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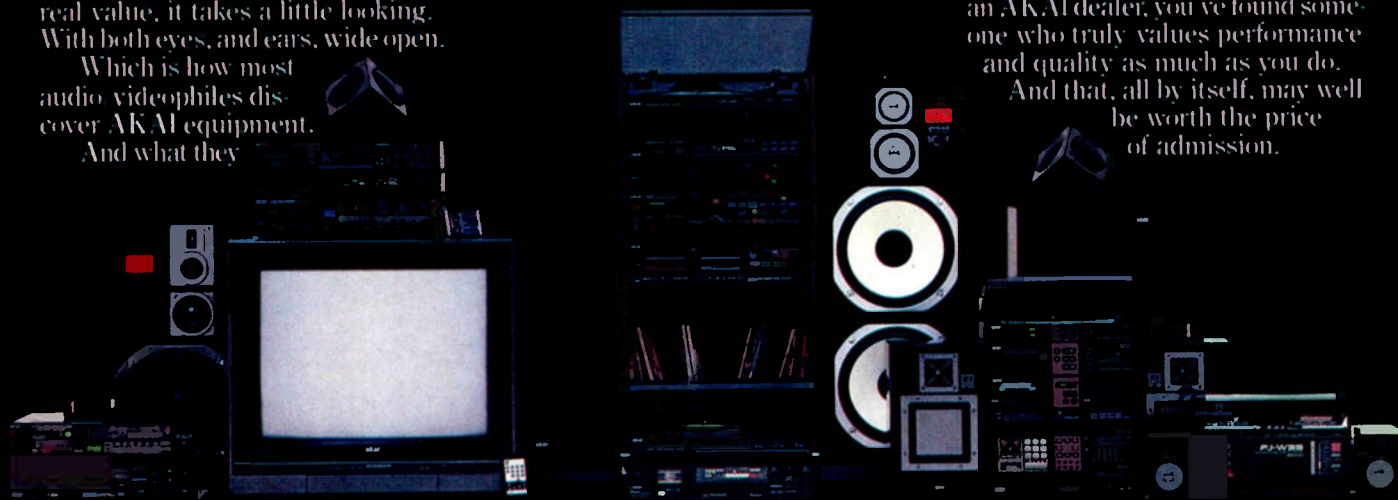
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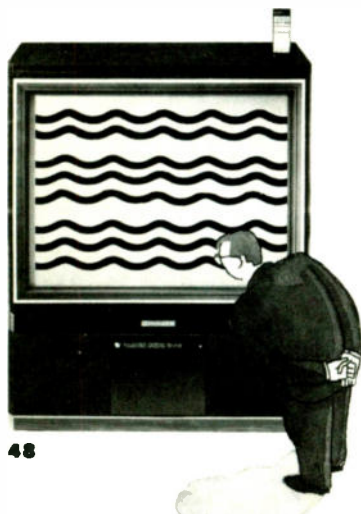
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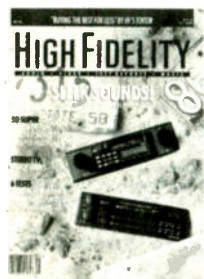
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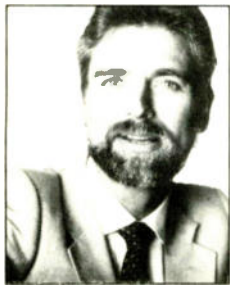
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LOOKING FOR NUMBER ONES

SEVERAL MONTHS AGO, AS EDITOR MICHAEL RIGGS, TECHNICAL Editor David Ranada, and I were planning our coverage of new components, we realized that we rarely look back and bring into perspective all the various products we report on throughout a model year, taking special note of those that in some way have been outstanding. For nearly 20 years, the magazine has done just that with classical recordings, presenting the annual HIGH FIDELITY/International Record Critics Awards. The answer was obvious, and therefore we inaugurate in this, HF's 35th anniversary year, the HIGH FIDELITY Product of the Year Awards.

What will these awards honor? How many will there be? Who will pick the winners? Some answers. Our goal is to recognize those audio, video, audio-video, and car stereo products that are significant in design, technology, value, and other important areas. Each product will be evaluated on its own merits, and thus there will be no set categories, such as "Receiver of the Year." Nor will there be a set number of awards. All components released during a model year (September through August) are eligible. The awards panel includes HIGH FIDELITY's editors and several well-known industry experts. Beginning this month, many of the products we feel are contenders will appear in a featured section of "Currents," though the finalists will not be limited to these. Winners—and all contenders—will be announced in December.

Sure to be among this year's finalists are some of the exciting new car-stereo components covered in this issue. "Autophile" columnist Jay C. Taylor attended the recent Winter Consumer Electronics Show, and in "The '86 Model Year" he reports on the latest gear and notes the increasing interest in high-end products. Complementing this coverage are road/lab tests on two front ends that typify car stereo's new high-tech look.

Elsewhere in these pages is the first installment of "Tape Tracks," a monthly column on audio and video tape and taping by Consulting Technical Editor Robert Long, who has written about the subject for almost 20 years. Also appearing are "Five Steps to Better Buying" in Michael Riggs's "Basically Speaking" column; "Stereo TV Questions and Answers," the second of two articles by DBX's vice-president of engineering Leslie B. Tyler on how the new broadcast technology works; and profiles of Dutch conductor Bernard Haitink and jazz singer Abbey Lincoln. ■

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SOVIET PROPAGANDA?

I READ WITH INTEREST JOEL W. SPIEGELMAN'S "The Czar of Soviet Music" [March]. As is usual with such articles, it sounds like propaganda. I was surprised that HIGH FIDELITY, with its commitment to "true" sound, would print such a story without an answer—and that Mr. Spiegelman, for all his apparent interest in and knowledge of Soviet music, would let himself be taken in by Tikhon Krennikov's statements. However, I do realize that Mr. Spiegelman was probably thinking more about the Soviet-American music festival and symposium he is trying to establish than about truth.

I have not read Solomon Volkov's book [*Testimony: The Memoirs of Dmitri Shostakovich*], but I have read Galina Vishnevskaya's autobiography, *Galina*, in which she spends a lot of time describing the state of the musician in Soviet society. What Shostakovich revealed to friends with whom he apparently enjoyed a close relationship and what he revealed *in public* to a society controlled by self-seeking individuals who are committed to mediocrity are (had to be?) two different things. To rely on Shostakovich's public statements without understanding the circumstances under which he spoke is to ig-

nore the probable truth. To shed some light on those circumstances, I recommend *Galina*, as well as the chapters on Vladimir Ashkenazy and Mstislav Rostropovich in Helena Matheopoulos's book *Maestro*.

With the Soviet system's past practice of rewriting history to suit its purposes (witness the current campaign against Leonid Brezhnev), the protestations of innocence regarding the persecution of leading Soviet composers are certainly suspect, if not outright lies. What is even more tragic is that Khrennikov probably believes what he said. (An interesting question to have asked him would have been about the dearth of contemporary Soviet composers of the stature of Shostakovich or Prokofiev. Perhaps the system has finally "won.") I appreciated the interview, if only because it so revealed the duplicity or ignorance of Khrennikov and the gullibility of Mr. Spiegelman. Please don't let this letter stop you from publishing other interviews—but please conduct those interviews with your eyes open.

James S. Lowery
Crystal Lake, Ill.

JOEL W. SPIEGELMAN'S INTERVIEW WITH TIKHON KHRENNIKOV LEAVES OUT MORE INFOR-

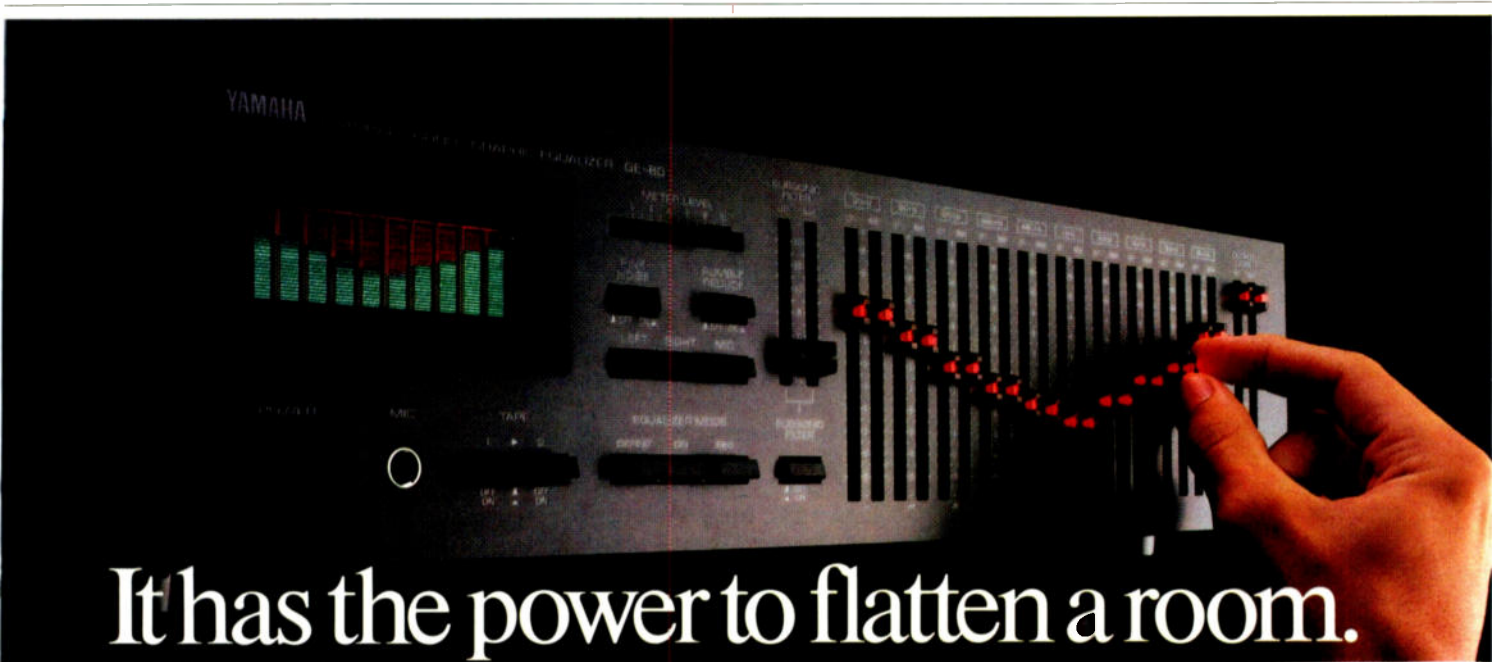
mation than it actually gives regarding the infamous censoring of both Shostakovich and Prokofiev. Khrennikov would have us believe that the only source of information on those censures is Solomon Volkov's book. Such a distortion of known facts is reprehensible. This particular case was well known for more than 30 years before Volkov's book was even published.

Here we have a classic situation of bureaucracy over art. The scenario and procedures are as simple as they are deadly:

1. Soviet bureaucrats who oversee "the arts" and "culture," and who know nothing of either, decide that certain composers are at odds with their brand of ideology.

2. To deal with the situation (and to gain some measure of credibility and respectability), the bureaucrats reorganize the Union of Soviet Composers and install Khrennikov as its chairman, who acts as "spokesman" and publicly (with the proper outrage) censures the objects of the bureaucrats' wrath.

3. The disgraced artists—if they know what's good for them—publicly sign the "official" form attesting to their guilt and, upon beating their breasts and vowing future cooperation with the party line, are welcomed (CONTINUED ON PAGE 7)



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(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5)
back into the fold.

That men of the stature of Shostakovich and Prokofiev were humiliated in this manner—and that the man most responsible should make statements like “Why should I put [Shostakovich] down when I revered him just like I revered Prokofiev, who was a god to me?”—is hypocrisy of the lowest level. Sorry, Mr. K., but it won't wash.

Kenneth H. Wise
Goleta, Calif.

Classical Music Editor Theodore W. Libbey, Jr., replies: If we were to pronounce editorially upon comments given in an interview, we would be doing much the same thing Messrs. Lowery and Wise accuse Tikhon Khrennikov of doing: committing a form of censorship. It is not our policy to prevent an individual, regardless of what he has said before and of the historical context in which he said it, from giving his side of a story. Mr. Lowery's observation about past public statements and their sometimes distant relationship to the truth can be applied in Khrennikov's case as well as in Shostakovich's. Bear in mind, too, that it was not our intent to merely examine the record on Khrennikov or repeat the accusations against him, but to add to the record—

to question him and report what he said.

What distinguished Joel W. Spiegelman's interview from the sort of exposé Messrs. Lowery and Wise seem to have wanted was that he put his preconceptions (valid or not) aside and let Khrennikov do the talking. We think most of our readers are able to read between the lines—as both of these letter writers did—and reach their own conclusions.

By the way, contributing editor Paul Moor has asked to offer a response to Khrennikov's remarks. That response will appear in a forthcoming issue.

ALL ABOUT CD

LET ME SAY RIGHT OFF THAT I DON'T DOUBT the general superiority of the Compact Disc over the current standard of the LP. But I also think that the CD has a long way to go before we see the total demise of the LP.

This is evidenced by my recent purchase of the LP version of Kip Hanrahan and Jack Bruce's *Desire Develops an Edge* [American Clavé 1008/9; distributed by New Music Distribution Service]. The vinyl is so quiet, the separation and production so lush and believable, that it makes even my mediocre stylus and loudspeakers sound like music. This is in marked contrast to most current LPs, which even the best match of stylus and speaker could hardly bring to life.

I think herein lies the argument for a continued future for the LP. As more and more major titles are offered solely on Compact Disc, the current glut of records on cheap-vinyl will fall by the wayside, allowing small labels who have neither the finances nor the access to CD production to offer their music on high-grade vinyl at very competitive prices. In this way, the CD, rather than burying the LP, will actually liberate it, allowing it to become the exciting, unpredictable, eclectic, and high-quality medium it can be.

Dennis Darrah
Montpelier, Vt.

WILLIAM TYNAN'S "COMPACT DISC IS KING" ["Editor's Page," October 1985] makes most interesting reading. I agree wholeheartedly with his sentiments that the CD is the medium of today.

The original detractors of the Compact Disc—who, incidentally, caused a lot of harm—were those manufacturers, distributors, or retailers who did not have their own CD player to sell. It was, to a large extent, sour grapes. These people certainly have come around to the current way of thinking.

Our company distributes Telarc CDs, and we have been overwhelmed by the demand. Never mind the strong dollar that has made their prices outrageous. Demand continues.

Errol J. Rink
Managing Director
J. B. Radio Parts (PTY), Ltd.
Johannesburg, South Africa

The last word in stereo-phones

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I RECENTLY PURCHASED A COMPACT DISC PLAYER, and I thoroughly enjoy it. I've been impressed with two particular discs but have yet to see a review on either one of them: the Glenn Miller Orchestra's *In the Digital Mood* [GRP-D 9502] and Papa Doo Run Run's *California Project* [Telarc CD 70501]. If you have not reviewed these . . . boy, are you in for a treat!

John Levin
Inglewood, Calif.

We're not familiar with the Miller, but we agree that California Project is impressive, with the group Papa Doo Run Run performing a collection of Beach Boy greatest hits, duplicating the original harmonies and instrumentation. However, we decided its being an excellent imitation doesn't justify it for review in a section that we like to think covers original music. Now if only someone could get the real Beach Boys to issue a comparable collection: This CD features every hit from "Surfin' U.S.A.," and "Fun, Fun, Fun" to "Wouldn't It Be Nice" and "Good Vibrations."—Ed.

Letters should be addressed to The Editor, 1160 FIVE AVENUE, 825 7th Ave., New York, N.Y. 10019. All letters are subject to editing for brevity and clarity.

The last word in phono cartridges

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Unusual Features in Magnavox CD Player

The editors have selected this product as being one of special interest. As such, it is also a contender for IIF's Product of the Year Awards. (See "Front Lines," page 2.)

IT'S BECOMING RARE FOR ANY NEW COMPACT Disc player to represent an advance in basic disc-playing performance, and rarer still for one to incorporate a truly innovative convenience feature. The drawer-loading Magnavox CDB-650, according to the preliminary information we have received, does both.

The outstanding attribute of the CDB-650's operation is its 785-selection FTS (favorite track selection) memory. That capacity should be the tip-off that this is far from being a mere extension of the programmable playback systems on many players, as a single CD can hold a maximum of "only" 99 tracks. The CDB-650 memorizes both the selected tracks and the disc catalog number (which is also encoded on a CD) and stores them in a nonvolatile circuit "for onetime lifetime programming." Put in the disc years later and you can call up the same programmed sequence. Turning the power off does not erase the memory. A conventional 20-selection single-disc volatile memory is also provided, but like the cueing and FTS systems it has the same unusual flexibility in what it considers a selection: a complete track, an index point, or a time period. Programming is via the internal numerical keypad or the supplied infrared remote control. Available repeat modes are entire disc, programmed sequence, and user-defined segment.

Other convenience features include a

three-speed scan control (with audible program at the two lower rates), selectable four-second record-pause insertion for tape-scanning cassette decks, antijamming protection that rejects improperly inserted discs, a headphone jack with volume control, and a direct digital output for connection to future signal-processing components.

Perhaps the outstanding audio feature of the CDB-650 is its use of new Philips CD-decoding chips. These devices offer improved error-detection-and-correction capabilities over previous Magnavox chips and the ability to smoothly interpolate over eight consecutive defective samples (as opposed to only one in almost every other player). Transformation of the digital signal to audio is accomplished by four-times oversampling digital filters and two full 16-bit digital-to-analog converters. The outputs are not multiplexed, nor is there any time skew between channels. The player also has a separate analog-filtered output, making it the only unit offering a choice of filter technology. Phase linearity of the analog output filter is said to be uniform to within 1 degree. Frequency response is given as ± 0.3 dB, 2 Hz to 20 kHz. Signal-to-noise ratio is claimed to be greater than 100 dB, separation better than 94 dB at 1 kHz. Total harmonic distortion is stated as less than 0.002 percent at 1 kHz, while ultrasonic rejection is greater than 60 dB.

The enclosure is available in black or silver finishes and measures 16½ by 3¾ by 11¾ inches. Price is \$430. For more information, write to Magnavox/N.A.P. Consumer Electronics Corp., I-40 and Straw Plains Pike, Knoxville, Tenn. 37914-1810.

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- FLORIDA Altamonte Springs: Audio Spectrum • Boca Raton: Capl Video • Clearwater: Pyramid Audio • Daytona Beach: Stereo Lab • Ft. Lauderdale: Capl Video • Ft. Myers: Stereo Garage • Ft. Pierce: Sound Shack • Ft. Walton Beach: Audio International • Jacksonville: Audio Tech • Lakewood: Sound Shack • Miami Island: Southern Audio • Miami: Audio By Caruso Capl Video • Sympathetic Ear • Naples: Stereo Garage • Orange Park: Audio Tech • Orlando: Audio Spectrum • Panama City: Fidler Hi-Fi • Tallahassee: Stereo Store • Tampa: Audio Vision • W. Palm Beach: Electronic Connection
- GEORGIA Atlanta: Stereo Village • Augusta: Stereo City • Dalton: Stereo Village • Morrow: Stereo Village • Savannah: Audio Warehouse • Smyrna: Stereo Village • Tucker: Stereo Village
- HAWAII Honolulu: Stereo Station
- IDAHO Boise: Stereo Shoppe • Pocatello: Stokes Brothers • Shoshone: Electric Art • Twin Falls: Audio Warehouse
- ILLINOIS Aurora: Stereo Systems • Bloomington: Alan's Creative Stereo • Buffalo Grove: Columbia Audio Video • Champaign: Alan's Creative Stereo • DeKalb: Audio Pro • Hoffman Estates: Simply Stereo • Highland Park: Columbia Audio Video • Lansing: Audio Clinic • Mt. Prospect: Simply Stereo • Normal: Alan's Creative Stereo • Northbrook: Alan's Creative Stereo • Palmdale: Team Electronics • Riverdale: Stereo Designs • Rockford: Columbia Audio Video • Schaumburg: Alan's Creative Stereo • H. H. Huich • Springfield: Sundown One • Sterling: Midwest Hi-Fi • Vernon Hills: Alan's Creative Stereo • Villa Park: H. H. Huich • Waukegan: Alan's Creative Stereo
- INDIANA Bloomington: Hooser Electronics • Bluffton: Key TV & Stereo • Greenwood: Hi-Fi Buys • Indianapolis: Hi-Fi Buys • Lafayette: Hi-Fi Buys • Muncie: Hi-Fi Buys • South Bend: Classic Stereo • Terre Haute: Hooser Electronics
- KANSAS Des Moines: Audio Labs • Fairlie: Golden Ear Audio Video • Brentz City: Audio Emporium
- KANSAS Emporia: Nelsons • Junction City: Audio Emporium • Overland Park: Audio Electronics • Wichita: Audio Visions
- KENTUCKY Lexington: Stereo Shoppe • Louisville: Hi-Fi Buys • Owensboro: FM Hi-Fi
- LOUISIANA Baton Rouge: Stereo Village • Gretna: Stereo Village • Lafayette: Sound Electronics • Metairie: Stereo Village • New Orleans: Stereo Village • Opelousas: Sound Electronics • Shreveport: Aud of Fidelity • West Monroe: Audio West
- MAINE Bangor: Sound Source • Camden: Harbor Video
- MARYLAND Annapolis: Sparkey • Sound • Baltimore: Soundscape • Frederick: Leary • Audio • Pikesville: Myer Empo
- MASSACHUSETTS Gloucester: Glass Sailboat • N. Dartmouth: Creative Sound Systems • Waltham (Boston): Waltham Camera & Stereo • Worcester: O Connors
- MICHIGAN Ann Arbor: Absolute Sound • Birmingham: Almas Hi-Fi • Dearborn: Almas Hi-Fi • East Lansing: Stereo Shoppe • Farmington Hills: Almas Hi-Fi • Grand Rapids: Sound Room • Iron Mountain: Sound North • Lansing: Stereo Shoppe • Portage: Sound Room • Royal Oak: Absolute Sound • Saginaw: Audio Shoppe • Court Street Listening Room • Traverse City: Stereo Shoppe
- MINNESOTA Brooklyn Center: Audio King • Burnsville: Audio King • Duluth: Meis TV & Audio • Eden: Audio King • Minnetonka: Sound World • Minneapolis: Audio King • Minnetonka: Audio King • Rochester: Sound World • Roseville: Audio King
- MISSISSIPPI Gulfport: Epress • Jackson: Marsh Audio • Passaicville: Epress
- MISSOURI Cape Girardeau: Stereo One • Columbia: D & M Sound • Lebanon: Sign 'N' Sound • St. Louis: Sound Central
- MONTANA Bozeman: Thirty Cal • Great Falls: Rocky Mountain Hi-Fi
- NEBRASKA Lincoln: Stereo West • Omaha: Stereo West
- NEVADA Las Vegas: Upper Ear • Reno: The Audio Authority
- NEW HAMPSHIRE Concord: Audio of New England • Lebanon: Audio of New England • New Lebanon: Norm Star Electronics • Salem: Quinones
- NEW JERSEY East Brunswick: Atlantic Stereo • Franklin Lakes: Franklin Lakes Stereo • Maple Shade: Bryn Mawr Stereo • Montclair: Parcus Radio • Raritan: AC Audio & Video • Ridgewood: Sounding Board • Silverbury: Monmouth Stereo • Teaneck: Rvar: Randa Camera • West Caldwell: Stereo Radio
- NEW MEXICO Albuquerque: Real Time Audio • Carlsbad: Beason's
- NEW YORK Albany: Clark Music • Batavia: Lantz • Columbia: Stereo Lab • Dayton: Carling • Chemung Electronics • Elmira: Chemung Electronics • Fredonia: Studio One • Glens Falls: Audio Genesis • Huntington: Audio Genesis • Hudson: Chemung Electronics • Jamestown: Studio One • Mohawick: Audio Broadthroughs • Newburgh: Randos Electronics • New York City: Hi-Fi • Rochester: Sound Shop • Rochester: JB Sound • Scarsdale: Listening Room • Syracuse: Clark Music • Vestal: Hart Electronics • Wappingers Falls: Perdue Radio
- NORTH CAROLINA Asheville: Mr. Load Stereo Video • Chapel Hill: Stereo Sound • Clarksville: Stereo Video • Greensboro: Stereo Video • Hendersonville: Hi-Fi Stereo • Hillsborough: Electronic • Pineville: Stereo Video • Raleigh: Audio Buys Stereo • Wilmington: Southeastern Electronics • Winston-Salem: Stereo Video
- NORTH DAKOTA Bismarck: Pacific Sound • Minot: Midwest Audio
- OHIO Cleveland: Audio Craft • Cincinnati: Stereo Lab • Columbus: Stereo Lab • Dayton: Micro Computer Center • Fairport: Audio Craft • Findlay: Audio Craft • Lima: Classic Stereo • Mayfield Heights: Audio Craft • Toledo: Audio Craft • Westlake: Audio Craft
- OKLAHOMA Lawton: Hi-Fi Shop • Tulsa: Audio Advice
- OREGON Beaverton: Stereo Superstore • Eugene: Stereo Superstore • Gresham: Klamath Falls: Sound Chamber • Pendleton: Royal Mobile Sound • Portland: Stereo Superstore
- PENNSYLVANIA Allentown: Bryn Mawr Stereo • Altoona: Stereo Superstore • Bloomsburg: Hart Electronics • Bryn Mawr: Bryn Mawr Stereo • Camp Hill: Bryn Mawr Stereo • Erie: Studio One • Fraser: Bryn Mawr Stereo • Harrisburg: Bryn Mawr Stereo • Kingstree: Hart Electronics • Lancaster: G N T Stereo • Montgomeryville: Bryn Mawr Stereo • Norristown Heights: Stereo Lab • Philadelphia: Bryn Mawr Stereo • Pittsburgh: Audio Junction • Quakertown: Bryn Mawr Stereo • Reading: G N T Stereo • Red Bank: Stereo Shop • Williamsport: Robert M. Sides • Winchester: Pro Audio
- RHODE ISLAND N. Providence: Eastern Audio
- SOUTH CAROLINA Charleston: Audio Warehouse • Columbia: Stereo Shop • Greenwood: Stereo Shop • Spartanburg: Stereo Shop
- SOUTH DAKOTA Rapid City: Team Electronics • Sioux Falls: Sound World
- TENNESSEE Chattanooga: Colege Hi-Fi • Cookeville: Nelson Entertainment • Knoxville: City: Mr. Load Stereo • Kingsport: Mr. Load Stereo Video • Knoxville: Lindsey Wa • McMillanville: Network Entertainment • Memphis: Opus II • Nashville: Sound Center • Jacksonville: King'sport
- TEXAS Austin: Audio Video • Beaumont: Brook Audio • College Station: Audio Video • Dallas: Arnold & Morgan • El Paso: Sound Quest • Galveston: Sound Audio • Garland: Arnold & Morgan • Houston: Sheffield Audio • Leagueville: Audio Techniques • Lubbock: Ultra Electronics • Odessa: Harold's Electronics • San Angelo: Walker Audio • Temple: Audio Tech • Texasboro: Sound Tunes • Waco: Audio Tech • Wichita Falls: Hamilton Bryan
- UTAH Large stereo only: Stokes Brothers • Salt Lake City: Broadway Music • Vernal: Dixie Labrum Co
- VERMONT Burlington: Audio Den • Whitehall: Sound Source • Woodstock: Stereo Video • Charlotteville: Sound Machine • Falls Church: Myer Empo • Franklin: Audio Showroom • Lebanon: Evergreen Audio • Richmond: Gans Stereo • Lindsey Wa • Roseland: Audio Electronics • Virginia Beach: Digital Sound
- WASHINGTON Bellevue: Northwest Audio Video • Bellingham: OC Stereo • Everett: Northwest Audio Video • Oak Harbor: OC Stereo Center • Richland: Tin Ear Stereo • Seattle: Definitive Audio • Northside Audio Video • Spokane: Electrical Hi-Fi • Wenatchee: Northwest Audio Video
- WEST VIRGINIA Barboursville: Ped P per • Beckley: Ped Piper • Huntington: Ped Piper • Morgantown: Sound Post • Piedmont Sound
- WISCONSIN Appleton: Sound World • Green Bay: Sound World • Lacrosse: Sound World • Madison: Nobby Medium • Marinette: Sound World • Milwaukee: Audio Emporium • Rhinelander: Audio Broker • Wausau: Sound World
- WYOMING Cheyenne: Team Electronics • Riverton: Sound Room



SDA 2
\$625.00 ea

SDA SRS
\$1395.00 ea

SDA 1A
\$875.00 ea

SDA CRS
\$395.00 ea

Digital Disc Ready

"The experts agree: Matthew Polk's revolutionary TRUE STEREO SDAs always sound dramatically better than conventional loudspeakers."

"The Genius of Matthew Polk Brings You the Breathtaking Sound of the SDAs"

Matthew Polk's critically acclaimed Audio Video Grand Prix Award-winning TRUE STEREO SDA Technology is the most important fundamental advance in loudspeaker technology since stereo itself. "They truly represent a breakthrough."

Rolling Stone Magazine

The SDAs' patented* design makes them the world's only true stereo speakers. A conventional mono speaker is designed to be heard by 2 ears at once while True Stereo loudspeakers should each be heard by only one ear apiece (like headphones) in order to preserve full stereo separation. Polk's revolutionary TRUE STEREO SDAs are the first speakers engineered to accomplish this and realize the astonishingly lifelike, three-dimensional imaging capabilities of stereo.

The Experts Agree:

"Breathtaking... a new world of hi-fi listening."
Stereo Buyers Guide

"Mindboggling powers of sonic persuasion."
High Fidelity Magazine

"Literally a new dimension in sound."
Stereo Review Magazine

"An amazing experience."

High Fidelity Magazine

Listeners are always amazed when they hear the huge, lifelike, high definition, three-dimensional sonic image produced by Polk's revolutionary TRUE STEREO SDA Loudspeakers. The nation's top audio experts agree that Polk SDA Loudspeakers always sound dramatically better than conventional loudspeakers. When you hear the dramatic difference you'll agree too.

*U.S. Patent Nos. 4,489,432 and 4,497,064. Other Patents Pending, U.S. and foreign.

Distributed in Canada by Evolution Technology, Toronto.

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← For your nearest Polk dealer see opposite page.

MTX ROAD THUNDER SPEAKERS



Feel the Thunder

- Thunderous Bass
- Install In Minutes
—without cutting holes

Simply place them vertically behind truck bench seats or lay them flat in the cargo area of vans and hatchbacks.

- Fit all Trucks, Vans
Hatchbacks, RVs

Install them with extra wire and you can easily use these rugged, durable speakers outside your vehicle at the park, ball games, tailgate parties, the beach, etc.

- Carpeted Enclosures

Heavy-duty carpeting can be dyed to match color of vehicle interior.

- Convenient Handles

- Exceptional 10-Year
Limited Warranty

ROAD THUNDER SPEAKERS
*for wherever
you like to hear great sound*

Road Thunder Speakers are portable and easy to place just where you want them. Such dynamic sound that people use them with their home stereo system.

MTX Road Thunder Speakers available at Sound Advice in Miami, FL; Mad Jack's in San Diego, CA; and Crazy Eddie's in New York, NY.

MTX Loudspeakers—a Mitek company
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Phone (815) 367-3811

a spectrum-analyzer and reverberation-time display, a built-in pink-noise generator, and a combination calibrated condenser microphone and remote control. There are no slide adjustments: The 24 frequency-band controls (12 per channel) are manipulated either from the remote or by using the supplied light pen to "draw" the curve directly on the face of the unit. Equalization may be set individually for each channel or simultaneously for both channels. EQ steps are normally 2 dB and are switchable into 1-dB increments for fine adjustment.

Five of the SE-99's EQ memories are preset "to enhance various types of recordings." Listed are contemporary, classical, rock/pop, tapes for car stereos, and tapes for players with headphones. Five other memories are user-defined, and the last is used to store the result of the unit's room-equalization process. In addition to automatic room EQ, the SE-99 can be switched to compensate for tape-deck frequency-response variations. Reverb time is calculated for each frequency band and can be stored.

Distortion for the unit is given as 0.003 percent, signal-to-noise ratio as 120 dB. Price is \$699. Details are available from Sansui Electronics Corp., 1250 Valley Brook Ave., Lyndhurst, N.J. 07071.

JVC'S ULTRA CAR RECEIVER

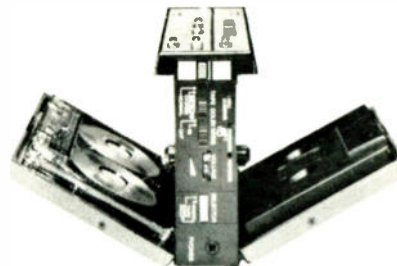


JVC'S TOP-OF-THE-LINE CAR RECEIVER/TAPE deck, the KS-RX710, offers a five-band graphic equalizer, an autoreverse cassette player with Dolby B, a digital-synthesis tuner, and an input for a Compact Disc player. The amplifier portion is rated at 25 watts "maximum power capability per channel." Twenty station presets are provided in the tuner section (fifteen for FM, five for AM). The CD-player terminals are on the rear of the unit. Other features include a digital frequency/clock display and line-level output terminals in addition to the front and rear speaker connectors. Price is \$440. For additional information, contact JVC Company of America, 41 Slater Dr., Elmwood Park, N.J. 07407.

PORTABLE DUAL DECK FROM PANASONIC

IN THEORY, AT LEAST, TAPE DUBS MADE ON Panasonic's RX-HD10 combination dual

cassette recorder and AM/FM radio will have very low wow and flutter. Because of the unit's single-motor drive system, the tape speeds of original (playback-only) and dubbing transports are the same. The dub-



bing deck has an autoreverse capability in the playback mode. A cassette-size tuner pack (included) slips into the playback-only deck; its output can be recorded on the dubbing transport. In playback, both transports have Dolby B noise reduction and switchable 70-microsecond tape equalization. The dubbing transport has a pause control, an automatic record-level control, and a one-touch recording feature. Headphones are included, but the two AA cells necessary are not. Dimensions are 5 by 3 by 1½ inches; weight is 10¼ ounces without batteries. The RX-HD10 costs \$200. Write Panasonic Co., 1 Panasonic Way, Secaucus, N.J. 07094.

EXPANDING CD CAPABILITIES

PHILIPS AND SONY, HOLDERS OF THE PRINCIPAL CD patents and controllers of all CD licensing, announced in February a standardization of yet another application of the Compact Disc. The new format, which seems to combine the technology of subcode graphics and the computer-data-storage capabilities of the CD-ROM, is called CD Interactive Media (CD-I). It "allows for full interactive use of the CD-ROM in . . . not only music . . . but also speech, natural still and animated pictures, graphics, computer programs, and computer data." This means that a single CD will be able to simultaneously hold audio, moving video, computer graphics, and computer data.

The audio comes in various grades, depending on how many channels are needed. Only one pair of full CD-fidelity audio channels is possible, but as many as 16 separate mono tracks of speech-grade sound can be stored. Horizontal video resolution has been set at 384 lines in normal mode and at 768 lines in high-resolution mode. The computer graphics can store as many as 32,768 colors, depending on which encoding method is used. Total capacity of a CD-I pressing is approximately 650 megabytes, each byte approximately equivalent in information to one printed character.

David Ranada



What other audio tapes fail to hear.

One audio tape is so sensitive it can hear a pin drop
Or the full crash of a cymbal.

To no one's surprise, it's made by Sony.

Designed with our widest dynamic range ever, the UCX-S can pick up the softest softs you've never heard.

Or the loudest louds.
Without distortion.*

And since we pack smaller, more uniform particles on our tape, you can pack more music in it.

And go from one extreme to the other.

So pick Sony. And hear what you've been missing.



SONY
THE ONE AND ONLY.®

The Pioneer® SD-P40 is not a projection television. It is a projection *monitor*. The first of its kind.

And in one masterstroke, all—not some, but *all*—of the compromises associated with projection television have been eliminated.

In fact, the SD-P40 is not merely far

For the first time, a true skin tone is achieved in the presence of a vivid green. At last, color compromise is eliminated.

The exceptional performance of the Pioneer SD-P40 is the result of several major technological advances developed by Pioneer engineers over the last 3 years.

PIONEER INTRODUCES THE WORLD'S FIRST PROJECTION MONITOR.

superior to *any* other conventional projection system, it is also superior to all but a few direct-view monitors.

