

CD

HIGH FIDELITY

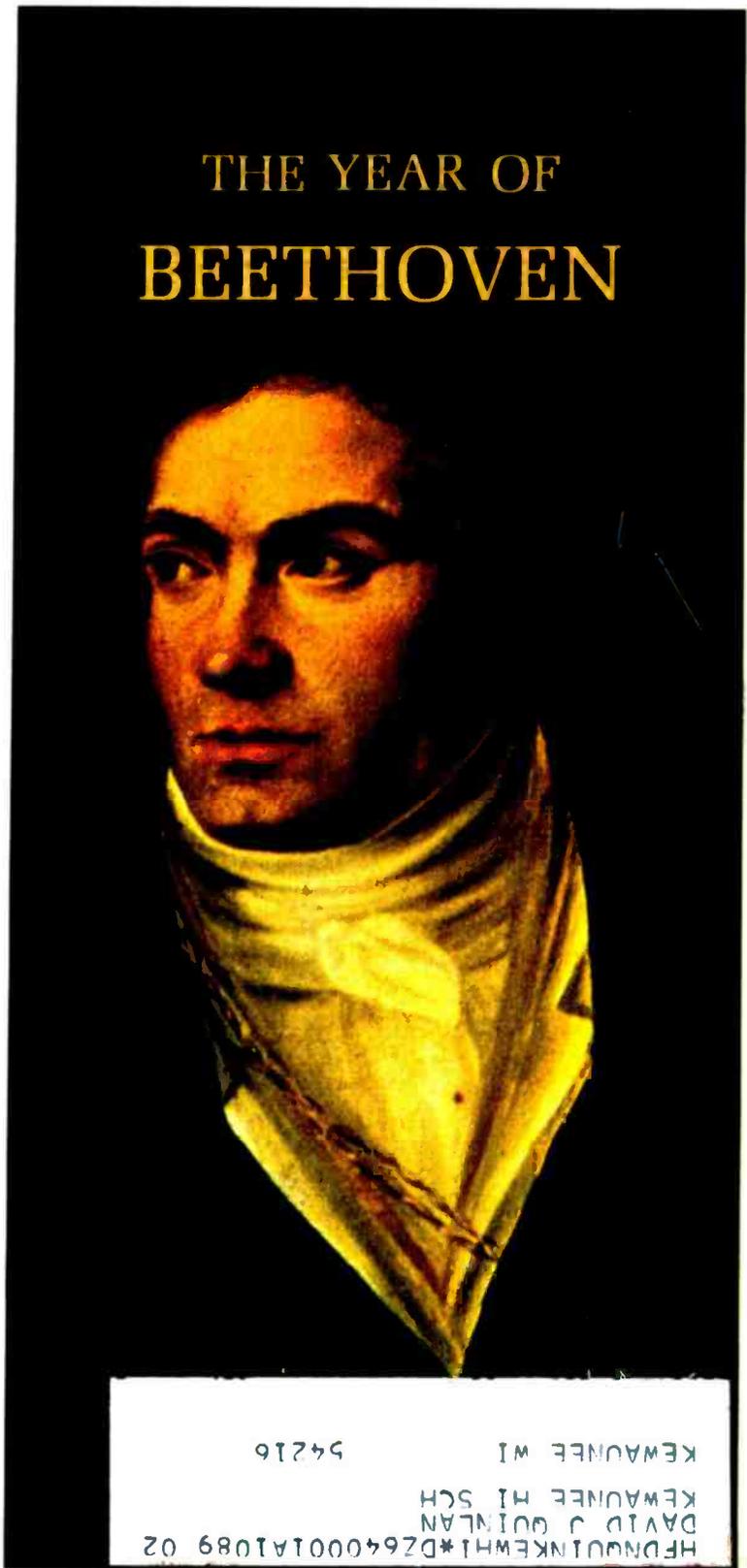
JANUARY 1970 60¢

BEGINNING THIS MONTH
A Buyer's Guide
To The Complete
Beethoven
Recordings

Never Before Published
**Beethoven's
Written
Conversations**

8 Pages in Color
**Beethoven's
Life and Times**

**Is Beethoven
Overrated?**



Sure, we use IC's, FET's, MOSFET's and space-age circuitry in our receivers. And in many applications they're a definite asset.

Many, but not all.

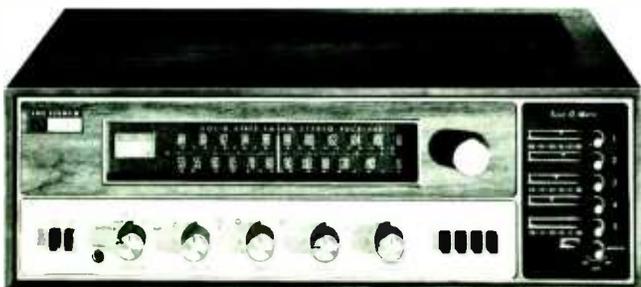
We've found that the mere inclusion of these devices does not result in superior performance.

