.** For a feature review, see page 75.

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**BEYOND THE FOREGROUND:  
A DIRECTORY OF  
SMALLER AUDIO COMPANIES  
(PART FOUR)**

Close observers of the audio scene know that just beyond the foreground of mammoth mass-market multinationals and names that have been around so long as to be synonymous with quality audio lies a significant and promising multitude of companies that rarely receive the attention they merit: the smaller and specialized manufacturers (and importers) of audio equipment and accessories. Though they are often somewhat imprecisely referred to in the trade as the "esoteric" or "high-end" manufacturers, their products—and the potential purchasers of them—probably vary even more widely than those of the "majors." But such companies have a few things in common: limited production facilities and similarly limited or regional distribution, and budgets that seldom permit access through advertising to the broad national public reached by such journals as this one. With this in mind we extended a blanket invitation to these companies to tell their stories in their own words for readers of this special section. What follows is selected (and in some cases slightly adapted) from the responses. The first installment of this directory appeared in January 1979.

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CIRCLE 81 ON PAGE 105

Fidelity Research of America was formed to handle the distribution and sales in the U.S. of products made in Japan by the parent company. Products distributed here include three moving-coil cartridges, three tone arms, and two stepup toroidal transformers. They permit the serious audiophile to purchase superbly matched components for their music reproduction systems. Heretofore, the audiophile has had to make one decision after another in his selection and purchase. Frequently this has meant choosing a tone arm from one manufacturer, a cartridge from another, and a stepup device from yet another. Perhaps one or more of the units frequently has not yielded optimum results.

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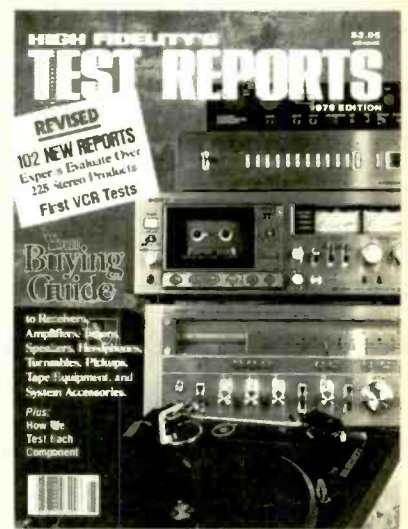
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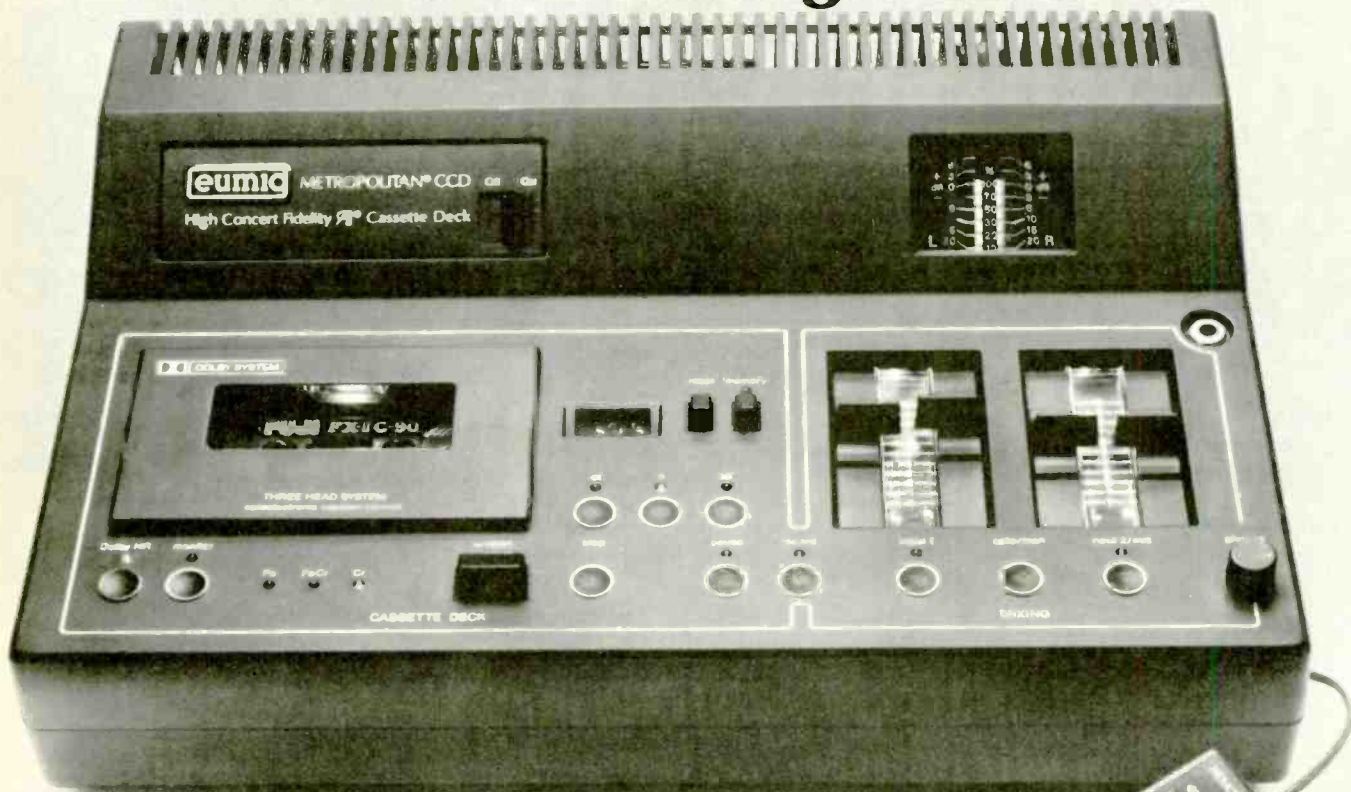
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# Backbeat

## Shaun Cassidy: More than Meets the Eye

by Todd Everett

**F**or a teenage idol, Shaun Cassidy is thinking deep thoughts these days. Some of them have to do with an identity crisis. Not his: Contrary to popular belief, Shaun is well aware of who he is and what he's doing. No, it's his audience that has the identity crisis. "People think," he says, "that the records I make are deliberately aimed at whatever the mentality of a twelve-year-old is. But that's not true. My music progresses with each new record, and I try to bring my audience along with me. My fans, those who pay attention, are much more on top of it than people will give them credit for."

As is he. Look at it this way: Shaun admits to being twenty years old. Born into a show-business family, he's been on the boards for most of his life following his parents—Shirley Jones and the late Jack Cassidy—from films to summer stock to Broadway and back. He's "been around," as they say, and he's quite serious about his career and his music. Yet the typical review of his live show, which toured the country last summer, centered less on his performances than it did on the fact that his audience was composed almost entirely of young teenagers and their parents. That may be true. But it's his contention, as well as that of those around him, that his show can be enjoyed by anyone who keeps an open mind.

What all of this boils down to is Cassidy's accurate claim that he's "a serious rock & roller," and he, no doubt, would like to be treated accordingly. "I belong to a generation that has never known anything *but* rock & roll. In fact, the first songs I remember very clearly are the ones from '66 and '67 [that would've made him eight or nine]—Herman's Hermits, the Beatles, the Lovin' Spoonful. I always loved the Beach



Boys, and I remember Jimi Hendrix and a couple of the Turtles' records."

But these were not exactly his first experiences with popular music. "I remember being on the set of *The Music Man* [Shaun's mother played Marian the Librarian in the 1962 screen version] and onstage with both of my parents. Mom would take me everywhere with her and have me in the chorus somewhere—dancing, singing, or playing in a tree, and trying to look older than I was. I did *On a Clear Day You Can See Forever* and *The Sound of Music* with her in summer stock and *High Button Shoes* with my dad, all the time thinking that *that* was what music was. When I discovered rock & roll, it probably had more impact on me

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**"I was so clean-cut that they all hated me."**

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than it did on kids who hadn't had that kind of background."

It was to be his calling. It seems almost prophetic that *Da Doo Ron Ron*, the single that launched his career in this country in 1975, was "the first recording I ever bought." (He's referring to the original Crystals recording.) "When I was going to kindergarten and the first grade, the bus driver was always playing KHJ, Los Angeles' biggest Top 40 station."

School continued to have more influence than the home front, and by the time he reached high school, Shaun was playing in a band (and on a baseball team) called the Beverly Hills Brats. The Brats specialized in such staples as the Iron Butterfly's *In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida* and Led Zeppelin's *Communication Breakdown*, playing at parties, Bar Mitzvahs, and anywhere that an audience could be persuaded to listen.

But the fun came to a temporary standstill when he was sent off to a private boarding school in Pennsylvania. It was a turning point in his life: "I hated that school. It was sort of a place for rich hippie delinquents—ax murderers down the hall. I was so clean-cut that they all hated me. So every night after dinner, to avoid getting beaten up or thrown into the lake, I'd go into the music room, lock myself up with the piano, and write songs about home and girls and things. I have yet to recapture the passion that I put into those songs—I was miserable, angry, and hurt, ... real strong emotions."

A brief stay in New York City followed, giving Shaun a taste of what is, to some, the Real World. "There was this club called the Coventry, a really grimy place. Kiss was playing there, and the New York Dolls. Going to that place and meeting the people were really strong influences on me. Those weren't the kinds of people that Mom would introduce me to, but the fact that they weren't and still accepted me made me feel really good.

"If you grow up in an environment like Beverly Hills, you get an unrealistic view of what life is all



*Cassidy—not for teenyboppers only*

about. New York isn't pretty. Hollywood isn't pretty. But in New York and Hollywood, the people know that much of what's going on is a facade. In Beverly Hills, people *really believe* in the life they're living."

So when he returned home he brought a new perspective. "Things had changed a great deal. I saw them in a different light. The band wasn't as good as I remembered it; the songs didn't hold up. So that was that: I decided to pursue a solo career."

But, recalls a friend, "Shirley was adamant that Shaun finish school. She would not allow him to go professional until he had. She was a very good mother, and Shaun and [half-brother] David adored her." So, back to Beverly Hills High.

For several months in 1972–73, during the height of Hollywood's glamor-rock phase, local teenagers would flock to a Sunset Boulevard establishment called Rodney Bingenheimer's English Discotheque. The club was small, admitted all ages, served fruit juice and English beer, and—like no other place in town—gave the kids an opportunity to listen to the latest hit records from England. Sweet got their first American exposure here, and so did bands like Silverhead, Mud, Slade, and Showaddywaddy. Suzi Quatro, Gary Glitter, and Larry Lurex (an early incarnation of Freddie Mercury) were also objects of idolatry in this glitter hall of fame where the boys frequently were prettier than the girls and everyone wore various combinations of makeup, sparkle, leather, and silk. It was quite a scene, and into it stepped young Shaun Cassidy: "I was about sixteen and going through a period of classic teenage rebellion. Not so much against my parents as against school and all of those things that I was told to do but didn't really want

to do. I wanted to play rock & roll. Real rock & roll—not screw around with m.o.r. or anything else.”