450 LINES. AND THAT'S THE BEGINNING.

The horizontal resolution on the SD-P40 is more than 450 lines.

The brightness is more than 300 footlamberts. It is actually brighter than any direct-view system.

The contrast has a dynamic range more than twice that of conventional projection systems.

THE END OF BIG-SCREEN COMPROMISE.

Ambient light, one of the great problems in projection video, is no problem at all. In fact, there is less deterioration in contrast due to ambient light than in direct-view systems.

Focus, so much a problem in conventional projection systems, is sharp to the edges of the screen. Further, the picture is equally bright regardless of what angle you are viewing it from.

Blacks, so often grey on conventional systems, are rich while holding detail.

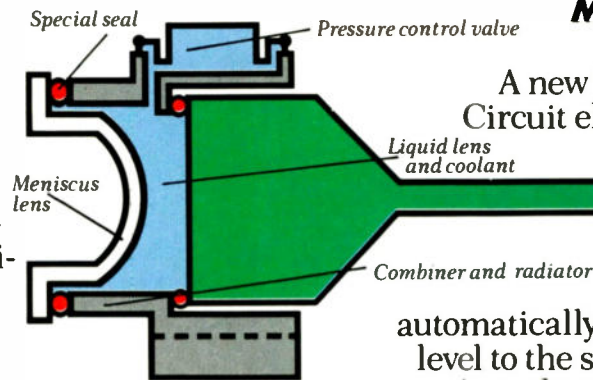
The fuzziness you're so used to seeing around white lettering and objects at high brightness, known as "blooming," is eliminated.

Color values are exceptionally accurate.

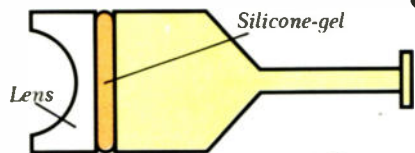
AN UNPARALLELED LENS. A REVOLUTIONARY LENS SYSTEM.

The lens itself is the largest projection lens ever developed for private use—with a maximum bore of 160 mm.

Perhaps even more significant is Pioneer's development of the world's first liquid-cooled optical-coupling system. Far superior to conventional silicone gel or air coupling systems, the "Liquid Lens" is clearly the most accurate, efficient projection lens system ever devised.



The "Liquid Lens" Technique.



Conventional Coupling Technique.

MAJOR ADVANCES IN CIRCUITRY.

A new High-Voltage Stabilizing Circuit eliminates anode voltage drop, preventing darkness in white areas and focus loss.

A new Black-Level Stabilizer Circuit automatically sets the optimum black level to the signal source.

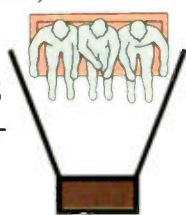
A newly created Dynamic Focus Circuit guarantees sharp focus to the edges of the screen. And new High-Focus CRTs utilize not one but three electron lenses. These, combined with a newly developed Linear Tracking Focus System, result in a focal performance superior to conventional CRTs.

THE HEART OF A SOPHISTICATED AUDIO/VIDEO SYSTEM.

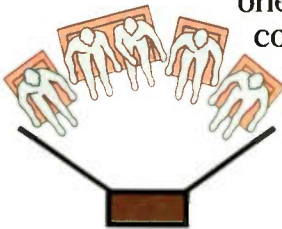
Inputs are provided for a LaserVision player

and two videocassette recorders, in addition to 139 cable-capable channels with 10-key direct access. There's an MTS decoder for stereo/SAP broadcasts, and a simulated-stereo processor. There's a built-in high-powered 12W + 12W amplifier, with two built-in 6⁵/₁₆-inch speakers. There's a monitor output, and a TV output. There's even a variable audio output that lets you control volume through your hi-fi system by remote control.

In fact, the entire system is controlled by



Conventional seating



Our seating

Finally, you can sit anywhere.

one 54-function System Remote control (which will also control Pioneer LaserDisc™ and VCRs bearing the SR symbol).

We could go on and on. Suffice it to say, all you have to do is see the Pioneer SD-P40 once, and you will suddenly understand the difference

between the world of projection televisions and the only projection monitor in the world.

 **PIONEER®**



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Absolutely not. There are certain areas in life where you can't skimp on quality.

That's why there's Maxell XLS tape. It's engineered to achieve a lower distortion and wider dynamic range. XLS frequency response extends to the widest possible limits, with greater sensitivity throughout the tonal range.

It helps capture the quality of sound your system was designed to deliver.

Use Maxell XLS for all your taping needs.

Because there's simply no substitute for quality.

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**WOULD YOU BUY
CHEAP PERFUME FOR
YOUR GIRLFRIEND?**



OLD MIXES IN NEW CDs

I READ THAT THERE IS HISS IN COMPACT DISCS that have been remastered from analog tapes because the noise was on the old master tapes and digital transfer retains all of the sound from the originals. Isn't this hiss actually part of the noise floor, and shouldn't this be eliminated in remastering?

Jim Chaney

Jonesboro, Ark.

No, the noise won't be eliminated. Every medium of transmission has its own dynamic range, extending between its inherent noise floor and its inherent overload ceiling, and the noise that a recording acquires from the medium remains with the signal whenever it's played back. For Dolby B cassettes, open-reel tapes without noise reduction, and run-of-the-mill LPs, dynamic range is approximately 60 dB. If you were to master a CD, whose inherent dynamic range is about 90 dB, from any of those media, the recording's dynamic range would remain only 60 dB. It's like pouring a pint of milk into a gallon pail: It remains only a pint no matter what the capacity of the container. On the other hand, if you try to record a signal of wide dynamic range to a medium with a smaller capacity (going, say, from CD to cassette), something will perform spill over and be lost.

DISPOSABLE PICKUPS?

ON AVERAGE, I NEED TO REPLACE STYLI IN MY cartridges every two years. Every time I go to the shop for a new one, they tell me I'm better off replacing the whole cartridge. Is this a sales pitch, or are they correct?

Dave Benz

Syracuse, N.Y.

It could be a little of both. Inexpensive replacement styli may not be as well made, particularly in their tip geometry and polish, as those available from the cartridge's manufacturer, which can cost a large fraction of a new pickup's price. The argument is that since it costs little more to buy a whole new cartridge, you might as well take the opportunity to upgrade to the latest technology. And if the cartridge body contains any materials designed to supply physical compliance and damping, they may become stiff with age, altering performance. In that case, replacing the cartridge periodically may be almost mandatory. Such materials usually are built into the stylus assembly rather than the body, however, and thus are renewed with the assembly (another reason for preferring original-manufacturer replacements). So if you're satisfied with the performance of your cartridges, there probably is no reason you should feel compelled to replace them instead of the styli.

12 VOLTS IN THE WILD

I HAVE A SMALL, ISOLATED PIECE OF LAND AND minimal power—a 12-volt battery system recharged by a solar panel with wind-power backup. I already have a color TV set and a shortwave receiver. Now I'd like to add an AM/FM radio with a cassette deck, and the logical choice seems to be a car radio. I want a digital frequency-synthesis receiver with scan and manual override for fine-tuning. And I'd like an AM section that will pull in weak stations from my shortwave antenna.

Duncan Cameron

Pasadena, Texas

You won't find the sort of fine-tuning you're used to from shortwave listening in any digital car radio we know of. If you need detuning for either AM or FM, you'll have to go with a traditional capacitor analog front end. The "muting" of weak stations in most car equipment is progressive—not the sharp on/off action of typical home receivers—so you can still recover borderline stations by turning up the volume. But the AM sections built into most shortwave receivers should prove more capable than typical car-stereo AM sections. All told, we wonder whether a multiband boom-box portable with a 12-volt adapter might not prove more appropriate to your needs than a car unit.

Discwasher® takes the tackies off your tape path.

For home and car.



Discwasher tape care products do away with tacky contaminants for the purest sound possible.

The Discwasher® Perfect Path™ Cassette Head Cleaner removes oxides and residues from all tape heads and the entire tape path. This unique dry cleaning system is gently effective and totally non-abrasive.

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tape jamming. And Discwasher® D'Mag™ eliminates magnetism problems that could erase portions of your tapes.

Discwasher, with a complete tape care system, is the technological leader in keeping your tapes and equipment in top form. Discwasher, 4309 Transworld Road, Schiller Park, IL 60176.

Find out what we can do for your record, compact disc and video equipment, too!

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For good, clean fun.

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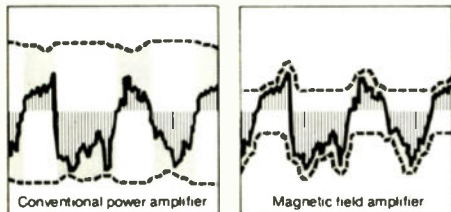


MOBILE MUSICALITY.

THE CARVER CAR AMPLIFIER introduces Magnetic Field Amplifier technology to automotive high fidelity. Finally, the traditional weak link between car stereo decks and modern speaker design has been replaced with Carver technology. Into 1/10th of a cubic foot, Bob Carver has engineered a complete 120 watts RMS per channel amplification system with the fidelity, accuracy and musicality demanded by the most critical reviewers and audiophiles.

ESSENTIAL POWER. Even before the exciting advent of car Compact Disc players, an abundance of power has been necessary to reproduce, without distortion, the frequency and dynamic range produced by modern decks.

Unfortunately, conventional amplifier technology is particularly unsuited to delivering this needed power to the specialized car interior environment. Like their home stereo counterparts, traditional car designs produce a constant high voltage level at all times, irrespective of the demands of the ever-changing audio signal—even those times when there is no audio signal at all! Because automotive amplifiers must, obviously, derive their power from the host vehicle, such an approach results in substantial drain to delicately balanced automobile electrical systems.



Solid line: audio output signal. Broken line: power supply voltage. Shaded area: wasted power. Vertical lines: power to speakers.

The Carver Magnetic Field Car Amplifier is signal responsive. Highly efficient, it produces only the exact amount of power needed to deliver each musical impulse with complete accuracy and fidelity. Thus the Carver Car Amplifier not only reduces overall long-term power demands, but produces the large amount of power necessary for reproduction of music at realistic listening levels without the need for oversize power supply components. Important considerations in the minuscule spaces which quality car design allocates to add-on electronics.

INTELLIGENT POWER. A hallmark of all Carver amplifiers is the careful integration of sophisticated speaker and amplifier protection circuitry. The Carver Car Amplifier is no exception.

Speakers are protected with a DC offset internal fault protection design which turns off the power supply at first hint of overload. An overcurrent detector mutes audio within microseconds of a short circuit, as does an output short circuit monitoring circuit. Together, these three circuits eliminate the potential need to replace fuses, revisit your autosound installer, or worse yet, replace expensive speakers due to a moment's indiscretion with your deck's volume control.

ASSIGNABLE POWER. Integrated bi-amplification and bridging circuits, along with The Carver Car Amplifier's compact configuration make it ideal for multiple-amplifier installations.

The built-in 18dB/octave electronic crossover allows use of two amplifiers in a pure bi-amplification mode without addition of extra electronics. Or, at the touch of a button, one Carver Car Amplifier can become a mono amplifier for subwoofers while the other Carver Amplifier handles full range. Or, for astonishing dynamic and frequency response, two Carver Car Amplifiers may be operated in mono mode into 8 ohms for a 240 watt per channel car system which will truly do justice to digital without taxing your car's electrical generation system.

INNOVATIVE POWER. Can 1/10th of a cubic foot of space hold yet more innovations? Yes.

Carver has addressed the ongoing problem of head-end/power amplifier level matching: Output of current car decks varies widely from brand to brand and model to model. The result can be a less than perfect match. The Carver Car Amplifier incorporates circuitry which compensates for variations in head-end output, reducing noise and optimizing signal-to-noise ratio. In addition, Carver has added a subsonic

filter which removes inaudible power-robbing infrasonics before they can tax the amplifier and speakers. Finally, a delayed turn-on circuit activates the Carver Car Amplifier after your head-end unit has powered up, to eliminate starting pops and thumps.

ACCURATE POWER. It goes almost without saying that a product Bob Carver designs for the road carries the same superb electronic specifications that his home audio products are known for.

The Carver Car Amplifier is flat from 20Hz to 20kHz, down -3dB at 16Hz and 30kHz. Not coincidentally, the usual specifications given for Compact Discs. A signal-to-noise ratio of over 100dB means that, in even the most quiet luxury sedan, you will never be annoyed by hiss. The other specifications are equally as impeccable. You may peruse them in our literature or in independent reviews soon to appear.

ACQUIRABLE POWER. The remarkable Carver Car Amplifier is currently available for audition at Carver dealers across the country.

It is worth the journey. Whether you have a car system in need of the sonic excitement possible with abundant power, or are in search of the perfect complement to a new high-performance automobile, you owe it to yourself to experience the logical extension of Carver technology—The Carver Car Amplifier M-240.

Power Output Stereo Mode: (continuous RMS power output per channel, both channels driven, at 13.8 VDC input). 120 W into 4 ohms, 20 Hz to 20 kHz with no more than 0.15% THD.

Power Output Bridged Mono Mode: (Referenced to 13.8 VDC input) 240 W into 8 ohms, 20 Hz to 20 kHz with no more than .15% THD

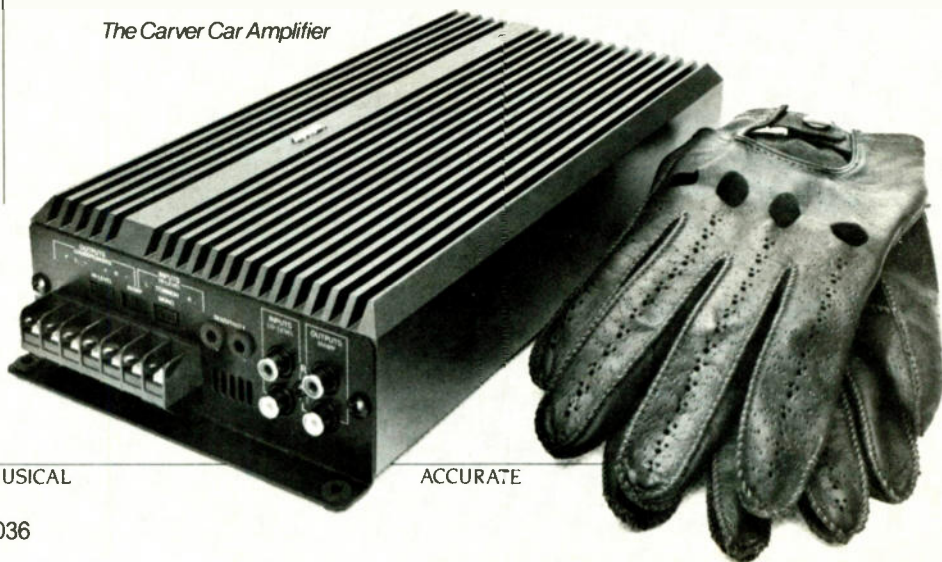
Input Sensitivity: Variable 250mV to 4V

Signal to Noise Ratio: (Referenced to 120 W. A weighted into 4 ohms) Greater than 100 db

Crossover: 115 Hz, 18 dB/octave

Weight: 4.7 lb.

The Carver Car Amplifier



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Carver Corporation, P.O. Box 1237, Lynnwood, WA 98036

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FIVE STEPS TO BETTER BUYING

MANY PEOPLE FACE THE PROSPECT OF SHOPPING FOR a new audio or video system with great anxiety. It can be a complicated decision, and the fear of making a costly mistake looms large. I, on the other hand, think the whole process can be enjoyable, so maybe it would be a good idea to look at some of the things that can be done to make that true for almost anyone.

1. WHAT DO YOU NEED?

THINK ABOUT WHAT YOU WANT YOUR SYSTEM TO DO. FOR example, if you have a lot of records, you almost certainly will want a turntable, even if you also get a Compact Disc player. Otherwise, you may prefer to buy just a CD player and forego vinyl altogether. The next step is to figure out what kinds of components you need to achieve your goals. Start by imagining the ideal configuration, then whittle it down to something that will fit into your budget.

2. SEPARATION VS. INTEGRATION

ONE OF THE KEY DECISIONS YOU HAVE TO MAKE IS HOW "integrated" your system should be. Your choices range from fully separate configurations (built around a preamplifier, power amplifier, and tuner) to all-in-one or rack systems. For most people, it's best to take a middle position, building around a receiver and two good speakers. That alone will serve for FM listening, usually at a lower price than an equivalent array of separates would fetch. You can then add other sources, like a turntable, CD player, or tape deck.

Each of the other approaches to system-building has its appeal as well, but one choice is not suitable for anyone who really cares about fine sound and the other usually is more costly. All-in-one systems are not an option I would expect anyone who reads this magazine regularly to entertain seriously. Many are padded with extra components to make them look like great values, but the result often is lower quality in each unit. This is particularly evident in the speakers, which are ordinarily quite bad in such setups. If you can get a rack system without speakers (not easy) or are willing to replace them with something good, purchase *might* be worth considering for the sake of the system remote control often provided.

The opposite extreme is to build a system around a separate preamp and power amp. Although in most cases this is more expensive than buying a receiver, it provides greater flexibility and sometimes better performance. If you are a serious audiophile, you probably will want such a setup eventually, no matter how you start out.

3. HOW MUCH AMPLIFIER POWER IS NECESSARY?

A PERENNIAL QUESTION, ANSWER: PROBABLY LESS THAN you think. Doubling your amplifier power does not get you twice the sound—just 3 dB more maximum volume, which is audible, but not dramatically so. To actually double your system's maximum perceived volume capability, you would need to increase its amplifier power by a factor of ten. There is some value in

having more power: The more there is available, the less likely the amplifier is to be driven into gross distortion. But eventually you hit a point of diminishing returns, which I would put, typically, at about 60 watts per channel. After that, you start paying heavily for relatively small benefits, unless your speakers are very inefficient, your living room is large and sound-absorbing, or you play a lot of very loud music.

4. BUYING THE RIGHT SPEAKER

THE SPEAKERS IN ANY HIGH FIDELITY SYSTEM WORTHY of the name have a much greater effect on its sound than any other component. Test reports can help, but ultimately it's up to your ears to pick the speaker that's right for you. This means going around to stores and listening. If possible, take a few records of your own—preferably ones that you're familiar with and that sound natural to you. They also should represent a variety of music, including (but not limited to) voice, strings, piano, and something to test deep-bass extension (pipe organ often is good for this). Compact Discs are the best source, but LPs will do. (Avoid cassettes, whose sound can vary radically from deck to deck if the alignments of the tape heads are not identical.) Seek a smooth, balanced sound. Thumping bass and glaring highs may seem exciting at first, but they quickly wear thin. On the other hand, the lows and highs should be there when called for.

Make sure that any A/B comparisons of speakers are conducted fairly. They should be at the same volume (louder tends to sound better in this sort of test), and the speakers should be placed where the manufacturers specify. A model designed to work well when against a wall may sound bass-shy when moved out into the room. Similarly, a speaker on the floor may sound like it has more bass than one in the middle of the wall.

5. GETTING A GOOD DEAL

CONSIDER WHAT YOU'RE WILLING TO GIVE UP TO GET the best possible price. One route to low prices is through the mail-order discounters—provided you already know exactly what you want. The risk is that if you do have trouble, the store may be too far away to do much about it. Plus, it can be hard to obtain some product lines from mail-order dealers. And you have to watch out for gray-market goods imported directly to dealers, bypassing the U.S. distributor. Some companies won't honor the warranties on such items.

Regular audio stores may offer discounts on some components and almost always will give you 20 to 30 percent off on complete systems. The prices may not be quite as good as what you can get by mail order, but you can deal with someone face-to-face and perhaps benefit from any service facilities or additional warranties or return policies the store may have. High-end shops are the most likely to go out of their way to help you with equipment selection and installation. In return, however, you more often will have to pay full ticket to get the gear out the door. ■



B Y

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R I G G S



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T A P E T R A C K S

BY ROBERT LONG

Glad You Asked

Every year, we receive hundreds of queries about audio and video tape and taping, many of which are similar and of general interest. For the first "Tape Tracks," I've selected a number of these to answer.

Q. I'VE BEEN USING A NAKAMICHI 1000ZXL TAPE deck and a DBX Model 224 noise reduction unit to record pop and rock, keeping average levels down at -10 dB and peak readings at 0 dB. I've noticed print-through during quiet passages of tapes made a year ago. Would a change in recording level help? Should I switch from C-90s to C-60s? And because recorder response specs usually are given at -20 dB, I wonder whether the lower the level, the better the response?

A. Your present levels sound about right, given Nakamichi's method of calibrating meters. With the DBX system's 2:1 compression of the signal before recording, the treble can be boosted higher than normal, relative to midrange levels. You should thus avoid higher levels since they may run you out of high-frequency headroom.

In typical music, the extreme highs will be at least 20 dB lower than the midrange levels. Since specifications are determined with signals that retain the same level at all frequencies (pink noise or sine waves), a level of -20 dB is used because that is the highest level the recorder is expected to encounter with high frequencies—in theory. However, when DBX noise reduction is used, the highs are boosted even when the signal level is high, so the theory doesn't entirely apply. A lawered recording level may thus be necessary to produce flat response, but the DBX system should keep the added noise inaudible.

As for solving your print-through problems (which, if anything, I'd expect DBX to reduce by making the faint print-through sound even fainter), the only relatively sure remedies I know of are switching to thicker tape (C-60 and shorter cassettes have the same thickness; C-90s are thinner, C-120s thinner yet) and playing or at least rewinding your cassettes from time to time so that the same surfaces aren't always in contact with each other. Also, high-coercivity tapes, like metal, chrome, or the cobalt-doped ferrics (chrome equivalents) can be less susceptible to print-through than ordinary ferric formulations.

Q. I ALREADY OWN A DELUXE TABLETOP VCR, and I want to buy a video camera. My feeling is that I should get a fully portable camera or camcorder. What is your opinion of the 8mm format? Is that the way to go?

A. By a "fully portable camera" I assume you mean a portable tape deck plus a separate camera. Some of the latter are very light, though the combination of such a camera and a typical port-

able deck usually adds up to more than the weight of a camcorder (a single unit incorporating both deck and camera). But the combination might be more comfortable, as it may be possible to carry, strap on, or set down the VCR and have only a very light camera to manipulate. In camcorder mass, the 8mm units tend to be the winners, though some VHS models using small VHS-C cassettes are in the same ballpark, and Beta isn't all that much bulkier. If you use a Beta or VHS camcorder, or camera/VCR combo, you can pop your "movies" right into your home deck. With 8mm, you must either dub far home viewing, buy a home 8mm deck, or lash the 8mm portable to your home system.

Ignoring questions of performance and features, which must be addressed more on a model-by-model basis than across tape formats, I'd say that 8mm is the most convenient system. Its support from several major companies is sufficient to ensure that it won't go away for a long time, even if it doesn't turn out to be the runaway favorite its backers are predicting. But performance and features can't be ignored, and in some respects the best half-inch models have a definite edge. You'll have to judge for yourself, however, how important these areas are to you.

Q. I WANT TO RECORD TWO SEPARATE FM PROGRAMS received simultaneously from separate stations. It should be easy to do with two tuners, Y connectors (to get a mono signal from each), and a stereo recorder. But when I try, I either get both stations recorded on the same track, with no separation, or one station recorded on both. What is wrong?

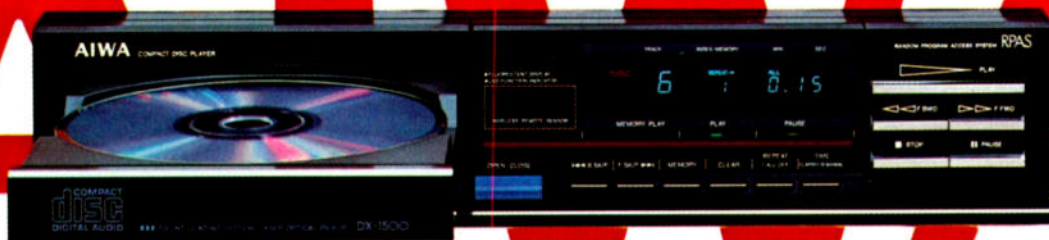
A. It sounds as though you just hooked up the Y connectors wrong. Both outputs of each tuner should be combined using one Y connector per tuner, and the resulting single output from each should be fed to one input of the recorder with no further Y connectors. Some equipment may object to the bridged output, however, and it would be simpler to just switch each tuner to the mono mode and feed only one of its outputs directly to one input of the recorder. This won't work, however, if the "tuner" is one of those rare models whose only mode switch is after the tape feed, leaving it stereo even when the amplification is mono.

In any case, you may find the results disappointing because of crosstalk in the stereo tape head, which can vary a lot from model to model. Channel separation of only 30 dB is more than adequate for reasonably good stereo imaging. But listening to one program with another going on behind it only 30 dB down is murder. In fact, Philips (as original patentee of the Compact Cassette system) took great pains to prevent users from running into this problem by requiring cassette licensees to forswear separate record/play switching for each channel.



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We bet this isn't the first time you've heard the Aiwa name, even if it is the first time you've read an Aiwa ad. Because what's on people's minds is soon on their lips. Like the name Aiwa. And Aiwa's new high-performance DX-1500 Compact Disc Player. Its advanced 3-beam laser pickup assures positive, precise tracking. Two sub-beams constantly check, and instantaneously correct, the main laser beam as it tracks each digital signal. If that sounds a bit too technical, wait until you hear how good it makes your compact discs actually sound. Just listen to your favorite album. In any order you like! The DX-1500 has single-touch memory. This allows you to program up to 16 tracks for playback in any order you wish. And the repeat function can be programmed for the whole disc, your random program or just one track. While the music is playing you just sit back with the wireless remote control and enjoy the sounds. That's the Aiwa advantage: all the technology you expect from the compact disc now comes with the incredible ease you get only from Aiwa. Now that you know all about Aiwa's high-performance DX-1500 Compact Disc Player, try to keep your lips sealed. Go on, just try. Really try.



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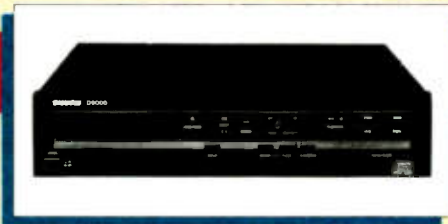
*Dolby is the registered trademark of Dolby Laboratories, Inc.

Report preparation supervised by Michael Riggs, David Ranada, Robert Long, and Edward J. Foster. Laboratory data (unless otherwise indicated) is supplied by Diversified Science Laboratories.

HARMAN KARDON HK-951
AM/FM RECEIVER



SHURE D-5000
COMPACT DISC PLAYER



MONSTER CABLE ALPHA 2 H.O.
PHONO CARTRIDGE



CONCORD HPL-526
CAR RECEIVER/TAPE DECK



SOUNDSTREAM FC-300
CAR TUNER/TAPE DECK



PHOTOS BY NICE BASTILON

YAMAHA M-85 POWER AMPLIFIER SWITCHES AUTOMATICALLY BETWEEN CLASS A AND CLASS AB OPERATION. REPORT BEGINS ON PAGE 23.

BETTER. MUCH BETTER. NONE BETTER.

Improving on the sonic performance of the Denon DCD-1800 was no easy task, considering that reviewers in the U.S., West Germany, and Japan claim "never to have heard a better sounding CD player." Yet Denon set out to build players that exceed our original performance level *and* make them more affordable.

We began with the compact DCD-1000, a Denon CD Player at an unthinkable low \$379.95* Yet it includes Denon's unique DDAC, the world's only digital-to-analog converter that's hand-tuned for reduced D/A transfer distortion. And it has Denon's Real Time phase correction circuitry

Better still is Denon's DCD-1100. This full-sized machine has the same high-performance DDAC, the same Real Time phase correction, and adds wireless remote control with a 10-key pad for direct track access.

The deluxe DCD-1500 uses two separate 16-bit DDAC converters (one for each channel), and computer-analyzed linear-phase filtration for perfectly flat frequency response. Its wireless remote even features volume adjustment.

Now, no matter how much or how little you plan to spend for a CD Player, you can own one from the first name in digital audio. Denon.



DENON

D E S I G N I N T E G R I T Y

*Suggested retail price.

Denon America, Inc., 27 Law Drive, Fairfield, N.J. 07006

Yamaha M-85 Power Amplifier



DIMENSIONS: 17½ BY 6 INCHES (FRONT PANEL), 15 INCHES DEEP PLUS CLEARANCE FOR CONTROLS AND CONNECTIONS. **AC CONVENIENCE OUTLET:** ONE UNSWITCHED (200 WATTS MAX.). **PRICE:** \$950. **WARRANTY:** "LIMITED," TWO YEARS PARTS AND LABOR. **MANUFACTURER:** NIPPON GAKKI COMPANY, LTD., JAPAN; U.S. DISTRIBUTOR: YAMAHA ELECTRONICS CORPORATION, U.S.A., 6660 ORANGETHORPE AVE., BUENA PARK, CALIF. 90620.

EVER SINCE YAMAHA—a longtime manufacturer of musical instruments—suddenly landed squarely among the vanguard of the major audio component companies, it has considered Class A amplifier circuits as the standard against which the more economical (and far more prevalent) Class AB designs must be assessed. More recently, Yamaha, like many of its competitors, has gone to "smart" Class A circuitry that seeks to achieve the waveform perfection of pure Class A at a much more reasonable cost. Or, conversely, to achieve Class A performance together with output ratings that would be prohibitive, both in initial cost and heat dissipation, without some form of "smart" power supply or automatic variable-bias operation.

Yamaha calls its solution Auto Class A, and we were impressed when we first reviewed it (as embodied in the A-1000 inte-

grated amplifier, September 1984). In a sense, it is less "smart" than solutions that involve cranking the power supply or bias up and down in response to input-signal voltage swings, but its simplicity also can be viewed as inherently more elegant. It operates as a Class A circuit at low signal levels (no more than 30 watts into an 8-ohm load, according to the company's spec for the M-85), but automatically switches to the more efficient Class AB mode at higher outputs where Class A becomes relatively impractical and Class AB is at its best and essentially the equal in performance of Class A.

Actually, in the M-85 (as in the A-1000) you can defeat the Auto Class A mode and revert to regular Class AB, from which it differs more in degree than in kind. A standard Class AB circuit biases its transistors into conducting all the way down to no-signal conditions. (Without this bias, you'd have pure Class B and its attendant severe "notch" or "crossover" distortion whenever the signal voltage neared zero, which it does twice in every cycle, even for voltage swings to very high maxima between the zero crossings.) Auto Class A simply uses more bias than AB, but still not enough to maintain true Class A operation to full rated output.

RATED POWER

8-ohm load	24 dBW (260 watts)/channel
4-ohm load	25 1/4 dBW (330 watts)/channel

OUTPUT AT CLIPPING (at 1 kHz; both channels driven)

8-ohm load	25 1/2 dBW (335 watts)/channel
4-ohm load	26 1/2 dBW (450 watts)/channel

DYNAMIC POWER (at 1 kHz)

8-ohm load	26 dBW
4-ohm load	28 dBW
2-ohm load	28 3/4 dBW

DYNAMIC HEADROOM (re rated power)

8-ohm load	+2 dB
4-ohm load	+2 3/4 dB

HARMONIC DISTORTION (THD; 20 Hz to 20 kHz)

at 24 dBW (260 watts)	< 0.01%
at 0 dBW (1 watt)	≤ 0.024%

FREQUENCY RESPONSE

+0, -1/4 dB, < 10 Hz to 44.3 kHz,
+0, -3 dB, < 10 Hz to 300 kHz

S/N RATIO (re 0 dBW; A-weighted)	101 dB
----------------------------------	--------

SENSITIVITY (re 0 dBW)	100 mV
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INPUT IMPEDANCE	12 kΩ ohms
-----------------	------------

DAMPING FACTOR (at 50 Hz; re 8 ohms)	500
--------------------------------------	-----

CHANNEL SEPARATION (at 1 kHz)	104 dB
-------------------------------	--------

ABOUT THE dBW

We currently are expressing power in terms of dBW—meaning power in dB with a reference (0 dBW) of 1 watt. The conversion table will enable you to use the advantages of dBW in comparing these products to others for which you have no dBW figures.

WATTS	dBW	WATTS	dBW
1.0	0	32	15
1.25	1	40	16
1.6	2	50	17
2.0	3	63	18
2.5	4	80	19
3.2	5	100	20
4.0	6	125	21
5.0	7	160	22
6.3	8	200	23
8.0	9	250	24
10.0	10	320	25
12.5	11	400	26
16.0	12	500	27
20.0	13	630	28
25.0	14	800	29

When you unpack the M-85, you're immediately aware that this is no ordinary amp because its heft (about 50 pounds) must inevitably come from the heat sinks needed to keep its output transistors adequately cooled when running Class A and from the massive power supply necessary to support its very high output capability. Next you'll probably notice the gold-plated input pin jacks and the extremely heavy-duty binding posts (they're actually constructed more like miniature vices) with top or bottom apertures for moderate wire gauges and provision for direct axial connection of heavy "high performance" cables. The M-85 has terminals for as many as three speaker pairs.

There also is a 200-watt AC convenience outlet on the back panel. Though we saw no caveat in the clear and straightforward mul-

tilingual owner's manual, this unusual feature doubtless is intended for the preamp and other components of your system. Attempting to run an amplifier rated for a power consumption of 600 watts (the U.S. model; the Canadian version is rated at about twice that and the European/Australian one even higher) from a preamp's switched outlet, typically rated at less than 200 watts, is to court disaster.

As you can see from the picture, the M-85's front panel has an unusual complement of controls for a high-performance power amp. The speaker selectors are unconventionally (and ingeniously) wired so that if both Pairs B and C are in use, they always will be connected in series with each other and in parallel with Pair A—but if either is used without the other, it will operate completely independently and in parallel with A. This prevents the horrendously low load impedance that would be imposed on the amp if three paralleled pairs of typical speakers were to be used simultaneously, but still keeps the series hookup from compromising the fidelity of sound both from the main speaker pair under any circumstances and from the subsidiary pairs in all but the unlikely event of their being used at the same time.

The central controls relate to the power display. We're ordinarily critical of such displays, considering them more gaudy than useful. This one, however, is beyond the ordinary on two counts. First, if you merely want moving lights to accompany your music (and that's about all most displays really provide), this is arguably the most elegant of its ilk: The two broad columns of horizontal red lines, dimmed and mellowed by darkly smoked glass, put most of the competition to shame aesthetically. Second, if you actually plan to use the display as a measurement tool, the calibration options (for loads of 2, 4, or 8 ohms and for full-scale indications of 900 or 90 watts), dual scales (in watts and in dB re 600 watts), and peak-hold mode (so

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you can assess the loudest transients without riveting your attention on the display) put it virtually in a class by itself.

Performance, as documented in Diversified Science Laboratories' measurements, reinforces the positive impression created by the outward design. The amplifier's ability to continue delivering increased power as load impedance drops is to its credit, and the actual output levels achieved are truly intimidating. There is no sign of faltering anywhere. The dynamic headroom, though not exceptionally generous (which would gild the lily of the already very generous steady-state rated power), is consistent—something we rarely have an opportunity to note in exactly these terms because so few home amplifiers are rated for a 4-ohm load, permitting a determination of headroom into that impedance.

Response is very flat and broad; noise is extremely low. Distortion never breaches our reporting threshold (0.01 percent) at 0 dBW (1 watt) and just barely does so (though consistently across the spectrum) at rated power. In the latter test, which theoretically should be above the Class A operating range and thus unaffected by the Auto Class A switch, very slight differences appeared in the distortion data for straight Class AB and Auto Class A at some frequencies. For the record, both here and in the 0-dBW test (where minute but measurable distortion appeared at the very top of the frequency range), Auto Class A proved the better mode—but by an inconsequential margin. At full power, the distortion is dominated by the third harmonic through the bass and midrange, with the second and third about equal in the treble, but this would be of significance only if the total amount were much higher.

This is in fact a superb amplifier, whether it is used in the Auto Class A mode or as a regular high-performance model. After careful listening, we're satisfied that most music lovers will hear no difference between the two operating modes, although some auditors undoubtedly will feel otherwise. In controlled testing, such subtle areas of superiority, or presumed superiority, regularly prove elusive, as they did when we addressed the M-85. But we see no purpose in worrying over the point: Since Yamaha gives you the choice of operating mode, you can hardly go wrong.



THE METERING SYSTEM OF THE YAMAHA M-85 POWER AMPLIFIER IS MORE VERSATILE AND ACCURATE THAN MOST.