Careful judgment and discretion is required to make the most out of IC's, and the rest.

For example. Our engineers discovered one particular application (in one of the audio preamplifier stages) where none of the available IC's on the market could match the noise and overload performance of our special low noise silicon transistors.

And that's not an isolated example.

Another new IC that many manufacturers were using and advertising was tested by Fisher, and found to have subtle performance flaws. Rather than incorporate it in our equipment simply to "keep up" with our competitors, our engineers worked with the IC manufacturer and were able to improve on its signal-to-noise ratio, distortion and dynamic range. As a result, the 450-T and other new Fisher receivers use this improved IC. And no Fisher receivers were built with the inferior version of this IC.



The 120-watt Fisher 250-TX, your best buy at \$329.95

Most receivers are in this price range. But the new AM/FM-stereo Fisher 250-TX is more powerful, more versatile, and will bring in more clear FM stations than any of the rest.

The Tune-O-Matic push-button memory tuning incorporated into the 250-TX will allow you to preset your five favorite FM stations, and then tune instantly to any one by pushing the corresponding button.

(Tune-O-Matic is another form of diode tuning, and it works electronically, without any moving parts.)

Tuning can also be accomplished manually, of course. And with an FM sensitivity of $2.0 \mu\text{V}$, you'll be able to listen to stations that you didn't even know existed.

Two sets of speaker systems can be hooked up and controlled with the 250-TX. And 120 watts is enough power for nearly any purpose you can imagine.

Go ahead, boost the bass and treble.

Baxandall tone controls (a feature of every Fisher receiver) allow you to increase the very low bass and the upper treble without affecting the mid-range. That means no boomy, or harsh side effects at higher bass and treble boost levels.

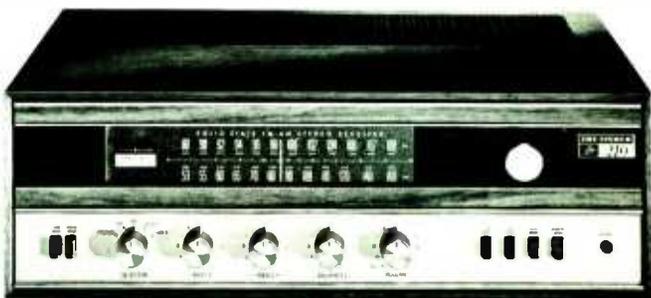
The overall performance of the 250-TX is up to Fisher's usual high standards. It shares these important specs with the 500-TX:

FM signal-to-noise ratio, 65 dB.

FM stereo separation (at 1 kHz), 38 dB.

Harmonic distortion, 0.5%.

Hum and Noise, -90 dB.



The 110-watt Fisher 210-T, your best buy at \$279.95

This is the only low-priced AM/FM-stereo receiver we know of with real power.

The 210-T will drive inefficient, acoustic suspension speaker systems in any room.

The tuner section of the 210-T will bring in more stations than many higher priced receivers—sensitivity is $2.0 \mu\text{V}$.

And, like the other more expensive Fisher receivers, you can hook up and control two sets of speaker systems with the 210-T.

Tuning is manual only.

(At this price something had to give. And it wasn't Fisher quality.)

The Fisher®

OVERSEAS AND CANADIAN RESIDENTS PLEASE WRITE TO
FISHER RADIO INTERNATIONAL, LONG ISLAND CITY, N. Y. 11101



The 200-watt Fisher 500-TX, your best buy at \$449.95

We've explained the various tuning advancements incorporated in the Fisher 500-TX.

And we claimed that Fisher AutoScan would bring in far-off stations automatically, that other good receivers couldn't even manually. (Even other receivers that can match the 500-TX's remarkable 1.7 μ V sensitivity.) We can back up that claim.

Crystal filters are great — maybe.

Most good receivers today incorporate crystal filters. These filters permit a high degree of selectivity so that strong, local stations don't over-ride far-off, hard to receive stations.

Crystal filters also do away with periodic alignment—you align them once and they're permanently aligned. Or misaligned!

Fisher discovered that by tuning a crystal filter to "average" operating conditions before installing it (as is the industry custom) there's a good chance that the completed receiver will be permanently misaligned, to some degree.

By using a 4-pole crystal filter (others use a 2-pole filter) and by tuning it after the receiver is wired, we've been able to achieve up to six times better selectivity in production-line receivers than competitive models we've tested.

This holds true for our least expensive receiver, and all the way up through the 500-TX. Count stations, and you'll discover that Fisher receivers bring in dramatically more stations.

As for the amplifier section of the 500-TX, it's everything you could ask for.



Mail this coupon for your free copy of The Fisher Handbook, 1970 edition. This reference guide to hi-fi and stereo also includes detailed information on all Fisher components.