When Cassidy and a band of his high school friends (including bassist Ivan Kral, who much later joined Patti Smith’s group) appeared for a few dates at Rodney’s under the name of Longfellow, they didn’t exactly go unnoticed. In a situation somewhat similar to the recent John-Joe Travolta press phenomenon, Shaun and his long blond hair had already begun to arouse interest among the publishers of teen-oriented fan magazines. (Older brother David was quite a teen idol in his day, thanks to his regular role on the *Partridge Family* TV series and a varyingly successful recording career.)

### “I was an international star . . . wrapping Christmas presents for pocket money.”

“Rodney was trying to hype his club,” says Cassidy, who seems slightly embarrassed by the whole experience. “It was *his* idea. We were just looking for a place to play. It was the first time we’d appeared at *any* club. I had no idea that all of the press in the world would be there.”

Bingenheimer remembers things differently: “Oh pooh! It was Shaun’s idea, and he loved it. He had all

of the Beverly Hills in-crowd down there.” Rodney recalls that Cassidy’s repertoire included material by Chuck Berry and the Beach Boys and an original called *Stranded in Beverly Hills*. Cassidy wore a jump suit, no shirt, and suspenders.

“He was very mature in some ways, and quite sure of himself,” recalls Michele Meyer, who now helps book acts at L.A.’s Whisky a Go Go. “There was a sophisticated Jack Cassidy trying to break out of this pimply kid. I knew he was going to be a god.”

“He had to be,” adds Bingenheimer. “He had the look. The young girls . . . all of the magazines went for him.”

They included several European publications, whose representatives had been especially invited by either Cassidy or Bingenheimer; each now credits (or blames) the other. Rodney says, “Remember, Shaun wasn’t doing anything. He wasn’t acting and wasn’t making records. But now all of the European papers could print pictures of him fronting a band. Over in Germany, you’d open a copy of *Bravo* and it looked like he was playing all over the place. It was a classic scam.”

About a year later, in 1975, Shaun auditioned for producer Mike Curb. He and his associate, Michael Lloyd (see below), signed Shaun to Curb Records, which had a distribution deal with Warner Bros. “We’d met Shaun a couple of years earlier,” says

**M**ichael Lloyd, who has produced all of Shaun Cassidy’s records, is a likely teen idol himself, a fact attested to by the sacks of fan mail that this twenty-nine-year-old millionaire receives.

A classically trained pianist and son of musical-comedy veteran Suzanne Lloyd, Michael began playing electric guitar in his teens. He became apprenticed to producer, record executive, and current lieutenant governor of California Mike Curb when he was sixteen and produced his first million-selling record (Lou Rawls’s 1971 Grammy-winning *Natural Man*) at twenty-one. In the years since, Lloyd says he has produced more than forty-three gold albums and singles for such acts as the Osmonds, New Seekers, Bellamy Bros., Coven, Al Martino, Steve Lawrence and Eydie Gorme, and other pop-oriented artists. He was a member of the vaguely psychedelic West Coast Pop Art Experimental Band during the Sixties, and of Cotton, Lloyd & Christian during the early Seventies.

Like Curb and Cassidy, Lloyd has an affinity for rock numbers from the late Fifties through the mid-Sixties. He met Shaun Cassidy while producing a record for brother David and says that Shaun impressed him: “He was very talented, eager to be successful, and a very hard worker.”

Like Cassidy, Lloyd denies that the singer’s records are slanted to any particular age group: “When you’re on at seven o’clock on Sunday, obviously every kid in



Todd Everett

Michael Lloyd—an impressive track record

the country’s going to be watching. Of course he’s quite good-looking, and that helps. But Shaun is a performer. He could be Rod Stewart or Elvis Presley. I don’t know *what* he wants to be. I do know that he continues to improve. He’s an electrifying performer, not like a Ricky Nelson, who just stands there. . . . You’ve got to move, develop your audience. Look at Stevie Wonder and Paul Simon and people with that kind of longevity. They’re always changing.”

Would Shaun record something like Stewart’s *Do You Think I’m Sexy?* “I can’t imagine why not. I don’t think of that song as being unappealing to teenagers or anybody. I think of that as being an across-the-board record. I would be proud to have a song like that on a Shaun Cassidy album.”

Lloyd, "but he wasn't ready then. By the time we got together again, he'd gained some notoriety in Germany. We decided to release the first record in Europe, to capitalize on that." Shaun's entrée into the record business was a cheerful, midtempo pop/country ballad called *Morning Glory*. Though it was apparently a hit in Holland, the followup—Eric Carmen's *That's Rock & Roll*—was responsible for his real launching.

"I was sitting in a hotel room in London, playing Eric's album," says Cassidy. "I heard the song and

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**"I decided to do the  
*Hardy Boys* hoping that  
it would get canceled."**

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wanted to do it. There was some resistance from the record company, who thought it was a bit gritty—the lines about playing bars, for instance. Michael Lloyd [his producer] was my biggest supporter." The record went to No. 1 in Australia and reached the Top 10 in Germany, Holland, and several other countries. But Cassidy still hadn't released a single in the U.S.

"All of the money from the foreign sales was just enough to cover the cost of recording and promotional touring, so I didn't have any money. It was Christmas-time, and I needed to buy presents and stuff. So I got a job at Saks Fifth Avenue department store. I was an international star, with a major record contract, wrapping Christmas presents for pocket money."

Shortly thereafter, Cassidy was signed to portray one of television's *Hardy Boys*. He says that, though it appeared to be a plum role, he was hesitant to take it: "My manager was trying to sell NBC the idea of a variety special, based on the idea that even though no one in this country had ever heard of me, I was *gonna* be *terrific*."

"In the meantime, I wasn't working, wanted to move out of my parents' house, and needed money. I didn't want to do the variety special, so I decided to do *The Hardy Boys*, hoping that it would get canceled after a season or so—which it did, after two years. But when I took the part, all I could think was, 'Boy, this is going to put a damper on my serious rock aspirations. Guess I won't be the Beatles after all.'"

As it turned out, playing a teenage detective during prime time proved quite complementary to his rock & roll career. The success of his third European single, *Da Do Ron Ron*, led to its subsequent release in this country. That, along with his debut album, he says, sold in the millions: "When the producers found that out, they wanted me to sing on the show. I agreed to, just to promote the record. That was the highest-rated episode we had."

Maintaining two careers and touring to promote his second album, "Born Late" (1977), was not easy. "The first concerts were done while we were still

shooting the TV series, so I had to work around it. I'd leave on Friday, play two shows on Saturday and one in another town on Sunday. It wasn't until the show was canceled that we were able to go out full time."

Cassidy's performing band included several of the musicians who played on his albums—producer Lloyd on rhythm guitar and backing vocals, a keyboardist who had worked with Three Dog Night, and three backup singers. The selection of songs included oldies and originals from his first, second, and then-upcoming "Under Wraps" albums, plus a couple of surprises. "Each night, we'd work up some old rock & roll number just for the show. Most of them we'd perform only a few times during the tour. That's where two of the songs on the live album come from. *Rip It Up* and *Twist and Shout* are probably my favorite tunes on it."

Most of the material on "That's Rock & Roll" was taped during his four-night run at the outdoor Greek Theatre in Los Angeles last July. Does he have high hopes for it? "Well," he shrugs philosophically, "if there's anyone out there who went to the concerts, *remembers* what they were like, and *wants* to hear them again, perhaps we'll sell a few albums."\*

In the meantime, the onetime aspiring "next Beatles" is working on his acting, writing, and singing professions—simultaneously. His first TV movie, *Like Normal People*, in which he played one of two mentally retarded lovers, aired in mid-April on ABC-TV. He's also well into production on his next album, which he says will concentrate on his new band and his songwriting.

"I have a tendency to write story songs or songs that are autobiographical. But it's difficult to spill your guts out without sounding too clichéd. It works for Jackson Browne, and it worked for John Lennon, but they're great lyricists.

"I'm not trying to be something I'm not. I'm not trying to be a 'sophisticated artist'—for me, that's a lot of jive. I'm not out to make some kind of artsy record that you've got to delve deep into. That's not what rock & roll's about. It's a feeling, an energy. You shouldn't have to think that much."

And what about that segment of his live audience that he panders to so shamelessly by jumping through paper hoops and peeling off successive layers of clothing to prepubescent squeals of delight? "Look, I could have recorded more songs like *Da Doo Ron Ron*, and I'm sure a lot of people would like to have seen me do that. But I haven't been playing it safe. There's only so much that you can see from the back of a limousine during a tour, but there's been so much happening to me so quickly that I've been learning a whole lot, quite fast." Something tells me that we'd best keep our eye on this lad. After all, he's not exactly an aging rock star. ●

\*Not in the immediate future. At the eleventh hour, Cassidy's management announced a long postponement for the release of "That's Rock & Roll." No explanation was given.

## Radio Programming Consultants: The Power Elite

by Donna L. Halper

**Y**ou wake up one morning and your favorite radio station suddenly has switched from an easy-listening to an all-disco format. The lady deejay you had been brushing your teeth to every morning for the last five years has been retired from what's known as morning drive time and replaced by someone who sounds like a used-car salesman. You're furious. You hastily turn your dial in retaliation.

Well, that's your decision. But that's also progress. What your ex-favorite station is quite literally banking on is gaining lots of new listeners for every old faithful one that it loses. Witness New York's WKTU-FM: It went from easy-listening to all-disco and within three months jumped from a one-share to a ten-share to become the most listened-to station in the Metropolitan area.

Chances are, the person responsible for your station's and for many another's recent mysterious changes was an independent programming consultant. Kent Burkhart, for instance, not only master-minded WKTU's switch, but is in the process of doing the same for over forty other broadcast outlets across the country. WKTU's runaway success is indicative of just how much power he and a handful of colleagues wield in an industry that affects millions of people and in turn generates billions of dollars in record sales.

As in other businesses, a radio station will often call in a third party when it is losing money—usually due to a decreasing listenership and the resulting low ratings. After studying the station's programming formats, ratings history, competition, and—in some cases—market demographics, the consultant will come up with a plan. Management may accept or reject it, but, since the consultant's services have been paid for

up to that point, the station will usually avail itself of his market-research data. If it agrees with his plan, it may then contract him to implement it.

Burkhart, in this case, may go as far as restaffing the station, in addition to selecting the music it will broadcast. He and his associate Lee Abrams, who work out of Atlanta, contact all of their clients weekly to let them know what the up-and-coming hits are. Their predictions are based on a combination of record sales, questionnaires, and “ear tests”—i.e., playing a record for randomly selected listeners and asking them what they think of it. Naturally, Burkhart and Abrams—like all consultants—pride themselves

**WKTU-FM went from  
easy listening to all-disco  
and within three months jumped  
from a one-share to a ten-share.**

on their ability to accurately predict a record's success.

Nowadays consultants work with both AM and FM outlets, but in the earliest days of consulting, most of their attention was focused on AM Top 40—stations that played only the current hits, with some selected oldies. Bill Drake, now in the radio syndication business with Gene Chenault, was one of the first AM consultants, and his work with the RKO General chain has been widely imitated. It was his research—which indicated listeners wanted to hear their favorite songs more often—that caused so many stations to slash their playlists down to thirty or in some cases even fifteen hit singles and repeat them over and over. Claude Hall, of *Claude Hall's Radio Report*, recalls that “Bill Drake refined Top 40 to its ultimate form.”