Shure D-5000 Compact Disc Player



DIMENSIONS: 17 BY 4 INCHES (FRONT), 1 1/2 INCHES DEEP PLUS CLEARANCE FOR CONNECTIONS. **PRICE:** \$500. **WARRANTY:** "LIMITED," ONE YEAR PARTS AND LABOR. **MANUFACTURER:** MADE IN JAPAN FOR SHURE BROTHERS, INC., 222 HARTREY AVE., EVANSTON, ILL. 60204.

SHURE HAS STARTLED US LATELY WITH TWO unexpected products. First was the highly regarded HTS-5000 surround-sound processor, incorporating some rather sophisticated technology (such as a proprietary delta-modulation delay line). Now comes the D-5000 Compact Disc player—another significant departure for a company noted, through its phono cartridges and microphones, for its command of analog technology. Of the two, the D-5000 is the more modest and conservative entry, delivering nothing dramatically out of the ordinary in features or design. It is, nonetheless, a very capable player that does quite well the things most users want done.

In audio performance, for example, the D-5000 has nothing to be modest about. Channel separation, though not the best we've seen for a CD player, is much more than adequate for superb stereo reproduction. (Anything more than about 25 dB is gilding the lily here.) And the other data from Diversified Science Laboratories are altogether typical of today's models. The D-5000's signal-to-noise ratios, in particular, are comparable to the best. Frequency response falls a hair short of the performance pinnacle, mainly because of a small bump (less than 1/2 dB) in the bass. However, an in-

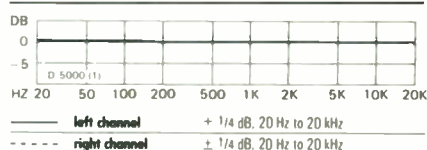
formal single-blind listening comparison to one of the few players having flatter response revealed no audible differences on white noise, pink noise, or music. (For this test, we used instantaneous switching with player output levels matched to within 0.05 dB at 1 kHz and synchronized playback of the same recordings.) The D-5000 uses 16-bit digital-to-analog (D/A) conversion with two-times oversampling and digital filtering, and its square-wave response and impulse waveforms show ringing patterns typical of these circuits, with just a slight asymmetry. The unit passed all the standard error-correction and tracking tests.

The D-5000's cueing and other control features are sufficient for most purposes, but by no means elaborate. Among them are a 15-selection programmed-playback memory and an infrared wireless remote control (a facility we are beginning to find it painful to do without). On the other hand, its digital LED readout must be switched manually to show either track and index number or elapsed time from the start of a track. And though index numbers can be displayed, there is no means for cueing directly to them. The D-5000 has one set of fixed-level line output jacks and no headphone output.

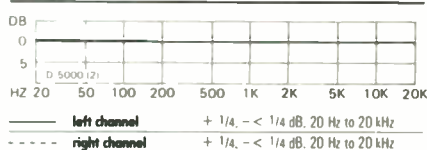
What remains are the core CD-player functions: play, pause, track skipping, scanning (two speeds, the faster starting three seconds after a scan button is held down), repeat (of the entire disc or programmed sequence or of any continuous segment of the

All data were obtained using the Sony YE05 7, Technics SH CD001, Philips 410 055 2, and Philips 420 056 2 test discs

FREQUENCY RESPONSE WITHOUT DE-EMPHASIS



FREQUENCY RESPONSE WITH DE-EMPHASIS



CHANNEL SEPARATION (at 1 kHz) 86 3/4 dB

CHANNEL BALANCE (at 1 kHz) ± 0 dB

S/N RATIO (re 0 dB; A-weighted)

without de-emphasis 99 3/4 dB

with de-emphasis 103 1/2 dB

HARMONIC DISTORTION (THD+N; 40 Hz to 20 kHz)

at 0 dB ≤ 0.011%

at -24 dB ≤ 0.046%

IM DISTORTION (70-Hz difference; 300 Hz to 20 kHz)

0 to -20 dB < 0.01%

at -30 dB 0.011%

LINEARITY (at 1 kHz)

0 to -50 dB no measurable error

at -60 dB -1/4 dB

at -70 dB -1 dB

at -80 dB -4 1/4 dB

at -90 dB -5 dB

TRACKING & ERROR-CORRECTION

maximum signal-layer gap ≥ 900 μm

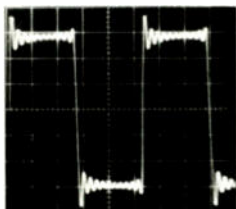
maximum surface obstruction ≥ 800 μm

simulated-fingerprint test pass

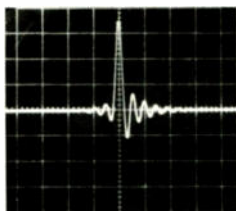
MAXIMUM OUTPUT LEVEL 2.17 volts

OUTPUT IMPEDANCE 300 ohms

SQUARE-WAVE RESPONSE (1 kHz)



IMPULSE RESPONSE



disc you choose), and the programming controls. All are activated by pushbuttons, the larger ones devoted to cueing and scanning, the smaller to programming and repeating. We found the switch for changing display modes a bit too far from the readout it regulates, but the control layout is quite logical otherwise. The remote handset duplicates all but two front-panel functions: power switching and disc-drawer open/close (although the drawer-close function can be invoked by pressing PLAY).

The manual is written in clear, idiomatic English and adequately explains each player feature. It also offers some sage advice about handling Compact Discs. In addition to coming up with the felicitous phrase "rainbow colored side" to describe what is officially known as the playback surface, it warns against sticking adhesive tape or labels to

the label side of a CD, as these may pull off the protective lacquer if they warp or are removed. The manual also cautions against using benzene to clean discs, probably because it will dissolve the label side.

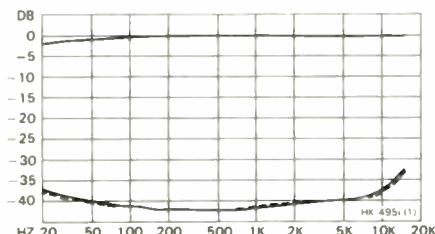
It takes about ten seconds after PLAY is pressed for a disc to retract into the machine and start making music—noticeably longer than some other recent players require. This and the switched-function display make this model suitable more for the sit-and-listen user than the scan-and-peek amateur deejay. On the other hand, Shure's avoidance of extra controls and dual-definition pushbuttons makes learning to use the D-5000 very easy, and the player's audio performance leaves nothing at all to be desired. Indeed, we wouldn't mind a bit if Shure were to have a few more surprises like this one up its sleeve. ■

T E S T R E P O R T S

Harman Kardon HK-495i AM/FM Receiver

FM TUNER SECTION

STEREO RESPONSE & CHANNEL SEPARATION



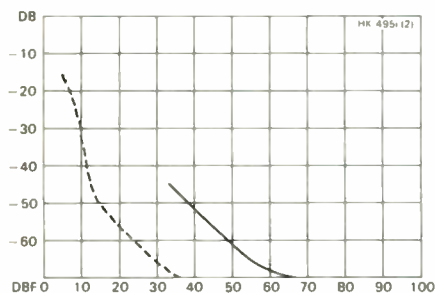
Frequency response

— left channel	+0, -2 dB, 20 Hz to 15 kHz
- - - right channel	+0, -2 dB, 20 Hz to 15 kHz

Channel separation

≥ 40 dB, 43 Hz to 2.5 kHz.
≥ 32 dB, 20 Hz to 15 kHz

FM SENSITIVITY & QUIETING



— stereo quieting (noise)
- - - mono quieting (noise)

DIMENSIONS: 17 1/2 BY 3 1/2 INCHES (FRONT PANEL), 12 1/2 INCHES DEEP PLUS CLEARANCE FOR CONTROLS AND CONNECTIONS. AC CONVENIENCE OUTLETS: ONE SWITCHED, ONE UNSWITCHED (180 WATTS MAX. EACH). PRICE: \$485. WARRANTY: "LIMITED," TWO YEARS PARTS AND LABOR. MANUFACTURER: MADE IN JAPAN FOR HARMAN KARDON, 240 CROSSWAYS PARK WEST, WOODBURY, N.Y. 11797.

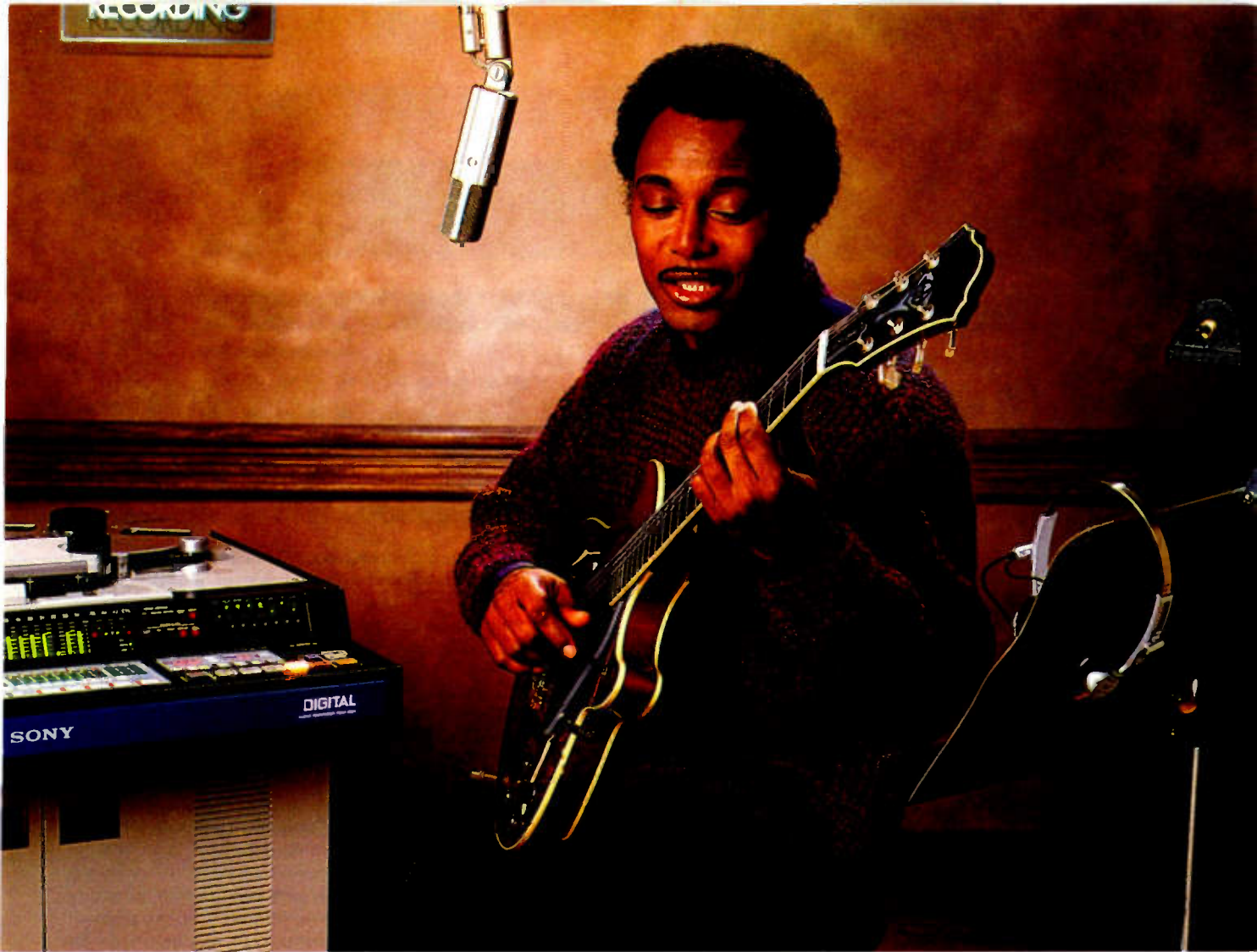
HARMAN KARDON HAS A QUIET WAY WITH its technology. Where other companies might shout SuperThis and Ultra-That about comparable developments—and ultimately leave you wondering whether the circuit features really were worth all the fuss—Harman Kardon chooses a more matter-of-fact tone. It tells us that its wideband circuitry and limited negative feedback promote better transient behavior than competing designs are likely to yield. What it calls HCC (high current capability) is said to achieve radically better headroom into the reactive loads of real loudspeakers than is possible with current-limited amplifiers designed primarily to drive the pure resistances of the test bench. Both are reasonable claims.

Consistent with this tendency toward understatement, the HK-495i receiver evinces less pizzazz than many competing models—surely an important part of its charm. The look is tailored with the neat control groupings that characterize the company's products. We might wish for greater visual differentiation (of the VOLUME with respect to the

other rotary controls, for instance, or among the miscellaneous switches above the source selectors), but that could compromise the simplicity of the whole. (In addition to the company's traditional champagne-colored anodizing shown in our photograph, Harman Kardon recently added a brushed-black option.)

The switching (which incidentally calls the auxiliary input "CD/video," allowing use of one but not both) can monitor from the playback head on either of two tape decks during recording from the regular sources. However, if you monitor Tape 1 you can only record the selected source on it or dub from Tape 1 to Tape 2. You can neither monitor Tape 2 while you're copying tapes nor monitor Tape 1 while recording the selected source on both decks without interrupting the signal feed. If you have only one deck or use two-head models or seldom dub, this will be altogether adequate. (If not, check out Harman Kardon's top receiver, the 795i.)

The switching also provides separately for FM muting and mono/stereo listening—the latter at a switch that affects all sources but delivers the same effect as an FM mode switch—so you need not, for example, choose mono-only reception if you decide to defeat the muting. Aside from the eight presets, each of which can memorize one FM and one AM frequency, the digital tuning is



To hear why George Benson records on Sony Digital equipment, play him back on a Sony Compact Disc Player.

When it comes to capturing the experience of live music, no audio equipment delivers the performance of digital audio.

That's why George Benson, creator of *Breezin'*, the best-selling jazz recording in history, has decided to invest in digital equipment.

And the name this leader in jazz/pop fusion chooses, interestingly enough, is the leader in digital audio: Sony.

Not only has Sony led the way in professional digital recording equipment, we also invented the digital system for playback—the compact disc player. Sony introduced the first home, car and portable CD players. And Sony sells more types of compact disc players than anyone else in the world.

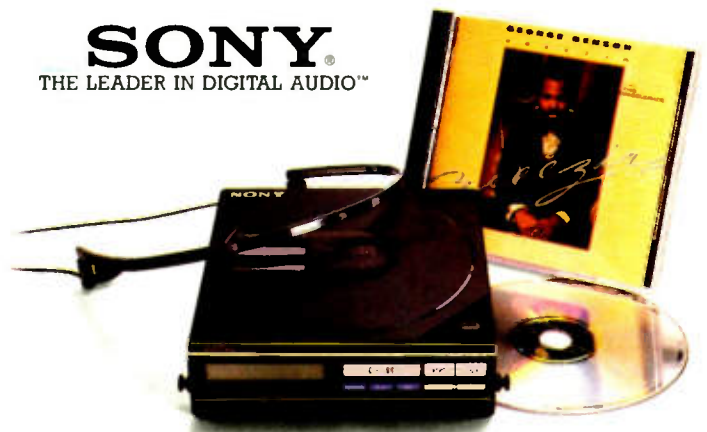
But whichever Sony Compact Disc Player you choose, each allows you to hear the music the way the artist originally intended.

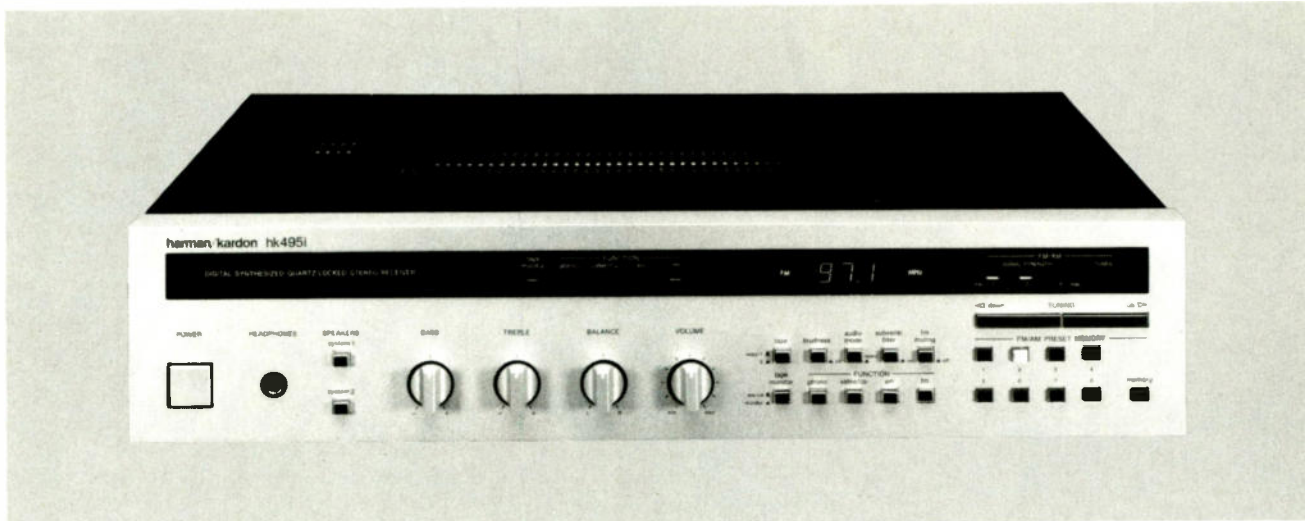
So why not do what George Benson does? Play back the top-selling compact discs the same way they were mastered. On Sony Digital equipment. You'll find that when it comes to bringing you close to the music, nothing else even comes close.

Presenting the Sony Discman,[™] the world's smallest portable compact disc player.

Hardly larger than the disc itself, the fully programmable Discman* D-7DX comes complete with carrying case, headphones and a rechargeable battery. Everything you need for digital audio on the go.

SONY
THE LEADER IN DIGITAL AUDIO[™]





Stereo sensitivity (for 50-dB noise suppression)

38 dBf at 98 MHz, with 0.46% THD + N
(38 1/2 dBf at 90 MHz, 38 dBf at 106 MHz)

Mono sensitivity (for 50-dB noise suppression)

14 3/4 dBf at 98 MHz

Muting threshold	32 1/2 dBf
Stereo threshold	32 1/4 dBf
Stereo S/N ratio (at 65 dBf)	69 3/4 dB
Mono S/N ratio (at 65 dBf)	73 3/4 dB

CAPTURE RATIO	1 1/4 dB
---------------	----------

SELECTIVITY

alternate-channel	56 dB
adjacent-channel	6 dB

HARMONIC DISTORTION (THD+N)

	stereo	mono
at 100 Hz	0.57%	0.17%
at 1 kHz	0.25%	0.056%
at 6 kHz	0.26%	0.57%

STEREO PILOT INTERMODULATION	0.097%
------------------------------	--------

INTERMODULATION DISTORTION (mono)	0.033%
-----------------------------------	--------

AM SUPPRESSION	60 dB
----------------	-------

PILOT (19 kHz) SUPPRESSION	63 1/4 dB
----------------------------	-----------

SUBCARRIER (38 kHz) SUPPRESSION	84 dB
---------------------------------	-------

AMPLIFIER SECTION

RATED POWER	16 1/2 dBW (45 watts) / channel
-------------	---------------------------------

OUTPUT AT CLIPPING (at 1 kHz; both channels driven)

8-ohm load	17 1/2 dBW (55 watts) / channel
4-ohm load	18 1/2 dBW (70 watts) / channel

DYNAMIC POWER (at 1 kHz)

8-ohm load	18 1/2 dBW
4-ohm load	19 3/4 dBW
2-ohm load	20 1/4 dBW

DYNAMIC HEADROOM (re rated power, 8-ohm load)

+2 dB

HARMONIC DISTORTION (THD; 20 Hz to 20 kHz)

at 16 1/2 dBW (45 watts)	≤ 0.057%
at 0 dBW (1 watt)	≤ 0.067%

entirely manual and advances in half-channel (100-kHz) steps on FM and full-channel (10-kHz) steps on AM. Even very deliberate pressure on the tuning bars doesn't immediately switch to fast-scan tuning, so there's no tendency to overshoot. Like many models these days, the 495i "remembers" which station you were tuned to when you switched sources or turned off the receiver and automatically returns to it when you switch back.

Welcome to American users is the back-panel F connector for 75-ohm coax FM lead-in wire from antenna or cable. The usual screw terminals are provided as well, for 300-ohm FM twinlead and AM antennas—including the supplied AM loop, for which a mounting bracket is built into the back panel. So are two AC convenience outlets, one of which is switched by the main AC button.

The phono preamp section, which is designed around an unusual combination of active and passive RIAA equalization (partly to maintain low negative feedback), is very flat. Response matches the "ruler flat" criterion except for a very slight rise entirely below 50 Hz, where it is unlikely to be heard as such even if the records themselves were flat to such depths. The phono section itself includes no significant infrasonic filtering.

There is, however, a switchable infrasonic filter that affects every input. It introduces an overall attenuation of 3/4 dB above about 400 Hz; below that point, it rolls off ever so slightly faster than the basic response as measured from the aux input to the speaker terminals. The 15-Hz knee cited in our data column is the frequency at which, with the filter on, response is 3 dB below that at 1 kHz. When the lab looked for the frequency at which response is 3 dB lower with the filter on than with it off, the knee appeared to be at 11 Hz. If the filter-on response were to be boosted by 3/4 dB to match 1-kHz output with the filter off, the apparent knee would be moved even lower. However you assess this point, the filter is quite gentle (also characteristic of the company's circuitry, to minimize audio-band phase shift) and therefore introduces only minimal attenuation of warp

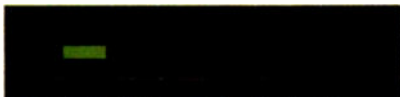
"information," although in some cases any rolloff is better than none.

Even with the infrasonic filter switched out, there is a very gradual deep-bass rolloff in the aux input response. It begins below 200 Hz and reaches -1 dB (re 1 kHz) at 50 Hz. Response remains at -1 dB from there on down. Superimposed on this overall response, the bass control introduces about 12 dB of cut or boost, shelving below 50 Hz at its extreme positions and behaving similarly at in-between settings. At its extremes, the bass control introduces a slight boost in the 1-kHz region when dialed for a cut, and vice versa. The treble control is a little more predictable in its midrange behavior (extending down to below 500 Hz) but less symmetrical in boost/cut response with respect to the flat position. Maximum rotation yields about 14 dB of boost or cut at 20 kHz and evidently shelves above audibility; lesser rotation produces shelving at lower frequencies. The LOUDNESS introduces a broad dip centered on about 2 kHz and reaching from 100 Hz up to the ultrasonic region. For low volume settings, the maximum depth of the dip is about 8 dB, diminishing progressively at higher volume levels. Overall, we found the usefulness of these preamp controls fairly typical of their kinds.

Bass response of the FM tuner section rolls off in a slightly different way, without the shelf in the very deep bass, but is otherwise extremely smooth and flat right up to the 15-kHz limit of the FM passband. The bench tests all document good or excellent performance, in fact, and we were struck by what we considered the particularly good listening quality of the section—presumably a vindication of Harman Kardon's care with the design of its IF (intermediate frequency) filtering and sample-and-hold multiplex decoder. For that matter, the AM section also struck us as above average. The only weakness in the tuner we found—and that relevant only to readers owning rotatable antennas—is the three-LED signal-strength "meter," which supplies minimal information.



SEE RADAR IN A NEW LIGHT.



Green LED - There's radar in the area.



Yellow LED - Radar is near. Proceed with caution.



Red LED - You are in clocking range.

FOX TAKES RADAR OUT OF THE DARK WITH THE SUPERFOX VIXEN II.

Now you can see much more than red when you look at a radar detector.

When you look at the Vixen II LED, you'll see just how close you really are to radar.

Green tells you there's radar in the area.

Yellow warns you that you are much closer and should proceed with caution.

And red is the range that's accompanied by one continuous audio alarm.

It combines both sight and sound into the most advanced alert system in radar today. No

tiny numbered meters to read. No bouncing needles. No more guessing.

WHAT ROAD & TRACK SAW, IT "HIGHLY RECOMMENDED."

ROAD & TRACK Magazine's April '85 issue looked at the 10 most widely distributed radar detectors. They tested for overall Sensitivity, Sensitivity Around A Corner, Sensitivity Cresting A Hill, the Maximum Audible signal, and Leakage and Leakage Reception (picking up non-radar signals as radar). It was a tough road test that not everyone passed and that only a few were considered good enough to be "highly recommended" by the editors of ROAD & TRACK.

The SuperFox Vixen II was one of the few.

WE'RE AS SENSITIVE TO RADAR AS YOU ARE.

Fox has been pioneering the research and development of radar detectors for almost a decade. The Vixen II incorporates the most advanced technology in radar today, both in finding radar and in communicating its findings to the driver.

A dual conversion super-heterodyne receiver gives the Vixen II many times the range of any radar signal. No matter what the band, pulse or continuous. What's more, the Vixen II goes beyond line of sight range. It can see around corners and over hills to pick out weak reflected signals.

CITY, HIGHWAY, OR PRESET.

The Vixen II is sensitive to all your driving needs. So we offer you a choice of City/Highway or Preset.

For most driving, a special "Preset" position will yield the best results. Around town, you may want to turn the squelch control to "City," to eliminate annoying false alarms from non-microwave signals, for example.

On the open road, turn it to "Highway." Or choose any point in-between. With the Vixen II, you're in control.

IT'S LIGHT ON VISORS, TOO.

Our sensitivity even extends to installation. The mounting system of the Vixen II adapts to any size or shape dash. Or if you prefer, clips quickly to any visor.

When you reach your destination, you can simply unplug the cord and put your Vixen II safely away.

A VIXEN II IS AS NEAR AS YOUR PHONE.

Call toll free to order a Vixen II for \$249.95; or to get the name of your nearest Fox dealer. Call 1-800-543-7892. In Ohio, 1-800-621-2513; in Canada, 1-800-663-0295.



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The power-amplifier section delivers a good deal of punch for its moderate power rating. The consistent increase of output power with progressively lower load impedances confirms that the receiver has the sort of current capability claimed by Harman Kardon. Dynamic output into 2 ohms is more than twice the 8-ohm rating (that is, more than 3 dB higher), which certainly would not be true with the usual current-limited designs. Steady-state distortion, particularly at 0 dBW, is higher than you would expect in most receivers of this caliber. But keep in mind that the 495i's designers have deliberately traded away some negative feedback for better performance in other areas, and the inevitable consequence is slightly higher distortion. But the distortion levels we found are certainly not high enough to cause complaint.

A special word of praise is due the owner's manual because of the dim days through which the company went in this respect a few years ago and the generally sorry state of this unsung art. Like the receiver itself, the man-

ual looks relatively unpretentious, but its contents are in many ways a model of clarity and completeness—neither condescending to kindergarten show-and-tell nor displaying its erudition to the despair of neophytes. And it's written in gen-u-ine American English.

It's heartening, in this me-too world of precooked hamburgers and microwaved sole florentine, that a company can retain not only its individuality, but its sense of devotion to an ideal. The economics of electronics haven't been kind to American manufacturers, and most of the last generation's leaders are long gone. Super-price specialty-goods companies aside, the towering exception is Harman Kardon: Although, like all its remaining colleagues, it is forced to manufacture overseas, it almost miraculously continues to serve up its own unique creations. The HK-495i, while neither the most adventurous nor the least expensive among them, is a good moderate-price receiver with attractive virtues and more than a dollop of what made its maker famous. ■

T E S T R E P O R T S

Monster Cable Alpha 2 H.O. Phono Cartridge

TYPE: HIGH-OUTPUT MOVING-COIL WITH FIXED (NOT USER-REPLACEABLE) MULTIRADIAL DIAMOND STYLUS. **PRICE:** \$650. **WARRANTY:** "LIMITED," ONE YEAR PARTS AND LABOR. **MANUFACTURER:** MADE IN JAPAN FOR MONSTER CABLE PRODUCTS, INC., 101 TOWNSEND ST., SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF. 94107.

ALL MAGNETIC CARTRIDGES PERFORM their duty by causing variations in the strength of a magnetic field that surrounds a coil of wire. These variations (controlled, of course, by the stylus motion) induce a voltage across the coil that in turn feeds a preamp. The three simple ways of doing this have been used as the basis for the three major phono-cartridge categories: moving-coil, moving-magnet, and moving-iron (in which a magnetically conductive substance vibrates between stationary coil and magnet). To minimize the mass of material moved by the stylus—a requirement for good tracking ability—the coil in a moving-coil model usually consists of only a few loops of microscopically thin wire. In general, making these coils involves hand craftsmanship (read: higher prices) to a much greater extent than the production of fixed-coil cartridges.

It also has meant very low output and the addition of a head amp or matching trans-

former in order to boost the cartridge output to levels acceptable by standard phono-preamp inputs. While extra turns of wire can be used to increase coil output, they also raise moving mass and therefore compromise tracking ability to a significant degree. Undaunted, designers in the past few years have produced a number of high-output cartridges intended to feed directly—without any sort of step-up devices—into normal "moving magnet" phono inputs. Of these, the Alpha 2 H.O. must be viewed as a luxury model and is sold by the company that put special "high performance" speaker cables on the map.

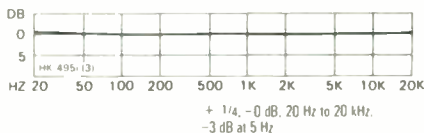
Although pickups and speaker cables are at opposite ends of the high fidelity reproduction chain, they have a marked similarity in this case. Each of the Monster Cable products is in a class that is prized by many audiophiles even as the product's claimed advantages or superiorities are denigrated by others. These controversies are by no means easily settled, either in listening or in measurement.

Take, for example, the frequency response shown in our curve and measured with the JVC test record that Diversified Science Laboratories has used as its reference

FREQUENCY RESPONSE

+ 0 1 dB, 41 Hz to 163 kHz
+ 0 -3 dB, < 10 Hz to 307 kHz

RIAA PHONO EQUALIZATION



SENSITIVITY & NOISE (re 0 dBW; A-weighting)

	sensitivity	S/N ratio
aux input	19.5 mV	80 1/2 dB
phono input	0.31 mV	75 1/4 dB
PHONO OVERLOAD (1-kHz clipping)		180 mV

INPUT IMPEDANCE

aux input	38k ohms
phono input	48k ohms 130 pF

OUTPUT IMPEDANCE (to tape)

from aux input	direct
from tuner section	1.860 ohms
from phono input	1.280 ohms

DAMPING FACTOR (at 50 Hz; re 8 ohms)

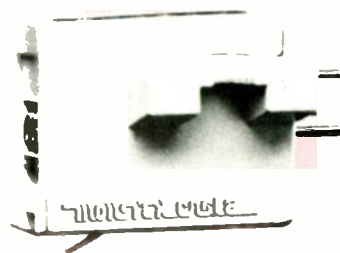
100

CHANNEL SEPARATION (at 1 kHz)

72 1/4 dB

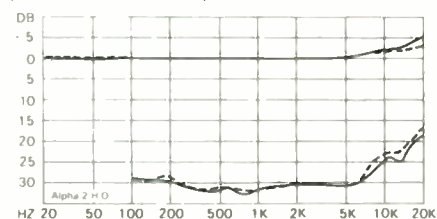
INFRASONIC FILTER

-3 dB at 15 Hz, \approx 6 dB/octave



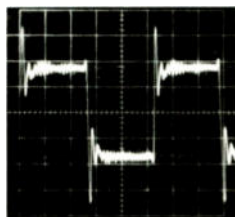
FREQUENCY RESPONSE & CHANNEL SEPARATION

(test record: JVC TR5-1007 Mk. II)



Frequency response	
— left channel	+ 5 1/2, -1.4 dB, 20 Hz to 20 kHz
- - - right channel	+ 3 1/4, -1.4 dB, 20 Hz to 20 kHz
Channel separation	
	> 30 dB, 230 Hz to 6.3 kHz
	\geq 20 dB, 100 Hz to 16 kHz

SENSITIVITY (at 1 kHz)	0.61 mV/cm/sec.
CHANNEL BALANCE	± 1/4 dB
VERTICAL TRACKING ANGLE	≈ 26°
MAXIMUM TRACKING LEVEL (vs RIAA 0 VU: 1.8 grams)	
lateral	+ 12 dB
vertical	+ 12 dB
DYNAMIC COMPLIANCE (vertical)	
	≈ 13 x 10 ⁻⁶ cm dyne
RECOMMENDED EFFECTIVE TONEARM MASS	
optimum	≈ 13 grams
acceptable	≈ 6.6 to ≈ 24 grams
WEIGHT	6.9 grams
SQUARE-WAVE RESPONSE (1 kHz)	



for some years. The Alpha 2 displays a distinctly rising high end, and an ultrasonic peak is confirmed by the spike at the beginning of each half-cycle in the square wave. With different test records, both might be less or more marked, though we would expect at least some rise on just about any standard test disc. The strip-chart curves accompanying our test samples were exceedingly flat, however, and therefore unlike the DSL curves.

Actually, the measured performance of the Alpha 2 bears a family resemblance to that of the Alpha 1 (test report, September 1983)—except, as could be expected, in sensitivity (output level). In this test, the earlier model measured 0.125 millivolts per centimeter per second of groove velocity, a value that is already high for a moving-coil cartridge. The Alpha 2 measures 0.61 mV/cm/sec (13¾ dB higher), which is typical of its kind and only a little below the 1-mV/cm/sec that is par for fixed-coil models. Separation is a hair better in the Alpha 2 than in the old model, and the new pickup has better damping of the square wave's ultrasonic spike.

The cartridge's Micro Ridge line-contact stylus tip is ground on a nude square-shank diamond mounted on a hollow sapphire cantilever. The recommended minimum vertical tracking force of 1.8 grams is lower than for some prestigious moving-coil cartridges of the past, but it's higher than is typical of fixed-coil models, even though the fad for ultralow tracking forces and ultrahigh compliance is past. That the Alpha 2's compliance is somewhat lower than that of most fixed-coil pickups (and lower than that of the Alpha 1) is perhaps an index as much of the times as of its moving-coil heritage. These

specifics, together with the moderate cartridge weight, add up to a model that doesn't need an ultralight tonearm to perform its best and will match well to a wide spectrum of available arms. The capacitive load was set at 140 picofarads (a fairly typical value for high-quality equipment) for the lab tests and at about that for listening, though Monster Cable actually specified that it should be as low as possible. However, this factor should make little difference, if any, with a moving-coil cartridge.

The sound? Excellent overall. The measured response had led us to fear a certain hardness at the top end, but we didn't encounter it in practice. The characteristic that most intruded upon listening was, in fact, the pickup's handling of extreme modulation levels or groove defects due to scratches. The earlier Alpha 1 was measurably a little better in this respect. With the new cartridge, we found the antiskating setting critical for good tracking on some records. Considering the no-expense-spared approach and the perfectionist clientele for which it presumably was intended, we're frankly a little surprised that the cartridge didn't prove outstanding in the tracking test. Keep in mind, however, that the ability to track + 18 dB (the highest band on the test record) represents an extreme that many users may never need.

It's hard to know what to say about a \$650 phono cartridge—by a wide margin, the most expensive we have ever tested. On one hand, prodigies might be expected of it; on the other, there's a limit to how much better than other models it possibly can be. But when playing sane levels of record-groove modulation, the Alpha 2 H.O. is among the best of pickups. ■

T E S T R E P O R T S

Concord HPL-550 Car Receiver/Tape Deck

DIMENSIONS: 7 BY 2 INCHES (CHASSIS FRONT), 5½ INCHES DEEP; ES-CUTCHEON, 7¼ BY 2¼ INCHES; "NOSE," 4¼ BY 2 INCHES; MAIN SHAFTS, 5¼ TO 6¼ INCHES O.C. **CONNECTIONS:** UNTERMINATED WIRES FOR IGNITION, BATTERY, GROUND, AND ANTENNA/REMOTE-AMP CONTROL; UNTERMINATED WIRES ON SEPARATE FOUR-SPEAKER AND TWO-SPEAKER PLUG-IN HARNESSSES; STANDARD COAXIAL FEMALE FOR ANTENNA INPUT. **FUSES:** 7-AMP IN IGNITION LINE, ½-AMP IN BATTERY LINE, 1-AMP IN ANTENNA/AMP LINE. **PRICE:** \$600 TO \$650. **WARRANTY:** "LIMITED," ONE YEAR PARTS AND LABOR. **MANUFACTURER:** MADE IN JAPAN FOR CONCORD SYSTEMS, INC., 6025 YOLANDA AVE., TARZANA, CALIF. 91356.