Fisher Radio
11-35 45th Road
Long Island City, N.Y. 11101

Name

Address

City State Zip

0101701

Power? Power!

With 200 watts of clean power you'll be able to drive a remote pair of speaker systems, as well as a big, power-hungry main stereo system, complete with a third, center channel speaker.

Again, we quote Audio:

"Always we sensed that here was an amplifier section with great power reserve that could handle just about anything we fed to it at very loud levels in large listening rooms.

"...all the wonderful tuning convenience cannot obscure the fact that it's a powerhouse of an amplifier that is capable of excellent transient response . . . and truly 'big,' 'clean' sound."

There are many reasons why the Fisher 500-TX sounds as clean as it does, including a more discretionary use of IC's than is common industry practice these days. More about that later, when we tell you about the new 450-T.

Summing up, in the words of Audio:

"The Fisher 500-TX is a top-grade receiver whose performance might easily challenge that of even some of the better separate tuners and amplifiers."

In the words of High Fidelity magazine:

"The 500-TX is, at this writing, the top-of-the-line receiver from Fisher. It certainly strikes us as a top unit for any line."



The 180-watt Fisher 450-T, your best buy at \$399.95

You can tell just by looking at the 450-T that it's a lot of receiver for the money. It has AutoScan in addition to conventional flywheel tuning. (Remote control AutoScan is included in the price of the 450-T.) It has an AM section. (One that we're extremely proud of, incorporating sophisticated circuitry to cut out interference and whistles, and highly selective ceramic filters.)

But it's overall performance that really counts. And the 450-T won't disappoint anybody.

It has the same clean sound as the Fisher 500-TX, with only marginally less power.

Now, about IC's.

Other receivers claim to have more IC's than Fishers.

That's fine with us.

The Fisher 500-TX has made its own tuning knob obsolete.



Push-button electronic tuning without moving parts is more convenient, more accurate, and more foolproof than tuning by hand. (No matter how many meters or scopes you use!)

If you saw *Audio* magazine's review of the Fisher 500-TX 200-watt AM/FM-stereo receiver, you may have been surprised, and maybe a bit confused, by a statement that was made about our AutoScan® electronic tuning.

We quote *Audio*: "AutoScan is probably more accurate in tuning to center of desired channel than can be accomplished manually."

At this point in history, when other receivers are offering two and three tuning meters, oscilloscopes, words that light up, and various other devices to help you tune in stations more accurately, we thought you might like to know why we at Fisher are putting simplified push-button tuning into all our best receivers. And how our push-button tuning is more accurate than anybody's manual tuning, including our own.

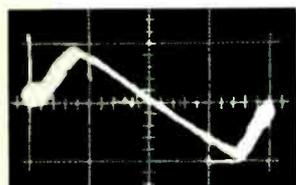
For the moment, disregard its convenience.

Diode tuning is dead-accurate, instantly.

AutoScan (as well as our Tune-O-Matic push-button memory tuning) is a purely electronic tuning system. There are no moving parts. Instead, devices called varactor diodes are used to lock in stations at their most powerful, most distortion-free tuning point. We again quote *Audio*:

"Station lock-in is flawless. That is, when the AutoScan stops on a station it stops on the exact 'center' of that channel.

"The photograph shows the detector 'S' curve obtained using the AutoScan and letting it 'home in' on our signal. Note that it locked in on the precise center of the curve. This test, by the way, is far more severe than would be encountered in normal station selection because of the extremes of modulation we employed."



Now comes the question of how important this degree of tuning accuracy is to you. Can you hear it?

We believe you can. There's a subtle distortion that creeps into complex orchestral material, at every

volume level, when an FM station isn't precisely tuned. If you've ever tried to listen to an FM concert, and felt somewhat unsatisfied with the sound as compared to records or tape, it could be a tuning problem. No tuner or receiver can be manually tuned as accurately as the Fisher 500-TX (as well as the Fisher 450-T) with AutoScan. Our engineers estimate that tuning accuracy is at least ten times greater with AutoScan than with manual tuning.

Also, AutoScan accuracy requires no warm-up. Stations can be locked in instantly, as soon as the receiver is switched on. That's important, because even some of the best manual tuning systems can't be

tuned with reasonable accuracy until the circuits are stabilized, after the tuner has been on for twenty minutes or so.

AutoScan is so automatic — does it take the fun out of tuning?

Everyone who has ever used the AutoScan mechanism has found it to be a more enjoyable way to tune than any other they've tried.

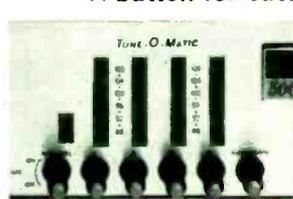
Here's how AutoScan tuning is accomplished:

Press one of the AutoScan buttons and you automatically bring in the next station, right or left, on the dial. (Even far-off stations that are marginal or completely impossible to tune in manually on other good receivers, are brought in loud and clear, automatically, by AutoScan.) Keep your finger on the button and the AutoScan will scan the entire FM band, station by station. There's nothing further for you to do but enjoy the parade of perfectly tuned-in stations filing before you. Stop when you hear what you like.