A few years later, Lee Abrams did something

*Donna L. Halper is a free-lance journalist who has served as a deejay and music director for several stations in the East.*

similar for album rock. Actually, he got into consulting quite by accident. "In the mid-'60s," he remembers, "the groups that all my friends and I liked weren't being played on AM at all. Rock artists like the Grateful Dead, the Yardbirds, and Cream had excellent albums but no hit singles, so they didn't get any airplay. The only place you could hear their music back then was in concert."

His first opportunity to meet the needs of what he perceived as a growing album-rock audience came when a friend at WQDR-FM, an ailing station in Raleigh, North Carolina, asked for some programming advice. (At the time, Abrams was working for an ABC-FM outlet in Detroit.) Abrams suggested he try an album-rock orientation that featured the best cuts from major acts' LPs, along with the best of the current, non-teeny-bopper hit singles. In essence, he was telling them to aim for the eighteen- to thirty-four-year-old listeners. WQDR in Raleigh tried Lee's ideas and shot to No. 1. This not only delighted management, but eventually helped Lee land a job with Burkhart, who was consulting mostly for AM outlets at the time.

WQDR was among the first instances of FM's transformation into an alternative rock-music outlet. "As the musical tastes of the American people changed and Top 40 radio did not," says Hall, "more and more FMs started switching to pop music and live announcers. Suddenly there was a need for someone with expertise to hire and train the FM staffs." In some cities, the demand for variety led to the emergence of "free-form" FM, which generally broadcast everything from raggas to rock & roll. Top 40 was considered "unhip" at these stations—airing hit singles was strictly verboten. So popular music radio (not including Muzak) offered two extreme choices: FM's free-form, characterized by unpredictable programming of often obscure music, or AM's rigidly structured, very repetitious programming of Top 40.

Bob Henabery, who currently consults for more than thirty stations, was one of the first to recognize the need for a middle ground. He felt the listener should have the chance to hear the more popular albums as well as the hit singles. At the time (the early '70s), Henabery was director of program development for ABC radio. Some of his automated FM outlets were failing to turn a profit anyway, so he decided to try some of his ideas. He directed his stations to play artists with some degree of free-form's "hip" image, but also to play well-known, mass-appeal acts such as the Beatles or Elton John, and to do so in a controlled rotation—that way listeners would know what to expect and when.

The ABC-FM album-rock format, later named Rock 'n' Stereo, had its first noteworthy success at KLOS in Los Angeles, under the direction of Tom Yates and Tim Powell. The station's ratings quadrupled almost immediately. Powell was soon asked to consult for all six ABC-FM rock stations, and Hena-

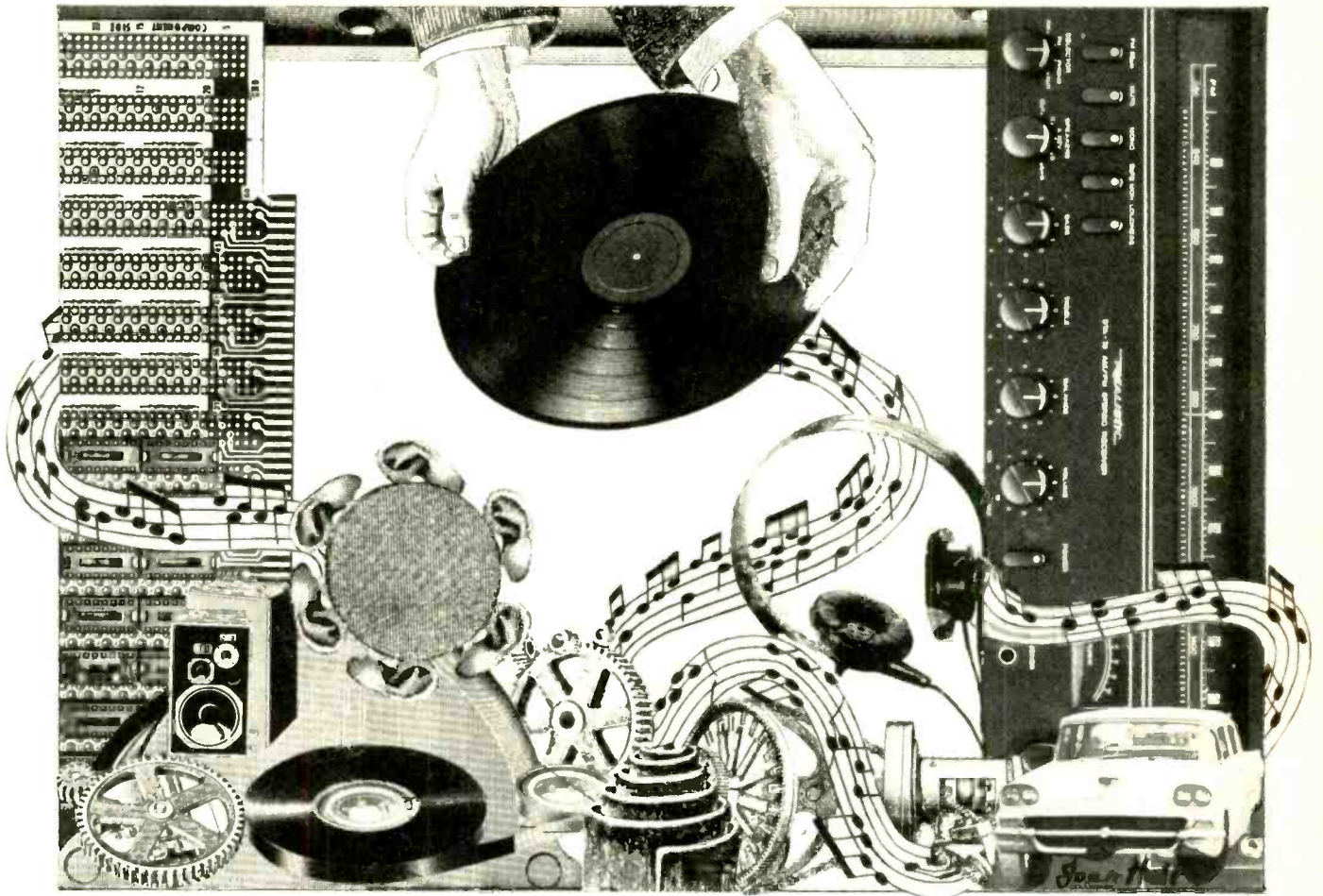
bery's success with the FM group led to a promotion to work the AM group. Powell customized a format for each station, so that they wouldn't sound like carbon copies of one another. He showed the program directors, many of whom had come from free-form and had no real experience working within a structure, how to use local and national sales research and how to execute their particular formats effectively. Many of the people he worked with have gone on to do some important things of their own. Dwight Douglas, who was at WDVE in Pittsburgh, now works with Abrams; Yates also went on to become an independent consultant.

Burkhart, Powell, and Henabery all design formats to fit individual stations. Abrams does not. When he first joined Burkhart and became the FM specialist, he came up with the Superstars format—an improved version of the North Carolina station's album-rock, with strong appeal for young adults. One station this has worked well for is Milwaukee's WLPX. "The owners decided to bring Lee in," says program director Tom Daniels, "because they felt WLPX hadn't yet lived up to its full potential. Since the Superstars format had done well in other cities, they felt it could do equally well in Milwaukee." They were right. WLPX is also used as a test market: not only does Abrams advise Daniels on what is selling nationally, but Daniels reports back on local reaction to new or unfamiliar artists. WQDR in Raleigh is another test market for the Abrams group. Former music director Bill Hard (who now writes *The Hard Report* for the trade) says that some records that have become national hits were first aired in on WQDR. "We were the first station to play *At Seventeen* by Janis Ian and *Foiled Around and Fell in Love* by Elvin Bishop. Lee provided us with helpful research about what artists were popular in other cities, but he also trusted us to break new artists."

By comparison, ABC-FM radio is extremely conservative: Nowadays the stations play only name artists whose albums are in the Top 30. If, however, another station airs a new record and management sees a positive reaction to it, it will add that record to the playlists. In most cases, neither the ABC nor the CBS chain uses outside consultants. Rick Sklar, mastermind of WABC-AM in New York, is ABC's current vice president of programming. He and FM president Allen Shaw do their own market research and base their programming decisions on national sales figures. NBC, on the other hand, has used independent consultants, and one of them is Bob Henabery. Two years ago he became one of the first to produce a successful disco station—WKYS, an NBC station in Washington, D.C.

Since so many stations are using consultants, and since record companies depend largely upon airplay for record sales, it's a safe bet that label promotion representatives put on their Sunday best when they go calling on radio consultants. Convincing Lee Abrams





Joan Hall

that you've got a hit record can mean exposing that record to up to sixty different major audiences across the country. Bobbie Silver, a regional promotion representative for RSO records, says that since Abrams bases most of his decisions on hard marketing research data, making a case for a new artist can be a real challenge. "I try to get him to see my artist in concert," she explains, "or offer to give away albums; sometimes I even offer the artist for a special concert at one of Lee's stations. Fortunately, Lee has some stations that are willing to take a chance."

Roger Lifeset, an independent promoter who works for several labels, calls hundreds of stations weekly—either to persuade them to add a record or to get feedback on those they are playing. He says some stations are free to add a record if they like it, but others must wait for an okay from their consultant. "Most of the time, consultants don't really hamper me. But it would make things easier if I could just deal on a direct basis with each station without that third party." Like most promoters, Lifeset agrees that consultants can break a disc by adding it to their playlists. They can also stop a record dead by telling their stations to drop it.

Are consultants the answer to every problem? Certainly many respected radio programmers like the

overview they provide. Chuck Dunaway has been a successful announcer and program director in many major cities. Though he has never used one, he feels that consultants are "a clearinghouse for all kinds of music information as well as a good source of feedback. They do sell a real service, and they do solve problems."

Dick Oppenheimer former senior vice president of Starr Broadcasting and now the owner of several Texas stations, agrees: "I would not hesitate to make use of a consultant's expertise. When I was with Starr, our Detroit station was having problems, so we called in Abrams, who had some solid ideas."

On the other hand, Shelly Grafman, executive

**Convincing Lee Abrams  
that you've got a hit record  
can mean exposing  
that record to up to sixty  
different major audiences.**

vice president of Century Broadcasting, feels that consultants are fine for some stations but not for his. After eleven years at KSHE-FM, a successful St. Louis rock station, he says, "I know my market better than any

outsider. While I respect consultants for what they do, I feel no need to rely on one. Our ratings are excellent, and we have a feel for what St. Louis wants to hear.

**“Research is valuable, but you shouldn’t be a slave to it.”**

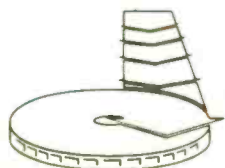
We aren’t afraid to play new records—we even helped to break Rod Stewart. We are involved with our audience and with our city. And you can’t get that kind of involvement long-distance.”