THE CONCORD HPL-550 IS AMONG THE MOST versatile car units we have tested. It contains its own amplifier section that—via a chassis switch and a choice of two wiring harnesses that plug into the speaker leads emerging at the back—can be used to drive either a fader-controlled four-speaker setup, a single (balance-controlled) stereo pair, or one pair with its maximum (bridged) per-channel output while an outboard amp feeds another pair. There are separate front and back line outputs, however, so you can bypass the built-in amp altogether if you

choose. The HPL-550 also has a chassis adjustment to match line output levels to the sensitivity of any outboard amp you use, as well as connections for an outboard signal processor or auxiliary source.

The front panel poses the usual question: How do you fit all the controls for a multifeature car-stereo deck into that tiny space and still keep them usable? As a "conventional" model (with a nosepiece containing cassette slot, display, and pushbuttons, plus flanking rotary-control clusters), the 550 must keep the buttons very small in-

New! EYE-LEVEL BRAKE LIGHT Gives YOUR CAR 1986 STYLING and SAFETY!

FITS ALL CARS (sedans, coupes, hatchbacks, station wagons), VANS, PICKUPS—ANY YEAR, ANY MODEL—AMERICAN or IMPORTED, with 12 volt system.



Astonishing Fact: Rigid testing by the federal government proved that the third brake light—mounted and functioning at eye-level to following drivers—reduces rear-end collisions by 53%.

Astonishing Fact: predictions by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) estimate that the eye-level third brake light will prevent 900,000 rear-end collisions a year.

Astonishing Fact: Estimates by the NHTSA predict that the eye-level third brake light will prevent 40,000 personal injuries a year.

Astonishing Fact: Use of the eye-level third brake light can reduce vehicle damage and repairs by almost 60%.

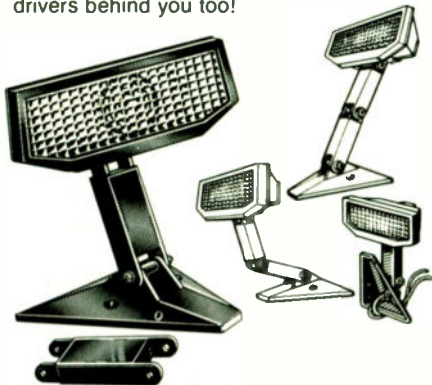
The overwhelming benefits of the eye-level third brake light demanded strong government action. So in the public interest...

Federal Safety Regulations Now Require Eye-Level-Mount Brake Lights On All 1986 Model Cars.

You owe it to yourself, to those who ride with you, and to those who drive behind you, to equip your car with this light as soon as possible.

Here's How It Works

Your third brake light is mounted at eye level, so it is highly visible to the driver behind you... and to the second and third drivers behind you too!



FAST, EASY INSTALLATION... FITS ALL CARS, TRUCKS & VANS

Bright red light turns on only when you press your brakes, so it's impossible to confuse with your turn-signal or tail lights

Extra mounting extension included... assures easy perfect positioning in station wagon, pick-up, any vehicle



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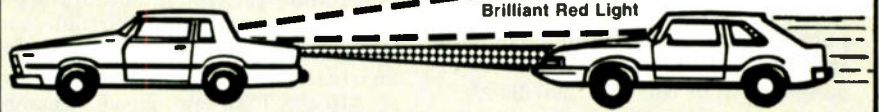
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A built-in logic circuit is programmed to turn on this light with your car's regular brake lights/and with your brake lights only—and that is very important...

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Installation of this light may even qualify you for a discount on your auto insurance.

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VISA or MasterCard customers welcome. Simply phone (312) 431-6102... Call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Order stock number 81-2289R.

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EHCC

Dealerscope Merchandising Products of the Month

Samsung VT290T VCR Offers Hi-Fi Stereo



A 4 head video system and a 2 head hi-fi stereo audio system make the Samsung VT290T VHS format VCR a high-quality audio/video tape deck. Its on-screen command system displays operating instructions on the TV screen, indicates which buttons to push, confirms the commands and memorizes them. Other features the VT290T offers include: 139 channel cable-compatible tuner with 16 present channels, 4 week/8 program timer, quartz clock, auto date and time recording. For more information, contact your nearest Samsung dealer, or call (201) 587-9600.



Nitec Debuts Robot Antenna Positioner

Nitec Advanced Technologies presents the state-of-the-art in antenna positioners. Nitec's Robot Antenna Positioner offers the only system that tracks international, C and KU-band satellites. The computer controller contains 16 pre-programmed satellite positions—32 in all. It is the only antenna controller to use azimuth and elevation data for pinpoint tracking. Manual controls allow fine tuning adjustments, and a backup battery preserves all data



in case of power outage. The solid die-cast aluminum body of the Robot Positioner contains the high-precision actuator mechanism. It moves in a smooth 180 degree arc—the full above-the-equator range. The positioner will track any satellite to within 0.2 degrees of its precise location. For more information, call Nitec at 1-800-553-5617.

Pfantone VCR Head Cleaning Cassettes



Pfantone Head Cleaning Cassettes in both Beta and VHS contain a non-abrasive tape which can be used wet or dry. Each cassette comes with Head Cleaning Fluid. The cassettes clean all tape-contact parts to maintain the picture and sound quality of virtually any VCR. Each cassette has easy-to-follow instructions and has a suggested retail of \$10.49. Pfantone Head Cleaning Cassettes are marketed by Pfanstiehl Corporation. For more information, call 1-800-323-9446.



New Scotch™ EXG Camera Cassette Features Superior Color Performances



The new Scotch EXG Camera Cassette from 3M offers unsurpassed color performance over time and unique features for people who make home video movies or record programs they want to keep. The Scotch EXG Camera Cassette has been designed for use in tough environmental conditions or for long-term libraries. The video cassette also features 3M's own patented "Anti-Static System" which virtually eliminates picture drop-out. The new EXG series of Scotch video cassettes was recently ranked best in 10 categories in a field of 47 name-brand video cassettes in performance tests conducted by an independent testing organization. For more information, call 1-612-736-5077.

KLM Electronics Introduces the SBR-6100 Integrated System



The KLM SBR-6100 is a totally new concept in system integration. It incorporates a microprocessor-controlled dish positioner, a synthesized stereo tuner, full-function remote controls and total recall memory. The total recall memory gives direct access to any satellite-transponder combination automatically, and sets dish position, channel, skew, polarity, audio bandwidth, as well as stereo mode, all from a single remote control. Dual feed capability is an added plus with this receiver/positioner, providing enhanced performance in conjunction with ease of operation. For more information on the System Complete SBR-6100 receiver, contact your distributor or call 1-800-228-1926 or 1-800-336-7506 for the KLM rep nearest you.



Warrantech Safeguards Your Equipment With Service Extension Plan

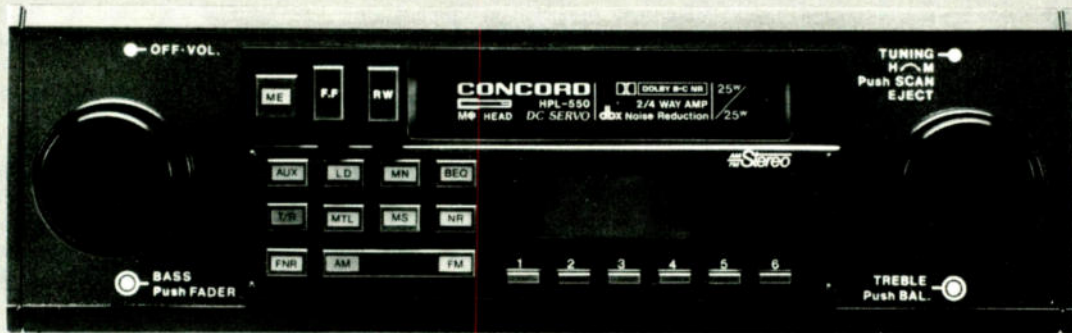


With Warrantech's Service Extension plan, anyone purchasing virtually any home-entertainment product is covered for all costs involved in repairs for a period after the original warranty expires. "Prices are based on 50% of what just one service call would cost a consumer," explains Joel San Antonio, president of Warrantech. "We will fix the product for free, as many times as is necessary, for the life of the service-extension period." Equipment covered includes all major consumer electronics products.



Dealerscope Merchandising is the Marketing Magazine for Consumer Electronics and Major Appliance Retailing

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deed. Rather than go for multifunction buttons (say, one switch for tape EQ and tuner sensitivity, depending on the active source), which can be confusing, Concord assigns a single operation to each and illuminates only those buttons that are active with the chosen source. At night, especially, this is a significant help.

As with the majority of models we test, the legends, both at the controls and in the display panel, are too small to be read with any ease while you're driving. The most frequently used controls—for the FNR (FM noise reduction) feature, the presets, and the tape transport—are positioned for easy access. On-the-go command of the others usually requires memorization and development of a custom finger technique to home in on the button you want. A beeper goes off when any switch is changed and thus warns of unintentional triggering.

The tape deck is a relatively simple unidirectional transport (meaning that the head is truly fixed and should retain alignment better than if it were a bidirectional design) with a SEEK that stops fast-wind in either direction at the nearest interselection blank. It is fitted with all three noise reduction options: DBX and Dolby B and C (plus, of course, "off"). Eject is automatic when a tape ends or when the power is switched off either at the ignition or at the deck itself.

If the 550's head azimuth alignment were better matched to Diversified Science Laboratories' BASF test tape, the cassette section's response would appear much better than it does—presumably quite flat, since there are no serious anomalies attributable to anything but the poor azimuth match, which causes the treble rolloff in our curve. (Our policy is to test products as delivered, just as you probably will use them. The azimuth adjustment screw on the chassis is clearly marked and covered by a stick-on dust seal. Adjustment takes only a few minutes for a technician with appropriate tools, but we don't recommend that the average consumer undertake the procedure.)

The deck runs a hair fast (by a little more than 2 percent, 6 percent being needed for a

half-tone change in reproduced pitch), which is more than we usually encounter but of no consequence unless you're one of those rare individuals with perfect pitch. More important, the flutter measures better than average, and we could hear no wow due to road shock (which was particularly severe because of ice ruts on our "test track" during the February trials). In fact, we found the in-car listening quality particularly lifelike (suggesting that the azimuth of at least one of our in-car test tapes is closer to Concord's than to BASF's).

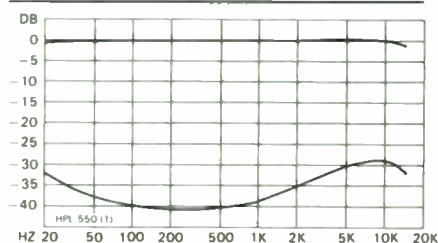
The FM section's FNR feature is atypical of automatic optimizer circuits in that it operates in mono as well as stereo. In stereo, it rapidly begins blending channels before signal strength can fall below even moderate levels (about 55 dBf). By 40 dBf, separation is down to only a few dB and reception is only marginally stereo, but the result is quieting of around 60 dB right down to below 30 dBf, where stereo reception on most equipment is too noisy to be listenable, if it's possible at all. With FNR off, stereo imaging remains excellent down to below the sensitivity rating, but at the expense of greater noise. For this reason, the rating (40 dBf) is not particularly low.

At very low signal strengths, output is attenuated sooner (quite steeply below 25 dBf in mono, higher and more gradually in stereo) with FNR on than with it off; without FNR, the unit maintains full output (including noise) to below 20 dBf. Thus, we preferred the FNR mode (or mono, which is independently switchable) when noise rendered listening truly annoying without it, but left it off otherwise to maintain greater consistency of output and imaging. The noise ("spitting," as we've been calling it) generated by rapidly varying signal strength and multipath distortion occurred relatively frequently on our test road with FNR off, but the noise quality is rather soft and woolly, making it less jarring and obtrusive than in some competing models. With FNR on, it becomes even softer. The remaining stereo data represent good performance for a car unit, and we rated the sound quality with

FM TUNER SECTION

Data taken with FNR off except as indicated; see text.

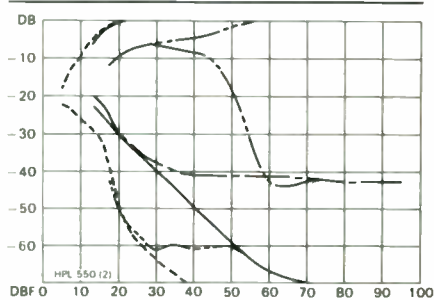
FREQUENCY RESPONSE & CHANNEL SEPARATION



Frequency response + 1/2, -1 1/4 dB, 20 Hz to 15 kHz

Channel separation ≥ 29 dB, 20 Hz to 15 kHz

FM SENSITIVITY & QUIETING



stereo quieting (noise) & output, FNR off
 mono quieting (noise) & output, FNR off
 channel separation at 1 kHz, FNR off
 stereo quieting, output, & separation, FNR on

Stereo sensitivity (for 50-dB noise suppression)
 40 1/4 dBf, with 36 3/4 dB separation at 1 kHz

Mono sensitivity (for 50-dB noise suppression) 20 1/2 dBf

Stereo S/N ratio (at 65 dBf) 68 3/4 dB

Mono S/N ratio (at 65 dBf) 74 1/2 dB

CAPTURE RATIO 2 1/2 dB

SELECTIVITY (alternate-channel) 63 dB

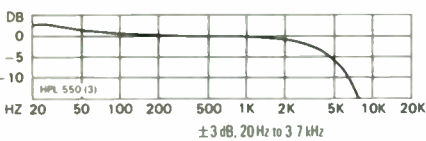
AM SUPPRESSION 67 dB

DISTORTION (THD+N)

	stereo	mono
at 100 Hz	0.26%	0.19%
at 1 kHz	0.07%	0.10%
at 6 kHz	0.18%	0.10%

AM TUNER SECTION

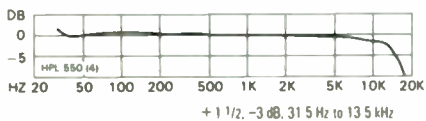
FREQUENCY RESPONSE



SENSITIVITY	6.0 μ V
SELECTIVITY	20 1/A dB
AVC RANGE	67 dB

CASSETTE TRANSPORT SECTION

FREQUENCY RESPONSE



WOW & FLUTTER	$\pm 0.17\%$ average, $\pm 0.19\%$ peak
SPEED ACCURACY (10.8 to 14.4 volts)	2.3% fast

PREAMP/AMPLIFIER SECTION

BASS CONTROL	$\pm 11\ 3/4$ dB at 100 Hz
TREBLE CONTROL	+11 3/4, -11 dB at 10 Hz
LINE OUTPUT IMPEDANCE	1.850 (or 1.725) ohms*

MAXIMUM LINE OUTPUT LEVEL

from FM (100% modulation)	1.3 (or 0.088) volts*
from tape (DIN 0 dB)	1.73 (or 0.115) volts*

OUTPUT (per channel into 4 ohms; at 3% THD+N)	15.8 watts (12 dBW)
at 1 kHz	

*All data (except those in parentheses for line output) taken with output switch at high setting.

strong signals distinctly above average.

We might rate the AM section similarly if it were a little more sensitive. Response is relatively flat; the deep-bass "bump" actually represents distortion and is not nearly as severe as similar anomalies in several other AM sections we've measured. This one is equipped to reproduce C-Quam (Motorola) broadcasts in stereo, but no C-Quam station has a strong enough signal in our test-track area for adequate evaluation.

Tuning progresses in full-channel steps on both bands: 200 kHz for FM, 10 kHz for AM. A heavy hand on the spring-loaded tuning knob can easily overshoot the intended frequency, but we otherwise were pleased with the tuning, which includes a station-

scan option. There are six preset buttons, each of which will accept three FM stations and one on AM.

Unlike most other car equipment, the 550 doesn't automatically switch you back to the tuner when a cassette ends and ejects, preventing loud radio from shattering the silence after a quiet tape. To return to the tuner, you press a button, which when you're listening to the radio enables you to check the time on a built-in clock that shares the digital readout with the tuned frequency (and therefore normally appears only when the tuner is switched off).

A selector above this button chooses what Concord calls the "aux" connections. Though they can be used as an extra input—say, for a Compact Disc player—they also include outputs and therefore will drive signal processors: outboard equalizers, surround-sound adapters, or whatever. In the latter sort of hookup, the aux selector becomes a "loop" or monitor switch, and the radio/tape switch selects the signal that will feed the processor. A jumper plug that feeds the output back to the input is supplied with the 550; attaching it in place of an outboard ensures that the sound won't go dead if you accidentally hit the aux button.

The treble control is fairly typical, providing its maximum boost or cut (plus or minus approximately 11 dB, relative to response at the center detent) at about 10 kHz. The bass is not typical at all. It avoids boost at extremely low frequencies, which usually produces woofer distortion rather than sound, and concentrates its effect at either 80 or 240 Hz. The ± 11 -dB measurement shown in the data was made (at 100 Hz) with the 80-Hz option, designed mainly to cut the deep-bass standing waves that develop in some car-stereo installations. Alternatively, a little boost at this setting is very effective in adding a touch of viscerality to systems without subwoofers. It doubtless will be abused remorselessly (even joyfully) by some owners. We found the 240-Hz option less useful in our test installation. But since it adds a

certain chestiness to the sound at its boost settings, it might enable you to reduce the same effect in a system that suffers from it.

At the lab's test volume setting, the loudness compensation (which is volume-dependent) introduces about 10 dB of boost from 100 Hz down, relative to a minimum in the range around 2.5 kHz, and raises the uppermost treble somewhat (by about 5 dB at 15 kHz). Another preamp feature is the level adjustment for the line outputs. Its purpose is not to optimize loudness action—though it could be used for that if you have outboard amps—but to compensate for different amplifier input sensitivities.

Concord's output power ratings for high fidelity purposes, which stipulate a bandwidth of 30 Hz to 20 kHz, are 12 watts per channel in a two-channel configuration, 10 in a four-channel setup. (There also are "maximum power" ratings, based on higher distortion and unspecified bandwidth.) We measure power only at 1 kHz, and consequently the lab's figure of 15.8 watts is a dB or two higher. In any event, it's a good deal more than you can expect in typical factory-installed radios and more than a stopgap until you can spring for outboard amps, whether you opt for two speakers or four. The two-speaker power (as usual, for such ratings) derives from bridged output, which means that neither side of your speakers can be grounded because both leads are "hot" (though opposite in polarity).

Though the 550 sits atop Concord's HPL line and incorporates a substantial list of features, it isn't a particularly expensive model. We enjoyed its sound during our testing and would recommend it especially to urban and suburban drivers who don't normally need exceptional tuner sensitivity. The flexibility of the various power options commends it to users on a budget who want high power and multiple speakers but don't want to incur the cost all at once. And the triple noise reduction options will interest recordists who would like to rotate a mixed cassette collection between home and car. ■



THE AUX BUTTON ON THE CONCORD HPL-550 CAN BE USED TO SWITCH IN AN EXTERNAL PROCESSOR.



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STEREOPHILE (U.S.) Winter 1986

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HI-FI HERETIC (U.S.) Winter 1986

Mirage 550

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STEREO GUIDE November/December 1984

Mirage 650

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SOUND AND VISION January/February 1986

Mirage 750

"an excellent \$1,500.00 speaker. But it only costs (\$750.00)."

A major U.S. "Underground Publication," Autumn 1985.



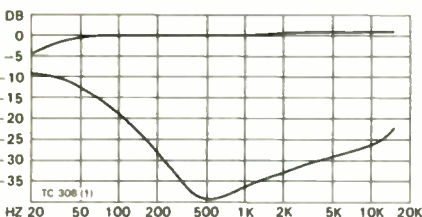
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M I R A G E A C O U S T I C S

Soundstream TC-308 Car Tuner/Tape Deck

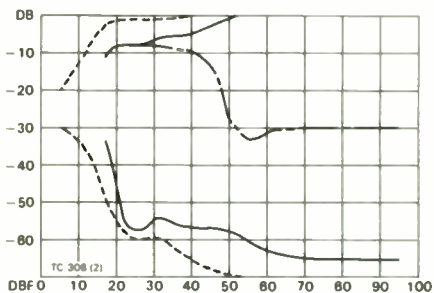
FM TUNER SECTION

FREQUENCY RESPONSE & CHANNEL SEPARATION



Frequency response	+1, -3 dB, 26 Hz to 15 kHz
Channel separation	≥ 20 dB, 110 Hz to 15 kHz

FM SENSITIVITY & QUIETING



Stereo sensitivity (for 50-dB noise suppression)	see text
Mono sensitivity (for 50-dB noise suppression)	18 1/2 dBf
Stereo S/N ratio (at 6.5 dBf)	64 dB
Mono S/N ratio (at 6.5 dBf)	70 3/4 dB

CAPTURE RATIO	2 dB
SELECTIVITY (alternate-channel)	66 1/2 dB
AM SUPPRESSION	64 1/2 dB

DISTORTION (THD+N)	stereo		mono	
	at 100 Hz	at 1 kHz	at 100 Hz	at 1 kHz
	2.4%	0.21%	0.34%	0.09%
	1.5%	0.21%	0.19%	0.09%

DIMENSIONS: 7 BY 2 INCHES (CHASSIS FRONT), 6 INCHES DEEP; ESCUTCHEON, 7/8 BY 2 1/4 INCHES. **CONNECTIONS:** UNTERMINATED WIRES FOR IGNITION, BATTERY, AND GROUND; ROUND FEMALE FOR POWER-AMP AND POWER-ANTENNA SWITCHING; PIN-JACK PAIRS FOR AUX (CD) INPUT, FRONT OUTPUT, AND BACK OUTPUT; STANDARD COAXIAL FEMALE FOR ANTENNA INPUT. **FUSES:** 2-AMP IN IGNITION LINE, 1/2-AMP IN BATTERY LINE. **PRICE:** \$579; OPTIONAL SH-30 QUICK-RELEASE HANDLE, \$20. **WARRANTY:** "LIMITED," ONE YEAR PARTS AND LABOR. **MANUFACTURER:** MADE IN JAPAN FOR SOUNDSTREAM TECHNOLOGIES, 2907 W. 182nd ST., REDONDO BEACH, CALIF. 90278.

SOUNDSTREAM'S IS A CLASS ACT. MAKE NO mistake. Not only is its front-panel design unique—and uniquely satisfying to use—but there are quality touches everywhere. Line connections are gold plated like those of many home components, for instance. And one feature—the so-called Playtrim—appears here for the first time in our car-stereo experience, though a comparable feature was announced for a home deck more than a year ago.

The concept (developed jointly by Dolby Laboratories and NAD) seeks to correct for azimuth disparities between deck and tape by purely electronic means. When a head's alignment doesn't match that of the tape being played, the head loses the ability to resolve the shortest wavelengths (that is, the highest frequencies) on the tape—the greater the alignment skew, the greater the loss of highs. The resulting high-frequency rolloff in playback response may be partially correctable by a simple treble boost at your tone controls, but not if Dolby noise reduction is used. The altered spectral balance "misinforms" the Dolby decoding circuitry about the signal's nature and thus compromises the decoding.

Playtrim is essentially a high-frequency equalizer that neutralizes the effects of azimuth misalignment (and similar high-frequency problems caused by under- or over-biasing during recording) and does so *before* Dolby decoding is performed. Diversified Science Laboratories measured the effect of Playtrim, which has a center-detent "flat" position, as introducing a rising or falling characteristic (for clockwise or counter-clockwise rotation, respectively) beginning gradually above 1 kHz and amounting, at maximum settings, to about ± 1/2 dB at 2 kHz, 1 1/4 dB at 4 kHz, 2 dB at 6 kHz, 3 dB at 8 kHz, 4 dB at 12 kHz, and 5 dB at 16 kHz—all of which conforms well to Soundstream's specs.

The TV-308 provides an excellent match for the azimuth of the BASF test tape. It has a rising frequency characteristic that approximates that of the Playtrim at its maximum clockwise setting; it is therefore a response that is very nearly a reciprocal of the minimum Playtrim setting. The owner's manual (which is among the very best we've encountered for a car component) says that the center detent should match "ideally recorded tapes." If so, the minimum (full counter-clockwise) setting would have little point, despite its very flat net response with the test tape. But if the minimum position is taken as a match for the "ideal," that leaves a range of approximately 10 dB (at 16 kHz) by which compensation could be made for tapes that don't match the deck's azimuth. By the time that range is used up, the poor azimuth match probably would introduce such unstable high-frequency output, due to tape skew, that no fixed EQ could be adequate.

In practice, of course, the adjustment is made by ear, rather than by instruments or theory. We tried quite a number of tapes, recorded on almost as many decks, and found that ideal settings varied considerably—though to what extent the adjustments were dictated by actual azimuth error and to what extent simply by taste is hard to assess under those circumstances. Because brighter tends to sound better, if not more accurate, we tended to overemphasize the highs until odd sibilants, pingy piano tone, or other exaggerations taught us the error of our ways. But where an objective comparison could be made with an original, we usually found that we could achieve excellent replication with a little care.

Frequency response is remarkably alike in the two directions of tape travel. Soundstream says it takes special care in this regard, and on the basis of the data, we can believe it. Also exemplary are the figures for tape motion: very low flutter for a car deck (and no discernible wow due to road shock) and speed accuracy that varies a hair with voltage but averages spot-on the correct speed, which it achieves at 14.4 volts in the forward direction and 10.8 volts in reverse.

The tuner section was designed by Larry Schotz (who numbers among his credits designs for NAD, Proton, Nakamichi, and—at his debut, so to speak—Sherwood). Its FM section is engineered to be quiet, with a rapid channel blend as input drops below 50



dBf. Separation is down to only 3¼ dB at 35 dBf, where noise measures 50 dB below output—technically, the stereo sensitivity rating point. We hesitate to so identify it, however, because it's hardly stereo with so little separation. The stereo indicator stays lit down to 16 dBf, even though there is no measurable separation with any signal lower than 25 dBf.

The rapid blending of channels in the input range between 40 and 50 dBf produces what we've sometimes described as a "billyow" image—rapid changes in apparent size—when signal strength fluctuates. We didn't often encounter the effect in our road testing, but it's disconcerting when it does occur. Faced with multipath and still lower signal strengths, the tuner produces "spitting" noise bursts less frequently but with a somewhat harder sonic edge than we've encountered with some competing models. The remaining FM measurements all speak well of the 308. Overall, we judged on-the-road listenability good, though not as spectacularly good as the Schotz imprimatur had led us to hope.

Manual tuning advances by full-channel increments on both bands (200 kHz on FM, 10 kHz on AM). The six presets will store one station apiece from each band. There is a SCAN whose threshold on the FM band can be adjusted from 26 dBf (normal) to 51 dBf (local); on AM, this switch simply attenuates input to prevent tuner overload. AM bandwidth is relatively limited, trading away response fidelity for relative quiet. As frequently happens in the AM response measurement, distortion is too high in the extreme bass to permit an unequivocal response characterization. Sensitivity is better than average among car models, bringing in something on almost every AM channel during night hours—though most with less than stunning sonics.

In addition to the line outputs, there are gold-plated pin-jack aux inputs, intended specifically for a Compact Disc player. To

choose it, you press EJECT. It ejects the tape if one was playing; otherwise it switches to the aux inputs. (Eject is automatic, incidentally, when the power is switched off at the ignition; there is no on/off switch on the 308 itself.) A pair of screwdriver adjustments on the top of the chassis can be used to trim aux input sensitivity so that the CD player's level will match those of the other sources.

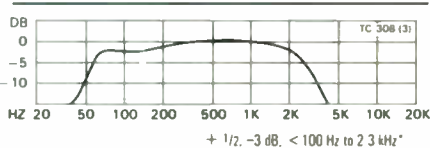
At the lab's test-volume setting, LOUDNESS (whose action is volume-dependent) introduces a shelf at +10 dB below 100 Hz and rises to +7 dB at 20 kHz, relative to a broad depression centered on about 2 kHz. The tone controls are atypical of car stereo equipment in the neat symmetry of their action about both the 0-dB response line and the range (centered on approximately 800 Hz) where they have no effect. They also have maximum boost and cut near the frequency extremes (at 20 Hz in the bass, 15 kHz in the treble) so that the curves slope rather than shelf in the important parts of their working range, particularly in the bass. The maximum effect runs to about ±12 dB in both.

The 308 is a DIN-size chassis with a mounting sleeve into which it docks via mating connectors. (The various input and output wires are connected to the sleeve, rather than the chassis.) An optional SH-30 handle makes it easy to draw the chassis out of the sleeve, for storage out of sight to reduce the likelihood of theft.

Which brings us to what may be the TC-308's most endearing trait: its ergonomics. Not just another pretty faceplate, it is perhaps the easiest to use of any model of comparable complexity we've yet encountered. The rounded corners on everything add an element of tactile pleasure to the visual, the logical layout and differentiated shapes of the control elements aid memorization, and the tiny green LEDs on the controls (some of which turn red when activated) further help the button-homing process, particularly at night. We're very impressed. ■

AM TUNER SECTION

FREQUENCY RESPONSE

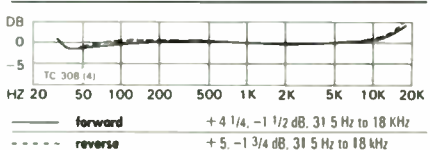


SENSITIVITY	3.5 µV
SELECTIVITY	49 1/4 dB
AVC RANGE	69 3/4 dB

* See text

CASSETTE TRANSPORT SECTION

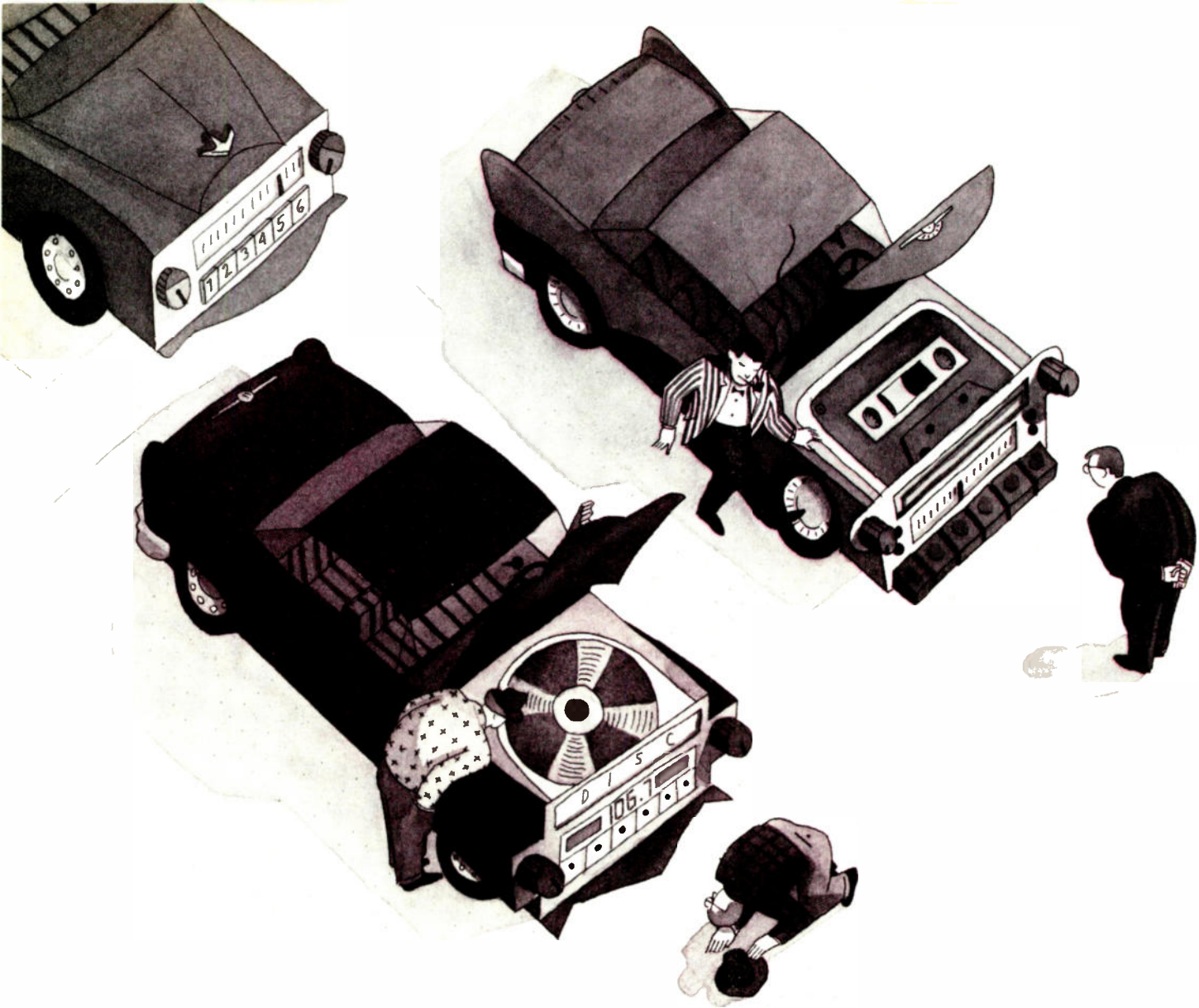
FREQUENCY RESPONSE (Play/trim at detent; see text)



WOW & FLUTTER	± ≤ 0.13% average, ± ≤ 0.16% peak
SPEED ACCURACY (10.8 to 14.4 volts)	0.2% slow to 0.3% fast

PREAMPLIFIER SECTION

BASS CONTROL	+7 1/4, -6 1/2 dB at 100 Hz
TREBLE CONTROL	+10 1/2, -11 3/4 dB at 10 kHz
LINE OUTPUT IMPEDANCE	1,430 ohms
MAXIMUM LINE OUTPUT LEVEL	
from FM (100% modulation)	1.16 volts
from tape (DIN 0 dB)	1.24 volts
AUX (CD) FREQUENCY RESPONSE	+ 1/2, -1 1/2 dB, 20 Hz to 20 kHz
AUX (CD) INPUT CHARACTERISTICS	
Input level trim setting:	max. min.
Sensitivity	32 mV 440 mV
Overload (3% THD+N)	0.23 volts 3.0 volts
Impedance	10k ohms 32k ohms
AUX (CD) S/N RATIO (A-weighted; re 0.5 volt)	≥ 72 dB

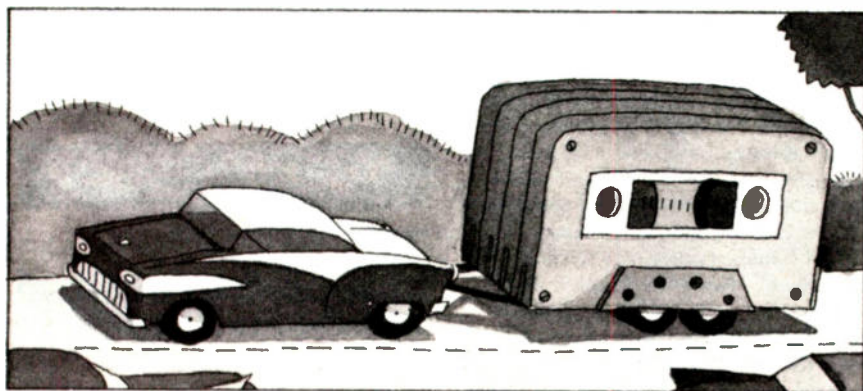


BY JAY C. TAYLOR

The '86 Model Year

CAR STEREO FOR HIGH ROLLERS TOOK CENTER STAGE AT THE WINTER Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, and as a result, the way you listen to music on the road may never be the same. Gambling on the surprising interest in \$1,000-plus front ends, three industry leaders showed their versions of what that much money should buy. Beyond these products, and at lower prices, January's show again demonstrated that in car stereo—as in nearly all other audio fields—the Compact Disc is having quite an impact. Car CD players certainly made a greater impression at this CES than at any previous exhibition.