For added convenience, a remote control option is available. You can work the AutoScan from your favorite chair.

Of course, for the psychological benefit of those who still want to tune manually, the Fisher 500-TX also has ultra-smooth flywheel tuning, complete with an accurate tuning meter. And, in addition to AutoScan automatic tuning, and manual tuning, the 500-TX has still another tuning convenience called Tune-O-Matic®.

A button for each of your favorite FM stations.



Tune-O-Matic is another form of diode tuning. It has no moving parts, and works completely electronically, just like AutoScan.

However, Tune-O-Matic is actually a simple computer with a memory. You program each of the Tune-O-Matic push buttons with the frequency of a favorite FM station. After that, you just push the button that corresponds to the station you want to hear, and that station will be locked in immediately. Perfectly tuned to center-of-channel of course.

Tune-O-Matic push-buttons can be re-programmed (set for a different station) anytime, in a matter of seconds.

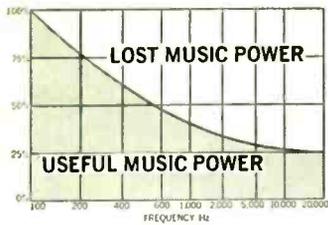
Tune-O-Matic is also available in a lower-cost Fisher receiver, the new Fisher 250-TX.

Fisher receivers pull in more stations than equally sensitive, competitive receivers.

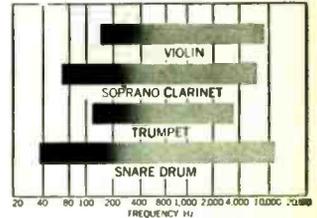
Why?

Open the flap for more information about all the new Fisher receivers.

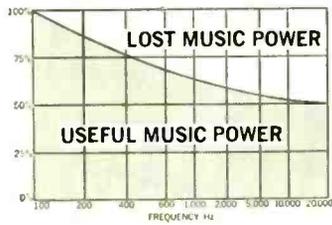
A new concept **100% MUSIC POWER[®]**



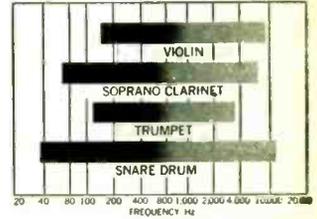
CARTRIDGE "C"
at 25% Music Power



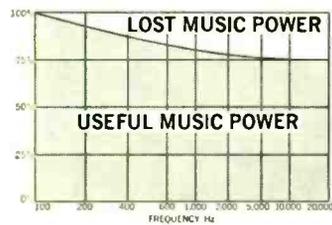
... a serious loss of definition occurs: because cartridge "C" has completely lost 75% of the Music Power at the higher frequencies.



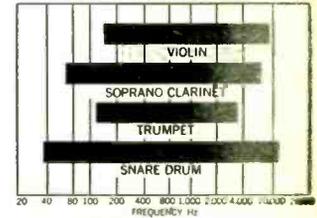
CARTRIDGE "B"
at 50% Music Power



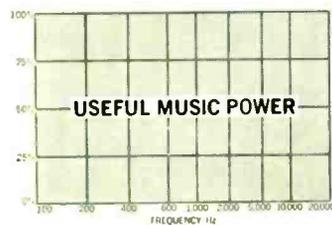
... in this case you lose definition of tone and instruments: because cartridge "B" loses as much as 50% at higher frequencies.



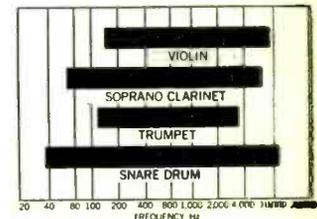
CARTRIDGE "A"
at 75% Music Power



... the instruments seem a little faded in the upper frequencies: because cartridge "A" attenuates higher frequencies as much as 25%.



XV-15
at 100% Music Power



... the instruments, all of them, are distinct and clear throughout the entire fundamental frequency range.

With the Pickering XV-15 Cartridge You Get **100% Music Power** — You Hear It All!

Only Pickering's XV-15 series of cartridges features 100% Music Power. With the Pickering, a harp sounds like a harp, a trumpet has the biting sound that you expect from a brass instrument, the flute has a rich romantic tone, the orchestra is the full-throated instrument the composer called for. So choose Pickering — and make the enjoyment of 100% Music Power a part of your life.

PICKERING

For those who can **HEAR** the difference



THE NEW PICKERING XV-15/750E. PREMIER MODEL OF THE XV-15 SERIES. TRACKS AT 1/2 TO 1 GRAM. DYNAMIC COUPLING FACTOR OF 750 FOR USE IN FIRST TONEARMS. \$60.00. OTHER XV-115 CARTRIDGES FROM \$29.95. PICKERING & CO., PLAINVIEW, L.I., N. Y. CIRCLE 49 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

HIGH FIDELITY

VOL. 20 NO. 1 JANUARY 1970

music and musicians

Leonard Marcus WHY BEETHOVEN?