Jim Ladd, an announcer at the equally popular KMET in Los Angeles and producer of a syndicated interview show called *Inner View*, echoes Grafman’s sentiments. Both KSHE and KMET are free-form and thus avoid the use of a fixed or predictable playlist. “Research is valuable, but you shouldn’t be a slave to it. We love rock music—we go to concerts, keep in constant contact with our audience, and play familiar hit groups like Boston as well as new groups. If a record feels right to us, we play it. If we don’t think it’s appropriate, we don’t play it.” KMET doesn’t play the

Bee Gees, for instance, since it feels the group doesn’t have a strong enough rock image for the station. All music is chosen by the program director and her staff at weekly music meetings.

WIOQ in Philadelphia, another successful station, has a philosophy similar to KMET’s. It concentrates on playing the best of all types of rock—and only rock—music. “WIOQ wasn’t supposed to succeed,” recalls assistant program director Helen Leicht. “Our owners even called in some consultants for advice, and they all said the market couldn’t support another album station. But the owners gave us a year to turn the station around anyway.” And they did.

As Kent Burkhardt put it when asked to define consulting, “It’s a marriage of science and emotion, experience and expertise. It’s having the research but knowing how to use it.” There is certainly no question that consultants play a major role in radio today, as stations fiercely compete for the No. 1 spot. Hiring a consultant can be expensive, and few will disclose exactly what they charge for their services—probably between \$700 and \$3,000 a month, depending on the size of the station. But for those stations who owe their newfound success to a programming consultant, that’s a small price to pay. ●



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CIRCLE 10 ON PAGE 105



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# Input Output

Instruments and  
Accessories



*Trouper I monitor mixer and optional expander module*

**Uni-Sync Trouper I Monitor Mixer.** The Trouper I is a compact stage monitor system designed to accept eight microphones (as many as twenty with the separate expander module) and capable of feeding four independent monitor outputs. Each input has a 10 and a 20 dB attenuator switch, which may be combined for 30 dB of attenuation. Below each set of these is a three-band graphic equalizer, with 150 Hz shelving, 2 kHz reciprocal peak and dip, and 8 kHz shelving circuits for each input. Next in line is a SOLO switch, which sends its input signal to a circuit for metering and previewing through the SOLO output or the headphone jack. These switches follow the EQ but precede the faders—each input position also has four slide pots for sending that signal source in differing amounts to each of the outputs.

The output section of the Trouper I has master faders for each of the output busses, and each fader has low-cut and high-cut filter switches just above it.

Above the four output faders are more SOLO switches, which follow the buss, and an LED VU meter calibrated in 3-dB steps; a single red LED indicates peaks. Immediately above the meter is a slide fader to control the headphone (600-ohm output) volume and SOLO volume. A POWER ON/OFF rocker switch

and headphone jack complete the front panel.

The back panel has eight female XLR connectors feeding balanced 150-ohm inputs and uses high-quality Switchcraft connectors. The output connections, including the SOLO output, are phone jacks, and a multipin jack provides connection to the slave or expander module. A nondetachable power cord with a fuse holder is close at hand.

Trouper I is your basic monitor system—no frills or doodads. As such, it does its job commendably. We experienced no crosstalk between output channels and were unable to overload the inputs to the point where the sound was bad. Certainly the unit is quiet—we encountered no objectionable noise of any kind. Though the faders are a little tight to the touch, that's better than loose. The attenuation is rapid because the travel of the faders is short, so you have to be alert when using them during performance. Of course, the reason for the short travel of the faders, and for their small size and tight grouping, is that the whole mixer is only 10 inches from top to bottom (and 19 inches wide for rack mounting). I'm sure Uni-Sync considers this a benefit because space-saving is always an important factor for a performing band. But damn, those things are small! The

blue rocker switches for the input pads (the whole board is color-coded) feel good—you can feel the click when they are pushed in or out of the circuit. The rocker switches for SOLO, however, are mushy—but then, *their* action is identifiable through the headphones.

The three-band equalizers have a range of 20 dB and the frequency selection (150 Hz, 2 kHz, and 8 kHz) is good. These are effective bands for monitor work. The low-cut and high-cut filters at each output fader, in conjunction with the equalizers, give a high measure of control over the monitor feed.

With its compact size, good flexibility, and wholly satisfactory performance capabilities, this system looks like a good bet if you're in the market for a monitor mixer. The specs are good, it's made of 13-gauge steel, and it weighs only seventeen pounds. Uni-Sync had not yet written a manual for the Trouper I when I used it, and the combination spec sheet/flyer wouldn't be much help for novices. But the company promises to remedy this by the time you read these words, and if your unit comes without one, you can get in touch with the Customer Service Department. The mixer sells for \$799 and the expander module for the same.

FRED MILLER

CIRCLE 121 ON PAGE 105

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## Cuba's Irakere: A Jazz Milestone

by Don Heckman

One of the saddest side effects of the long disengagement between the United States and Cuba has been the loss of any opportunity to hear new Cuban music and—perhaps more important—its consequent failure to influence ours in recent years. Early twentieth-century American music is dotted with creative input from that large island in the Caribbean: Jelly Roll Morton's famous "Spanish tinge"; the habañera rhythms that became the Rudolf Valentino tango; the Cuban pop song hits of the Thirties and Forties; the *montuna* and the mambo; the Afro-jazz of Dizzy Gillespie and Machito and Chano Pozo. Cuba was one of the last slaveholding areas in the Western hemisphere, and its music, resultingly, maintained a tight emotional connection with Africa. The gut-shaking, rhythmic energy of that connection remained intact both in Cuban music of the past and, as recent evidence confirms, in the Cuban music of the present.

That evidence is Irakere, a Cuban jazz/rock group (I'm not so sure about the "rock") signed last year by Columbia records in a precedent-shattering move. That the band is competent will come as news to no one; Columbia is not known for signing turkeys. What is surprising is the fact that the group—as heard in a subsequent American/European tour and on this new recording—is so creative, so filled with musical riches, that it undoubtedly will be one of the most influential voices of the year and of the decade to come.



It arrives at a good time. Jazz has lately been paying more attention to cash registers than to chord changes, and the proliferation of jazz fusion has

had a dampening effect on the development of skilled young talent. Many young black musicians, in particular, understandably have turned their skills in the big-buck directions of r&b and disco, rather than toward the less lucrative pastures of jazz.

Irakere reminds us what youth and enthusiasm and talent and new ideas can mean. It helps us recover our own roots by being so caught up with its own. This

is a Cuban band, first and foremost, and anything else they are must be understood in that context. But the way in which they explore their heritage, adding to it their skills and their love of traditional jazz, tells us something about what has been missing in our own music lately.

This collection apparently is a distillation of material from live performances at the Newport Festival and at the Montreux Jazz Festival. Obviously, much of what Irakere played at those programs has been left out. (Some who have heard the entire performances have complained that Columbia took the safe route, leav-

**Irakere.** Bert deCoteaux & Mike Berniker, producers. *Columbia JC 35655*, \$7.98. *Tape:*  *JCT 35655*,  *JCA 35655*, \$7.98.



*Irakere at a recent concert in Havana—gut-shaking energy*

ing out the most challenging numbers.) But not having been present at either venue, I can only react with enormous enthusiasm to "Irakere."

The opening track, *Juana Mil Ciento*, illustrates the tremendous power of the band's rhythms. This piece, like virtually all the others, makes much of the high excitement that can be gained from the juxtaposition of rhythms in two against rhythms in three, and four against six. No, there is nothing new about this. Mariachi bands do it; so did Gustav Mahler and J. S. Bach. But Irakere uses the rhythmic conflict with the improvisatory abandon of jazz musicians and the body-shaking propulsive power of African drummers. Another element that surfaces is the call-and-response pattern—a vital element in African music, and one indigenous to the back-and-forth male vocal declamations so common in Cuban music. All of this is happening in the context of almost frenetic ensemble work and some exciting jazz improvisation from the horn players. (Notice, in particular, their long, startling unison figure just before the ending.)

The sudden shifting of rhythmic gears on *Ilya* is apparently characteristic of Irakere. Those shifts are not as arbitrary as they may seem, however, and grow quite logically out of the duality of, once again, two against three.

The most unexpected piece is *Adagio*,



Joey Molland and Tom Evans—1979's *Badfinger*

based on an unidentified Mozartean theme, on which soprano saxophonist/arranger Paquito D'Rivera's continuous and prodigious soloing ranges from classical quotes to flame-breathing gospel to full-blown bebop.

Side 2 is dominated by the brooding *Misa Negra*, composed by leader Chucho Valdés. It includes a lengthy rhapsodic piano solo from the enormously gifted Valdés and a virtual study in saxophone high harmonics from D'Rivera. All the complex elements of Cuban music drift in and out of its textures: male vocals weaving through call-and-response patterns; frequent reliance on the *montuna*, the Latin version of a passacaglia; contrasting rhythmic sectionalization: two against three against four against six; and, throughout virtually everything, the clave—that element so necessary in Latin music.

Is Irakere one of a kind? Is it the best Cuba has to offer? I suspect not. It is probably only the beginning of a wave of talent. But for the moment, it offers us plenty to think about and enjoy. ●

**Badfinger: *Airwaves*.** David Malloy, producer. Elektra 6E 175, \$7.98. Tape: ●● TC5 175, ●● ET8 175, \$7.98.

Unlike so many of the outright Beatle clones or Beatle-influenced harmonizers, Badfinger had official support from the Fab Four from its very beginnings almost a decade ago and was even signed to Apple Records. But sprightly tunes and robust harmonies were not sufficient to propel the group past its

early hits, notably McCartney's *Come and Get It* and leader Pete Ham's *No Matter What* and *Without You*. The last Badfinger album appeared in 1974, and Ham's suicide a year later seemed to foreclose any possibility of future reunions.

"Airwaves," then, comes as a surprise. The new Badfinger consists of two of the original members—vocalist Tom Evans and guitarist/vocalist Joey Molland—supplemented by a variety of session players. The duo has written seven out of the nine tunes, and, while there are no instant classics here, they have put together an interesting group of ballads, rock tunes, and even dance numbers that widely emphasize what they do best—i.e., sing ethereally and play vigorously. Though the most likely single, Joe Tansin's *Sympathy*, has a disco-ish impact, it does not seriously depart from Badfinger's straight-ahead rock style. In fact "Airwaves" is true to the band's trademarks of soaring voices and biting guitar leads shot over precise, dramatic rhythms. Its guitar sound ranges from a George Harrison-type whine (on *Love Is Gonna Come at Last*) to raving rock & roll on *Come Down Hard* and *Look Out California*. Less characteristic are the use of strings and piano to reinforce the album's rhythms.

Even without the impact of memorable songs, the vocal gifts displayed on "Airwaves" do impress. Authentic Liverpool harmonies, pure and gutsy, are a fond part of Sixties recall, which Evans and Molland successfully re-create and bring up to date. T.G.



Irakere's Carlos Averhoff



**Burnette—definitive country/rock**

**Billy Burnette.** Chips Moman, producer. Polydor PD-1 6187, \$7.98. Tape: CT-1 6187, ST-16187, \$7.98.

**Tim Krekel: Crazy Me.** Tony Brown, producer. Capricorn CPN 0219, \$7.98. Tape: M5N 0219, M8N 0219, \$7.98.

Last year, like most of us who listen to music for a living, I was asked by this publication to supply a "Top 10" list. Thinking of that many deserving albums was difficult. Harder still was coming up with the names of worthy newcomers.