ILLUSTRATED BY MICHAEL KLEIN



For the Long Haul

IF YOU'RE A LONG-DISTANCE DRIVER, TWO of the most innovative—and expensive—car stereo products may be for you. The first is the Sony CDX-A10 (\$1,000), nicknamed the Disc Jockey: a trunk-mounted unit that cradles ten of your favorite Compact Discs in a vibration-resistant changer mechanism, surrounded by a dust-resistant enclosure. The CDs are held in a removable ten-disc magazine and are chosen via remote control. The DIN-sized (7-by-2-inch) remote, connected by an umbilical cord to the changer, provides access to any disc or track. A Random Music Sensor will pick five tracks for you, and Program Play can memorize your choice of ten different selections from any of the ten discs, in any order. Because of its standard dimensions, the remote can be mounted in-dash in many cars. But the real surprise is its depth. Only one inch thick, the remote can actually be attached with Velcro to the dash, to be passed between passengers or tucked out of sight when necessary. As a bonus, the remote will operate a quartz-synthesis tuner pack, the XT-10 (\$130),

which also stays in the trunk. In addition, the CDX-A10 is equipped with the first two-position compressor I've seen on a car CD player; it can be made to work on the tuner output, as well.

Despite its relatively high price, the Disc Jockey clearly has enormous potential. With all the "works" securely locked in the trunk, thieves, even if they can locate the remote, won't find much of a market for it. Without the space limitations of an in-dash installation, the laser mechanism can be, and apparently is, isolated from all but the most severe jolts. Pounding on the outer case had no effect, and even a vigorous jostling of the changer mechanism itself produced no audible mistracking. Since the preamplifier outputs are part of the trunk-mounted changer, similarly mounted amplifiers will be shielded from the engine and associated motor noise. The next logical step, now apparently in the design stage, is a home CD player that uses the same ten-disc magazine. Additional XA-10 magazines (\$20 each) are available, as is a switching box, the XA-39 (\$30), for combining the Disc Jockey with an existing conventional car stereo system.

The second major product for the long haul, the Alpine 7375 AM/FM cassette changer (\$1,300), also has most of its works stashed in the trunk. It can be programmed to play tapes in any order from a removable magazine. The magazine provides individual noise reduction settings for each of six tapes, including Dolby B, Dolby C, and DBX. Alpine's GZ tape transport mechanism automatically selects the appropriate equalization. Control for the changer is supplied by a fiber-optic link to the in-dash panel radio. Except for the absence of a cassette door, this unit has the familiar Alpine cosmetics, but as with the Disc Jockey, an LCD serves as a visual indicator for a multitude of functions. Unique to the Al-

pine is a change of display color, from green to red, to signal tape or tuner function, respectively.

Alpine puts to good use the larger component dimensions possible in a nondash location, producing a tape deck with frequency response, noise, and flutter specifications rivaling those of good home recorders. Three sets of preamplifier outputs—including one for a subwoofer with variable crossover points (50, 80, and 120 Hz) and 18-dB/octave slopes and two high-pass outputs—provide the amplifier section with a variety of speaker hookup options.

As with the Sony CD changer, noise isolation from the engine is achieved by trunk mounting, but in addition, Alpine's fiber-optic connections from the dash to the changer are completely immune to electrical interference. In fact, fiber optics may play a leading role in car audio's future. Richard Hirschmann, a company known primarily for its antennas, had a prototype fiber-optic replacement for speaker wire on display. Offering precisely the same noise-immunity advantages as the Alpine fiber-optic link, a complete system with encode and decode adapters should retail for about \$400.



CD Flavors

THERE SEEMS TO BE SOME CONFUSION AS to exactly how customers want their car CD players to be provided. Although a number of manufacturers have announced their intentions to build



TWO OF BLAUPUNKT'S LATEST SPEAKERS HAVE TWEETER MODULES ADJUSTABLE FOR BEST DISPERSION.



PROTON D-275 POWER AMPLIFIER



ALPHASONIK A-2025 POWER AMPLIFIER

CD/tuner combinations, very few have shown any tangible evidence that they are following through with such plans. Sanyo, however, introduced not one but two in-dash AM/FM/CD players. The FT-EC1 (\$600) and the FT-EC2 (\$700) have inputs for a portable cassette player. The approach seems quite a bit more sensible than that of buying an AM/FM/cassette receiver with a similar CD input and using a portable digital player. Either way, you can listen to both cassettes and CDs, but given the current state of technology, tape is still the more portable format, if you're inclined to carry both. In addition to the basic disc-player features found on the FT-EC1, the FT-EC2 adds a pause control, fast search, 16-selection programmability, and Sanyo's Viper security system. Besides sounding the car's horn if theft of the unit is attempted, the FT-EC2 can be tied into the car's ignition system, requiring entry of a three-digit code before the car can be started.

Compact Disc players without tuners were everywhere. Perhaps the most interesting and certainly the most unusual was the Philips CD-10 (\$400), which permits a portable Philips CD player to dock with an in-dash preamp/housing. The advantages of this setup are quite apparent: The guts of the machine can be removed for security, for use at home, or for transfer to another appropriately equipped vehicle. Other new players include the CDC-005 (\$600) from Clarion, the latest automotive CD player company to incorporate a CD caddy system. Previously shown by Yamaha, and later by Blaupunkt and JVC, the system uses a protective sleeve that replaces the standard jewel box and is inserted into the player along with the disc.

When the Yamaha caddy was first shown a year ago, I predicted that other manufacturers would follow the company's

lead. But I also predicted that the market would eventually belong to CD/tuner combinations. If the added complication of a CD sleeve cannot be accommodated inside the standard 7-by-2-inch chassis along with a tuner, then the caddy's days are numbered. Not long after this January's show, Sony, citing a 10:1 sales ratio of CD/tuner units vs. CD-only ones, made plans for gradually phasing out its CD-X5 car player. Subsequently, Pioneer announced a close-out price on the CDX-P1 player, to be replaced by a model with a tuner. Another maker that wishes to remain anonymous confided that its CD-only player may never be produced because of the lack of consumer interest.

With home disc player sales breaking new records every day, why, wonders the industry, aren't you, Mr. Customer, willing to strap a \$500 CD player under your dash? If you are expecting the same astounding price decreases that occurred with home units, forget it. The construction necessary to handle typical road conditions will prohibit any precipitous declines, and the recent surge in the value of the yen rules out anything but a price increase. Why spend \$500 when a \$200 portable can be pressed into service? Because the latter cannot be expected to track properly under automotive vibration and temperature conditions. And an unsecured portable is a more tempting target for the casual thief, in addition to being considerably harder to load



PIONEER EQ-E303 GRAPHIC EQUALIZER



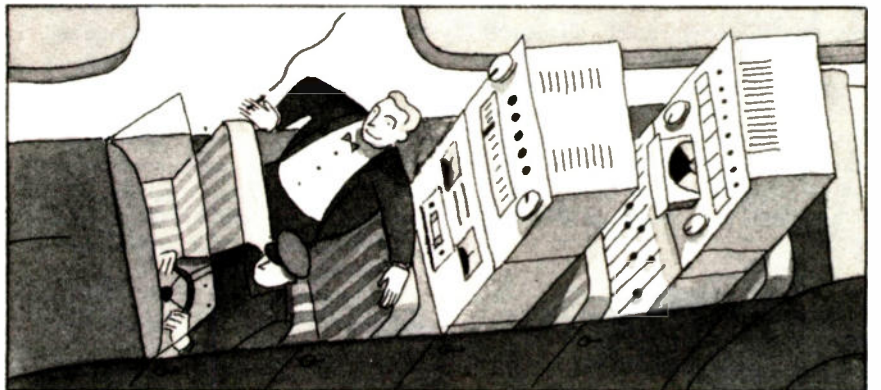
DENON DCE-2150 EQUALIZER/CROSSOVER



SHERWOOD EQA-280 EQUALIZER/BOOSTER

and operate while driving.

Still, if you already own a portable CD player and would like at least to give it a mobile audition, there now are products to make that easy. In-dash receivers too numerous to mention sprouted CD inputs in Las Vegas. But not all CD inputs are created equal. Most are simply a pair of RCA jacks on the back of the unit, with no provisions for a quick portable patch-in or power source for the player. Jensen showed two such models, the JXL-55 (\$400) and JXL-45 (\$330), but it also had an adapter, the J-1470 (\$25), that would furnish a permanent under-dash input and power source. Proton unveiled two new front ends, the P-206 (\$450) and the P-215 (\$375), that are equipped with the usual CD button and rear RCA inputs, but also have a front-panel miniphone jack for easy access.



Having it All

FOR THOSE OF YOU WITH THE TIME AND patience to change cassettes manually (or a chauffeur to do it for you), the new Kenwood KRC-999 (\$1,300) is described as a "breakthrough product." And thanks to an outboard computer module, breakthrough may be an understatement (see test report, March). With microproces-

sors controlling a host of features, the KRC-999 is probably the most comprehensive tuner/tape deck on the road today. Unable to fit all of the controls on a standard DIN faceplate, Kenwood has had to pack 19 buttons operating an even greater number of functions into a motor-driven tray.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 45)



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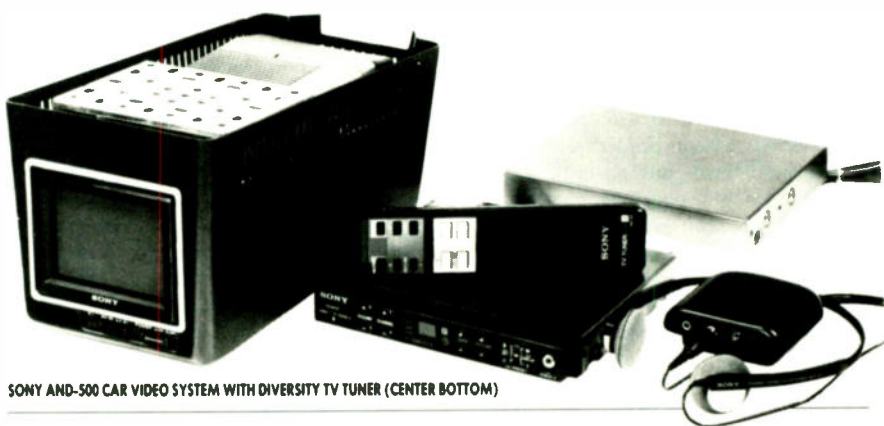
(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 42)

In addition to the kind of performance and features you would expect from this class of front end, the KRC-999 has a seven-band graphic equalizer that will memorize three user-programmed EQ curves plus three that are preprogrammed. The seven-segment, three-color LED display for each band can be used as a visual indicator of the boost or attenuation at that frequency (audible tones are emitted during adjustments, in case driving demands 100 percent of your visual attention) or as a spectrum analyzer. More LEDs are used to show volume level, tuner band and signal strength, noise reduction system, and other information. The KRC-999 will accept direct hookup of a Kenwood car CD player.



CD Security

CAR CD PLAYERS—HIGH-TICKET ITEMS, for the moment—have understandably generated considerable concern among security-conscious autophiles. While perhaps not as flashy as a trunk-mounted changer, the Denon DCD-X AM/FM/CD front end may be equally secure, because it is the first car disc player to use the increasingly popular removable DIN format, allowing it to be taken from the vehicle (for safekeeping, of course). Shown in prototype form, the DCD-X will use the same Super Linear Converter (SLC) that is said to reduce conversion distortion in Denon's home CD players. A second removable DIN in-dash unit, the DCR-5420 (\$430), provides the same type of



SONY AND-500 CAR VIDEO SYSTEM WITH DIVERSITY TV TUNER (CENTER BOTTOM)

security in an AM/FM cassette receiver. Special features of the 5420 include a CD input that is activated by the presence of an audio signal and accessory kits for matching the unit's night illumination with your dashboard lights.

Getting into the removable DIN security business for the first time, JVC previewed the KS-RX605 (\$480), with a CD input and a built-in five-band S.E.A. graphic equalizer. Kenwood showed an updated version of the KRC-626, its original extractable design. The new KRC-636 (\$639) incorporates Kenwood's Bi-Azimuth head to optimize tape-to-head alignment in both directions of tape travel. Among the other new features are a full-logic tape transport and selectable green/amber lighting.

Car Video

FOR THE VAN/LIMO/RV OWNER OR PASSENGER searching for the complete audiovisual experience, Sony has taken its background of FM diversity tuning and produced a complete mobile video system. The AND-500 (\$125) Mobile TV Diversity Unit provides the best possible reception by automatically compensating for variations in video signal strength. A minimum of two antennas is required, and additional antennas, up to a maximum of four, improve performance. The half-DIN-size TV tuner will fit the full-size DIN radio slots in most new American cars, if installed with a customizing kit (manufactured by Scosche). Featuring scan tuning and a digital display, the XTV-5 (\$265) comes complete with an RM-X5 remote control and has both front and rear video inputs for a videocassette recorder. At the show, an eight-inch monitor, the XVM-8 (\$400), was suspended from the ceiling of the demo van in a GM-4200 mounting rack (\$100). Another accessory offered by Sony is a passenger headphone adapter, the XA-66 (\$45).

New Manufacturers

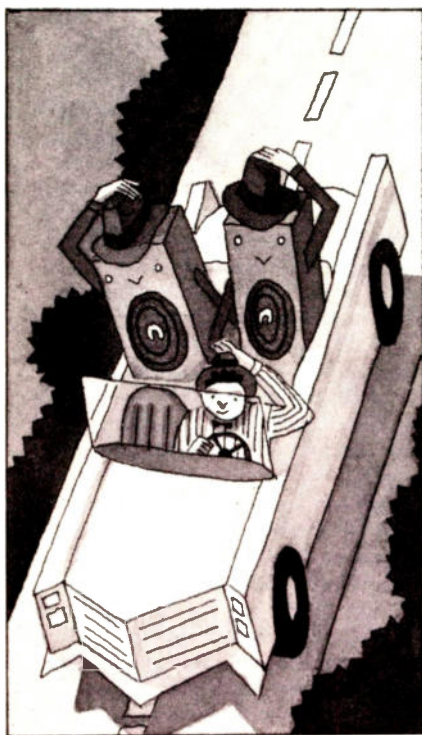
NEW NAMES IN THE AUTOSOUND ARENA include Sharp, Hitachi, and Sunkyong. Among Sharp's products are eight speakers and six in-dash front ends, headlined by the RG-F870 (\$400), which comes with a remote control that operates in either a wired fiber-optic or wireless infrared mode. Hitachi showed a complete line that includes amps, speakers, four high-powered FTR/cassette players, an alarm, and a CD player, the CD-1D4 (\$700).

Carver, having previously tested the market with a car power amplifier, displayed two prototype front ends of German origin, the TX-Nine (\$775) and the TX-Seven (\$650). Another mobile-amp manufacturer, Soundstream, also expanded its line to encompass in-dash products. Both the \$579 TC-308 (see test report, this issue) and the \$449 TC-305 are removable DIN designs with an unusual "rounded-off" appearance. In fact, I'd have to say the soft, uncluttered look of these decks is the best I've ever encountered. In addition to the excellent styling, the TC-308 and -305 offer a play-trim control for good high-frequency response with any cassette. The circuitry, jointly developed by NAD and Dolby Labs, provides a fine adjustment of playback EQ prior to Dolby decoding, to compensate for high-frequency inaccuracies and prevent Dolby mistracking. Other features include an adjustable CD input on the TC-308 and bass and treble controls that focus on the frequency extremes.

For years, the oversized panel openings in late-model GM cars have been filled with an installation kit and a standard-size receiver. The competition was so lackadaisical that several Clarion models, designed to fill the entire space, were introduced in early 1982 and are still available. However, now that Ford and Chrysler products will both accept this new domestic standard,

manufacturers are beginning to realize the after-market potential of high-quality receivers with the "factory" look.

JVC has updated its initial effort in the category, the KS-RX910, with the KS-RX710 (\$500). Like its predecessor, the 710 has ample front-panel space for a five-band S.E.A. graphic equalizer, but the cosmetics have been refined to look more like those of factory-installed equipment. Mitsubishi unveiled two oversized receivers, the JX-2 (\$280) and JX-3 (\$350). Both come with GM wiring harnesses for ease of installation and will plug directly into the Mitsubishi CD-100 Compact Disc player. The JX-3 also boasts high power—100 watts (20 dBW) maximum—and a six-band equalizer.



Speakers

SPEAKERS TOO NUMEROUS TO MENTION made their debuts in Las Vegas, including completely new lines from AR and Philips, the Series II Reference Standard speakers from Infinity (with new Polycell midranges and tweeters), and Multi-Directional models from Blaupunkt. Two of the Blaupunkts, the MD-5062 5-inch (\$120) and MD-6592 6½-inch (\$130), have tweeter modules that can be adjusted for best high-frequency dispersion. A third model, the MD-5054 (\$130)—a 5-inch speaker designed for rear-deck placement—sports a

"spoiler" for aiming the three mid-/high-frequency drivers directly at the listener.

Other introductions of note included the resurrection of the Phase Linear brand name for a new high-end line from Jensen. All four speakers, ranging from the 4-inch dual-cone PL-1400 (\$65) to the 6-by-9-inch triaxial PL-3690 (\$200), have cones made of a carbon compound, which yields both a significant weight reduction and extra rigidity. Two of Yamaha's latest, the YCS-501 (\$100) and YCS-401 (\$100), use a woofer made of carbon fiber, the same cone material employed in many of the company's home speakers.

Boston Acoustics joined the growing number of companies making three-way matched-component speaker systems with two models, the 793 (\$300) and the 763 (\$270). Both packages contain a pair of 4-inch midrange drivers and Varimount dome tweeters for forward placement and either a 6-by-9-inch (the 793) or 6-inch (the 763) woofer for the rear deck. A 5¼-inch dual-cone model, the 705 (\$70), and an 8-inch subwoofer, the 780LF (\$100), also were presented.

A trend supported by virtually all the latest speakers is increased sensitivity and power handling, with "digital ready" being the most frequent explanation. Another trend, one that I am no longer able to ignore, much as I'd like to, is the pickup-truck box speaker. Although companies (like Stillwater Designs, with their Kickers) have been making this type of speaker for years, the recent surge in pickup sales has brought a bevy of new contestants into the expanding market. Lured by the lack of complicated installation procedures and the ease with which they can be moved from one vehicle to another, consumers are spending several hundred dollars for what the manufacturers like to call an investment that doesn't get traded in when the pickup does. Prominent contributors to the new category are MTX (Road Thunder), Pyle (Pounders), Ultimate (Turbo), and Philips. All produce one- and two-piece units de-



CONCORD HPL-540 RECEIVER/DECK



SPARKOMATIC SR-317 RECEIVER/DECK/EQUALIZER



SHERWOOD CRD-210 RECEIVER/DECK



ALPINE MODEL 7172 RECEIVER/TAPE DECK

signed to fit behind the seat. With the exception of Philips, all use horn tweeters, whose brightness is subdued by the upholstery they hide behind. And except for the MTX speakers, which are constructed with ducted ports, all have passive radiators for a bass thump that can really be felt as well as heard.

But you say you don't own a pickup? Products are nonetheless beginning to spin off from that category that may still interest you. Southern Audio Service's Bazooka subwoofers were originally designed for pickups, but are equally at home when corner-loaded in a hatchback. Variations on the single-piece, full-range theme are emerging for hatchbacks, and more recently, rear-deck applications have been found. Of interest to everyone who ever wanted a subwoofer, but had no place for one: New compact "subs" from Stillwater and MTX fit under most front seats. The Stillwater Compact (\$200) uses such small drivers (4-inch cone and 4-inch passive radiator) that I laughed—until I heard it demonstrated. Talk about a kick in the pants! In tandem with a subwoofer amp, such as the Alpha-sonik AS-1060 (\$145) or AS-1100 (\$250), even just one of the pair added a new dimension to low-frequency reproduction. You should give this product an audition before cutting gaping holes in your new car's interior.



BLAUPUNKT CDP-05 CD PLAYER/TUNER



SANYO FT-EC2 CD PLAYER/TUNER

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STEREO QUESTIONS & ANSWERS BY LESLIE B. TYLER

Leslie B. Tyler is vice-president of engineering at DBX, Inc., and was active in designing the company's TV noise reduction system.

WHAT IS STEREO TV?

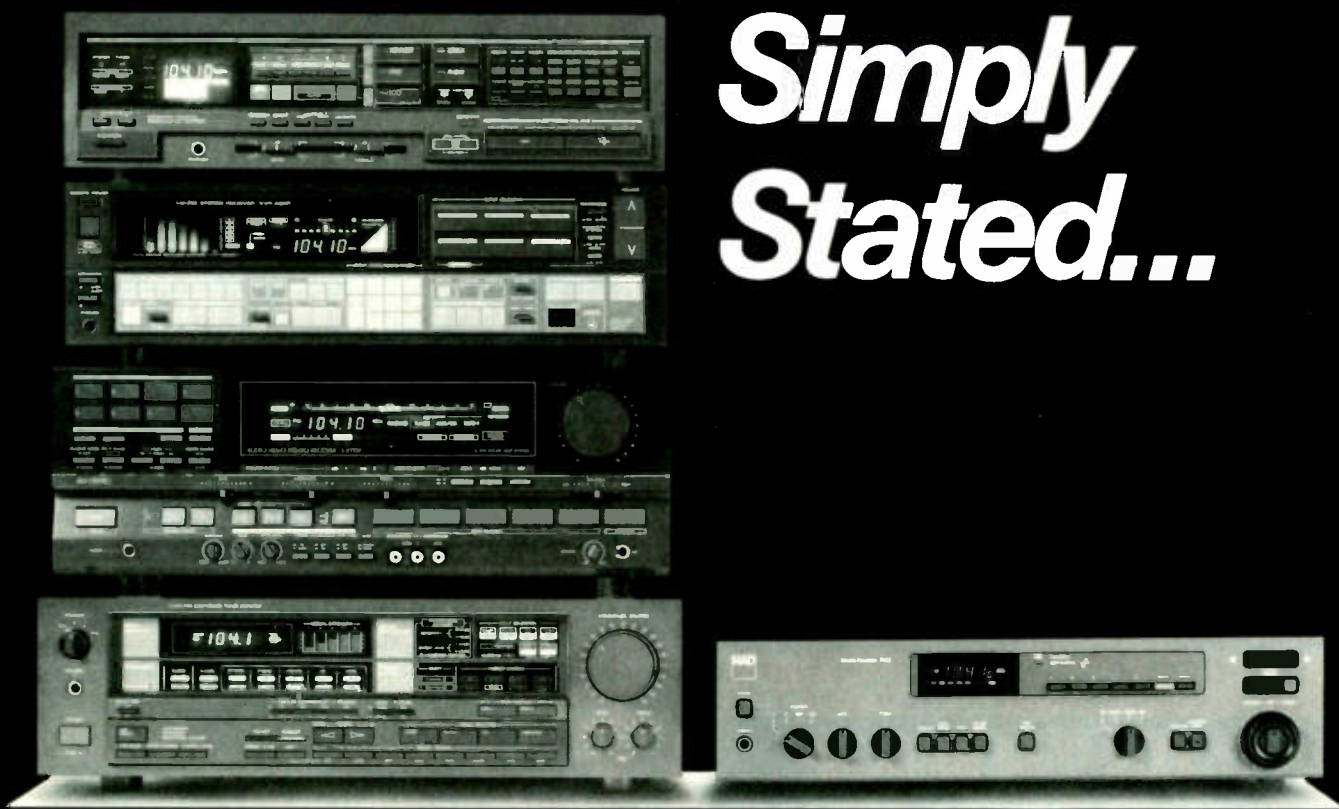
THE BTSC (BROADCAST TELEVISION SYSTEM COMMITTEE) STANDARD version of MTS (multichannel television sound) has two main parts: a system (developed by Zenith) of modulating a television signal with stereo audio information and a method (developed by DBX) of reducing audio noise during stereo reception. Zenith's modulation scheme itself consists of four audio channels: left- and right-channel stereo information, an SAP (separate audio program) channel, and a low-quality professional channel. The SAP channel is intended to be a medium-fidelity "service" for simultaneous translations, visiting-team sports announcers' commentary, and even non-program-related uses such as 24-hour news. The professional channel can be utilized to send paging beeper signals, transmitter telemetry, and the like. No restrictions have been

placed on its use as long as it does not interfere with the two primary services, stereo audio and the SAP. (For a detailed explanation of stereo TV abbreviations and acronyms, see "Coming to You in Stereo," March).

HOW IS STEREO TV POSSIBLE—TWO CHANNELS WHERE ONE EXISTED BEFORE?

THAT STEREO TV IS COMPATIBLE WITH MONO RECEPTION IS largely due to an accident of history. In NTSC (National Television System Committee) television broadcasting, the standard in the United States since the advent of color in 1953, the video information extends up to 4.2 MHz above the video carrier. With mono NTSC, the audio is encoded by frequency modulation of a 4.5-MHz audio carrier. Maximum audio modulation causes a 25-kHz deviation of the carrier—

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Featured above on the right is the NAD 7140 AM/FM Stereo Receiver. Industrial design by Reinhold Weiss Design, Chicago

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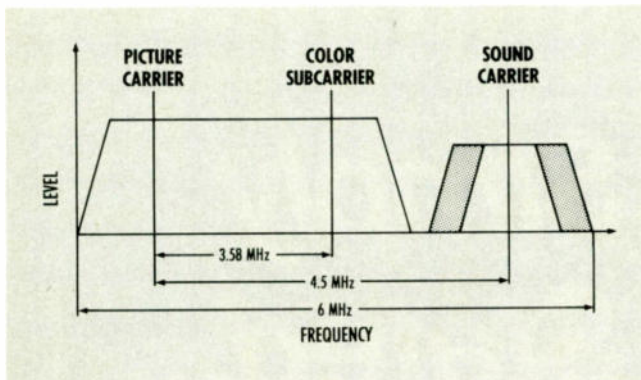


FIGURE 1. THE SPECTRUM OF AN NTSC VIDEO SIGNAL, SHOWING THE FREQUENCY REGIONS TAKEN UP BY STEREO TV (TINTED AREAS)

the carrier frequency varies between 4.475 MHz and 4.525 MHz. But even with a fully modulated audio carrier, there is a gap in the spectrum of about 275 kHz between the lowest audio modulation (4.475 MHz) and the highest video frequency (4.2 MHz). This space, determined more than three decades ago, is what makes stereo TV possible: In the BTSC system, the video spectrum is unchanged from NTSC, but the audio signal uses up much of the buffer zone and occupies greater spectrum space (see tinted portion of Figure 1).

HOW IS A BTSC SIGNAL MODULATED?

FIGURE 2 SHOWS THE COMPARATIVELY COMPLEX BASEBAND spectrum of the BTSC audio signal. (A baseband signal is one that modulates the carrier or subcarrier; it's what the carrier carries.) Just as in NTSC, it contains the monaural (or stereo-sum, $L + R$) information in its original frequency space (from 50 Hz to 15 kHz) with a 75-microsecond pre-emphasis. But BTSC makes four important additions:

First, the stereo-difference ($L - R$) information is compressed by the DBX-TV noise reduction system. This signal amplitude-modulates a 31.468-kHz subcarrier, producing a double-sideband suppressed-carrier (DSSC) signal occupying a bandwidth of about 30 kHz. The $L - R$ subcarrier frequency was chosen because it is twice the horizontal-sweep frequency in the NTSC system (15.734 kHz) and is therefore easily synchronized with during reception. The amplitude of the DSSC signal is adjusted to deviate the 4.5-MHz audio carrier by 50 kHz, or twice the deviation of the stereo-sum (mono) signal. This in turn increases the $L - R$ dynamic range.

Second, the SAP signal is also compressed, and the resulting signal frequency-modulates a 78.67-kHz subcarrier (five times the horizontal-sweep frequency) and is injected to produce a 15-kHz maximum deviation of the audio carrier.

Third, the professional-channel signal frequency-modulates a 102.3-kHz subcarrier (6.5 times the horizontal-sweep frequency), which is added to produce a 3-kHz deviation of the audio carrier.

Finally, the system uses an unmodulated pilot tone located at 15.734 kHz, injected with sufficient amplitude to pro-

duce a 5-kHz deviation of the audio carrier. This pilot tone identifies the transmission as a BTSC-encoded one and is used by TV receivers to switch into the stereo mode.

The sum of all the carrier deviations (25 kHz + 50 kHz + 15 kHz + 3 kHz + 5 kHz = 98 kHz) is about four times the deviation of a mono TV carrier. This eats into the spectral gap conveniently left by the developers of mono color broadcasting.

HOW DOES BTSC COMPARE TO STEREO FM RADIO IN AUDIO PERFORMANCE?

MODERN FM-RADIO TRANSMITTERS ARE CAPABLE OF S/N (signal-to-noise) ratios in excess of 70 dB, flat frequency response to beyond 15 kHz, and low distortion (usually around 0.1 percent). Potential home tuner performance usually is substantially better than the quality of signal being received. However, when receiving a stereo FM signal, distance from the transmitter dramatically affects the final S/N ratio. This is because FM radio's $L - R$ signal is inherently 23 dB noisier than its $L + R$ signal. (At higher modulating frequencies, FM systems have increased amounts of noise, and FM radio's stereo subcarrier is up at 38 kHz.) This noise gain is heard when switching from mono to stereo reception on all but the closest FM stations.

With the BTSC system, the basic S/N ratio of a good TV transmitter is only a few dB less than that of an FM transmitter. Distortion is just as low as radio's, but frequency response is not possible beyond 15 kHz, because of the relatively low stereo subcarrier frequency (31.5 kHz). However, the received S/N ratio in stereo is every bit as good as that in mono, owing to the compander. This means that there will be no difference in dynamic range when switching from mono to stereo in MTS. For the broadcaster, this is extremely important: It means no loss in coverage area in stereo.

IS COMPANDING REALLY NECESSARY?

WITHOUT NOISE REDUCTION, THE ZENITH MTS TRANSMISSION system is capable of high-quality transmission and reception of stereo audio. However, the BTSC stereo subcarrier adds approximately 15 dB of noise to stereo reception. This noise penalty arises from the frequency distribution of noise natural to all frequency-modulation systems combined with the limits imposed on the power and spectrum space available for the audio subcarrier (in order for it not to interfere with the video signal). Furthermore, under certain impaired transmission and reception conditions (weak received signals, transmitter imperfections, and multipath, among other degradations), buzz or hum can be introduced into the audio.

The situation is worse for the SAP channel. Because of its subcarrier's higher frequency, even more noise is introduced. The SAP channel also uses a frequency modulated subcarrier, which is subject to "buzz beat," an intermodulation of the picture with the audio, causing a particularly obnoxious type of non-harmonically-related distortion. The most practical engineering solution to these problems was to apply a sophisticated companding noise reduction system only to the stereo-difference and SAP channels.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE DBX-TV SYSTEM?

THE COMPANDING SYSTEM DEVELOPED BY DBX, LIKE THE OTHERS submitted for examination, was designed to:

- provide significant noise reduction even in poor reception areas,
- preserve input-signal dynamic range without loss of headroom or incursion of other audio anomalies (distortion, noise pumping, breathing, alteration of frequency response, and so forth),
- prevent the stereo subcarrier from interfering with overall TV-transmitter power levels,
- ensure reliable and effective performance even in the face of severe man-made noise and transmission/reception system impairments (such as multipath and low signal strength), and
- perform well at reasonable circuit cost and simplicity.

The simultaneous achievement of these five goals was not easy, and it was necessary to use unusual companding techniques to overcome some difficult engineering challenges. For example, the dynamic range of the channels before noise reduction was very low. Sixty miles from a transmitter, where picture quality is only slightly snowy, an uncompanded

stereo subcarrier would have had only about 43 dB of dynamic range (measured from the peak signal to unweighted-rms noise level). The dynamic range of an "unprotected" SAP channel would have been worse, around 26 dB!

HOW DOES DBX-TV WORK?

TO COPE WITH SUCH NOISY CHANNELS, AN ENTIRELY NEW NOISE reduction system was designed. In order to consistently mask background noise during low-level, predominantly low-frequency passages, substantial amounts of pre-emphasis (treble boost during transmission) would be required. But if extreme pre-emphasis were permitted to remain in effect during high-level, high-frequency passages, the broadcast channel would be overloaded and gross distortion would result. The solution combines the traditional approaches of wideband companding and pre-emphasis with an innovative system (called spectral companding) that varies the pre-emphasis to suit the characteristics of the audio signal.

HOW DOES SPECTRAL COMPANDING OPERATE?

A SUBSECTION OF A DBX-TV COMPANDER—THE SPECTRAL COMPRESSOR—examines the input signal to determine the ratio between its high- and low-frequency information and varies the pre-emphasis according to these rules: For predominantly low-frequency signals, large amounts of pre-emphasis are applied to boost the high frequencies far above the noise. For predominantly high-frequency signals, where the signal itself hides the noise, the boost is reduced to prevent overload. (CONTINUED ON PAGE 52)

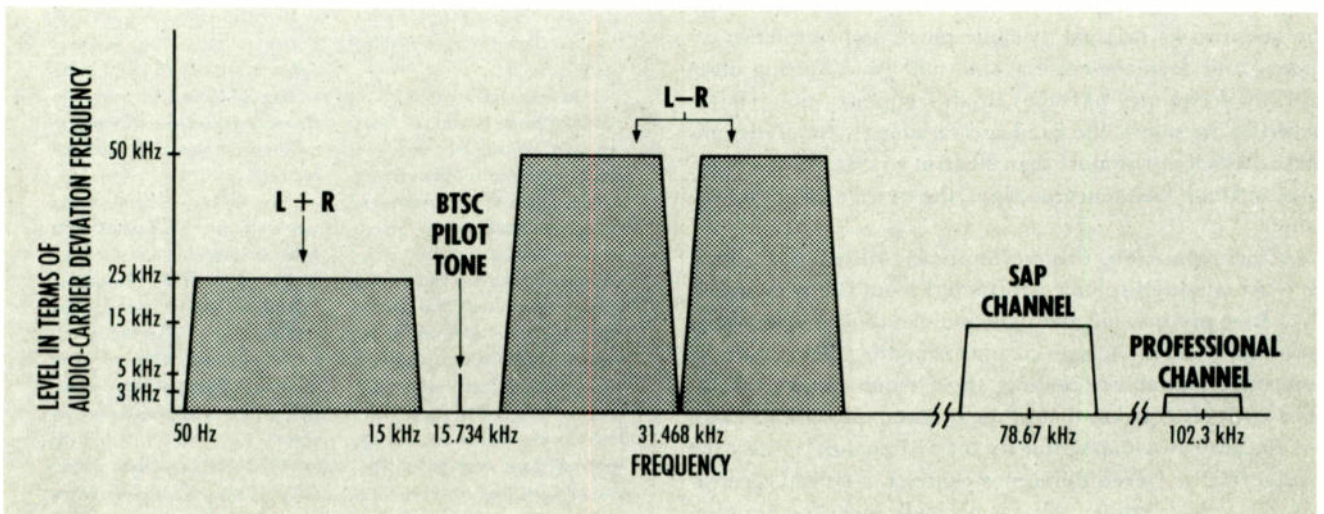


FIGURE 2. THE BASEBAND SPECTRUM OF A BTSC SIGNAL (NOT SHOWN TO SCALE). THE L + R AND L - R MODULATIONS (TINTED AREAS) CARRY THE STEREO INFORMATION.

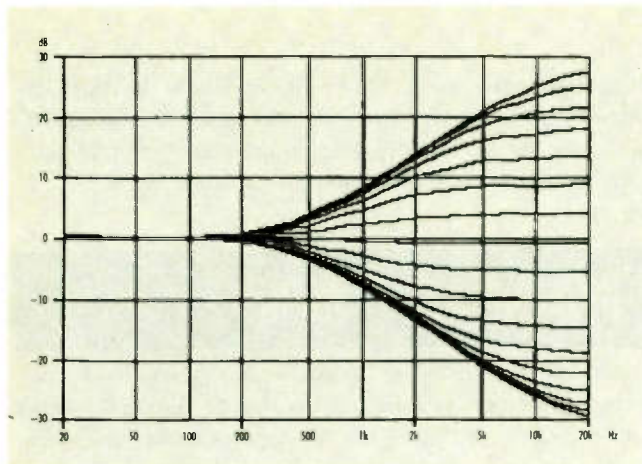


FIGURE 3. THE RANGE OF PRE-EMPHASIS CURVES APPLIED BY THE DBX-TV COMPRESSOR CIRCUIT

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 51)

The spectral compressor works in conjunction with a fixed pre-emphasis stage that provides a treble boost somewhat stronger than that used in FM broadcasting. This fixed pre-emphasis has a steep response rise in the critical frequency region between 1 kHz and 5 kHz to help overcome the natural TV-channel noise. Thanks to the spectral compressor, the boost does not cause overload. The combined responses of the fixed and variable (spectral) pre-emphasis are shown in Figure 3. The last major section of the DBX-TV companding system is a wideband compressor stage, which acts to maintain high average audio levels in the channel, but keeps them below the overload point at all times.