Peter G. Davis, Roy McMullen, Kurt Blaukopf
BEHIND THE SCENES: MUNICH, PARIS, WARSAW

Karl-Heinz Köhler BEETHOVEN'S WRITTEN CONVERSATIONS

George Marek BEETHOVEN'S AMERICAN BOSWELL

H. C. Robbins Landon BEETHOVEN: AN ILLUSTRATED ESSAY

Jan Meyerowitz DO WE OVERESTIMATE BEETHOVEN?

George Movshon
BEETHOVEN ON DISC: FIDELIO AND THE SONGS

audio and video

TOO HOT TO HANDLE

NEWS AND VIEWS

EQUIPMENT IN THE NEWS

EQUIPMENT REPORTS

recordings

R. D. Darrell THE TAPE DECK

FEATURE REVIEWS

CLASSICAL REVIEWS

Susan Thiemann Sommer
MONTEVERDI'S MAGNIFICENT MUSICAL DRAMA

Jack Hiemenz CLASSICS FOR THE NOW GENERATION

IN BRIEF

Peter G. Davis REPEAT PERFORMANCE

POP REVIEWS

JAZZ REVIEWS

THEATER AND FILM REVIEWS

etc.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

PRODUCT INFORMATION

ADVERTISING INDEX

4 A letter from the Editor

20 Richter records Beethoven's Mass in C . . . EMI's new Carmen . . . Rarities from Poland

56 19th century big- and small-talk by Beethoven, friends, and family

64 A. W. Thayer's life-long search for Beethoven

69 The composer's life in pictures

77 Is he really the greatest composer?

81 Part I of an eight-part critical discography

32 HF answers your more incisive questions

36 Video recording and the housebroken laser

38 The latest in audio gear

43 Ferrograph 724 tape recorder
EPI 100 speaker system
Harman-Kardon CAD-4 cassette recorder
Dual 1219 automatic turntable

50 The avant-garde on tape

87 The Romantic piano repertoire rediscovered
Callas and Tebaldi—yesterday and today
Zukerman's debut, Thibaud revisited

92 Introducing Anthony Newman . . . Boulez' Debussy, Vol. 2

102 Telefunken's brilliant new Orfeo

112 Lorin Hollander plays the electronic Baldwin

126 Capsule wrap-ups of new releases

128 The Milanov/Bjoerling Aida . . . De los Angeles as Manon

130 Laura Nyro and Lonnie Mack: two dramatic talents

136 Django Reinhardt and the jazz of the Thirties

140 Music for Hitchcock thrillers by Bernard Herrmann

6 Solti in Chicago

23
121 An "at home" shopping service

120

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Why Beethoven?

DEAR READER:

It doesn't take a Beethoven Bicentennial Year to remind us of the powerful and ubiquitous force the composer exerted on all subsequent occidental music. Indeed, it is hard to see how any special emphasis on the man could give us more of his music than we already receive each year. (I heard one sensible suggestion, that we honor Beethoven in 1970 by declaring a year-long moratorium on his works—so that we can come to him fresh again in 1971.) His musical contemporaries and heirs acknowledged his pre-eminence, and even today he remains the keystone of concert activity. In the popular mind, Beethoven has long been the personification (and Beethoven's Fifth the epitome) of classical music.

What makes Beethoven's music so great? His melodies? They are often simply triadic motifs, greater in their potential than in their immediate expressivity. While these themes, as Jan Meyerowitz points out elsewhere in this issue, are perfectly constructed *to serve the purpose Beethoven has in mind for their future development*, they are certainly not *in themselves* the reason for his unique position. Beethoven was hardly the tunesmith that Schubert, Mozart, Verdi, Tchaikovsky—name your favorite melodists—were.

His harmonies? On the whole, they stay tied to the three basic I-IV-V chords. Beethoven's music is generally less chromatic, even less dissonant than, say, that of Bach, born almost a century earlier. If his melodies are triadic and his harmonies diatonic, where is the revolutionary Beethoven who monopolized music for so long? Mahler wrote longer music, Wagner wrote louder music, Berlioz wrote faster music. What about rhythm? Again, while Beethoven makes his musical points as much through rhythmic as through melodic and harmonic means, there are few rhythmic patterns and devices in most of Beethoven's music that cannot also be found elsewhere. Brahms's rhythms are surely more subtle.

Counterpoint? Palestrina, Bach, and Mozart spoke more natural contrapuntal languages; Beethoven had to struggle for his. Beauty? Some of Beethoven's music (parts of the amazing *Grosse Fuge*, for instance) is among the ugliest ever written.