This year it looks as though the list-making will be easier. Good albums arrive with encouraging frequency, many of them by people who, if not exactly newcomers, aren't members of music's old guard, either. Neither Billy Burnette nor Tim Krekel is a stranger to recording studios, though neither name is likely to cause the same rumbling in the chest as Elvis Costello's or Barry Manilow's. Yet both have teamed up with particularly adept producers and supporting musicians to come up with albums that all but define the country/rock genre within which they work.

Burnette (not to be confused with Billy Joe Burnette, who is also quite good) comes by his talent and orientation naturally: He is the son of Memphis rockabilly Dorsey Burnette, who, with Billy's uncle Johnny, formed two-thirds of the Rock & Roll Trio, one of the most exciting bands of any era. Though the group was more influential than famous, it gave Dorsey and Johnny enough of a reputation to allow each to go on to a successful solo career.

Billy sounds a lot like his father: gruff and a bit menacing, which is fine for this kind of music. He pays tribute to his roots via strong versions of the swamp standard *Niki Hoeky* and his father's

composition *Believe What You Say*, a Fifties hit for Rick Nelson that sounds even better here. More significant, perhaps, is the fact that a number of his own tunes, several of them collaborations, are included, and they stand up well with the oldies.

The album was produced in Nashville by the ever-tasty Chips Moman, with backing largely supplied by the old American Studios crew that kept Memphis on the map during the Sixties. They, plus members of the Earl Scruggs Revue and a couple of ringers, all sound terrific. In fact, the album's only drawback is the pressing: My copy has the noisiest surface of any that I've ever heard. (That may not be true of the entire run, but if yours sounds like a snake convention between tracks, write a nasty letter to Polydor.)

Tim Krekel is best known as Jimmy Buffett's guitarist. He's a real whiz on the instrument, as well as a capable singer/songwriter whose material should rest well with fans of the Buffett school. Krekel's band is assembled from friends, members of the Buffett group (pianist Jay Spell, harmonica player Greg "Fingers" Taylor), and Emmylou Harris' band (guitarist Albert Lee, steel guitarist Hank De Vito). His bandleader, producer, and new pianist is Tony Brown, who has turned in a strong, not over-produced piece of work. Of the selections, the strongest are Krekel's energetic remake of *Rockin' Robin* and the funny, hard-driving *Greenhouse Blues*, an original.

The moral of all of this is simply that there is good stuff out there, even if it comes from unexpected places and you have to search a bit to find it. I'll put these albums (Burnette's second; Krekel's debut) against any released by far better-known performers, last year or this. T.E.

**Albert Collins: Ice Pickin'.** Bruce Iglauer, Richard McLeese, & Dick Shurman, producers. Alligator AL 4713, \$7.98 (Alligator Records, Box 60234, Chicago, Ill. 60660).

With the contemporary blues field endangered by commercial indifference and the attrition of active, pure blues stylists, "Ice Pickin'" is a twin triumph. For Texan guitarist Albert Collins, a distinctive showman better known to his peers than to the general public, it is a winning return to recording after a seven-year hiatus. For Bruce Iglauer, a stubborn blues disciple who single-handedly founded Alligator in the early '70s, it is his label's slickest, most stylish contender for wider attention.

That polish isn't achieved at the expense of Collins' authenticity. Like the



**Collins—the best in blues**

earliest Alligator LPs by performers like Son Seals and Hound Dog Taylor, "Ice Pickin'" follows the natural contours of the artist's live sets, from a strutting opener (*Honey, Hush!*) to a closing rapid-shuffle (*Avalanche*) guitar rave-up. Iglauer's shoestring finances once mandated raw live recordings or quickly cut sessions captured after hours in the same funky Chicago blues clubs. But here he has taken his more recent studio recordings to a new sharpness and clarity, attaining a clean, full production sound. He and his coproducers frame the frontman's stinging guitar, laconic vocals, and lean arrangements with crisp horn charts and rock-solid rhythm playing.

Collins' taut, personalized approach to guitar phrasing is further distinguished by the depth of tone he achieves on his Telecaster. Dubbed the "Cool Sound" at the time of his first, early-'60s singles for the Houston-based Kangaroo and Hall-Way labels, the style at its most intense (*Honey, Hush!*, *Ice Pick*, and *Avalanche*) is riveting. This explains his exalted niche among his American and English blues counterparts. But there's more here than food for would-be Claptons: Collins also projects a lively persona as vocalist and songwriter, one that offers a classic synthesis of hard-luck perspective and saving humor. Ribald, sarcastic, and self-kidding, his slice-of-life lyrics and conversational raps (*Conversation with Collins*) are worthy successors to a comic blues tradition that stretches back to Bessie Smith and Louis Jordan and that includes more recent masters like John Lee Hooker, B. B. King, and Albert King.

*Too Tired* finds Collins lazily declining his sexual duties. *Master Charge*, a wry fable of the consequences of instant credit, is spiced with falsetto mimicry as he recounts his wife's runaway pur-



chases. Throughout, his molten guitar lines and a studio support featuring some of Chicago's best surviving bluesmen keep the context lively. Discophiles won't find much to bump to, and rock devotees who think the style was born in Birmingham or London will find few moments of kilowatt melodrama. But aficionados of razor-sharp pure blues clearly won't mind. "Ice Pickin'" is simply one of the best contemporary blues sets in recent memory. s.s.

**Joe Ely: Down on the Drag.** Bob Johnston, producer. MCA 3080, \$7.98. Tape: ●● MCAC 3080, ●● MCAT 3080, \$7.98.

The opening moments of this album are a masterly display of the originality and power that can be wrought within the confines of country music. *Fools Fall in Love* is a song flush with dire cynicism, but its cynicism is inspirational. Instead of turgid harmonica work by Charlie McCoy or someone like him, there are brilliant rotgut accordion bursts by Ponty Bone; and instead of a bunch of sickly sweet background voices, there is a dark and effective sparseness.

That song and *Standin' at the Big Hotel* were both written by Butch Hancock, a member of an earlier Ely band, the Flatlanders. The strength of those two cuts—particularly the first—make the rest of "Down on the Drag" seem only slightly duller and less painful than most mainstream country music. In *She Leaves You Where You Are*, Ely has the audacity to employ one of the most trite metaphors in the book, likening a girl to a highway. Further examples of his eloquence include *Crazy Lemon*, which relies on the word "harlequin," and *Crawdad Train*, which is so derivative-folksy it makes Harry Belafonte sound like Lou Reed. His *Time for Travelin'* is yet another variation upon the motif of the hard-drivin' poseur, in case there are those among us who haven't had enough. And his *Maria* couldn't have even made it into *West Side Story*.

I had very nice, encouraging things to say about Ely's first two albums. It seemed that he was on the verge of doing good things in an area, country music, that sorely needed it. Though his voice sounds better on this LP than on his last two, he's still on the verge. And if somebody can't put together a solid forty-five



Joe Ely—time to get a day job?

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minutes of worthwhile music after three years of indulgence, well, let him get a day job. N.Y.

**Herbie Hancock: Feets Don't Fail Me Now.** David Rubinson & Herbie Hancock, producers. *Columbia JC 35764*, \$7.98. *Tape: ●● JCT 35764, ●● JCA 35764*, \$7.98.

Herbie Hancock would seem to have it all. Having been one of the most highly prized studio players in the world, his vi-

able solo career has taken him through many styles and directions of his own musical dictate, from the obscure to the accessible. In the last few years he's sought to reach an ever-widening audience, even stating in a recent interview that "the only thing I'm interested in doing is making music that's not self-centered or self-indulgent. Because otherwise I can go home and play the piano for myself."

On "Feets Don't Fail Me Now" Herbie continues to use the Vocodor, a vocal

synthesizer that supposedly allows "musicians to become singers." The truth is that his own expressively high and sweet tenor is developing nicely. One lovely ballad, *Trust Me*, slightly recalls the lightly Latin rhythms of his "Maiden Voyage" period and features a Fender Rhodes solo with the kind of atmospheric voicings that only Hancock can achieve. The rest of the album is basic disco/funk.

Just as Herbie's ultra-hip entrée into jazz fusion with the "Headhunters" album was an exploration of Sly Stone territory so is his contribution to today's mainstream dance music market strongly laced with Parliament-Funkadelic-Bootsy-derived rhythms and sounds. Producer David Rubinson supplies very accurate renderings of such effects as slap-back snare and, perhaps more importantly, Herbie's present band plays this music as well as any group *but* the P-Funk mob. (His intentions aren't quite that mainstream anyhow.) A very spare but potent James Gadson keeps the rhythm pockets going strongly on drums, and bassist Eddie Watkins' inventive lines and fresh energy raise the excitement level on tracks that could, in less capable hands, sound pedestrian. As usual, reedman Bennie Maupin supplies colors on soprano sax that dazzle.

How long will Hancock stay in this musical bag? Will he pick up legions of new fans with "Feets"? Will old fans be offended? I certainly don't know, but one thing is clear: He continues to leave his own signature on the musical avenues he enters. And ultimately, "Feets" does do what it's s'posed to do, and that is to make you really want to get up and dance. C.C.

**George Harrison.** George Harrison & Russ Titelman, producers. *Dark Horse DHK 3255*, \$7.98. *Tape: ●● M5 3255, ●● M8 3255*, \$7.98.

George Harrison's mythic pedigree and exotic enthusiasms have often concealed the underlying conservatism of his music. Though the brave new world of studio techniques that greeted the Beatles often enticed their lead guitarist to try new and intriguing effects, Harrison's growth was always more evolutionary than tradition-shattering. Apart from his flirtations with sitar and psychedelia, his songwriting, singing, and instrumental attack pursued a patient process of assimilation that seemed completed on his epic "All Things Must Pass" (1970). Compared to the quirky majesty of that album's best moments, his solo works since then have offered only varying—and mostly lesser—degrees of success.

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Hancock—down to the basics of disco/funk

His new, eponymous album gives one clue to his current approach in its atypically straightforward title. It also breaks no new ground and, as such, will inevitably draw easy critical fire. The new songs continue some of his worst excesses as a lyricist, ranging from starry-eyed love songs to equally ingenuous cosmic sermons, but they also boast the most attractive melodies and the trimmest, least bombastic arrangements in years. Thus, he saves a song like *Not Guilty* from a ludicrously awkward rhyme ("I'm not here for the rest/I'm not trying to steal your vest") with lambent acoustic guitar lines and an offhand vocal delivery.

His lingering naiveté intermittently triggers an incongruity between singer and song that is visually reflected on the inner sleeve: a photo of an older, tweedier, but still shaggy Harrison strolling through the paddock of a grand prix race circuit, under which is printed his usual salutation, "Hare Krishna." The juxtaposition of the chic with the earnest is an unwitting précis of Harrison's predicament as an artist, the tension between his exalted past and his increasingly predictable present work.