HOW DOES DBX-TV FUNCTION DURING DECODING?

IN A BTSC RECEIVER, THE INVERSE OF THE COMPRESSION PROCESS OCCURS. After demodulation, audio signals are passed through a spectral expander, two fixed de-emphasis networks, and a wideband expander. These elements restore the audio to its original dynamic range and frequency response and decrease noise at the same time. During quiet and low-frequency passages, high-frequency noise is reduced by the sum of the fixed and variable (spectral) de-emphasis, which can be more than 60 dB at 15 kHz. During high-level and high-frequency passages, the signal itself masks the noise.

After expansion, the stereophonic difference signal ($L - R$) is added to and subtracted from the sum signal ($L + R$) to produce left and right audio outputs, respectively. Since the noise in the sum channel is higher than that in the companded difference channel, the dynamic range of the final outputs is equal to that of the original (monaural) channel. Because the companding for the SAP channel is the same as that for the stereo difference channel, a typical receiver has only one expander. That is normally switched between SAP and stereo service.

WHAT LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE CAN BE EXPECTED FROM THE SAP AND PROFESSIONAL CHANNELS?

CLOSE TO A TRANSMITTER (WITHIN 35 MILES OR SO, WHERE THE picture has little snow), SAP performance is good. Its S/N ratio is better than 70 dB, thanks to the noise reduction system. Farther out, performance will degrade progressively, and compander "artifacts" will begin to be evident at about 45 to 50 miles from the transmitter. However, during listening tests those artifacts were judged to be subjectively preferable to a high uncompanied noise level. Frequency response extends to about 10 kHz. The professional channel has no noise reduction and has an upper frequency limit of about 3 kHz—definitely not high fidelity, but adequate for data transmission. ■

STEREO TV: WHAT TO LISTEN FOR

One of the principle traits to listen and look for (on data sheets and in test report results) is the *raison d'être* of stereo television: channel separation. In fact, a good channel-separation figure (the best are greater than 25 dB) is an indication that most everything else has been done well (spurious noise is low, the various filters in the system are well matched, and the compander circuits are tracking correctly). Although a separation figure of only 25 dB may seem low by the 90-dB standards set by the Compact Disc system, it is quite adequate for television sound purposes. Besides, the acoustical separation between the ears is less than that for most audible frequencies.

Another major category of stereo TV faults is noise, or, more properly, noises. Not only can hiss be a problem, but because of various video frequencies leaking into the audio circuits, assorted hums, buzzes, birdies, whistles, tweets, and the 15.734 kHz pilot tone may seep into the audio outputs. To listen for these, wait for a quiet passage in a stereo TV broadcast—you might have to wait a long time—and then turn the volume up. At DBX, we have found that titling (credits, subtitles, and the like) tends to create the worst leakage of

video-related noise into the audio signal. This stems from the repetitive sharp vertical edges and high video amplitudes generated by letters on the screen. In test report results, seek a signal-to-noise ratio approaching or exceeding 60 dB (from maximum modulation to an A-weighted broadband noise floor).

If reception conditions are good, distortion and noise pumping are not a problem. In stereo TV as in FM radio, most detrimental to reception is multipath, which can create the noises and distortion familiar to FM listeners, with the added problem of video-frequency leakage (buzzes, in particular). Luckily, TV multipath is easier to see—as "ghosts"—than to hear. Minimizing ghosting by antenna choice and orientation automatically reduces stereo TV multipath problems.

You should, in auditioning stereo TV sets, sit off-center for a time. Although it is not a characteristic of the BTSC (Broadcast Television System Committee) modulation or noise reduction, we have found that the mounting position of the loudspeakers on a stereo TV has a great effect on whether the stereo image remains stable, is pulled to one side, or collapses entirely, when heard from off-axis. L.B.T.

FAINT PRAISE



E D I T E D

B Y

G E O R G I A

C H R I S T G A U

A N D

T E D

L I B B E Y

WHAT'S THE GRATUITOUS INSULT "SHE SAID THAT she was working for the ABC News/It was as much of the alphabet as she knew how to use" doing on an album as good as Elvis Costello's *King of America*? Ask Billy Joel, who, lost in the narcissism of his fame, admitted, "I don't need clever conversation/I never want to work that hard," in "Just the Way You Are," his most popular—and most egalitarian—love song. Or Prince, the man-boy who reintegrated rock radio, who's turned on only by stupid girls.

Fact is, these songwriters, each tops in his very separate realm, haven't aged very gracefully. Their teenage-boy hang-ups have matured into lusty snorts and position papers; it's okay for them to indulge themselves, it's even expected. Costello, who gave Linda Ronstadt the best lyrics she ever sang in "Alison," is the most frustrating example, because when he's not hating a woman for rejecting him, this cult hero routinely turns his irritability into vision. "Little Palaces," about the English aristocracy knowing its place—"To be the heir apparent/Of the kingdom of the invisible"—is only the latest evidence of his genius. And he's frustrating because, as a word man, he gets the most press. *King of America*—woman problems notwithstanding—demands notice. But I couldn't justify a third Costello review in two years, especially when other deserving artists get none.

Speaking of which, Marshall Crenshaw, whose excellent *Downtown* from last year slipped through the cracks of BACKBEAT, also is a great songwriter. (And like Costello, he chose T-Bone Burnett to produce his most recent effort.) With his bookish good looks and shy-guy soft-spokenness, Crenshaw may seem self-effacing, but he hardly lacks confidence. From the stage of Greenwich Village's Bottom Line, he said, "There are a lot of great songs written about New York. This is mine." "My Town" was a rave-up, all right—not as great, though, as "You're My Favorite Waste of Time," which you might even hear, in cover versions, if you've bought a Bellamy Brothers or a Bette Midler album recently.

Crenshaw sings plenty about hurt love: "Lesson Number One" is tell the truth, and the way he sings it, he sounds like he just finished crying over someone who didn't. Or maybe it's just that blend of Buddy Holly plaintiveness with Beatles chord changes that jerks a tear. Ringing four-part harmonies also are standard, and though all that sonorous sincerity can get a little cloying on the '50s stuff in concert, Crenshaw is not the predictable revivalist complete with string tie and cowpunk attitude. His solo vocal on "Gimme Some Truth," which he introduced simply as "a song by John Lennon," stole the show with wit, loud rock 'n' roll: "No short-haired yellow-bellied son-of-Tricky-Dicky is gonna Mother Hubbard soft-soap me. . . ." Lennon personified the changes of a radical era; he matured, and we have his music as evidence. Elvis Costello should take a lesson, before he's relegated to the ranks of the unenlightened.

Georgia Christgau

EMI LOOKS TO OPERA

ON A RECENT VISIT TO LONDON, I TOOK ADVANTAGE OF a free morning to drop by 30 Gloucester Place, home of EMI, and have a chat with Peter Alward about the firm's current recording projects. Not surprisingly, our conversation centered on opera.

"If we were simply businessmen," Alward began, "we'd never issue operas." That out of the way, he told me about plans for a complete *Ring* with Bernard Haitink and the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, to be done as a coproduction with Bavarian Radio. Target date for the first sessions (slated for Munich's new Philharmonic Hall, where Haitink's *Daphne* was made) is 1988. The cast will include Waltraud Meier as Fricka, James Morris as Wotan, and—what everyone has been hoping for since San Francisco—Eva Marton as Brünnhilde. Would anyone like to guess who the Siegfried will be? Alward had not engaged anyone as of mid-November and was biding his time. Heldenentens are rare these days.

A new *Fledermaus* from Munich is in the offing as well, featuring Lucia Popp, Agnes Baltsa, José Carreras, Edita Gruberova, Wolfgang Brendel, Kurt Rydl, and Christian Boesch. The conductor—fanfare, please—is Plácido Domingo. While I gasped, Alward predicted, "That's going to be a jamboree."

In July it will be time for Verdi's *La Forza del destino*. Riccardo Muti will conduct his La Scala forces for the studio recording, which will include Domingo, Mirella Freni, and "hopefully" Morris as Padre Guardiano. Also in July, or late June, will come sessions for a new recording of *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, a coproduction with the Brussels Opera. Neil Shicoff, José van Dam, Rosalind Plowright, and Jessye Norman will be among the principals.

Sometime this summer, as a follow-up to his very fine recording of Ravel's *L'Enfant et les sortilèges*, EMI will loose André Previn on *L'Heure espagnole*, with Norman, Thomas Allen, Gabriel Bacquier, and Nicolai Gedda. And as a follow-up to his very fine Glyndebourne *Don Giovanni*, the firm will capture Haitink there in *Così fan tutte*, with Carole Vaness and John Aler. Then comes the big one: a new *Figaro* from Muti in Vienna, with Allen, Rydl, Gedda, Kathleen Battle, Margaret Price, Ann Murray, and Jorma Hynninen.

Alward also told me about a promising young East German baritone, Olaf Baer, with whom EMI has already recorded *Liederkreis* and *Dichterliebe*. Next up is an all-Wagner disc. And he told me that now that Jeffrey Tate has finished his Mozart symphony series with the English Chamber Orchestra, he is embarking on a Haydn series, a collection of the complete Mozart wind concertos, a pairing of Richard Strauss's *Bourgeois gentilhomme* and *Metamorphosen*, and, in Dresden, a Beethoven Seventh, a Bruckner Ninth, and a Schubert Ninth.

And as I was about to leave, Alward said that EMI hopes to do a new *I Vespri siciliani* ("... the trouble is, name me the tenor. . .") and, someday, the first complete recording of *Die Frau ohne Schatten* ("the trouble is. . ."). You get the rest.

Ted Libbey

CLASSICAL

The distinguished Dutch conductor discusses his years of apprenticeship before the

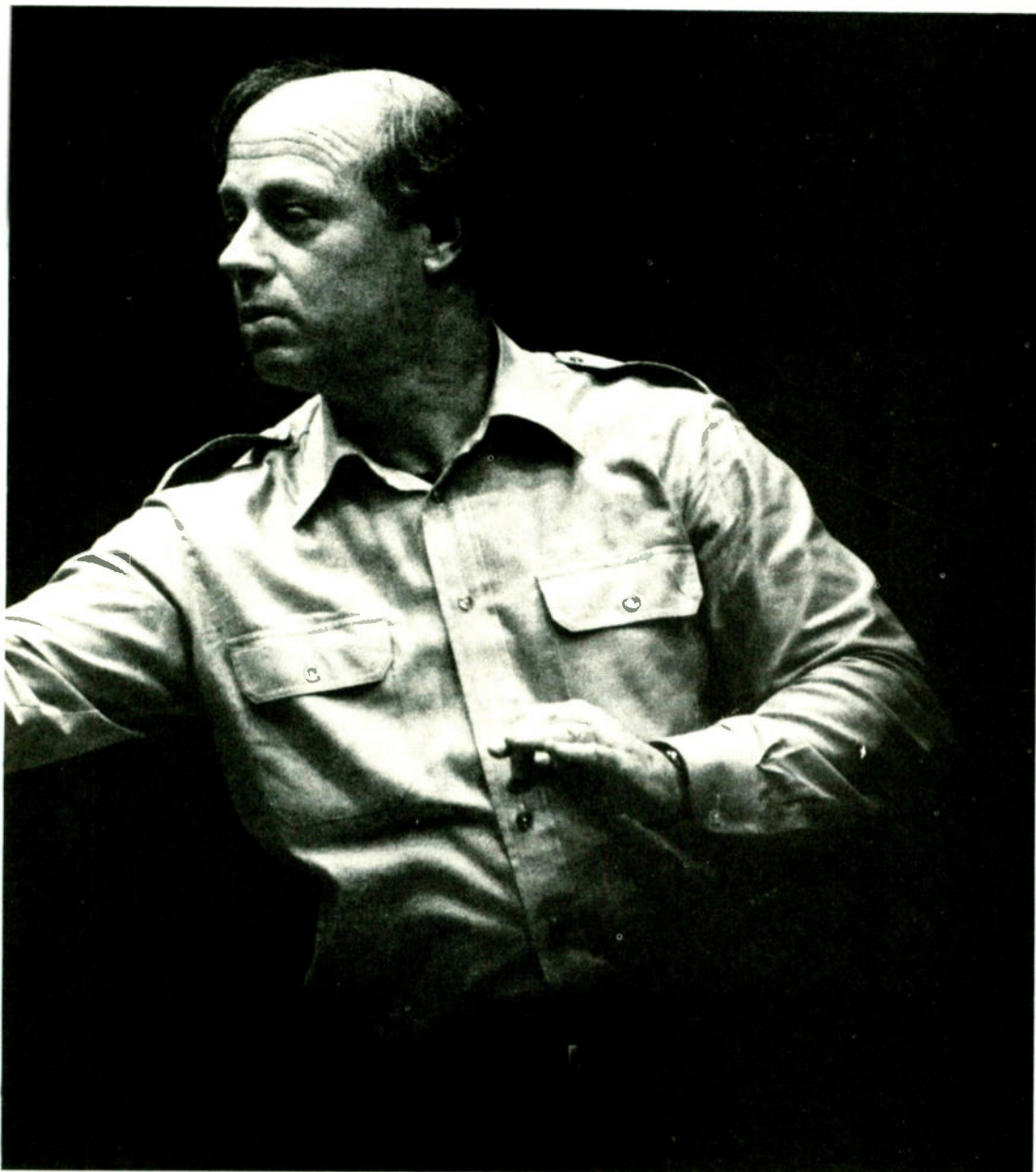
Bernard Haitink, For the Record

BERNARD HAITINK, IN MORE WAYS than one, has reached the crossroads of his career. Chief conductor of Amsterdam's Concertgebouw Orchestra for the past 22 years, he will step down at the end of the 1985-86 season to become music director of the Royal Opera, Covent Garden. With a new recording of Richard Strauss's *Eine Alpensinfonie* due for release this month and a Mahler Fifth slated for release in the fall, he continues an association with Philips and the Concertgebouw that began 26 years ago. Other projects for the label include a Bruckner Fourth with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, scheduled for autumn release, and a new recording of Brahms's *Variations on a Theme by Haydn* and ten of the composer's *Hungarian Dances* with the Concertgebouw, also expected in the fall. Haitink now has extensive commitments from Decca/London (his distinguished cycle of Shostakovich symphonies with the London Philharmonic Orchestra and the Concertgebouw will be completed this summer with the release of Symphony No. 13,

and he is recording the piano/orchestral works of Rachmaninoff with Vladimir Ashkenazy as soloist), from CBS (he is at work on a traversal of the Beethoven piano concertos with Murray Perahia as soloist), and from Angel EMI, for which he will undertake a complete studio recording in Munich of Wagner's *Ring*, beginning in 1988 (see this month's "Medley" for further details).—Ed.



microphone and his ideas on repertory and the chemistry of recording.



High Fidelity: You have been making records with the Concertgebouw Orchestra for more than a quarter of a century. What was it like in the beginning?

Ormandy: At first it was terrible. I didn't have any experience. I'll never forget producer Jaap van Ginniken's remark, half an hour into our first session: "The orchestra doesn't sound too good." We were recording Dvořák's Seventh

Symphony, which at the time was still called the Second.

High Fidelity: That was in 1960, the year that Philips made the switch from mono to stereo. It was a productive year for you, too: In addition to recording the Dvořák, you collaborated with violinist Arthur Grumiaux in the Tchaikovsky and Mendelssohn concertos and the Beethoven Romances. In 1962 you started the Mahler



EUGENE NETZER

"I HAVE ALWAYS TRIED TO MAKE MY RECORDINGS AS EXCITING AS POSSIBLE."

cycle for Philips, and in 1963 you began the Bruckner cycle. Those two projects, which were completed in the early 1970s, were a major part of Van Ginniken's lifework. How would you characterize your relationship with him, and did you come to feel more comfortable making recordings as you became more experienced?

Maltink: I continued to dislike recording at times, yet also found it very interesting and enjoyable. Most of the time, I liked doing it, and it was flattering to be continually reinvented, I'll admit.

Jaap van Ginniken was a very special man. I respected him enormously and we made a lot of records together. Our contact was often very good without our having to say anything to each other. We were always extremely polite and formal. He was a kind of father figure to me.

What I respected most in him, and also learned from him, was his way of having an ear for the right moment: to grab it, use it, and not waste any of it. He was a great musician who seldom interfered if he sensed that the atmosphere was right. For instance, we recorded the lengthy sixth movement from Mahler's Third Symphony in one take—unique. Ah, when I think back on it, I was still so young; it seems like another life.

The progress of recording technique continues to interest me. Van Ginniken's successor, Volker Straus, always considers your last recording to be your best, which is very touching. He demands a lot from you, but at the same time, I have to admit that when a recording he has supervised is good, it is very, very good.

High Fidelity: All of your recordings with the Concertgebouw Orchestra have been made in the Concertgebouw. Has this been much of a problem?

Maltink: No matter how beautiful it is, the Big Hall is not that suited to making recordings. It is very difficult for a producer to achieve a good sound there. The hall plays tricks on you: It has its moods, and it gives the violins and double basses a hard time. A lot also depends on the temperature and the level of humidity inside the hall. All this makes it quite difficult to record. Philips's achievements are therefore all the more laudable. I have noticed that companies with less experience in the Concertgebouw have trouble.

High Fidelity: How great a say do you have in the choice of the repertory you record? Has there been a certain line in your discography over the years?

Maltink: I have tried to follow a certain line with the Mahler and Bruckner symphony cycles, also with the orchestral music of Ravel and Debussy, and more recently with the Shostakovich symphonies for Decca/London. But it has lapsed at times. That has not always been the record company's fault: It has to do in part with the chemistry between a conductor and his orchestra. Often, unexpectedly, wonderful results are achieved, and everyone says, "What a shame that wasn't recorded." On the other hand, sometimes a beautiful project is planned that turns out to be a sort of middle-of-the-road recording. That's the life of an artist: There is no certainty. That's why it can be difficult for a record company—which must give priority to a commercial approach—to capture the right moment.

High Fidelity: Do you feel that you have favored certain composers along the way?

Maltink: It's not really my style to favor one special composer. Like my predecessor with the Concertgebouw, Eduard Van Beinum, I have always devoted myself to a broad reper-

tory. In doing this I am probably influenced by my conception of the task of the chief conductor. Maybe I should have been more demanding in Amsterdam, but I wanted to leave something for the guest conductors.

It's different with other orchestras. I remember a talk I had with the music director of a big American orchestra, with which I was to record something as a guest. He spelled it out for me: "No Beethoven, no Brahms, no Mozart, no Bruckner, no Tchaikovsky, no Debussy, no Schumann. You can do anything else." I mean, what else is left?

High Fidelity: What do you think of live recordings?

Maltink: I have always tried to make my recordings as exciting as possible. Others must judge if I have managed that. Live recordings are only suited to certain pieces. The real question is whether we are doing the public a favor—especially now with the perfection of the Compact Disc—if they continually have to hear a cough from the hall, a hiccup in the horns, or an uneven attack. On the other hand, live recordings can make for enormously lively results.

High Fidelity: Can you tell us something about the new releases that are on the way—specifically, the set of Schumann's four symphonies and your first recording of Richard Strauss's *Eine Alpensinfonie*, both with the Concertgebouw Orchestra, and Bruckner's Fourth Symphony with the Vienna Philharmonic?

Maltink: To start with the last, that was a very favorable moment for recording. I have always loved the Vienna Philharmonic, and I have a special kind of contact with it—which is strange, as people consider me a rather cool man and the orchestra is said to be very warm. Bruckner's Fourth turned out to be a special experience because the Philharmonic gives you the feeling that you have reached the source of the music. I had the same feeling once before when I conducted that orchestra in Beethoven's Sixth.

As far as Schumann is concerned, I know that previous generations of conductors made adjustments to his music because they thought he had not scored it properly. I have never done that, and I am finding that certain of my colleagues—Wolfgang Sawallisch, to name one—share the same opinion. I left the music as it is; if you start to touch it up, you just can't stop. To be honest, I must say that I am very interested in how the complete set will sound, because I have heard the tapes of only the Third Symphony so far; it was the only recording to be released in advance, and I remember it as sounding very noble, almost like Bruckner.

As for Strauss, I realize now that I have recorded virtually all of his major symphonic works. *Eine Alpensinfonie* is a masterly representation of a day in the mountains, a surrounding of which I am very fond. The composition is excellent, and it includes some fantastic moments. In fact, the reproduction of the storm is better than Beethoven's in his *Pastorale*. ■

CLASSICAL

REVIEWS



PHIL STROUPE

LAURITZ MELCHIOR READIES THE PINEAPPLE JUICE BEFORE GOING ONSTAGE AT THE OLD MET.

The Record of Singing

A COMPLETE DISCUSSION OF THE SINGERS heard in this Brobdingnagian album would be impossible in this space, since there are more than 200 of them [see box, page 58]—roughly twice as many as in either of EMI's two previous *Record of Singing* sets. Ironically, this one apparently almost never came out, since, as producer Keith Hardwick writes in his liner notes, "Early enthusiasm gave place to misgivings: Vocal standards were generally considered to have been in decline during the interwar years; most of the best singers were already well represented on LP; and (an unavoidable consideration)—would it sell?" Fortunately, Hardwick and Company gave it the old school try anyhow, and came up with a cornucopia of treasures as listenable as it is formidable.

True, most of the singers are amply represented elsewhere, but not in the often atypical repertory offered here. Moreover, many of the selections that once were well known were until now available only on the most arcane labels. In addition, several recordings on this album are heard in different takes than those originally issued, while some were never previously issued at all. As a result, Vol. 3 is every bit as valuable to the vocal aficionado as its predecessors.

Appropriately, Hardwick breaks down the content into five schools: German, Italian, French, Anglo-American, and East European/Slavic. Not surprisingly, the German is the best represented, since the interwar years were golden ones indeed for the performance of Germanic music, and

**THE RECORD OF SINGING, VOL. 3
(1926-1939).**

Various orchestras and accompanists.
⊙ Keith Hardwick, prod. Seraphim IM 6143 (A, 13). (Distributed by Angel.)

SOPRANOS: Albanese, Arangi-Lombardi, Austral, Badia, Baillie, Balguerie, Bathori, Belmas, Ben Sedira, Berger, Betendorf, Bruna Rasa, Caniglia, Capsir, Cebotari, Cesbron-Viseur, Cigna, Cross, Dal Monte, Diemen, Easton, Farneti, Favero, Feraldy, Flagstad, Frijsch, Fuchs, Gentile, Giannini, Ginster, Grey, Helleitsgruber, Hüni-Mihacsek, Jokl, Kern, Korjus, Kurenko, Labette, Larsen-Todsen, Lawrence, Lehmann, Leider, Lemnitz, Ljungberg, Luart, Lubin, Mannarini, Martinelli, Metcalfe-Casals, Mion, Moore, Müller, Muzio, Nagy, Nemeth, Nordenová, Noréna, Novotná, Ohms, Olivero, Pacetti, Pagliughi, Pampardini, Pauly, Perras, Pons, Ponselle, Printemps, Reinhardt, Reihberg, Saraceni, Sari, Sayão, Scacciati, Schöne, Schumann, Schwarz, Seinemeyer, Sheridan, Slobodskaya, Souez, Spani, Tassinari, Teschemacher, Teyte, Turner, Ursuleac, Vallin, Vechor, Vincent, Zamboni.

MEZZO-SOPRANOS: Alvarez, Cahier, Cernay, Cristoforeanu, Croiza, Gerhardt, Krasová, Minghini-Cattaneo, Myszkmeiner, Pederzini, Stignani, Supervia, Swarhout.

CONTRALTOS: Anday, Anderson, Basilides, Branzell, Brunskill, Butt, Klose, Olczewska, Onegin, Raveau, Thorborg.

TENORS: Arkor, Björling, Borgioli, Burke, Cortis, Crooks, De Muro Lomanto, Erb, Folgar, Fort, Gigli, Groh, Hahn, Hayes, Kullman, Lauri-Volpi, Lemeshev, Lorenz, Luccioni, Lugo, Maison, Masini, McCormack, Melchior, Merli, Micheletti, Mummery, Nash, Patzak, Pauli, Pertile, Planel, Ralf, Rogatchewsky, Rosing, Rosvaenge, Schipa, Schmidt, Slezak, Tauber, Thill, Verdière, Vezzani, Villabella, Völker, Widdop, Wittrich, Zanelli, Ziliani.

BARITONES: Badini, Balbon, Basiola, Bernac, Borgonovo, Bourdin, Brownlee, Couzinou, Domgraf-Fassbaender, Endrèze, Formichi, Franci, Fugère, Galeffi, Granforte, Hammes, Hüsch, Inghilleri, Janssen, Jeger, Noble, Palló, Panzéra, Pernet, Poli, Schlusnus, Singher, Stabile, Stracciari, Tagliabue, Thomas, Tibbett, Williams.

BASS-BARITONES: Bockelmann, Dawson, Schorr, Schützendorf.

BASSES: Allin, Andresen, Baccaloni, Chaliapin, De Angelis, Kipnis, Nissen, Passero, Pedroni, Pinza, Reizen, Strienz, Vanni-Marcoux.

Wagner in particular. Eight full sides (exhibiting more than 70 singers) are devoted to this school. The collection gets underway impressively with Lauritz Melchior's brilliant 1930 performance of "Dir töne Lob" from *Tannhäuser*—not that far out of the way, of course, but a wholesome reminder of the days when this singer could manage this cruel selection without strain. Much more out of the way, though, are long unavailable or oddball repertory recordings by Torsten Ralf (*Tiefland*), Karl Hammes (*Die tote Stadt*), Rudolf Bockelmann (*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*), Karin Branzell (*La Gioconda*), Meta Seinemeyer (*The Tsar's Bride*), Rose Pauly (*Die ägyptische Helena*), and others and much, much more of equal value, including an unpublished *Tannhäuser* scene with Walter Widdop and Göta Ljungberg.

The Italian school, spanning seven sides, features such estimable artists as Dusolina Giannini, Ebe Stignani, Claudia Muzio, Dino Borgioli, Renato Zanelli, and Mario Basiola in benchmark examples of their work, while there also are present some all-but-forgotten but obviously superb singers such as mezzo Florica Cristoforeanu. In pleasing and unusual repertory, a special highlight is Salvatore Baccaloni and Irma Mion doing a chucklesome duet from the Ricci brothers' *Crispino e la comare*. One might initially be puzzled to find Jussi Björling in this section, since he is heard in his classic rendition of Paris's entrance ("Au mont Ida") from Offenbach's *La belle Hélène*, albeit in Swedish. However, Björling's greatest operatic successes were probably in the Italian repertory.

The French portion runs in decibel level from Lily Pons to Germaine Lubin, from André d'Arkor to René Maison, from Pierre Bernac to Vanni-Marcoux, and there's hardly a disappointment to be found throughout these five sides. Despite this set's British origin, the Anglo-American school selections are evenly divided over four and three-quarter sides between England and the colonies. Hence we have Lawrence Tibbett (in his unpublished version of Ford's monologue, "E' sogno, o realtà?," from *Falstaff*) as well as John Brownlee; Richard Crooks (singing "Recondita armonia," from *Tosca*) as well as Hedde Nash; Marian Anderson as well as Muriel Brunskill; and Rosa Ponselle to counter Dame Eva Turner—all in splendid examples of their art.

The East European/Slavic school spans one and a quarter sides, which comes as a bit of a letdown. Feodor Chaliapin, Jarmila Novotná, Vladimir Rosing, Imre Palló, and Maria Krasová, for example, were all great artists, but this vast region (to say nothing of the repertory) seems to have received short shrift. Where is Dmitri Smirnov, for instance, whose electrical recordings were his best? Nevertheless, what's here is prime-cut singing, and the selections are definitely off-beat (bass Mark Reizen sings an aria from Gomez's *Salvator Rosa*, and in Italian yet!).

Transfers, as with most of Hardwick's other efforts, have been splendidly accom-

plished: The voices usually have gratifying presence, and surface noise and occasional peaking have been kept to a minimum, without falsifying the original source material. Biographies of all and pictures of most of the singers are included in a generous brochure that comes with the album. It also supplies date and place information on the recordings, so far as it is humanly obtainable. All in all, *The Record of Singing, Vol. 3: 1926-1939* is just that, and with a vengeance. To say that the collection is indispensable is an understatement.

Bill Zakariassen

BACH:

**Sonatas and Partitas for Solo Violin,
B.W.V. 1001-6.**

⊙ Mintz, Steven Paul, prod. Deutsche Grammophon 413 810-2 (D, 3), Ⓞ(3), ☐(3).

BACH:

**Sonatas and Partitas for Solo Violin,
B.W.V. 1001-6.**

⊙ Kantorow, Toru Yuki and Yoshiharu Kawaguchi, prods. Denon C37 7405/7 (D, 3).

OLD LOVES DIE HARD, AND IT TAKES A NEW EXPERIENCE of real power to challenge affections that have been snugly held for a long time. Shlomo Mintz's Bach sonatas and partitas now pose such a challenge, and like it or not, the listener who over the years has harbored loyalty to one or two admirable recordings of these works will have to reevaluate, and very possibly reshuffle, his dearest priorities.

For me, the Mintz can have only one possible placing: at the top of the list. The superlatives may be tedious to read about, but they are riveting to hear: the etched clarity of the left hand, the rhythmic resilience, the formidable poise and unshakable pacing, the sense of line and the projection of individual voices—and on through any number of attributes that enable Mintz to realize these pieces more completely than any other violinist has yet done on records.

Mintz is so assured in his technique that he can combine the elegance and serenity of a Henry Szeryng with a distinctively youthful thrust and zest; he has Szeryng's capacity for exploring the curve of a phrase in a wonderfully reflective way, but he also is able to turn from this lofty atmosphere and bite into the fugues with particular pungency. He plays them with a frown, not a smile, but never sacrifices his command of a thread-fine, silken line. Almost paradoxically, despite the invigorating punchiness of his approach, Mintz incorporates the double stops into the fabric with remarkable smoothness; they never shatter the texture. Nathan Milstein's long-admired reading of the Fugue of Sonata No. 1 makes an interesting comparison: He takes it at a much faster tempo, more matter-of-factly and with less conscious individuality.

In general, Mintz is more aggressive and tight-rhythmed than his older colleagues. Their mellowness in the Allemande of Partita No. 1, for example, is not for him. But his sharp articulation of the dotted rhythms is

never spastic, and the momentum of the movement is never derailed. In a similar vein, the Courante is played more détaché, less smoothly and sinuously than in either the Szeryng or the Milstein recording. This difference of viewpoint is most striking in the third Double (9/8), which Mintz plays détaché, and Milstein legato. They make it sound like two different pieces.

The marvels of this performance abound: the running-sixteenths movements that are diamond-bright and computer-accurate without ever lapsing into mechanical note-spinning, the play of light and shadow in the elaborate convolutions of movements like the Grave of Sonata No. 2, the warmth of the melodic line as it unfolds over the rock-steady pulse of the Andante of the same sonata. All these qualities come into play in the Chaconne, made extraordinarily expressive by Mintz's control of the smallest details. It is monumental, tender, delicate, ferocious, dramatic.

The CD sound, larger than life and frighteningly close and bright, is both seductive and suspicious. No violin ever sounded like this, either from a stage or close up, and in your heart of hearts you know you ought to protest. I confess that I can't. It is simply too exciting, and if it adds an extra sheen to an already brilliant achievement, the listener can only register his rational reservations and then sit back and be dazzled.

With the Mintz performance reverberating in the mind, it is probably unsporting to turn immediately to another rendition of the Bach pieces released at about the same time. Jean-Jacques Kantorow's readings have many attractive aspects, but they are less defined, less vivid, rougher in the double-stop work, and they lack the inexorable pulse of Mintz's. Denon's sound is considerably more restricted than DG's. *Shirley Fleming*

BEETHOVEN:

Concertos for Piano and Orchestra (5); Bagatelles (7); Andante in F.

Ⓢ Ashkenazy; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Mehta, Christopher Raeburn and Andrew Cornell, prods. London 411 899-1 (D, 4). ☐ (4). Ⓢ (3). 411 900-2, 411 901-2, 411 902-2, 411 903-2.

Piano Concertos: No. 1, in C, Op. 15; No. 2, in B flat, Op. 19; No. 3, in C minor, Op. 37; No. 4, in G, Op. 58; No. 5, in E flat, Op. 73 ("Emperor"). Bagatelles: in G, G minor, E flat, B minor, G, and E flat, Op. 126; in A minor ("Für Elise"). Andante in F ("Andante favori").

BEETHOVEN:

Concertos for Piano and Orchestra (5).

Ⓢ Brendel; Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Levine. Philips 411 189-1 (D, 4). ☐ (4). Ⓢ (3).

BEETHOVEN:

Concertos for Piano and Orchestra, Nos. 1*, 2*, 3**, 4**, and 5**.

Ⓢ Pollini; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Jochum*, Böhm**. Werner Mayer, prod. Deutsche Grammophon 2740 284. (A**, D*, 4).

LISTENING IN CLOSE SUCCESSION TO THESE three Beethoven piano concerto cycles is not quite the golden experience one might sup-

Format Key

- Ⓢ LP
- ☐ Cassette
- Ⓢ Compact Disc
- ☐ Videocassette
- Ⓢ Videodisc
- Ⓢ Open reel

RECORDING INFORMATION

(A) analog original

(D) digital original

Large symbol beneath title indicates reviewed format. Small symbols following catalog number of reviewed format indicate other available formats (if any). Catalog numbers of all formats of a particular recording usually are identical except for differing prefixes or suffixes. Catalog numbers of formats other than the reviewed format are printed only if their basic numbers differ substantially from that of the reviewed format. Arabic numeral in parentheses indicates number of items in multi-item set. Unless otherwise indicated, all multi-LP sets are in manual sequence.

pose. Each of them is actually not that much higher or lower on the success monitor than the other two. For anyone except the Beethoven fanatic who must have everything, the choice will be difficult. And that observation leads to the second, deeper reason for an overall sense of weariness. It was impossible, while hearing any one among these 15 performances, not to recall how much more compellingly the cycle was once played by the likes of Artur Schnabel, Wilhelm Kempff, Leon Fleisher, and Artur Schnabel (with Josef Krips), not to mention other great discs of single concertos. Indeed, the hand of pianistic history does sit heavily, if magnificently, when it comes to these fabulous creations.

Nonetheless, for anyone absolutely driven to buy, here is what to expect. The Vladimir Ashkenazy/Zubin Mehta cycle is surely the most pianistically beautiful of the three, yet it's also the least involving musically. Must Beethoven always be made so lovely, so placid, so uneventful? In the past generation, Walter Gieseking might have agreed, but Schnabel taught us otherwise. The Alfred Brendel/James Levine set, being live, does carry its particular interest, and in truth, the interpretations are more probing than Ashkenazy's, but only at the severe cost of putting up with Brendel's emotionally pinched and pianistically spiky understandings of these works. Did Edwin Fischer, Brendel's teacher, actually play them in like fashion? If so, then what on earth did so much of Europe hear in him before World War II? The Maurizio Pollini/Eugen Jochum/Karl Böhm version might well be the safest bet, but only provided that the listener agrees with the authoritarian, didactic, Bachhausian manner of each performance. In all three cycles, the conductors and orchestras are the most obedient servants of each soloist.

Thomas L. Dixon

BEETHOVEN:

Quartets for Strings.

Ⓢ The Melos Quartet. Steven Paul, prod. Deutsche Grammophon 415 342-2 (D, 3). ☐ (3). (3).

Three Quartets, in F, E minor, and C, Op. 59, Nos. 1, 2, and 3 ("Rasumovsky"); Quartet in E flat, Op. 74 ("The Harp"); Quartet in F minor, Op. 95; Quartet in F (trans. Sonata for Piano, in E, Op. 14, No. 1).

THE STUTTGART-BASED MELOS QUARTET, THE only German string quartet (as distinct from Viennese) of international notoriety today, has always given performances that are impressive for their youthful vitality and powerful intensity, sometimes at the expense of more subtle shadings. This approach is characteristic of their complete sets of the quartets of Mendelssohn, Schubert, and Cherubini, all for Deutsche Grammophon.

Early on, the Melos players recorded a complete Beethoven set, but on a small German label (Intercord) with hardly any impact abroad. Now, 12 years later, they have completed new recordings of the cycle. Opus 18 has so far appeared only on LP, while the middle-period quartets (discussed here) are available on LP, cassette, and CD. The late works have not yet been issued in any form.