What then accounts for Beethoven's greatness? I believe it is the *form* of his music—that is, the incontrovertible "rightness" of every note, measure, phrase, passage, and section of a piece—as well as his uncompromising, powerful struggle to ensure that form. Beethoven already had a supreme mental capacity to see musical relationships; by sheer determination, he pushed that capacity to its extremes. As a result, his music demonstrates the limits to which the greatest mind can be stretched; and if we of lesser genius follow this music and these relationships, our own perceptions are stretched far beyond their usual capabilities, forced by a supreme creator almost to the frontiers of the superhuman. That's one thing Tchaikovsky cannot do for us.

Next month we will continue our critical discography with **BEEHOTHOVEN'S CHORAL MUSIC**. Moving over to Mozart, in **THE RIDDLE OF THE MAGIC FLUTE** we will present an intriguing solution to the puzzling question of why Mozart changed the original fairy tale to a Masonic allegory. The key seems to be the identity of the person on whom the role of Sarastro is based. (Hint: Orson Welles played him in a 1949 movie.) For the audio-minded, we shall publish **NEW DESIGNS IN HEADPHONES**, a comparison of those models—including the new electrostatics—released since our previous survey last year, and in line with this, **EIGHT RECORDS TO TEST YOUR HEADPHONES BY**. Additionally, we will have an article on the latest developments in quadriphony: **FOUR CHANNEL STEREO FM —FROM ONE STATION!**

Leonard Marcus

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FEATURES & BENEFITS of the BOSE 901

TECHNICAL FEATURES* → PRODUCE → BENEFITS YOU CAN HEAR

A multiplicity of full range speakers acoustically coupled (to a common chamber)

1. Eliminates sound coloration produced by different-sized speakers with crossover networks. *The result is increased definition and clarity.*
2. The acoustic coupling disperses the many resonances of individual speakers to render them inaudible in the 901 array. *Instrumental sound is reproduced with greater accuracy.*
3. In any speaker most of the input power is dissipated as heat in the voice coil. By providing nine areas instead of one for heat dissipation, the 901 can handle much more power than conventional speakers. *This means that the 901 is capable of a much larger dynamic range (the ratio of the loudest to the softest audible passages). With small amplifiers (30 watts per channel) the 901 has a dynamic range superior to most conventional speakers. With larger amplifiers, you will experience dynamic ranges you never thought possible in recorded music.*

DIRECT/REFLECTING™
One front speaker and eight rear speakers positioned at precisely calculated angles to the wall.

1. Simulates the spatial properties of the direct and reverberant sound fields of a live performance: — *Much more of a sense of presence and realism* in which one wall of your room is used as the stage wall is used behind a live performance.
2. The precise ratio of reflected to direct sound and the angles of the reflections from the rear wall allow stereo listening *from almost any position in the room* — even 3 feet in front of one speaker.

FLAT POWER RADIATION

In a live performance you respond to the balance of the total acoustical energy radiated by an instrument, not to its frequency response on any axis. The 901 is designed to radiate this same balance of total acoustical energy. The result is that you can now hear the attack of instruments without the excessive screech that has for so long accompanied HiFi sounds.

ACTIVE EQUALIZATION
Over 100 components precisely tailor the musical signal fed to the 901.

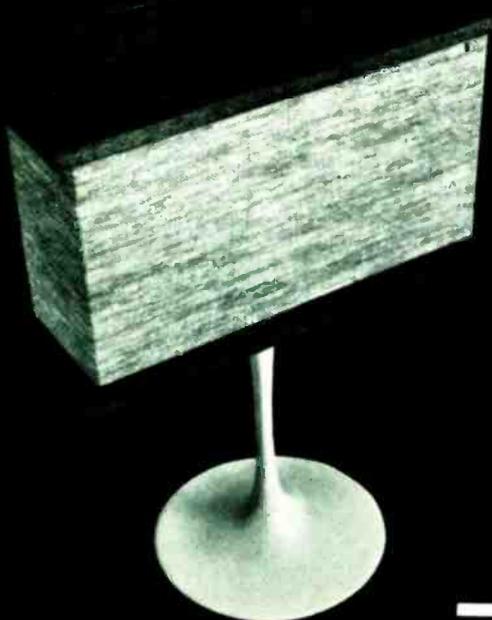
Provides precise control over the acoustical radiation of the 901 at all audible frequencies: — Unprecedented accuracy of instrumental timbre.

These features and benefits of the 901 have been the subjects of the unprecedented series of rave reviews in all the major music magazines. The latest review in the 1970 HIFI BUYERS GUIDE comments on the other reviews and on the 901 as follows:

"Utilizing a 'new' approach to sound reproduction . . . the Bose 901 is capable of delivering some of the most natural sound ever heard from a speaker system. Its midrange and highs are magnificently transparent, its lows neither smeared nor boomy, its over-all sound quality so clean that the listener is almost unaware of the electronics between him and the instruments . . . Widely acclaimed by most anyone putting pen to paper, the 901 has been hailed again and again as a breakthrough in technology . . . The sound? The 901 is very possibly the only speaker to date to pour forth in true concert-hall fashion."