Still, for fans of his silky slide guitar figures and sunny midtempo rock melodies, songs like *Love Comes to Everyone* and *Blow Away* will sound less self-conscious than their strained mid-'70s counterparts. And even an obvious act of self-

plagiarism like *Here Comes the Moon* proves more charming than cynics might have anticipated. If "George Harrison" is musical proof that its author has settled into adulthood, at least he has done so with a new candor. He is indeed an aging rock star, but the economy here argues that he may be aging more gracefully than expected. S.S.

**Hickory Wind: Crossing Devil's Bridge.** Hickory Wind, Nick Koumoutseas, J. Gary Burke, & Doug Dickey, producers. *Flying Fish 074, \$7.98.*

Because this West Virginian quintet employs a rhythm section and electric guitars, some observers will doubtless mistake them for conventional Southern rockers. Yet Hickory Wind is distinguished by more than their evocative name, taken from the title of a haunting country ballad by the late Gram Parsons.

Continued on page 127



Harrison—the art of aging gracefully

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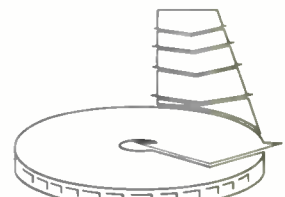


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CIRCLE 11 ON PAGE 105

## Gilberto Gil Brings Tropicalia to the Mainstream

by John Storm Roberts

To date, Brazilian music has swept the U.S. twice: in the 1940s with the samba and in the 1960s with the bossa nova. Both first underwent a period of "bubbling under," when Rio had its toe ashore but hadn't yet made it inland. That seems to be happening again. The samba's lilting melody and joyous percussion have been curvetting dolphinlike just below the surface of disco and jazz fusion ever since the squeak-squawk friction drum called *cuiça* became the hip percussion instrument of 1975. So this time the influences (which include Salsa and Mexican) are not manifesting themselves as separate entities. Instead,

they are a major trend in the mainstream of this country's popular music.

What isn't yet clear is whether contemporary Brazilian music, which has moved a long way beyond the bossa, will catch on here. Gilberto Gil's first U.S. album, "Nightingale," will be one good test of that. Singer/guitarist/composer Gil is one of the absolutely top stars in the Brazilian music world. He is also a prime mover in the movement that he and like-minded musicians have called "tropicalia". This isn't a rhythm, like the samba, or even exactly a style, like bossa nova. It's more of an overall approach, sparked by the reaction of a very strong

local music to soul and rock. The result is, so to speak, Brazilian funk.

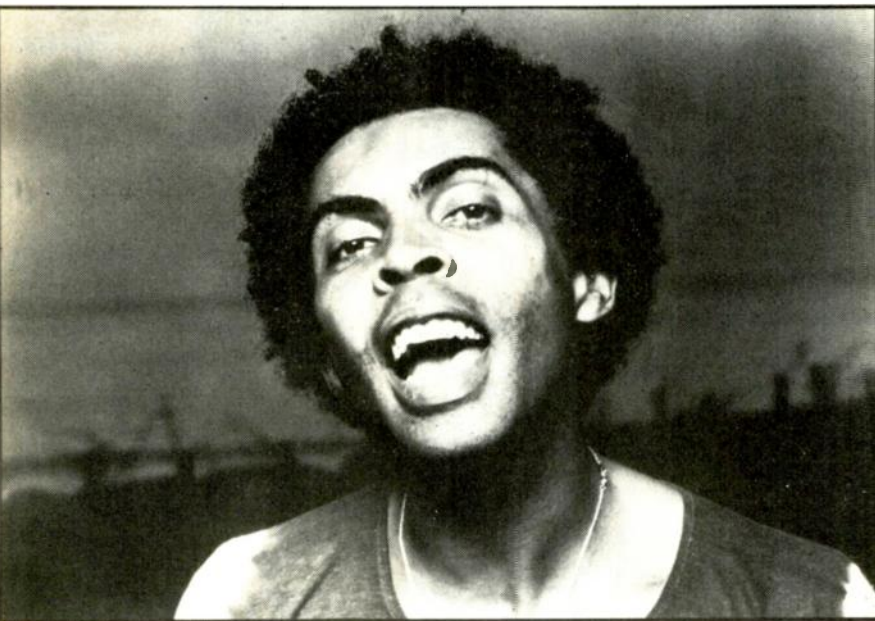
On "Nightingale," Gil has taken tropicalia a few steps further: He's mixed American musicians (basically Lee Ritenour's band) with Brazilians, handed the production over to that *petit maître* of Luso-U.S. fusion, Sergio Mendes, and sung several songs in English. All of this has been attempted before—by everybody from Mendes on down. But Gil comes by his fusion naturally; unlike, say, Airto, his basic influences include James Brown, Jimi Hendrix, and the like. His English is excellent, but more important (and again unlike Airto) he knows that the No. 1 problem in putting English lyrics to Brazilian music is that the inner rhythms of the two languages are totally different.

Three cuts are at the crossover end of the spectrum. *Here and Now* is an amiable pop ballad with Americanized international bolero rhythm and a spicing of Brazilian harmonic twists. The title track is a delightful Paul McCartney-ish effort—a light, happy song reminiscent of *When I'm Sixty-Four*. Rather more Brazilian, with its slow carnival march rhythm, is *Move Along with Me*, the one song by Gil written in English. Oddly enough, it doesn't work as well as some of his translations.

Any one of these cuts has a reasonable chance in the mainstream market. So does *Goodbye My Girl*, a cross between reggae and a traditional northeast Brazilian rhythm. It's full of Gil's unusual sharp, almost birdlike falsetto, with a touch of Beatles in the bridges and an altogether beguiling and upbeat feel.

Two songs come out of a quite different context. *Balafon* and *Alapalá* both stem from a trip Gil made to West Africa. But it's typical of Gil's thoroughgoing fusion that the West African high-life dance music feel of *Balafon* also has a strong Afro-Cuban edge, and that the rhythm of *Alapalá* has a powerful underlying James Brown kick.

Lastly, "Nightingale" has several essentially Brazilian compositions given a somewhat Americanized treatment. The most "ethnic" is *Samba de Los Angeles*, which is of the percussive school that Americans first encountered in the film *Black Orpheus* and now fuels discoland's Brazilian undertones. But the cream of the crop are the album's opener, *Sarará*, and *Ella*. Both are vibrant with a double impulse: Brazilian verve and lightness and the heavier drive of contemporary r&b. Both sparkle like the crest of a wave, showing Gil's originality as singer and composer.



Gil—the master of Brazilian funk

**Gilberto Gil: Nightingale.** Sergio Mendes, producer. Elektra 6E 167, \$7.98. Tape: ● TC5 167, ● ET8 167, \$7.98.

As their second album for Chicago's maverick Flying Fish label vividly demonstrates, this band explores Southern roots seldom glimpsed in the work of their boogie brethren: Instead of barrel-house blues or red-neck country rock, Hickory Wind contemporizes older white folk traditions, infusing Appalachian modes with modern firepower.

More provocatively, they trace those mountain styles back to their European origins, working a rich, if currently underexposed area where Anglo-Saxon and Celtic styles merge with their American descendants. Using hammered dulcimer, fiddle, banjo, mandolin, and tin whistle as foils for rock dynamics, Hickory Wind is closer than any American peers to English folk-rockers like Fairport Convention and Steeleye Span or Celtic traditionalists like Ireland's Chieftains and Celtic harpist Alan Stivell. The rich sonorities of modal tunings, the lilting rhythms of the jig and the reel, and an obvious reverence for tradition impart a pastoral atmosphere light-years removed from the more commercially potent conventions of Southern rock.

The album is dominated by traditional songs and dances from both sides of the Atlantic, and even the four origi-

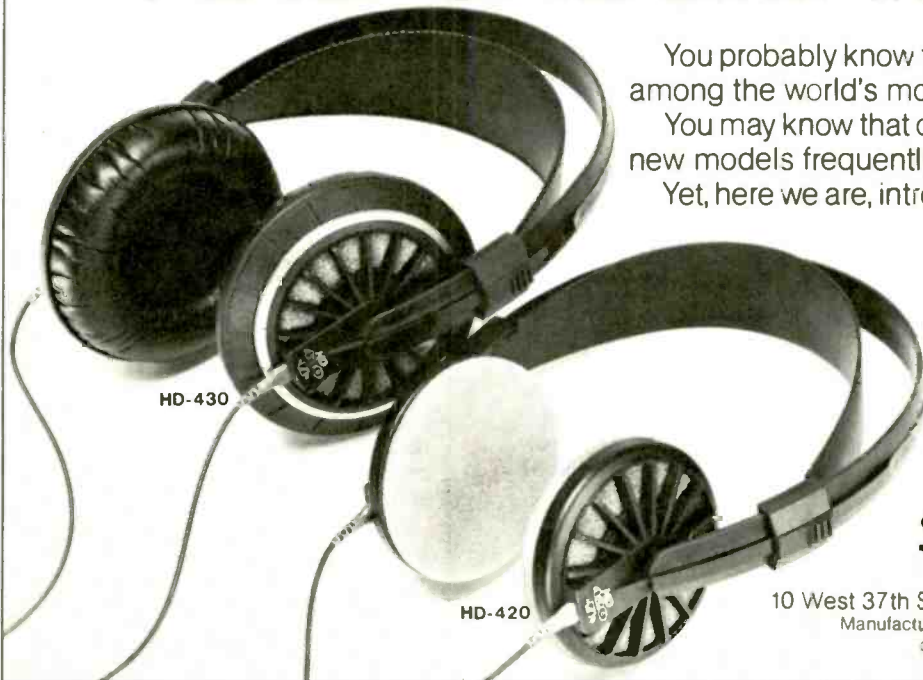


Hickory Wind—folk/rock at its most ambitious

nals (by multi-instrumentalists Sam Morgan and Mark Walbridge) hew to the musical and metaphorical disciplines of the oldest ballads and jigs included. As vocalists, Hickory Wind's members are still finding convincing styles, their singing sometimes thin and under-

powered amid the snap of their playing. But the exhilarating ensemble sound they create on instrumentals like the oft-recorded *Morrison's Jig* and the moody *Crossing Devil's Bridge/ Looking for Nessie* makes this LP far more satisfying than the slicker fare offered by most of their

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regional peers. And on originals like *Valentine Lynn* and the ghostly *Sycamore Song*, they display a gratifyingly unhip affection for older themes and characters. "Crossing Devil's Bridge" suggests that folk/rock at its most ambitious may not be dead after all. s.s.

**The Genius of Les Paul: Multi-Trackin'.** *London LC 50016, \$5.98, Tape: ●● LC 5 50016, ● LC 8 50016, \$6.95.*

The liner notes for this 1967 reissue are a

litany of Les Paul's accomplishments. Aside from the supremely popular solid-body guitar that bears his name, the likes of double-tracking, overdubbing, and echo delay are all attributed to this veteran guitarist.

Unfortunately, Paul's technical wizardry doesn't make for an album of musical magic. Nearly all of the selections here are so laden with guitar gimmicks, and Paul plays in so many different styles, that the LP in its entirety sounds like a clever novelty item. His celebrated

reverb, through layer upon layer of guitar tracks, only coats the music with the superficial veneer of Muzak. The sound is often just plain silly—in fact, it's the kind of thing one expects to hear in the background on *Dinah* or *Family Feud*.