The middle quartets are the most powerfully symphonic that Beethoven penned. This is especially true of the three *Rasumovsky* quartets, Op. 59, the first of which, in F major, holds a place in the body of his quartets comparable to that of the *Eroica* among his symphonies, revealing a similar revolutionary broadening of idiom and form. These are works that well befit the Melos players' peculiar qualities, and their reading of the F major Quartet is almost perfect, wanting only a little more inner feeling in the slow movement. Their account of the Quartet in E minor (Op. 59, No. 2) satisfies me less, and I am not sure I always want to hear *both* repeats in the opening movement, even though Beethoven specified them. The Stuttgart ensemble misses the point of the immense *Molto Adagio*, which lingers here, lacking expressive momentum. On the other hand, the extrovert and virtuoso C major Quartet (Op. 59, No. 3) gets a performance as electrifying, as thrilling, as I've ever heard—one that justly reasserts the value of a masterpiece that is sometimes unfairly rated as slightly inferior to its two companions.

In the warm and sunny lyricism of the genial *Harp* Quartet, Op. 74, the Melos players' limitations again show in the slow movement, and they rather underplay the concluding Variations, which sound a little bland in this performance. On the other hand, the opening Allegro and especially the harsh, crackling Scherzo fully receive their due. And this applies to the whole of the stunning F minor Quartet, Op. 95, a masterpiece of terseness and incandescent passion. The musicians spotlight all the prophetic aspects of the work—the real forerunner to many an "autobiographical" quartet of the Romantic and modern eras, from Mendels-

Critics' Choice

The most noteworthy releases reviewed recently

BRITTEN:

Choral Music.

Chance, Coxwell, Hayes, Salmon, Seers, Unwin; Westminster Cathedral Choristers, Corydon Singers, Best. ☐ Hyperion KA 66126, Jan.

CHOPIN:

Piano Music.

Perahia. ☐ CBS Masterworks IMT 39708, Mar.

DEBUSSY:

Préludes, Bk. 2.

Rodriguez. ☐ Élan 1206, Mar.

FAURÉ:

Requiem; Cantique de Jean Racine.

Ashton, Varcoe, Scott; Cambridge Singers, City of London Sinfonia, Rutter. ☐ Collegium COLC 101, Apr.

GINASTERA:

Piano Music.

Rodriguez. ☐ Élan 1202, Mar.

KHACHATURIAN:

Piano Concerto*.

PROKOFIEV:

Piano Concerto No. 3, in C, Op. 26**.

Kapell; Boston Symphony Orchestra, Koussevitzky*; Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Doráti**. ☐ RCA Gold Seal AGM 1-5266, Jan.

REICH:

The Desert Music.

Reich, chorus, members of the Steve Reich Ensemble, members of the Brooklyn Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra, Thomas. ☉ Nonesuch 79101-1, Apr.

ROSSINI:

Overtures (8).

Orpheus Chamber Orchestra. ☐ Deutsche Grammophon 415 363-4, Apr.

STRAUSS, R.:

Guntram.

Tokody, Goldberg, Sólyom-Nagy, Gáti, Bándi, Gregor, others; Hungarian People's Army Male Choir, Hungarian State Orchestra, Queler. ☉ CBS Masterworks 12M 39737, Mar.

VERDI:

Don Carlos.

Raimondi, Domingo, Nucci, Ghiaurov, Ricciarelli, Valentini Terrani; Chorus and Orchestra of the Teatro alla Scala, Milan, Abbado. ☉ Deutsche Grammophon 415 316-1, Jan.

sohn's in the same key to Smetana's and even Janáček's. As a bonus, the Melos four-some also gives us something of a discographic rarity: Beethoven's own transcription of his E major Piano Sonata, Op. 14, No. 1, here transposed up a semitone. Not only is this a thoroughly enjoyable piece in its own right, it also repays study, when compared with the original, as a fascinating lesson in instrumentation.

On the strength of this release, the Melos Quartet holds its own against the other contenders in what is admittedly a formidable competition (including the Amadeus, Berg, Budapest, Cleveland, Guarneri, Italian, Juilliard, Smetana, and Talich Quartets, not forgetting the Vegh Quartet in a sadly deleted set, still available in Europe). Less cerebral than the Juilliard, less superficial and fugitive than the Berg, less sentimental than the Italians (for whom, I confess, I have a weak spot), this recording should satisfy all those who like their Beethoven vital, heroic, and virile.

For the CD fan, the Melos accounts are in my opinion clearly preferable to the Berg on Angel EMI, but the Smetana on Denon is a far from negligible rival. Deutsche Grammophon's recorded sound is glorious, the accompanying brochure is far more lavish than usual with CDs, and the timings are most generous.

Harry Halbreich

CANTELOUBE:

Songs of the Auvergne (18).

☐ Gomez; Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, Handley. Andrew Keener, prod. Angel 4AE 34471 (D). ☉

Songs: Baillero; Brezairola; Chut, chut; Jou l'pount d'o Mirabel; L'Aio de ratso; L'Antoueno; Le Delaissado; Lo Fiolaire; Lou Boussu; Lou Coucut; Malourous qu'o uno fenna; Obal, din lou limouzi; Ound' onoren gordo; Passo pel prat; Pastourelle; Pastouro, se tu m'aymo; Te l'co te; Uno jionto postouro.

JILL GOMEZ AND VERNON HANDLEY, TWO HIGHLY regarded British musicians who are largely unknown in this country, have turned up on Eminence, Angel Records' new midline series, with an outstanding performance of 18 of Joseph Canteloube's *Songs of the Auvergne*, a charming collection of French folk songs gaudily arranged in the manner of Respighi for soprano and orchestra. Gomez's singing is bright and ardent, Handley's conducting by turns vigorous and sensitive. Andrew Keener's digital recording is excellent.

Gomez studied the Auvergnat dialect with a native of the Clermont-Ferrand region of France especially for this recording, and it shows. Devotees of the classic Canteloube recordings of Madeleine Grey or Nantania Davrath who are looking for a suitable digital remake need look no further, while owners of the more recent recordings by Kiri Te Kanawa or Frederica von Stade would definitely do well to give Gomez and Handley a listen. Hugh MacDonald's liner notes have been slashed to ribbons on cassette,

with no texts and no biographical information on either performer.

Terry Teachout

RAVEL:

Gaspard de la nuit; Pavane pour une infante défunte; Valses nobles et sentimentales.

Ashkenazy. Andrew Cornall, prod. London ☐ 410 255-4 (D). ☉ ☉

THIS IS VLADIMIR ASHKENAZY'S FIRST RECORDING of French music since a 1965 recital disc that contained Debussy's *L'Isle joyeuse* and Ravel's *Gaspard de la nuit*. Ashkenazy's playing on this all-Ravel collection is quite arresting in places ("Le Gibet," for example, or the epilogue to *Valses nobles et sentimentales*) and is unfailingly intelligent throughout. But there is an odd lack of fantasy and individuality that goes deeper than the mere avoidance of exaggeration and that detracts noticeably from the success of these very straightforward performances. Andrew Cornall's digital sound is warm and realistic.

Terry Teachout

TIPPETT:

Symphonies Nos. 1*, 2*, 3†, 4**.

☉ Harpert; London Symphony Orchestra, Davis*; Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Solti**. Philips 414 091-1 (A, 3). ☐ (3).

TIPPETT:

The Knot Garden.

☉ Minton, Barstow, Gomez, Hemsley, Carey, Tear, Herinck; Orchestra of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, Davis. Philips 412 707-1 (A, 2).

TIPPETT:

Concerto for Double String Orchestra*;

Fantasia concertante on a Theme of Corelli**;

Concerto for Piano†***; Sonatas for Piano,

Nos. 1† and 2†; Quartet for Strings, No. 1, in A††.

☐ Menuhin**, Masters**, Simpson**, Ogdont;

☐ Moscow Chamber Orchestra and Bath Festival Chamber Orchestra, Barshoi*; Bath Festival Orchestra, Tippett**; Philharmonia Orchestra, Davis***; Edinburgh Quartet††. EMI EX 290228-5 (A, 2). ☉ (2). (Distributed by International Book & Record Distributors, 40-11 24th St., Long Island City, N.Y. 11101.)

THE WORKS OF MICHAEL TIPPETT, WHO STARTED writing music in his teens and is now past eighty, are complex, thorny, and, unlike many pieces turned out by his British compatriots, neither immediately accessible nor deliberately designed to appeal to conventionally conditioned ears. To penetrate the labyrinthine passages of Tippett's music, the listener must be braced for an idiom that is not only idiosyncratic but unexpectedly and uncompromisingly difficult.

Moreover, as a man who was willing to go to prison during World War II rather than recant his pacifist views, Tippett believes that art is inextricably bound up with the social conscience of the artist and his obligations to society. This feeling is reflected in such powerful pieces as his oratorio, *A Child of Our Time* (which deals with the murder of a Nazi official in Paris by a Jewish boy), in his symphonies (the vocal finale of the Third

contains a plea for mankind to display "a deeper mercy that no god has shown"), and in the more private world of his chamber music.

All four of the symphonies are now available in a single album from Philips, Nos. 1-3 in superbly controlled performances under Colin Davis, the Fourth led with characteristic flamboyance by Sir Georg Solti. All require unusual concentration of a listener, but the effort is rewarding. Tippett's gods are Beethoven and Shakespeare; it is Beethoven who inspired the muscular symphonies, the first of which the composer completed at forty. The Fourth—like the Seventh of Sibelius, more a symphonic tone poem than a conventional four-movement symphony—is the most dramatically effective in the series.

Tippett's preoccupation with Shakespeare is evident in *The Knot Garden*, which has recently been rereleased by Philips. In this opera, there are not only thematic references to that most fantastic of comedies, *The Tempest*, but each of the contemporary characters actually corresponds to one in the play. There also are correspondences to various elements in Mozart's *Così fan tutte* in the eccentric, sometimes unexpectedly naive libretto that Tippett himself wrote, as well as in the intricately fashioned score. Yet it is not necessary to be conscious of these deliberate echoes to be thrilled by this curious musical drama about a group of confused and troubled people who bring their problems to Mangus, a sort of analyst whose stage ancestor is the sorcerous Prospero and who helps them all make new beginnings. *The Knot Garden* does not have the sensuality, the dancing propulsion, of *The Midsummer Marriage*, but it is almost as full of mystery and magic, and the performance by the Royal Opera, Covent Garden, under Davis's direction—the singers, conductor, and orchestra are the same ones that took part in the opera's 1971 premiere—is simply stunning, as is the recorded sound.

As a present for Tippett's eightieth birthday, EMI last year put together a box containing, on two extended-length cassettes, a generous Tippett concert consisting of his Piano Concerto, the Concerto for Double String Orchestra, two piano sonatas, the first of his string quartets, and his *Fantasia concertante on a Theme of Corelli*. With some of the best performers in England on hand to interpret them, this program (made up of previous releases cleverly recombined) affords the listener a chance to become acquainted with the more introspective aspects of Tippett's many-faceted, sometimes puzzlingly eclectic style. Indeed, Sir Michael's willingness to experiment with blending seemingly irreconcilable approaches to composition in his own distinctive, still evolving idiom; his unexpected moments of humor; his unstinting compassion for the agonies of our age; and his deep emotion are all qualities absorbingly exemplified by this collection.

Paul Kresh

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J. Gordon Holt *Stereophile* July, 1985.

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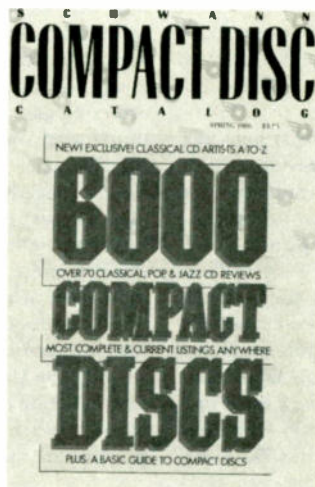
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Oldies but (Mostly) Goodies

COURAGE:



Star Trek: The Original Television Soundtrack.

Courage. Neil Narman, exec. prod. GNP Crescendo GNPS 8006 (D).  

THE QUALITY OF THE *STAR TREK* TELEVISION series was not enhanced by its music. Without exception, the scores were mainstream efforts that revealed little of interest in their style or instrumentation. This album of original cues by Alexander Courage is par for the course: Courage was a thorough professional who whipped up a pile of well-crafted segments of no particular musical distinction. Strip away the Trekkie nostalgia, and you've got a run-of-the-mill collection of production music. Although the cues on this album were written specifically for the episodes *The Cage* and *Where No Man Has Gone Before*, many of them were folded into the *Star Trek* stock library and used throughout the series. My pressing is noisy, but otherwise the digital transfers are fine.

ROYAL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA:


Star Trek, Vols. 1* and 2**.

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Bremner, John Lasher and Clyde Allen, prods. Label "X" LXDR 703* and 704** (D).   (Distributed by Fifth Continent Music Group.)

SUDDENLY, *STAR TREK* TELEVISION SCORES ARE beaming down everywhere. Here are two albums of newly recorded and arranged suites from scores originally written for six episodes. Volume 1 is a disappointment. George Duning's score for *Is There in Truth No Beauty?* is dominated by a sultry theme that wears quickly. Gerald Fried managed a bit more thematic contrast in his music for *Paradise Syndrome*, but the whole is an exercise in Amerind clichés. Volume 2 is the one to have. Best of the lot are Jerry Fielding's *Spectre of the Gun* and Sol Kaplan's *The Enemy Within*. Joseph Mullendore's *Conscience of the King* is aurally fattening but brief, and Samuel Matlovsky's *I, Mudd* proves how difficult it is to write a good comic score. Pressings are flawless, the digital sound is appropriately rich and full, the playing of the Royal Philharmonic is right on the notes, and—surprisingly—annotation is non-existent.

UTAH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA:

Family Plot*; Notorious; Suspicion; Strangers on a Train (excerpts).

University of Utah A Coppella Choir*, Utah Symphony Orchestra, Ketcham, George Korngold, prod. Varèse Sarabande 704.250 (D).   VCD 47.225.

A GRAND IDEA, GRANDLY REALIZED: MUSIC written for Alfred Hitchcock films by composers other than Bernard Herrmann. A brief cue from the John Williams score to *Family*



COURTESY COLUMBIA PICTURES

A FRAME FROM "SILVERADO": "SEEN ANY WATERING HOLES OUT THERE, PARDNER?"

Plot (1976) opens the set. The style is crisp, clean, and clever... something Mr. POPS hasn't managed all that often lately. Next come excerpts from Dimitri Tiomkin's *Strangers on a Train* (1951). Nobody overscored quite like Tiomkin, but occasionally his mix of rough-edged Russian Romanticism, wide-screen Hollywood instrumentation, and Gershwin-esque jazz managed to hit the mark, and this was one of those times. Franz Waxman remains an underrated film music master; his score for *Suspicion* (1941) offers elegant argument that the conventional assessment should change. A brief suite from the 1946 Roy Webb score to *Notorious* (arranged and orchestrated by Christopher Palmer) makes a similarly strong case for a reexamination of Webb's oeuvre. Producer George Korngold has captured the right sonic atmosphere (in digital, no less), while conductor Charles Ketcham does a fine job capturing the disparate styles involved. The Utah Symphony gives a believable imitation of the National Philharmonic, and Varèse Sarabande's packaging and pressing are up to its high standard.

VARIOUS ARTISTS:

Television's Greatest Hits.

Steve Gottlieb, prod. TeeVee Toons TVT 1100 (D, 2).  (220 Central Park South, New York, N.Y. 10019.)

HERE'S A LONG-OVERDUE COLLECTION FEATURING 65 examples of the musical miniature. Lasting perhaps 90 seconds, a TV theme must in that short time define the nature of a program (sitcom, western, etc.) and its unique quality—all in a form capable of withstanding repeated hearings as well as extensive variation. This two-record set is both a delightful celebration of this littlest art and a treasure trove for tube trivia buffs. The themes are blessedly unpadding, and most (though not all) are originals. The album's four sides are devoted to children's shows, sitcoms, adventures/westerns, and


Our resident expert on film and television soundtracks eyes a few recent releases.

BY NOAH ANDRÉ TRUDEAU

spy/police/detective dramas. Sound quality varies from theme to theme, but what is here is always listenable. This season, the best pictures from the tube may be found on your stereo system.

VARIOUS ARTISTS:

The Twilight Zone, Vol. 5.

 Risty, prod. Varèse Sarabande STV 81205 (A). THIS IS THE FINAL INSTALLMENT IN THE MOST distinguished series in soundtrack recording history. The sonic and musical standards set in the previous four volumes [see "Submitted for Your Approval," August 1984], featuring original music from the *Twilight Zone* television series, are fully maintained. Included here are two more alternate main titles written by Bernard Herrmann, Nathan Van Cleve's melodramatic *I Sing the Body Electric* (the only TZ score in true stereo), Fred Steiner's plaintive Americana for *The Passerby*, Jeff Alexander's Dixieland-style *The Trouble with Templeton*, and Jerry Goldsmith's finely wrought western score *Dust*. Mastering, transfers, and sequencing are all superb.

BROUGHTON:

Silverado.

 Broughton. Bruce Broughton, prod. Geffen GHS 24080 (A). 

BRUCE (*THE BLUE AND THE GRAY*) BROUGHTON has made such a determined effort to evoke the classic sound of the Hollywood western that it seems appropriate to consider this offering among the oldies. Broughton is a disciple of the John Williams "bigger is better" school of scoring: Every sound is bathed in a Grand Canyon-like ambience, and just about every instrumental group has a larger-than-life presence. When Broughton isn't trying to sound like Elmer Bernstein or Williams, he actually has some interesting things to say. Unfortunately, those times are few and far between... like watering holes in the desert, pardner.

THE CD SPREAD

MINI-REVIEWS OF THE LATEST COMPACT DISCS

BY IRVING KOLODIN, CHARLES McCARDELL, JAMES WIERZBICKI, AND BILL ZAKARIASEN

TWO MOZART QUARTETS FROM A CZECH GROUP

QUITE ASIDE FROM THE FACT THAT THEY'RE Nos. 1 and 2 of the famous set of six pieces dedicated to Haydn, it's not at all surprising that the Quartets in G, K. 387, and in D minor, K. 421, make up the first installment of the Kocián Quartet's recorded survey of the Mozart literature. Along with the so-called *Dissonance* Quartet in C, K. 465, these head the list of Mozart's most frequently heard chamber music creations, as popular with audiences for their easy flow and dramatic contrasts of light and dark colors as they are with performers for their technical demands and (especially in K. 387) contrapuntal intricacy. In other words, they are test pieces, by which an ensemble can, for better or worse, be instantly judged.

The Prague-based foursome, only recently represented on recordings available in the West, does very well with them in both execution and interpretation. Formed in 1972 and named after the esteemed Czech violinist Jaroslav Kocián, the group produces the slightly edgy sound—most prominent in the two lower instruments—characteristic of so many Eastern European ensembles, and its treatment of ornaments is perhaps a bit too snappish to suit the tastes of American listeners who have been paying attention to early music specialists. But otherwise the playing is wonderfully refined. So is the sound of the Compact Disc. My only complaint is with the dismal quality of the liner notes. (What are we to make of an essay that translates the German *Motivleistung* into "motivated hard work"?) Playing time: 58:50. (Denon CD 7228.) J.W.

FALLA FROM BÁTIZ AND THE MEXICO STATE SYMPHONY

VARÈSE SARABANDE'S NEW COUPLING OF TWO staples by Manuel de Falla—*Nights in the Gardens of Spain* and the complete ballet *The Three-cornered Hat*—seems eminently competitive. Enrique Bátiz and the Mexico State Symphony offer idiomatic, rhythmically acute, and elegantly played performances. Barring some blurry fingerwork at the outset of *Nights*, pianist Eva-Marie Zuk handles her solos extremely well; in the ballet, soprano

Maria Luisa Salinas sings her brief solos nicely. I must add that for sheer visceral excitement, one would have to turn to the ancient, pre-Spanish Civil War recording by Enrique Arbós of the familiar suite from *The Three-cornered Hat* (excellently transferred recently on an In Sync cassette) to hear something comparable. The CD sound is admirably open, with details coming through consistently in proper perspective. Playing time: 56:09. (Varèse Sarabande VCD 47210.) B.Z.

FURTWÄNGLER AT BAYREUTH: BEETHOVEN'S NINTH

WILHELM FURTWÄNGLER'S HISTORIC PERFORMANCE of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony from the 1951 Bayreuth Festival has always been available on some label, and for good reason: Though his interpretation, with its wild fluctuations of tempo, has always been controversial, perhaps no other conductor (not even Toscanini) ever captured the visionary, ecstatic nature of this towering work as well as he. Unfortunately, the only LP pressing of this performance with good sound is the original HMV one, long out of the catalog. Such incarnations as the RCA and Seraphim reissues were near-travesties of the original. Things have been set right by this Angel CD, and it's like going home for Thanksgiving. The clarity and perspective almost make one think the recording is in stereo, and the renewed impact in the climax surpasses what is heard on the venerable LP original. Background noise (excluding the audience) is virtually nonexistent, which is a special boon to the superb chorus and soloists (Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, Elisabeth Höngen, Hans Hopf, and Otto Edelmann)—as good a quartet as ever sang this piece). Highest recommendation. Playing time: 64:50. (Angel EMI CDC 47081.) B.Z.

BACH ON WALLOON ORGAN: CLARITY OVER FLASH

THE ORGAN OF THE OLD WALLOON CHURCH IN Amsterdam—built in 1680, remodeled in 1734, and restored in 1965—receives top billing here, though Bach's compositions and Jacques van Oortmerssen's efforts run a

close second. *Historical Organ at the Waalse Kerk in Amsterdam* showcases the instrument's magnificent sound, taking full advantage of the church's reverberant acoustics. There is a problem (a small one, unless the disc is played at house-shaking volume): Clacking noises can be heard in the Andante of the Sonata in E minor, B.W.V. 528.

Oortmerssen chooses clarity over flash, all the better to outline the three independent voices in this Italianate sonata, dated 1727. Ornamentation is unobtrusive throughout. He brings some inspired bravura to the Weimar-period Prelude and Fugue, in D, B.W.V. 532. However, Oortmerssen never indulges his own whims or the instrument's power for the sake of show; his taste and restraint reveal who's in charge. (Additional selections: Prelude in G, B.W.V. 568, and Partita Diverse, "Sei gegrüßet, Jesu gütig," B.W.V. 768.) Playing time: 50:11. (Denon CD 7376.) C.M.

REDISCOVERING A GENIUS OF THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY

ONE OF THE MOST TRAGIC CASES IN THE HISTORY of composition is that of Rudi Stephan (1887–1915). Prior to his untimely death on a World War I battlefield, he had been hailed by critics as the most important German composer of the younger generation. There is a sad irony in his death, since just before it he wrote a letter to his mother in which he said he had a premonition of being wounded, but he hoped he wouldn't be shot in the head, because there was so much music flying around in there waiting to get out. You can guess where the bullet went.

Stephan's output was too small for one to say whether those German critics were right (this new Schwann Musica Mundi CD contains about one quarter of it), but what is heard here—*Laubeszauber* for baritone and orchestra, *Music for Orchestra*, and *Music for Violin and Orchestra*—nevertheless shows a formidable communicative talent. Stephan wrote in a basically conservative, tonal idiom, yet his means of expression were imposingly individual. There is throughout these three sizable works an undercurrent of heartbreak and death, as if the composer knew of the little time he had. It's tempting

to compare his style with that of such older contemporaries as Pfitzner, Mahler, Zemlinsky, Schreker, and the early Schoenberg, but Stephan still lets his own personality—however difficult to pinpoint—shine through. (Genius is almost impossible to describe.)

The performances, featuring the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra under Hans Zender, seem completely authoritative, as do Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau's solo singing in *Liebeszauber* and Hans Maile's playing in the *Music for Violin and Orchestra*. The recorded sound has all the warmth and full perspective this music deserves. Playing time: 46:00. (Schwann Musica Mundi CD 1623-1. Distributed by German News Co., 220 E. 86th St., New York, N.Y. 10028.) *B.Z.*

GOLDEN "GOLDBERG" SET SERVED UP BY LEONHARDT

GUSTAV LEONHARDT'S 1976 PERFORMANCE OF the *Goldberg Variations*, now on CD, has risen above most of its pre-CD predecessors for reasons both artistic and technical, chief among them that Leonhardt's instincts for phrasing and his insight into style sustain the listener's interest from the outset. Used in this absorbing tour de force is a William Dowd harpsichord (Paris, 1975), fashioned, as the annotation states, after a Blanchet instrument made in Paris c. 1730. Such an instrument might well have been available when the music was first performed by the eminent Johann Gottlieb Goldberg himself, under the princely patronage of Hermann Karl von Keyserlingk, Russian ambassador to the Saxon court, in 1733. Such touches are an inherent part of Leonhardt's appetite for authenticity, which feeds the dietary instincts of the connoisseur. Playing time: 47:06. (Pro Arte CDD 010.) *I.K.*

SALT LAKE FORCES OFFER LISZT'S "DANTE" SYMPHONY

THE FIRST NEW RECORDING IN SOME YEARS OF Franz Liszt's *Dante* Symphony comes from a rather unexpected place: Utah. Nevertheless, this Varèse Sarabande CD, featuring the Utah Symphony Orchestra and the Utah Chorale under Varujan Kojian, makes the best case in both performance and sound that Liszt's problematic score has ever received on recordings. Kojian's broadly paced conception of the work captures all the ferocity of the "Inferno" first movement and the beatific qualities of the "Purgatorio" second, and the orchestral playing could hardly be bettered. In addition, this recording tacks on Liszt's brief (57-second) alternate ending, meant for those orchestras without a chorus available to sing the concluding Magnificat. The sound itself is marvelously resonant, extremely wide in dynamic range, and details and depth of field are remarkably three-dimensional. I've never cared much for the *Dante* Symphony, but this new CD almost makes me change my mind. Playing time: 41:15. (Varèse Sarabande VCD 47207.) *B.Z.*

VERDI'S "FOUR SACRED PIECES," WITH MUTI AND THE BERLIN

RICCARDO MUTI'S ANGEL LP RECORDING OF Verdi's *Quattro pezzi sacri* with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, the Swedish Radio Choir, and the Stockholm Chamber Choir has been rightfully praised for its Toscaninian power and its visionary underlining of the composer's prophetic flights into modernism. Unfortunately, the sound on the black disc doesn't possess the clarity and impact the performance deserves. This is happily corrected by the CD issue, which brings everything right into focus, adding a strong bass line and notably greater dynamic range in the bargain. True, it would have been nice to have a filler included in this edition, but since the CD is incomparably superior in sound, it appears that people who love this music (I surely do) have no other choice but to dig a bit deeper into the pocket. Playing time: 39:54. (Angel EMI CDC 47066.) *B.Z.*

HARRELL PLAYS THE SIX SOLO CELLO SUITES OF BACH

AS THE OFFSPRING OF SO ABLE AN ARTIST AS baritone Mack Harrell, cellist Lynn Harrell can take pride in having reached a similar plateau in his performing. His accounts of Bach's solo cello suites (B.W.V. 1007-12) are scintillating throughout, in a lyrical vein that might be said to derive from the influence of the elder Harrell, a former member of the Bach Aria Group. In all, it speaks well for what lies ahead on the cellist's path: high promise and productivity. Playing time: 127:23. (London 414 164/5-2.) *I.K.*

BARBER'S BEAUTIFUL CONCERTO PERFORMED BY SILVERSTEIN

SUCCESSOR TO SUCH PRIOR OCCUPANTS OF the concertmaster's seat in the Boston Symphony Orchestra as Franz Kneisel, Frederic Fradkin, and Richard Burgin, Joseph Silverstein set a first-rate example of violinistic virtuosity before becoming, at the start of the 1984 season, the conductor of the Utah Symphony. Of outstanding eloquence is his welcome new account of Samuel Barber's Violin Concerto, a work distinguished by its closeness in spirit to many of Barber's songs and the best parts of the opera *Vanessa*. Admirable accompaniment is provided by the Utah Symphony's associate conductor, Charles Ketcham. Silverstein goes on to speak his own piece on behalf of Barber by conducting the Prelude and Intermezzo from *Vanessa*, the *School for Scandal* Overture, and the *Second Essay for Orchestra*. Playing time: 48:34. (Pro Arte CDD 241.) *I.K.*

FROM TOULOUSE, THE ARTFUL REQUIEM OF FAURÉ

IN HIS NEARLY 80 YEARS OF PRODUCTIVITY (including a period when he was chapel master of La Madeleine in Paris), Gabriel Fauré ranged widely, composing the first music for Maurice Maeterlinck's *Pelléas et Mélisande*, much cherished chamber works, an innova-

tive series of songs, and this Requiem, here conducted by the able Michel Plasson of Toulouse, who earned considerable respect at the Metropolitan Opera in the late 1970s. Plasson's abilities as a conductor are reflected not merely in a persuasive outpouring of music wholly representative of the composer's statement "I envisage death as a felicitous deliverance, a yearning for the happiness of the other world," but also in the choice of such singers as soprano Barbara Hendricks for the "*Pie Jesu*" and Jose van Dam for the "*Libera Me*." The brief *Cantique de Jean Racine* is well performed by chorus and orchestra. Playing time: 47:34. (Angel EMI CDC 47317.) *I.K.*

CLASSIC HERRMANN SCORE FOR HITCHCOCK THRILLER

BERNARD HERRMANN'S CHURNING, BREATHLESSLY exciting score for Alfred Hitchcock's 1959 film *North by Northwest* has rightfully become a classic, and it certainly lives up to this description on a two-year-old Unicorn-Kanchana LP with the London Studio Orchestra conducted by Laurie Johnson. Unfortunately, the CD transfer of it (now on Varèse Sarabande) can't be so enthusiastically recommended. Of course, the sonics remain real solar-plexus stuff, but the playing time is chintzy, while the LP's copious program notes are missing. Those of you with the LP might just as well hold on to it and save some money. Playing time: 36:54. (Varèse Sarabande VCD 47205.) *B.Z.*

WITH KIRI TE KANAWA, IT'S "BLUE SKIES" TURNING GRAY

NEW ZEALAND, WHERE KIRI TE KANAWA WAS born, is a long way from Broadway or even the West End of London, where she matured musically. So it is hardly surprising that the golden glow of Irving Berlin's "Blue Skies," Kurt Weill's "Speak Low," or Richard Rodgers's "It Might as Well Be Spring," among the dozen offerings on this disc, is dimmer than one might wish in these renditions accompanied by Nelson Riddle and His Orchestra. We get too much of the gifted operatic artist's midrange and too little of the temperament and tunefulness the songs should have, in a sequence that makes the outcome monotonous. Playing time: 50:36. (London 414 666-2.) *I.K.*

FRANCISCO ARAIZA SINGS "DIE SCHÖNE MÜLLERIN"

AFTER STUDYING PIANO, FLUTE, ORGAN, VIOLIN, and cello, Francisco Araiza eventually turned to singing and is now a tenor much in demand for the works of Rossini and Puccini. In these Schubert lieder, his attention is purposeful, and his treatment of text as well as vocal line is serious. To be sure, he has much to learn about using the lower and upper registers; in spite of how well he does "*Ungeduld*," he has good reasons for making the effort. Irwin Gage is the well-equipped playing-partner. Playing time: 67:10. (Deutsche Grammophon 415 347-2.) *I.K.*

BACKBEAT[®]

Abbey Lincoln is fondest of the role she created for herself: jazz singer.



FRAN VOGLÉ

BY FRANCIS DAVIS

Leading Lady

And in many ways, I'm still Anna Marie."

Anna Marie Wooldridge was born in Chicago in 1930, the tenth of twelve children. Before she started school, her family

WHEN SINGER ABBEY LINCOLN GIVES her autograph, she appends the name "Aminata Moseka." During her pilgrimage to Africa in 1975, she was christened "Aminata" by the president of Guinea in recognition of her inner strength and determination. Zaïre's minister of education likened her to Moseka, the god of love in female form. "I love 'Aminata Moseka.' I've added her to myself. But I can't say that's my one and only name," admits Lincoln, who has taken many names and experienced several rebirths in her fifty-five years and who invests as much thought and feeling in conversation as she does in her songs. "It's more like a title, something to live up to. That's what I saw in Stevie Wonder's 'Golden Lady,' too, the opportunity to sing to a female god. But I'm still Abbey Lincoln: I still like to wear makeup and glittering dresses and look attractive.

moved to rural Calvin Center, Michigan. "I still remember the sound of my father's voice as he sang lullabies to me and my baby sister. He was a fine singer who might have become a professional if he and my mother hadn't had so many children. But they had a wonderful, lifelong love affair, and we were the result. He did odd jobs around the community, and my first exposure to music was from the records he got from neighbors. I sang in school pageants and in the church choir, though I never much enjoyed that. I preferred to sing alone—to be the centerpiece. The living-room piano was my private space, once I discovered that singing could win me attention and admiration."

At nineteen, she began her professional career as Gabby Wooldridge. "I was Gabby for two years because the owners of the Moulin Rouge in Los Angeles wanted all their girls to have French-sounding names. They didn't realize that Anna

Francis Davis is the author of In the Moment: Jazz in the 1980s, scheduled to be published this fall by Oxford University Press.

"My songs are autobiographical, about the world as I encounter it."



FRAN VOGEL

Marie was French; it was Wooldridge that was the problem. They knew less about their European heritage than I knew about my African heritage, which was nothing." She discarded the surname soon after an aged white millionaire also named Wooldridge spotted a mention of her in a newspaper and wrote to inquire whether she was his long-lost heir. "That's when I realized that although 'Wooldridge' was the name my father handed down, it wasn't really ours."

At that time, her manager was Bob Russell, best known for his lyrics to Duke Ellington's "Do Nothin' Till You Hear from Me" and "Don't Get Around Much Anymore." "Recognizing something potentially fierce and proud and independent in me, Bob renamed me Abbey Lincoln. He said, jokingly, 'Well, Abe Lincoln didn't really free the slaves, but maybe you will.' As a promotional gimmick, Liberty Records sent disc jockeys a photo of me dressed in one of those Marilyn Monroe-type skin-tight dresses and superimposed over President Lincoln's face on a penny. That was ridiculous, but the name worked magic on my life. As Abbey Lincoln, I acquired a reputation as a woman warrior."

*But for the painted lady,
There is a point and stare,
And eyes that ask a question:
Is she going anywhere?*

("Painted Lady," Moseka Music, BML)

THE COVERS OF HER FIRST FEW ALBUMS TRACE Lincoln's growing self-awareness. *Affair*, her debut, released in 1956 and subtitled *A Story of a Girl in Love*, shows her lounging center-fold-style like a sepia Julie London. "That was the way they packaged women singers then, and I went along with it because I didn't know any better. I didn't yet think of myself as a serious artist—or as a serious person either. All I wanted was to be thought of as beautiful and desirable."

But on her next few albums, the fortitude

that was coming to light in her singing also became manifest in the poses she struck for the camera. Gaining a sense of herself as a black woman, she took herself off the sexual auction block. "Through Max [Roach, whom she married in 1962], I met a circle of black musicians and other artists. It was the early days of the civil rights movement, and we were all asking the same questions. But they were questions that glamour girls weren't supposed to ask. As I toured the country, I noticed that black people everywhere were living in slums, in abject poverty. I wanted to know why."

Gone were the strings that had accompanied her on *Affair*. Her delivery hadn't changed, but she was now recording with top-rank jazz players like Roach, Sonny Rollins, Wynton Kelly, and Kenny Dorham, and often her material was topical. Although she continued to do standards, she banished from her repertoire songs about unrequited love and "no-good men who didn't know how to treat women. I discovered that you *become* what you sing. You can't repeat lyrics night after night as though they were prayer without having them come true in your life."

By 1961, when she collaborated with Roach and lyricist Oscar Brown, Jr., on *We Insist! Freedom Now Suite* (the original cover shows a reenactment of a sit-in at a segregated Southern lunch counter), she'd been branded an outspoken, intractable militant. Record companies considered her too hot to handle. "I would run into my old show-business associates, who would be surprised to see me looking pretty much the way I had always looked. They would say, 'Abbey, we heard you were living in Greenwich Village, wearing black woolly stockings, and sleeping with musicians.' The word was out on me, and I was in plenty of trouble. But at least it was trouble of my own choosing. Before, encouraged to portray a woman of easy virtue, I was on the road to loneliness and despair."