When you hear the 901 you will immediately notice its wide margin of (patented) superiority over any other speaker, regardless of size or price. Ask your franchised dealer to let you audition the 901 in your home on a trial basis. You have nothing to lose but your satisfaction with your present HiFi system.

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



You can hear the difference now.

THE **BOSE** CORP.®

East Natick Industrial Park, Natick, Massachusetts 01760

AMPLIFIER SHOPPING?

Try this checklist

DOES IT ALTER THE SOUND?

- low harmonic distortion
- all sounds accentuated evenly (flat response)
- adequate power to handle total dynamic range (note percussion and plucked strings, which require 30 times more power)

DOES IT ADD SOUNDS OF ITS OWN?

- no audible 60-cycle hum
- no power line noises

DOES IT SOUND NATURAL WITH MY SPEAKERS?

- practical performance, not theoretical (many amplifiers quoting outstanding specifications with a resistive load are distorted or unstable with some speakers)

WILL IT PERFORM RELIABLY?

- rugged, high-quality construction
- advanced but proven design
- adequate warranty protection

If you can check off all these points, then you're looking at a CROWN DC300 Amplifier -- the industry standard. Experience the notable difference at your audio specialist today. For a brochure and High Fidelity DC300 Equipment Report, write CROWN, Box 1000, Elkhart, Indiana, 46514. [Watch for the unveiling of CROWN's new Master Control -- a new-concept control center in the DC300 tradition of quality.]



Crown

CIRCLE 18 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Letters

Solti and Chicago

George Movshon's interesting article "The Parallel Careers of Georg Solti" [October 1969] perpetuates an error in stating that Fritz Reiner recorded with the Chicago Symphony in Medinah Temple. Dr. Reiner's recording as well as the early releases of the Chicagoans under Martinon (Roussel's *Bacchus et Ariane*, Suite No. 2) issued from Orchestra Hall when its acoustics were, for my money, unsurpassed—miraculously bright and spacious. Medinah Temple's acoustics are quite good as heard in Ozawa's *Pictures at an Exhibition* but lack the matchless ambience of old Orchestra Hall.

In your "Letters" column [February 1969] Robert C. Marsh replied to my letter of December 1968 lamenting the loss of Orchestra Hall's acoustics by suggesting that Ozawa's recording of the Tchaikovsky Fifth recaptured the old hall's special sound properties so evident on the Reiner pressings. Now in your October 1969 issue, R. D. Darrell, comparing the acoustic properties of a new Chicago release of Ravel pieces with the Tchaikovsky Fifth, compounds the confusion by suggesting the latter was recorded in Medinah Temple. He further states that the recording is "extremely rich and warm" while the Ravel release, by contrast, has a "lean, sinewy, *sec*" ambience appropriate for Ravel.

I disagree with Messrs. Marsh and Darrell, respectively, on two points: 1) The Tchaikovsky Fifth recording captures none of the spacious quality of the old Orchestra Hall; in fact, it seems drier than Ozawa's *Pictures* recorded in Medinah Temple. 2) The new Ravel release is by no means drier in ambience than the Tchaikovsky recording, the beefier orchestration of the latter notwithstanding.

Excuse my arrogance, but I feel I can always identify a recording of the Chicago Orchestra by virtue of their matchless first trumpeter's stunning virtuosity and by the acoustics of old Orchestra Hall, which are unmistakable and always recognizable.

No, Mr. Marsh, I fear we have lost the glories of Orchestra Hall.

Garry D. Whitlow, M.D.
Phoenix, Ariz.

The Solti article and discography were very interesting. There were a few misprints (the Beethoven Fourth was LL 316 and the Tchaikovsky Second was CS 6118) and a few asterisks were out of place (the two Decca records were deleted long ago but the Mahler First was not). Still, it was very nearly complete.

I thought you might be interested in the following omissions: 1) Rossini's overtures to the *Barber of Seville* and *L'Italiana in Algeri* on a ten-inch English Decca disc LW 5207 with the LPO. 2) Mozart's *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* and the Tchaikovsky Serenade for Strings on

London CS 6066 with the Israel Philharmonic.

Rev. Jerome F. Weber
Utica, N.Y.

I greatly enjoyed George Movshon's article on the career of Georg Solti. However, I must point out that the accompanying Solti discography does not include one of my favorite records: Solti's program of opera overtures and intermez-zos, featuring the preludes to Acts I and III of *La Traviata*, the overtures to Rossini's *L'Italiana in Algeri* and *Semiramide*, Offenbach's *Barcarolle*, and Ponchielli's *Dance of the Hours*. The record is RCA Victorla VICS 1119, which is still listed in Schwann. The sound is first-rate with a dynamic range nearly as wide as the London *Rheingold*.