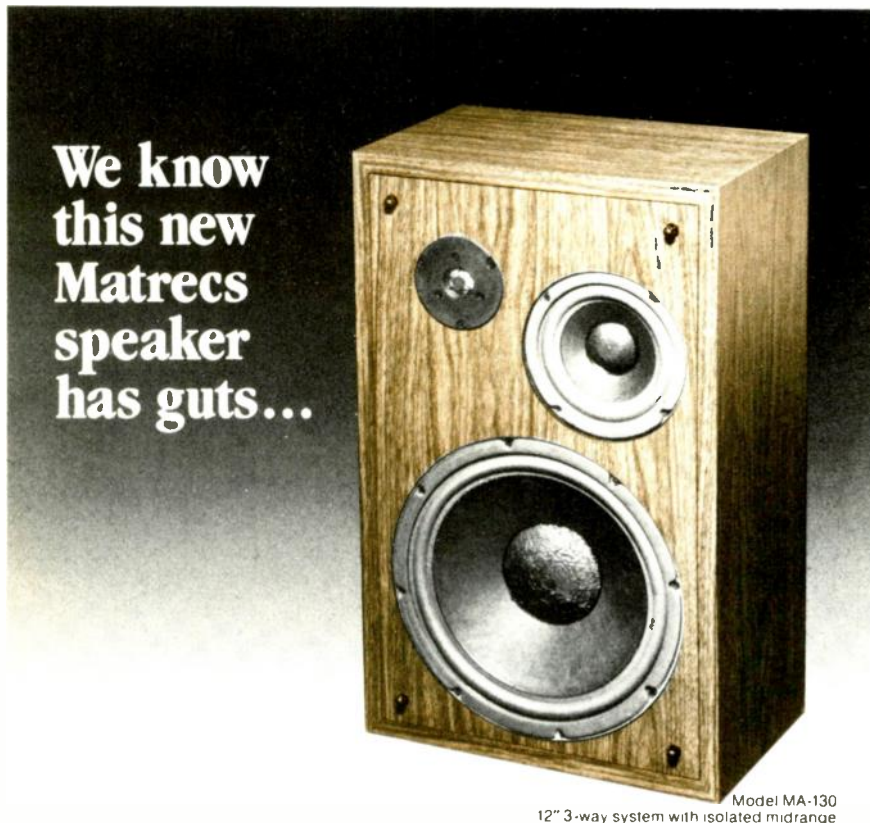
At the bottom of all of it, of course, is an exceptional guitarist—nimble, lyrical, with chops to spare. One hears echoes of Paul's teachers and followers in his playing, from Django Reinhardt and George Barnes to Gabor Szabo and various rock players. His best moments by far come when he simply plays: On *Sleep* he spins out some delightfully Django-esque lines; on *Golden Earrings* his sense of humor and expert playing blend beautifully. But on this album at least, those moments are all too rare. Paul seems to be trying harder to impress than convince. S.G.

**Raphael Ravenscroft: Her Father Didn't Like Me, Anyway.** Hugh Murphy & Raphael Ravenscroft, producers. *Portrait JR 35683, \$7.98, Tape: ●● JRT 35683, ● JRA 35683, \$7.98.*

Guitar stars notwithstanding, the saxophone obbligato has been an abiding tradition and necessary ingredient on scads of hit records. The '50s offered Sam "The Man" Taylor and a very young King Curtis, the '60s introduced the seminal Junior Walker. More recently, David Sanborn, Tom Scott, and Michael Brecker have been the pop sax standard-bearers. But no matter what the era, passion and immediacy have always been the genre's crucial factors, separating the mere honkers from the soulful masters.

With this in mind, it is no surprise that one of last year's major hit singles, Gerry Rafferty's *Baker Street*, succeeded largely due to the heartrending soprano sax solo by English studio woodwind player Raphael Ravenscroft. His debut album as a band leader, "Her Father Didn't Like Me, Anyway" is a treasure trove of emotional playing, albeit over some familiar-sounding rhythm tracks. But an eclectic array of pop song styles is the perfect choice for an artist like Ravenscroft, since he thrives on adding his own personality to existing material. *You Put Something Better Inside of Me* (a Rafferty composition) is a slow, pop/gospel love song that displays his unmistakable alto sax rapture, rooted in the earlier styles of Johnny Hodges and Hank Crawford.

Ravenscroft is also a torrid tenor sax man, thoroughly schooled in the Junior Walker / Tom Scott / Mike Brecker idiom, while never losing his own horn's "cry." And wonder of wonders, his flute playing is just as sweet and engaging. Moreover, the fact that studio vocalists



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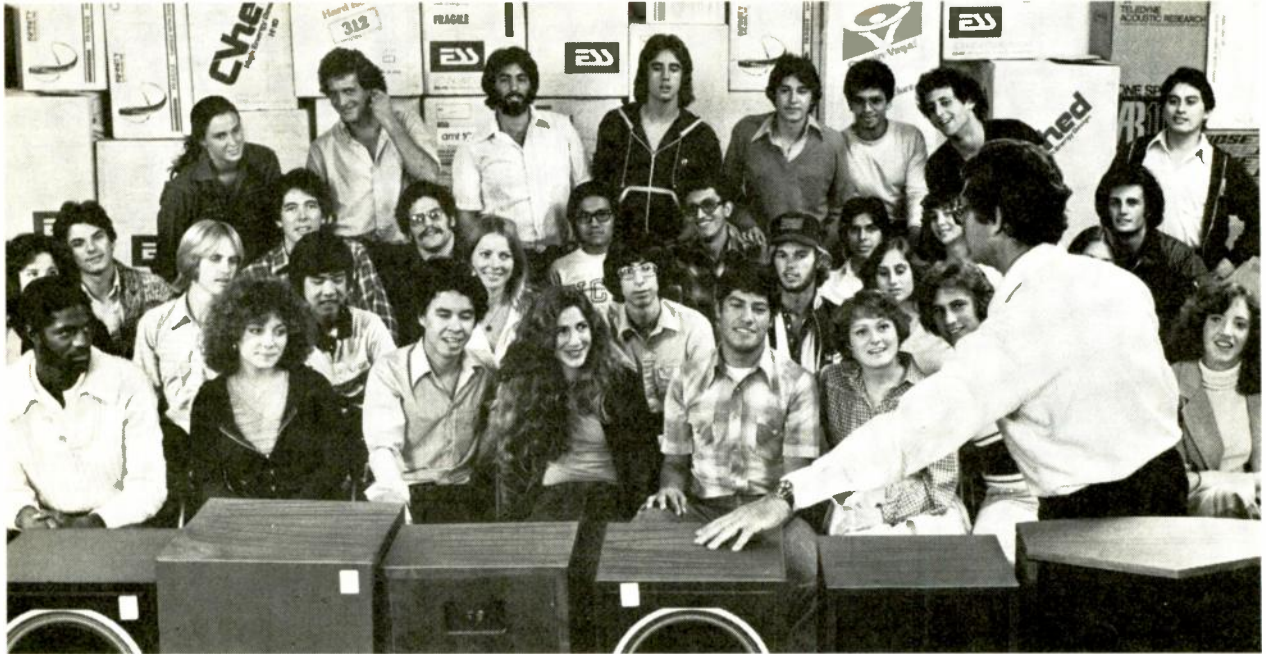
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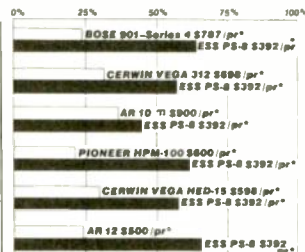


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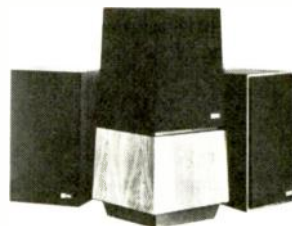
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*Twilley—can he make it without Seymour?*

Continued from page 129

This is an album of fits and starts, eminently enjoyable for short stretches but frustratingly flawed at almost every turn. High gloss pop/rock of this caliber needs to be projected with clarity and force in order to be effective. Like a shiny new toy without batteries, Twilley has all the right parts but, unfortunately, remains inert. G.K.

## JAZZ

**The Carla Bley Band: *Musique Mecanique*.** Carla Bley, producer. *Watt 9, \$7.98 (New Music Distribution Service, 6 W. 95th St., New York, N. Y. 10025).*

Carla Bley is developing into one of the most interesting, individualistic, and communicative composers in contemporary jazz. The rich textures of her voicings and her stimulating melodic flair suggest comparisons with Ellington; her

techniques with masses of sound are reminiscent of Charles Mingus. Despite its thorny qualities, her composing style is warm and accessible. This is particularly remarkable since it is derived from the '60s avant-garde school, which was anything but warm and accessible.

Like Ellington and Mingus, she uses her musicians as compositional building blocks. On "*Musique Mecanique*," the personalities of trombonist Roswell Rudd, tuba player Bob Stewart, trumpeter Mike Mantler, French horn player John Clark, and bassist Charlie Haden, are all given full sway. The three pieces here revel in her Ellington and Mingus roots and, with a strong dash of Kurt Weill, throb with her own characteristic dark, heavy, solidly oak-ribbed sound. On the twenty-three-minute title tune (which takes up an entire side), she uses offbeat techniques and rhythms—a limping, clubfooted gait, a stuck-needle effect, and a hoarse, shouted, repetitive narrative that Rudd sustains and builds incredibly. These are the hurdles she builds for herself: it is the slightly sour flavor she draws from them that brings Weill to mind.

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CIRCLE 21 ON PAGE 105



Carla Bley—a superb contemporary jazz composer

As he is in most group settings, Rudd is the dominant soloist—rasping, crooning, setting up a background for simpering saxophones on *Musique Mecanique*, or showing his confident, masterly use of a plunger mute. Stewart also stands out, creating a powerful, rich, urgent bottom, and the sense of awe that he and Rudd establish is astringently counterbalanced by Gary Windo's sharp tone on tenor saxophone.

J.S.W.

**Crystal Rainbows: The Sounds of Harmonious Craft.** Jim Harmon & William Penn, producers. *Sounds Reasonable SR 7801*, \$8.98 (*Sounds Reasonable, Inc.*, 2000 P St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20036). *Tape: SR 7801D*, \$7.98.

The instruments featured on this recording are from a 1978 Smithsonian Institution exhibit of "unique and esoteric American handcrafted musical instruments," including cloud chamber bowls, music by the inch, electronic jawbone, "sansa" finger piano, bicentennial turkey tambourine, and single-string stainless steel cello. Composer William Penn, who was commissioned by Sounds Reasonable to create a group of pieces for them, has done a fine job of showcasing some startling new sounds, supplementing them with the more traditional Fender bass, piano, and Arpsynthesizer.

In order to increase the instruments' dynamic ranges, he has used a number of modern studio techniques, including both electronic and spring echo for tonality modification, parametric equalization, electronic pitch change, and phase reversal. Most of the sheer melodic content, as well as some of the more pop-sounding textures, are provided by the traditional instruments. It is

during these moments that Penn's contributions are the least noteworthy, for the music tends to drift uncomfortably close to that of Deep Purple or Yes.