Over the last two decades, Lincoln's rec-

ords have been few, less the result of a lingering backlash than of the American recording industry's antipathy toward jazz. In concert, with her regal bearing and forthright declamation, Lincoln conveys an actress's riveting stage presence without indulging in salacious flirtation, histrionic bathos, or sociopolitical cant. Jazz critic Martin Williams once saluted Billie Holiday as an actress without an act—and that accolade also describes Lincoln, who did in fact enjoy a sporadic film career. She appeared in the 1956 rock exploitation flick *The Girl Can't Help It*, costarred with Ivan Dixon in the acclaimed, independently produced 1964 film *Nothing but a Man*, and played Sidney Poitier's love interest in the 1968 romantic comedy *For Love of Ivy*.

"With *Ivy*, my life reached a peak," she says. "Then it slid right into a valley again." *Ivy*'s producers optioned the rights to Holiday's autobiography, *Lady Sings the Blues*, for Lincoln, but finally the story was resold to Motown's Berry Gordy, who cast his own star, Diana Ross. "Billie came into Birdland one night to see Dizzy Gillespie play," Lincoln recalls. "Max and I were there, too. 'I'm so lonely,' she told me. 'Louis [McKay, her husband] is in California on business, and I'm sitting at home polishing my nails and going crazy.' And everybody knew that Louis was living it up a few blocks away with a woman who called herself Broadway Betty. That's the worst lie they told in the movie: If (CONTINUED ON PAGE 79)

Selected Discography

ABBEY LINCOLN

Affair.

Pathé-Marconi/Liberty LRP 3025; 1956 (reiss. 1985, available only as import; distributed by International Book & Record Distributors, 40-11, 24th St., Long Island City, N.Y. 11101).

That's Him!

Original Jazz Classics OJC 085; 1957 (reiss. 1983; distributed by Fantasy).

It's Magic!

OJC 205; 1958 (reiss. 1985).

Abbey Is Blue.

OJC 069; 1959 (reiss. 1983).

Straight Ahead.

Jazz Man 5043; 1961 (reiss. 1981, out of print).

People in Me.

Inner City IC 6040; 1979. □

Golden Lady.

Inner City IC 1117; 1981.

Talking to the Sun.

Enja 4060; 1984.

With MAX ROACH

We Insist! Freedom Now Suite.

Columbia FC 36390; 1961 (reiss. 1980).



MONICA DIE

SCOTLAND'S JESUS AND MARY CHAIN: WALLS OF SOUND PHIL SPECTOR NEVER DREAMED OF

Silly Love Songs

THE JESUS AND MARY CHAIN:
Psychocandy.

The Jesus and Mary Chain, prods. Reprise 25383-1. (Distributed by Warner Bros.)

THE JESUS AND MARY CHAIN ARE THE WONDERFullest. They are the world without end, ahem, they are the perfect merger of the Archies and Joy Division that we've needed for so long and not even known it. Sure! There are some acoustic guitars on *Psychocandy*, but most of it is more like "It's So Hard," the toxic landfill of awful electric guitar noise.

This album layers so much shrieking guitar feedback over the horizon that instead of screwing up your innards it makes you laugh. Nobody else has made so much noise, stacked up like a Dagwood sandwich, so much fun.

Just as the hype about these four leather boys from Scotland abates back in the United Kingdom, where *Psychocandy* was a No. 1 record for three months, the storm pummels the Atlantic coast. Initially, blasphemy got them ink at home (they tried to name a B-

side "Jesus Suck"). Then it was the shock of how they fastened their guitar howl to some classic pop chassis—Phil Spector, the Beach Boys, the Beatles—that built a following. Spontaneous they're not: When I saw them, guitarist William Reid struck a show-long pose with his back to the audience, and singer Jim (his brother) was impassive behind shades and bohemian cool. All in all, you could have been forgiven if you mistook the JAMC for a Conceptualism 101 project. Everything about them is packaged and

thought through, like another U.K. band, Roxy Music. And they share a common theme with that classic '70s cult group: some kind of love. At a time when John Lydon pulls off one of the few original love songs around (on the Golden Palominos' *Visions of Excess*), the JAMC come up with a new way of postulating the exhilaration of romance as it careens ahead into *nobody knows what*—and the degradation when it curdles.

The lyrics suggest the psychedelic—"How could something crawl within my rubber holy baked bean tin" is one—but these guys are not hippie love children. The Reids have a taste for the more, um, picaresque details of various mating rituals, an interest in exploring the porn districts of the soul. One of the few out-and-out happy songs, "The Living End," is no less disturbing than the downers. It sounds like Iggy Pop and Tommy James meeting in a midair collision, but the words are pure Iggy: about fast anonymous sex on a motorcycle, and about how even sex can reinforce your solitude. And it's about liking that solitude—which is pretty scary. While perky uh-huh-huhs and a Jan and Dean surfaditty melody power "Never Understand," the lyrics are about a connection that has been horribly severed; at the close, a human voice and axe fuzz pull each other apart in a very uncomfortable mix. "Sowing Seeds" begins with "Be My Baby"'s historic drumbeats, but if Jim starts out moist-lipped and poised, he winds up terribly alone. The ugly feedback somehow works with the sweet pop desire, the everyday, bottomless desire for somebody to take you out of yourself. The howl drives it all to the back of your head, cutting through you like a gripping, affected joke.

The JAMC love Dionne Warwick, in fact boast their work rivals her '60s hits. Well, about those hits: You can listen to them now and they'll still sound great, but you know they tell only part of the story. The Reid Brothers see the drawbacks of blind love, but they have a blind love for it all the same.

RJ Smith

SANDY ROGERS:

Fool for Love.

Ⓞ Jim Gaines, prod. MCA 6156. Ⓞ

SANDY ROGERS, WHO TENDS A CUTTING-HORSE ranch in northern California and has kicked around on the fringes of the music scene there since the 1960s, was cajoled into composing and recording the soundtrack for *Fool for Love* by her brother, Sam Shepard, author of the film and the play on which it is based. Given an amount of artistic control uncommon for a major-label debut, Rogers meets the challenge with a rare blend of raw talent and professional acumen.

The prominence of her alto, as crude and fiery as home-brewed whiskey, gives the album a honky-tonk intimacy, even though it borrows as much from pop as it does from Ernest Tubb and B.B. King. "Fifty or sixty crummy love affairs, they made me jumpy," she confides on "Love Shy," drawing the lis-

Format Key

- Ⓞ LP/EP
- Ⓜ Cassette
- Ⓛ Compact Disc
- Ⓜ Videocassette
- Ⓜ Videodisc
- Ⓛ 12-inch single
- Ⓜ Open reel

Large symbol beneath title indicates reviewed format. Small symbols following catalog number of reviewed format indicate other available formats (if any).

Catalog numbers of all formats of a particular recording usually are identical except for differing prefixes or suffixes. Catalog numbers of formats other than the reviewed format are printed only if their basic numbers differ substantially from that of the reviewed format.

Arabic numeral in parentheses indicates number of items in multi-item set.

tener into the nine scenes of sullen desire that follow; I trust this voice. "You Lied Your Way" and "A Heart That's Broke," damn-that-man ramblers accented with balmy steel slides, recount details that make you feel like the singer's best friend. But if a permanent wave and a brand-new green dress add humor to those songs' country blues, the "magazine dreams" and wide open sky that divide the characters of "Why Wyoming" become chilling metaphors for emptiness. "True Love" and "It Comes and Goes" dispense with traditional he-don't-her-wrong guilt. Love is personified; the characters, even though they're on the losing end, resign themselves to its power and unpredictability.

Rogers's gravelly timbre helps suspend your disbelief in *Fool for Love's* Wild West romanticism. Her tone is matter-of-fact, not self-pitying or melodramatic. The moments when her voice cracks aren't contrived; even a saccharine classic like "The End of the World" has a jagged edge. Austere arrangements with subtle twists—like the snarling guitars that tense the opening of "Let's Ride," the icy, high-octave piano that frames "Why Wyoming," and the pop changes that perk the chorus of "Love Shy"—polish and intensify her delivery. Rogers's songs tell tales about women who have been left out in the cold, but who are strong enough to feel at home in the wind and the rain.

Rosemary Passantino

THE DEL-LORDS:

Johnny Comes Marching Home.

Ⓞ Neil Geraldo, prod. EMI America ST 17183.

Ⓞ THERE'S ONE MOMENT ON THE DEL-LORDS' new *Johnny Comes Marching Home* that catches everything exuberant and touching about this scrappy New York band. On "Saint Jake," a man turns on the radio to an all-request show, expecting nothing, and hears Elvis Presley. But he can't just tell you the King's name once, he has to repeat it—this time in good-natured mockery—as the Del-

Lords' guitars swarm around him in fond emulation of Elvis sideman James Burton. Full of camp desecration and outright awe, the moment seems to ask some good questions—among them, what is Elvis's dream worth now? *Johnny Comes Marching Home* provides a possible answer. Bearing down on the easy joy of rockabilly with the cramped momentum of punk, the Del-Lords' songs can sound weary and anthemic in the same breath: the way "Dream Come True" springs full-blown from a quote of "If I Had a Hammer" is both crazy and heart-tugging.

On its 1984 debut, *Frontier Days*, the band jostled Alfred Reed's Depression-era lament "How Can a Poor Man Stand Such Times and Live" into a raging, Reagan-era protest. Here chief singer/songwriter Scott Kempner takes on more voices of the forgotten with greater detail: A man at a diner longs to save a waitress from her rotten job ("No Waitress No More"), a veteran offers a quiet prayer for peace ("Soldier's Home"), Kempner's concern trips him up only once, on "Against My Will," a perfectly well-intentioned song about hijacked Americans taken hostage "in the name of God" that can't live up to the complexity of its subject. (Tip-off lyric: "There are no words that can describe this feeling.") But small truths, not podium analysis, are this band's forte, as in Kempner's hilarious rejoicing during a search for "True Love" that he found a parking place. And on this album, there's a greater chance of those small truths getting across to the audience they deserve. Producer Neil Geraldo, Pat Benatar's guitarist, gives the band's guitars a wailing compression that can stand up to the symphonic hysteria that's passing for rock 'n' roll on the airwaves. (Pick to click: the shattered romanticism of "Love Lies Dying.") In 30 years, some guy tuning in a request show could very well be jolted out of his blue mood by the Del-Lords.

Mark Moses

BUCKWHEAT ZYDECO:

Waitin' for My Ya Ya.

Ⓞ Scott Billington, prod. Rounder 2051. Ⓞ

THOUGH OFTEN CONSIDERED ONE OF THE LAST purist forms in American pop, zydeco is also show-band music. At home in Louisiana, these groups play four to six sets a night, exclusively for dancers. They have to know a bit of everything—only a few originals can be slipped in between covers of current and past hits of the region and (increasingly) the radio, whether country, blues, soul, rock, or traditional. They'd be the last to call themselves purists. Occasionally somebody busts through with a national hit—as Rockin' Sidney did last year with "My 'Foot Toot"—but invariably returns quickly to the old circuit, where the reigning champ is accordionist Buckwheat Zydeco (Stanley "Buckwheat" Dural, Jr.) and his Ils Sont Partis Band.

Unlike most of his previous efforts, which played up the genre's ethnic angle, this is a show-band album. "Think It Over One More Time" and "Buck's Step-Up," the

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two originals, are both pretty routine, but they won't drive dancers off the floor. The unlikely gem of the set is a luscious, reggae-fied instrumental version of Percy Sledge's soul classic "Warm and Tender Love," with trumpeter Calvin Landry swaying the melody. The title song, once a pop hit for Lee Dorsey, gets a similar rhythmic treatment. On Buckwheat's soul-strutting blues cover of Denise Lasalle's recent hit "Someone Else Is Steppin' In," his accordion snakes through the song like a Hammond organ and then a whole horn section. Hear also the sonorous arrangement and conversational vocals of "Your Man Is Home Tonight," another timely soul-funk hit; a metronomic rendition of Fats Domino's "Walking to New Orleans," with Buckwheat in his warmest country-boy voice; and a heavily syncopated, pell-mell take on the Dirty Dozen Brass Band's "My Feet Can't Fail Me Now." Mix in Buckwheat's interpretations of the traditional "Lache Pas La Patate" and "Tee Nah Nah," and you've got what could well be a typical set in a Louisiana club.

Buckwheat is a nimble and insinuating accordionist, spinning off difficult rhythmic and melodic lines so casually he makes it sound easy, but he's also quite restrained for a frontman: He gives Landry more solo space than he takes for himself. Nat Jolivet's chugging drumbeats and Elijah Cudjé's rubboard recall original, turn-of-the-century Cajun music, which was made entirely with spoons and other kitchen utensils. But those snazzy Stax-like horn voicings reveal this man's true age and influences. With bandleaders like Buckwheat around, zydeco is still a good two-step or so away from becoming a museum piece.

John Morthland

ZAZOU BIKAYE:

Mr. Manager.

Marc Hollander, prod. Pow Wow WOW 7401. (1619 Broadway, Suite 403, New York, N.Y. 10019.)

LIKE TOURE KUNDA, ZAZOU BIKAYE REPRESENTS a fresh attempt by Africans in Paris to reconcile their heritage with Western commercialism and French culture. Their curious upscale syncretism—African rhythms, funk energy, and nasal Arab harmonies, in

the guise of an electro-Euro-pop band—is more fusion than roots, but let's not blame the assimilationist. Now, I've got my qualms about Zizou Bikaye, especially the cover art of *Mr. Manager* picturing a balloon-lipped black man flying through the air, but the group's synth-based, quadrilingual sound is surely more rooted in the African sensibility than the music of Malcolm McLaren or Peter Gabriel. And Zizou Bikaye personifies both the dilemma and the potential of the African in Paris. It must be strange residing in the *métropole*, keeping one ear to the motherland and the other to black America while trying to be French (a Congolese playwright recently recounted his schoolmasters' punishment for not speaking French: a bag of feces tied over the head). But such strangeness provided the synthesis that spawned blues and jazz in America.

Algerian synthesizer whiz Hector Zazou shows signs of this awareness with a concept as orchestral as anyone's short of Joe Zawinul's. His synth spews forth bass, keyboard, and percussion lines as complete and complementary (if familiar) ideas, laying down hip-hop and scratch rhythms under JB, Fela, and Memphis keyboard/guitar vamps to strike a dance groove. On the eerie, melodic "Soki Akei," Zaïrean lead singer Bony Bikaye's haunting lilt blends French romanticism with the hypnotic, whispered drone of Central Africa; elsewhere, his squawking, chanting vocals inspire the album's best jam, the riveting, Afro-beat "Angel."

Fleshed out with horns and silky-voiced chanteuses, Zazou Bikaye takes on the feel of such pan-ethnicists as Talking Heads and Kid Creole and the Coconuts. Live, the comparison is even more obvious as Bikaye and guitarist Maurice Poto mix up loose-limbed dance steps with shrewd Cab Calloway/Morris Day routines. Zazou Bikaye does have its shortcomings. There are no soloists aside from French saxist and clarinetist Professor Pinpin (Philippe de la Croix Herpin), and though he sometimes adds feverish licks, the group doesn't capitalize on this energy to go beyond the light and entrancing. It could, with more chiming guitar and denser, overlapping rhythms; then again, creolization often requires not only selling out, but buying in.

Don Palmer

GIORGIO MORODER:

From Here to Eternity . . . and Back.

Giorgio Moroder and Harold Faltermeyer, prods. Casablanca 822 661-1 (2). (Distributed by Polygram.)

DURING THE SEVENTIES, WHEN SYNTHESIZERS weren't as hip and necessary as they are now, Giorgio Moroder plugged in and blazed a trail to the future. He made his synth toys purr and talk sweet, causing those who at first called them frigid and grating to think again. But you say the only Moroder-produced song you're familiar with is Donna Summer's "I Feel Love"? You weren't into discos. Or perhaps you were underage. You say you want to turn on to this pioneer of



COURTESY CASABLANCA

MORODER: HIS REISSUE COULDN'T HAVE BEEN BETTER TIMED.

electronic pop? Good news: Polygram has just reissued *From Here to Eternity . . . and Back*, a two-record set complete with Vince Aletti's definitive liner notes, which include a brief Moroder bio. He's from Europe, of course—Munich, to be exact. Americans back then were much too formula-conscious to be pioneers.

"I Want to Funk with You Tonite" (from 1976), flushed with summery strings, horns, and sexy moans, gives a glimpse of Moroder's pre-electronic work. Like "I Wanna Rock You," with its incongruous, Bee Gees-style vocals, and "Oh What a Night," with its thump-thump bump, this track incorporates atypically typical elements. But on "Chase" (presented here in remixed form), with its eighth-note bass feel (cf. "Billie Jean") and gated drums, and "Valley of the Dolls," punctuated by sharp, dramatic synth bursts, it's clear that Moroder knew then where we'd be now.

The "From Here to Eternity" suite fills up one side, and though it no longer sounds weird, it still sounds long; the track never progresses. Yet the various voicings keep one marveling at Moroder's textural depth. Not that whole sides can't sustain interest: Another offers 1978's "Evolution" in all its 15:18 glory, with synths, guitar, and percussion weaving through a simple bass-and-drum pattern. Each bit seems as casual as a tease, but just as skillful and succinct—you can't help but want more. And that's just the intro. "Evolution" doesn't sound at all dated; I wouldn't be surprised if some deejay slipped it under Phyllis Nelson's "I Like You," a similar beat. Disco's pulse and some of its touches—the 4/4 hi-hat that last year went to the top of the pop charts with Wham!'s "Everything She Wants," for example—are back. In other words, *From Here to Eternity . . . and Back* is not just a historical footnote.

Havelock Nelson

LISA LISA AND CULT JAM WITH FULL FORCE:

Lisa Lisa and Cult Jam with Full Force.

Full Force, prods. Columbia CK 40135. (Distributed by Polygram.) "I WONDER IF I TAKE YOU HOME," LISA LISA and Cult Jam's percolating smash, was one of last year's friskiest and freshest, the type



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OUR BID FOR CD OF THE YEAR, LISA LISA AND CULT JAM: BROOKLYN ROCKS THE WORLD.

of song you put on when everyone at your party looks tired and disgusted. Ditto for the bouncy hip-teaser and follow-up, "Can You Feel the Beat." "This Is Cult Jam" and "Behind My Eyes," however, have to grow on you. "You'll Never Change" and "Private Property" are more immediate. On the former, Lisa cops a superwoman attitude when her man wrongs her, and on the latter, there's more bad news, guys: The babe can live without you, too. Propelled by a pumping bass and a thick piano figure, "Private Property" doubles back on itself before breaking down into ominous minimalism, sending your midsection for a ride.

Lisa Lisa's handling of the sole ballad here, a duet with Full Force's Lou George called "All Cried Out," doesn't deserve to be buried in analog smudge, and the CD translation lifts it out. Like the best blues and country singers, she tugs on your heart. Then, over hushed instrumentation, George pulls some more. But don't cry for this Brooklyn group: Despite their "Cult Jam" tag, they're rocking the world.

Besides having greater timbral detail, the CD benefits from a higher groove factor (increased dynamic range). The drums and bass tighten up: More ear candy, even bits of (pleasant) track leakage, reveals itself, and stereo imaging is seemingly improved. For me, though, the greatest virtue of this format is getting to hear Full Force's funky, choir-boy harmonies in all their dreaminess. They are the ingredient, atop the hip-hoppiness, that gives Lisa Lisa and Cult Jam their singular luminosity. The voice and instrument crispness, as well as some of these EQ adjustments, could have gone onto the LP. But, I am told, the record was rush-released, perhaps cutting short the usual dialogue between producer and mastering engineer. Thank goodness more time was spent on the CD master; now you can *really* hear one of the records that's helping balance out black music's surfeit of Prince and Arthur Baker clones.

Havelock Nelson

JIMMY JOHNSON:
Bar Room Preacher.

Disques Black & Blue, prod. Alligator AL 4744.

THE ROBERT CRAY BAND:
False Accusations.

Bruce Bromberg and Dennis Walker, prods. Hightone HT 8005.

TO A BELIEVER IN THE ELEGIAC AND CATHARTIC qualities of the blues, the best bands are those not too proud to ply their trade in bars—those to whom "bar band" is an existence, not a concept. And I don't mean to pigeonhole the genre or condemn it to obscurity and the musicians to poverty. It's just that the blues, at its best, is still so damn personal that mass marketeering can't help but steamroll individuality. Like punk, like funk, the blues is about an attitude. Those that project this in an arena, more power to 'em. But there are many who can't, don't, or won't who still deserve a listen.

Jimmy Johnson, the Mississippi-born, Chicago-based guitarist who received a lot of ink five years ago for the witty lyrics on *Johnson's Whacks*, actually suffered for his overnight recognition. Seemed like everybody expected him to keep churning out those puns, which he did at the expense of the music. His newest, *Bar Room Preacher* (recorded and released in France as *Heap See* on Blue Phoenix), is more indicative of his talents, especially his subtle phrasing and an attack that stresses control and clarity rather than speed and volume. Johnson's band is the type of crack, funky outfit that can hit a groove so tight and understated that a greased rubber glove couldn't fit through the crannies. His whining, gospel-inflected tenor, though limited in range, can growl seductively on the trash-talkin', spare vamp "Chicken Head," warble longingly on the slow blues "When My First Wife Left Me," and shout on the shuffles "Happy Home" and "Little by Little."

Whereas Johnson is rooted in the considered, piercing style of Chicago's West Side guitarists (like Magic Sam and Fenton Robinson), Robert Cray is something of a young upstart from the rain forests of the North-



JOHNSON: CAN'T, DOESN'T, OR WON'T PLAY ARENA BLUES

west. In two previous albums, he has tried to blend breezy '60s pop hooks (à la Arthur Alexander), soul, and blues, with moderate success. On *False Accusations*, Cray transcends the merely facile and sheds some of his sock-hop affectations. Obviously influenced by Albert King, he has always told a good if simple story lyrically. But here his hollow-toned, lubricious guitar fleshes things out, and so does a combo that is cleverly supportive, if not always hip on ensemble interplay. "Sonny," a tale of betrayal akin to Bobby Womack's "I Wish You Didn't Trust Me So Much," is heartaching, while stark ballads like "She's Gone," reminiscent of Johnnie Taylor's plaintive doggin' tunes, are downright haunting. As a singer, Cray stretches from throaty plaints to a chilling falsetto in rich, authoritative tones. He's not, as of yet, the future of the blues, but Cray, like Johnson, has found a voice in this confessional music that can distill the most painful and joyous truths.

Don Palmer

SHANKAR/CAROLINE:
The Epidemics.

Shankar/Caroline, prods. ECM 25039-1E.



ZAPPA SIDEMEN ACHIEVE! THAT'S WHY FRANK hires them in the first place. Think of Lowell George, Adrian Belew, Mr. and Ms. Bozzio, the Brecker Brothers. The jury is still out on L. Shankar and Steve Vai, but their current LP is damning evidence against them. Touted as ECM's first foray into rock (what about late-Seventies Pat Metheny, c. *New Chautauqua* and *American Garage*?), *The Epidemics* is sonics without substance.

The usually fiery Vai sounds surprisingly wooden, turning in formulaic rhythms and struggling through his solo on "Never Take No for an Answer." When he finally begins to soar at the end of the anemic "You Can Be Anything," it's hardly worth his (or our) effort. Brand X bassist Percy Jones also exhibits uncharacteristic caution. While billed as one of the group's leaders, Caroline's role on *The Epidemics* is relatively inaudible, save for a few vocals. In fact, the most consistently inspired player is the drum machine.

Shankar's last rock album (1979's *Touch Me There*) at least benefited from Zappa's tasteless/satirical touch, guest vocalists (including "Stucco Homes" himself), and instrumentalists that showed off Shankar the violinist. Here he limits himself to fills and short, mostly uninspired solos, preferring to put the singers up front. Shankar's voice is rather colorless, and Caroline's is thin, but this would be less noticeable if the lyrics didn't consist of endless repetitions of clichéd titles like "Give an Inch" or "You Don't Love Me Anymore."

"Situation" is one of the few tunes where the band really cuts loose, Jones exploring some harmonic range while Shankar finally lays into a solo. Yet the tone of *The Epidemics* is best summed up by this song's lyric: "Have you ever been/In a situation/When you felt like a fool." Wonder if Shankar wrote those words after listening to the rough mix. *Hank Bordowitz*

Bucket left off, with an exquisitely played composition about a fictional figure, Trinity Deliverance. "Just Trinity the Man" begins with a swirling pattern created by Threadgill, cellist Deirdre Murray, and bassist Fred Hopkins, played over the elusive rhythms of drummers Pheeron Aklaff and John Betsch. This is punctuated by the staccato notes of trombonist Ray Anderson and trumpeter Rasul Siddik. Then, suddenly, a scalar section leads to chipper syncopations, over which Anderson solos exuberantly. The variety, fluency, and good humor in "Just Trinity the Man" typifies much of *Subject to Change*, which is marred, it seems to me, only by Threadgill's inclusion of two unfortunate vocal performances. One is Aklaff's barely audible recitation of a clichéd poem; the other, "A Piece of Software," offers Amina Myers's agile and expressive singing of such lines as "I believe in life—and death."

Much more satisfying is the title cut, which slips from a kind of fanfare into a brightly aggressive section dominated by Threadgill's harsh-toned alto. Later, Murray solos frenetically over staccato chords played by the band in waves of increasing and decreasing volume; the accompanying figures Threadgill writes are often as interesting as his themes. Throughout the album, the flowing rhythms of Aklaff buoy the band, whether it's focusing on long tones in "Higher Places" or jumping to the neat r&b beat of "This." Threadgill does not solo

much on this LP. Perhaps, as with Ellington, the orchestra is becoming his instrument. At any rate, his Sextet is one of the best bands around, and *Subject to Change*, though slightly less illustrious than its predecessors, shows why Threadgill is the young jazz composer to watch. *Michael Ullman*

**THE HUGH RAGIN TRIO:
Metaphysical Question.**

Francesco Maino, prod. Cecma 1007. (Via Ricasoli, 27, Florence, Italy 50122.)

**THE ANDERSON, HELIAS, AND HEMINGWAY TRIO:
You Be.**

Stephan Meyner, prod. Minor Music MM 007. (Distributed by Polygram Special Imports.)

BOTH TRUMPETER HUGH RAGIN AND TROMBONIST Ray Anderson made their marks as supporting players in the wilds of the jazz avant-garde, Anderson most notably with Barry Altschul and Anthony Braxton, Ragin with Braxton and Roscoe Mitchell. Both have chosen to front a trio and to play music that is decidedly less radical than Braxton's and Mitchell's. Usually less austere, too, for despite what one might assume from the somber, abstract cover art and the cryptic weightiness of the titles of their new LPs, Ragin and Anderson also share a sense of playfulness; these guys respect structure, but when they delve into the freer aspects of the music, they positively frolic.

Not that things get too out of control: Ra-

JAZZ

**HENRY THREADGILL SEXTET:
Subject to Change.**

Ed Fishman, Alan Ringel, and Larry Shengold, prods. About Time AT 1007. (Distributed by New Music Distribution Service, 500 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10012.)

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gin in particular is a conscientious soloist. His first improvisation, on his long title composition, moves logically and carefully through several moods, starting with a bright, skipping lyricism and ending with discontented growls and strangled sounds. On an appropriately mournful version of Ornette Coleman's "Lonely Woman," the curve of his solo takes the opposite course, from a calm beginning through slow excitation to climax. The real freedom here is on a moment-to-moment basis, in the way Ragin interacts with drummer Thurman Barker, who coordinates a usually light but busy touch with an attentive ear, and bassist John Lindberg, whose support is consistently inventive and whose strikingly rhythmic solos show dramatic flair.

Anderson and his cohorts have fashioned a program equally as varied and somewhat more structured than Ragin's, though the former's vigorous attack makes the trumpeter seem almost decorous. No longer the unwieldy instrument it seemed amidst the milieu of virtuosic precision that was bop, the trombone has both developed conceptually and reached back tonally with the advent of looser forms. And so Anderson, who isn't afraid to use the rude, nasty sounds the horn is heir to, manages to sound simultaneously earthy and advanced on cuts like bassist Mark Helias's "Question Mark" and his own "Stoll Strole." As on the Ragin set, the rhythm plays both a freely expressive and a supportive role, though as the billing this time suggests, a more aggressive one. Drummer Gerry Hemingway's most impressive contribution is the composition "Edward's Dance," dedicated to Ornette's drummer Ed Blackwell. Its suitelike structure allows the musicians to go from a festive Caribbean style to avant-garde textural experiments. After Anderson throws in some atavistic mute work, the whole thing is topped off with a stretch of kick-ass swing. Throughout all this mixing and matching, the group manages to maintain its ease of approach. In fact, it's this facility, along with the enthusiastic delight the Ragin and Anderson trios bring to jazz's hard-won freedoms, that makes *Metaphysical Question* and *You Be* two of the most purely pleasurable records I've heard in some time.

Richard C. Walls

THE CANNONBALL ADDERLEY QUINTET:

The Cannonball Adderley Quintet in San Francisco.

① Orrin Keepnews, prod. Riverside FCD 656-1157. © Original Jazz Classics/Riverside OJC 035. (Distributed by Fantasy.)

CANNONBALL ADDERLEY WITH BILL EVANS: Know What I Mean?

① Orrin Keepnews, prod. Riverside FCD 644-9433. © Original Jazz Classics/Riverside OJC 105. (D)

ONE OF THE MOST POPULAR BANDLEADERS OF the late Fifties and Sixties, alto saxophonist Cannonball Adderley and his quintet made a number of hit records, beginning with "This



CANNONBALL ADDERLEY: HE INVENTED THE SOUL GROOVE IN JAZZ. THEN HE EXPLOITED IT.

Here" from *The Cannonball Adderley Quintet in San Francisco*. (Inevitably, "This Here" brought forth a sequel, "Dat Dere," a new take of which has been reissued on *Them Dirty Blues*, Landmark LLP 1301—the first in a series of LPs, also distributed by Fantasy, that will make up "The Cannonball Adderley Collection.")

The LP issue of the San Francisco date was an instant and—judging from Orrin Keepnews's notes on this reissue—unexpected popular success. It featured Adderley's big, buttery, extroverted tone and his almost raucous virtuosity in bluesy performances that had an immediate impact on audiences ready for his references to gospel music and country blues. His quintet was always a tightly swinging group; much of the credit goes to the rhythm section of bassist Sam Jones and drummer Louis Hayes. And pianist Bobby Timmons (who wrote "This Here"), Adderley, and Cannonball's cornetist brother, Nat, were always able to come up with readily appealing compositions—remember "Work Song"?

Not that Adderley was unadventurous. This date includes Randy Weston's challenging "Hi-Fly," whose melody sounds like a hiccup, and a version of Oscar Pettiford's bebop classic "Bohemia After Dark." *In San Francisco* captures a good night of a group that would become one of the trendsetters of the Sixties.

Though Adderley later proved himself willing to exploit the soul groove, he continued throughout his career to alternate quintet recording dates and one-of-a-kind studio summit meetings. On *Know What I Mean?*, a quartet recording made in 1961 with Bill Evans, he rather perks up the lyrical pianist—who in turn, using characteristically sophisticated harmonies and a carefully modulated touch, makes Adderley test himself with an unusually ambitious repertoire, including

Evans's own "Waltz for Debby," the title cut, and John Lewis's "Venice." Adderley seems to burst through Evans's demure introduction to "Waltz for Debby"; on Gordon Jenkins's ballad "Goodbye" he is restrained and affecting. *Know What I Mean?* is satisfying and substantial, and the sound on this Compact Disc, as on the quintet set, is solid and realistic.

Michael Ullman

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① Michael Cuscuna, prod. Blue Note BST 85121. (Distributed by Capitol Records.)

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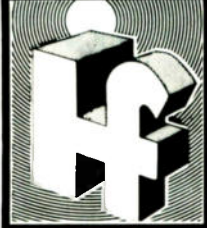
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Leading Lady

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 66) she'd had a man as faithful to her as the Billy Dee Williams character, her life might not have been so tragic. The problem was that although she could have had any man she wanted, she was never attracted to anyone who would have been good to her.

"In a way, it's best that I didn't play Billie, because I don't know how to do anything halfway. I was in such a sorry state myself at the time that portraying Billie's sorrow might have killed me. Max and I were divorced in 1970, and I was like a wounded animal. It's difficult recovering from a broken marriage, especially when it throws your career up in the air. I needed sanctuary, so I signed myself into a psychiatric hospital in upstate New York for five weeks, which turned out to be one of the best things that's ever happened to me."

Moving to Los Angeles in 1973 to care for her ailing mother, Lincoln laid low for eight years, rarely performing. "I went underground, though I never intended to. I did community work and taught drama at the California State University at Northridge. I had thrown away my career, my relationship with Max—and I thought I had thrown away my life."

*I think about the life I live,
A figure made of clay,
And think about the things I lost,
Things I gave away.*

*And when I'm in a certain mood,
I search the halls and look
One night I found these magic words
In a magic book:*

*Throw it away!
You can throw it away,
Give your love,
Live your life,
Each and every day.*

*And keep your hands wide open,
And let the sun shine through,
'Cause you can never lose a thing
If it belongs to you.*

(*"Throw It Away,"* Moseka Music, BMI.)

"I WROTE A LOVE SONG TO A MAN NOT OF THIS world, a man who doesn't even exist," Lincoln says of the title track of her latest album, *Talking to the Sun*, the implication being that no lover under the sun could be as steadfast. Although her lyrics generally strive for social uplift, she does not consider herself a message singer. "My songs are autobiographical, about the world as I encounter it. 'People on the Street' is about the plight of the homeless, but it's based on personal observation—and sometimes I think I should be doing more to help. When I moved back to New York in 1981, I was shocked to see women younger than I was huddled on the streets like zombies, and my friends laughing at them, as if there was anything to laugh about. In the '60s, people used to at least

feign social conscience, even if they didn't have any. It proves that we've taken more steps backward than forward since then. We demanded a say, and it was given to us. But the very people the revolution was fought for have sold it out. Black people like to wear the white hats, point our fingers at others, and pretend that we can do no wrong. But we can."

As a songwriter, Lincoln's greatest skill is her knack for hearty descants and quick, pointed, telling observations: "*The people in the houses can't got long.*" "I cried when that line came to me, because I realized I could wind up out there on the street someday, too. Composing music is the difficult part for me. I've come to think of lyrics as poems, some of which I find melodies for and some of which I don't." She has written an unpublished volume of poetry called *In a Circle, Everything Is Up* and an unproduced play called *A Pig in a Poke*, "about an odd-jobs man who stumbles onto a large fortune and doesn't know what to do with it. The character is partly based on my father and partly on myself. In my case, the fortune is my career, the musical gift it has taken me this long to figure out how to use properly."

In 1979, Lincoln reclaimed the career she had thrown away, as Inner City Records released *People in Me*, an album she had recorded with Miles Davis sidemen in Japan six years earlier. Since 1983, her backup band has included alto saxophonist Steve Coleman, pianist James Weidman, bassist Billy Johnson, and drummer Mark Johnson, all promising young musicians in their late twenties. "Even though I don't perform often enough to give them steady work, they're there for me whenever I call, and that thrills me. I worry about them, though—whether they can hold out against the commercial pressures that young musicians face today. Nobody pays them any attention, and I'm afraid that's going to make them bitter and discouraged."

She lives alone now in an apartment building on Central Park West, ten floors below her ex-husband, still a trusted friend. She has no children. "I never intended to. What sort of mother would I have been, traveling all the time? My mother was always there for me, and I knew I couldn't do that. I've gone through so much madness that I'm glad I didn't drag anyone else through it."

"That's why I'm thankful I've got my music. In a sense, it's all I've ever had. After *For Love of Ivy*, people predicted a big film career for me, but I knew it wouldn't happen. You have to temper practicality with idealism in real life. There are no roles for black women unless you're willing to play the buffoon, like Nell Carter in *Gimme a Break!*—not to knock her, of course, because she has to make a living. I was offered plenty of parts as the sassy maid. But I turned them all down; I decided that if I was going to be in the movies, it would have to be as a leading lady. Because that's what I've been off-screen, for better or worse: the leading lady in my own life." ■

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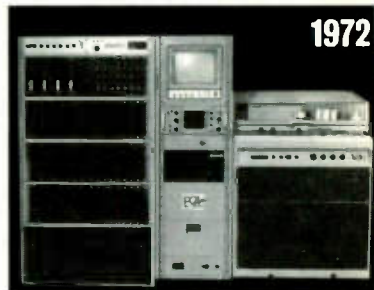
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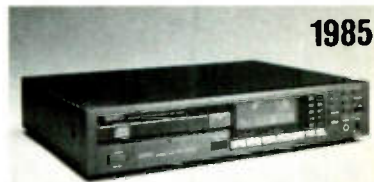
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