By any definition, the stars of "Crystal Rainbows" are the instruments. I was especially entranced by the single-string stainless steel cello (apparently an enormous, hanging sheet of steel), whose sound can best be described as richly overwhelming—almost too much so for my playback system. Fascinating, too, are the eerie, time-remembered sounds



Penn and the steel cello

of the glass harmonica (is this, I wonder, the same glass harmonica once composed for by Mozart?), the hanging tones of the cloud chamber bowls, the surprisingly funky twangs of the jaw harp, and the gentle, lilting arpeggios of the Appalachian Dulcimer. D.H.

**David Friesen, John Stowell: Through the Listening Glass.** David Friesen, producer. *Inner City IC 1061, \$7.98.*

Like the classical string quartet, the jazz duo—regardless of its instrumental makeup—is an ultimate test both of talent and personality. In this rigidly demanding setting, which allows no room for shucking and jiving or for the tedious verbosity of a monologue, the best jazz musicians examine the very root elements of the improvisational art. I can't think of two young players better equipped for such a challenge than David Friesen and John Stowell.

Friesen is one of jazz's premiere bassists. Stowell is less well known, but on the basis of his work on "Through the Listening Glass," he deserves a place among the ranks of such adventurous young guitarists as John Abercrombie, Pat Metheny, and Michael Gregory Jackson. My major complaint is that the duo has chosen to hedge their performances somewhat here by overdubbing such miscellaneous instruments as shakuhachi flute, assorted percussion, and, occasionally, saxophone (played by Gary Campbell). Only one track, *Autumn Ballet*, is pure guitar and bass, and it is brilliant. Though the others—*Tabla/Eternal Friend*, *Carousel Parade*, *Secret Moments of Silence*—display Friesen's and Stowell's facility with percussion instruments, too often the effect is simply icing on an already rich cake.

But this is a minor carp. At the core of "Through the Listening Glass" is an interplay in the true tradition of great jazz duos. They are welcome voices. D.H.

**Charles Mingus: Me, Myself an Eye.** Ilhan Mimaroglu & Raymond Silva, producers. *Atlantic SD 8803, \$7.98. Tape: ●● CS 8803, ●● TP 8803, \$7.98.*

Though he spent his last year locked in a wheelchair, Charles Mingus' stormy life drew to a close with appropriate flamboyance. For instance, at his last public appearance last June at the White House jazz festival, President Carter rushed over to hug him.

"Me, Myself an Eye," recorded in January, 1978, is an equally apt last vinyl flourish and worthy summation of his work: blues, ballad, gospel, old Mingus, new Mingus, and a thirty-minute monster production called *Three Worlds of Drums*. Played by a twenty-five-piece orchestra, it is a sprawling mixture of muscular rhythmic momentum, driving solos, and ensemble shouts and exclamations. Like a lot of his work, it is sometimes excessive and, depending on one's tolerance for drum solos, could have been cut by a third or even a half. Yet, typically, after it opens with a deep bow to Duke Ellington (a mixture of the solidity of the Duke's ensembles with echoes of the brassy cries of *Harlem*), it takes off with such headlong velocity that even the lesser soloists are swept along on the roaring crest. Getting its stimulus from Mingus, the full ensemble nips at the heels of the soloists, urging on the high, crying trumpet of Jack Walrath, the flamenco-colored bass of George Mraz, and the sustained dancing of bassist Eddie Gomez.

Continued on page 138



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# Folios

## Music in Print

Perhaps I'm mellowing out, but it does seem as if publishers and their music editors have quietly abandoned the practice of transcribing contemporary songs note-for-note from their most recent recorded interpretations. A studio player neither needs nor uses these nit-picking embellishments, and the home musician is likewise deterred by such extraneous doodads as sixteenth-note, back-phrased syncopations. Without reducing us to the level of "Teaching Little Fingers to Play," this month's piano-vocals require much less coordination of fingers and vocal cords and are consequently much more enjoyable for all concerned.

**Harry Chapin: Living Room Suite.**  
 WBP, 9 songs, \$6.95.

In Harry Chapin's house, we are all welcome. In the pages of his stunning new song package, he introduces us (via the photographs of Reid Miles and Ruth Bernal) to his children, his cat, and his Grandma Abby. Then he unfolds his life philosophy: "What makes you think emotions are something that you hide? ... If you don't feel, you'll never cry/ And if you don't cry, then you'll never heal" (*If You Want to Feel*). In support of that philosophy, he offers us music and lyrics of hope, amelioration, and humanity. It's a refreshing visit, indeed.

**(The New York Times) Great Songs of the '70s.** Times Books, 81 songs, \$19.95.

This is an important book (note the important price) and a worthy companion to the same publisher's "Great Songs of the '60s." Inasmuch as the '70s are only in the ninth round and not yet eligible for embalming, editor Milt Okun's culling of the decade's outstanding songs might seem slightly premature. However, the standards by which he assesses the worth of the included material (as stated in his introduction) cannot be faulted: "We call great those songs that are accessible to the nonprofessional and to the untrained music lover. ... those that are playable by a pianist, a guitarist, ... or nearly anyone. ... that can be sung by the untrained voice. ... The great songs last because people do use them." Hence the inclusion of such tunes as *I Write the Songs*, *Torn Between Two Lovers*, *Fifty Ways to Leave Your Lover*, and *Maggie May*. Bravo, Milt Okun, for separating the shoddy from the shining.



Chapin—a gracious host

**Loretta Lynn Song Book, Big 3, 19**  
 songs, \$5.95.

Ms. Lynn has never been considered a militant feminist, but she is certainly outspoken about the position of women in what is still a "macho, macho" man's world. From cradle to coffin, from the *Coal Miner's Daughter* to the middle-aged mother who used to wonder where babies came from and now wonders *Where Do Babies Go*, the lady's music explodes with feeling. Her tear-filled throat forbids her man to come home a-drinkin' with lovin' on his mind, proclaims that she's throwin' away her old maternity dress now that she's got *The Pill*, and remorsefully confesses that another man loved her last night.

I would not challenge the inclusion of any of these songs; I'm sure they were selected solely on the basis of merit. (Ms. Lynn's recordings sell in the millions.) But it's interesting that at this stage of her professional life Lynn's most eloquent writers are women.

**100 Peaceful Easy Feeling Songs.** WBP, 100 songs, \$7.95.

If you want to know who's in the LP firmament, just glance through this latest catchall collection. The platinum plutocrats include America, Cat Stevens, Fleetwood Mac, the Beatles, Neil Young, Van Morrison, the Eagles, and more—no lightweights, these. Although some of the songs may be older than you are (1960's *What Now, My Love*, '56's *It Only Hurts for a Little While*), there is a

smashing new piano-vocal setting of *Nature Boy* that belies its 1948 copyright notice. The 383 pages of this splendid folio guarantee at least six hours of peaceful feelings. And in these unsettled times, that's a bargain.

**Bad, Bad Leroy Brown: Jim Croce's Greatest Character Songs. Big 3, 14 songs. \$5.95.**

**Barry Manilow: Greatest Hits. Kamikazi and Big 3, 19 songs. \$7.95.**

**The Steve Miller Band: Greatest Hits 1974-78, WBP, 13 songs. \$7.95.**

**Barbra Streisand's Greatest Hits, Vol. 2. Big 3, 9 songs. \$5.95.**

**James Taylor: Greatest Hits. WBP, 12 songs. \$7.95**

Coupling the term "greatest hits" with the name of a superstar is a clever sales device and enables publishers to squeeze yet another few miles out of some well-worn retreads. Four such retrospectives have been placed on the racks this month, and if you want to trace the career development of Croce, Manilow, Miller, Streisand, or Taylor, you may want to buy one. Provided that you have not already purchased these songs in earlier incarnations, all are worthwhile. For my money, Manilow's is the dressiest and the slickest, and credit is due to its arranger—Mr. Manilow himself.

"Jim Croce's Greatest Character Songs" is exactly what it claims to be: Croce's impish humor revisited in simplified piano-vocals. It's a well-chosen reminiscence of a fine artist.

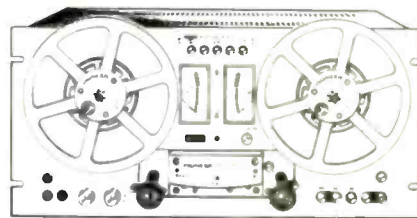
**MacArthur Park, Le Freak and More Great Disco. WBP, 15 songs. \$4.95.**

Question: Why is the mating call of an Alaskan moose like the latest disco hit? Answer: Because both fulfill a meaningful sociological function. But, Mr. Music Publisher, nobody ever got rich by notating the *sound*. As disco has all but wiped out the ballad-makers, so it will wipe out the gather 'round the old piano sing-along set. It just ain't that kinda music. This slim folio contains fifteen of the more melodic offerings of the genre, and the equally slim price is perhaps indicative of the publisher's insecurity about sales potential. If you can live with incorrect sentence structure and are not paralyzed by the sight of sixteenth notes massed for attack, you may make out fairly well.

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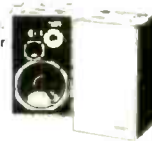


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Mingus—a worthy summation

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Ellington comes in again on *Wednesday Night Prayer Meeting*, a 1959 piece that points up the difference between the Duke's elegant church music and the earthy, gutty Mingus church. *Devil Woman*, originally recorded in 1961, is an ensemble performance that is strong and vital enough to overcome routine solos by Larry Coryell and Mike and Randy Brecker. The weakest piece in the set is the ballad, *Carolyn "Keki" Mingus*, a lovely melody that is given a positive, singing statement by Lee Konitz but eludes Coryell and Mike Brecker. J.S.W.

**Joe Turner: Effervescent.** Disques Black and Blue, producers. *Classic Jazz CJ 138*, \$7.98.

In this era of Fats Waller rediscovery (initiated by the success of Broadway's *Ain't Misbehavin'*) it must be hard for someone who has been playing in the Waller vein all his life to make a non-Waller record. But Joe Turner, a Waller contemporary in Harlem in the '20s, has done just that (though the record was made in 1976, prior to the revival).

Turner's application of the stride style is diverse enough to fit with ease into such varied tunes as *I Wanna Be Around*, *Tin Tin Deo*, and *Body and Soul*, none of which is normally associated with stride. In a more traditional vein, there is a bow to Willie the Lion Smith in *Echoes of Spring*, *Effervescent*, a rarely heard Waller original that probably never has been recorded before (it is Fats' approach to the impressionist style that the Lion used on *Echoes*), and several vocals. Of the last, the best is *Sweet Lorraine*, on which Turner sings in the full open style of pre-microphone days.

There are, inevitably, echoes of Waller ricocheting all through this disc. But Turner is never overwhelmed by them and shows he has listened to any number of other sources. *Ain't She Sweet* has a crisp, upright Lunceford attack, and *St. Louis Blues* suddenly recalls Earl Hines's boogie-woogie. The Turner idiom is rhythmic, melodic, and happy, exemplified by *Lazy River*, which has never sounded less lazy, and Benny Carter's *Blues in My Heart*, a bright, brisk, positive interpretation that gets down into a deep, swinging groove. J.S.W.



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