Tracy R. Killeen, Jr.
Schenectady, N.Y.

The Music of Africa

I would like to call your readers' attention to the work of the African Music Society of South Africa, founded in 1947 by Dr. Hugh Tracy. Besides recording and publishing African music, the AMS endeavors to bring African art to a wider public. The AMS has made available a series of 210 LP records called "The Sound of Africa," mainly intended for universities and other educational institutes. These discs constitute a valuable documentation of African music south of the Sahara.

There is also available a selection of nineteen discs from this series aimed at the general public. Although not stereo, the recorded quality is of a high standard: the recordings may also be obtained on tape. Interested parties should contact The Director, International Library of African Music, P.O. Box 138, Roodepoort, Transvaal, South Africa.

G. Nardini
Winterthur, Switzerland

Opera Reissues from RCA

Since I am one of those opera lovers addicted to duplicating as described by Leo Haber in his amusing article "The Perils of Record Collecting" [February 1969], I was overjoyed to read in your September 1969 issue that RCA is returning to circulation the recording of *Aida*—namely the 1955 Rome Opera performance with Milanov, Bjoerling, Barbieri, and Warren. Having only the highlights of this great recording, I have been making do with five "stopgap" versions. But that doesn't mean I will throw out my Toscanini, Tebaldi, or Price/Vickers *Aidas*: I have grown quite attached to them too, but there is still room for one more—especially if it is the best of the lot.

Thanks are also due to RCA for

Continued on page 8

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CIRCLE 2 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

LETTERS

Continued from page 6

reissuing the Albanese/Bjoerling/Merrill *Manon Lescaut* from 1954, another great performance that should never have left the catalogue. Maybe next year we can hope that RCA will give us back the Peters/Bjoerling *Rigoletto*, the Milanov/Bjoerling *Cavalleria rusticana*, and the Carteri / Valletti / Warren / Monteux *La Traviata* which Conrad L. Osborne praised so highly in your December 1967 issue.

Dr. Murray R. Steinbart
Winnipeg, Manitoba
Canada

Superstars

"Enrico Caruso, Father of Us All. The great tenor who virtually created the classical record industry is still in demand" [HIGH FIDELITY, September 1969].

This statement is like saying that Callas took pot in 1949 and that, since she was so big a star, Gigli, Schipa, Albanese, Klose, Berger, Lemnitz, Ralf, Svanholm, Farrell, Stignani, Milanov, Flagstad, Barbieri, Bjoerling, Warren, Stevens, Pinza, Merrill, Melchior, Sayao, Pons, Tagliabue, Tagliavini, Jobin, Traubel, Pearce, Hotter, and Lehmann followed suit. Who was Callas in 1949?

Part of the Caruso legend seems to be that he was already a superstar in 1902 and that he alone was responsible

for the commercial success of the gramophone. The fact is that he was an exciting and only relatively successful newcomer, teetering on the brink of a fantastic career. When London objected to Gaisberg's payment to Caruso for the Milan session, they were in no way being unreasonable.

But superstars did record at that period. The trip to the St. Petersburg Opera in which Mei-Figner and her husband made discs had been made two years before. The *real* arrival of the gramophone as an operatic medium, though, came with the signing of Melba, Tamagno, Patti, et al. to make special series with special label colors (pink for Patti, mauve for Melba, and—I think—green for Tamagno) and with special prices to match. Once that began, the real mark of arrival as an operatic superstar was the exorbitant price set on his or her records. Melba fought tooth and nail to keep her prices higher than anyone else's.

But Caruso never stood among the special-label elite. Twenty years later, he would have; but before 1905 or so, he was one among many. Indeed, his importance is almost the reverse of the legend—his voice was so finely matched to the properties of the "improved" acoustic recording process that *it* helped to establish *him* rather than the other way about!

Ron Tolberg
Bayside, N.Y.

Woody and Gene

Gene Lees has scored again with his magnificent piece on Woody Herman. ["Woody 'n' Me," September 1969]. His consistent efforts on behalf of "better" popular music through his reviews and columns, and perhaps even more through his sensitive lyrics, put me (and should well put others) to shame.

Woody Herman has been my favorite band leader for many years, and I've always felt that even though his hardcore fans are a devoted group, he has never really achieved the popular acclaim or financial success he deserves. This may be partly because, as Gene says, he is "seemingly cocky and flippant on the bandstand"; it may also be due to the fact that he has always used his own taste and judgment on tunes and arrangements. To reach the largest mass audience, perhaps he should have swallowed his personal standards and gone after "hits." Instead, he has always interpreted the trends as he saw them at the time.

I, for one, am eternally grateful to Woody for hours and hours of pleasure. I'm happy I've had the chance to talk with him for a few minutes here and there. I'm also extremely thankful to Gene Lees and HIGH FIDELITY for such a warm portrait.

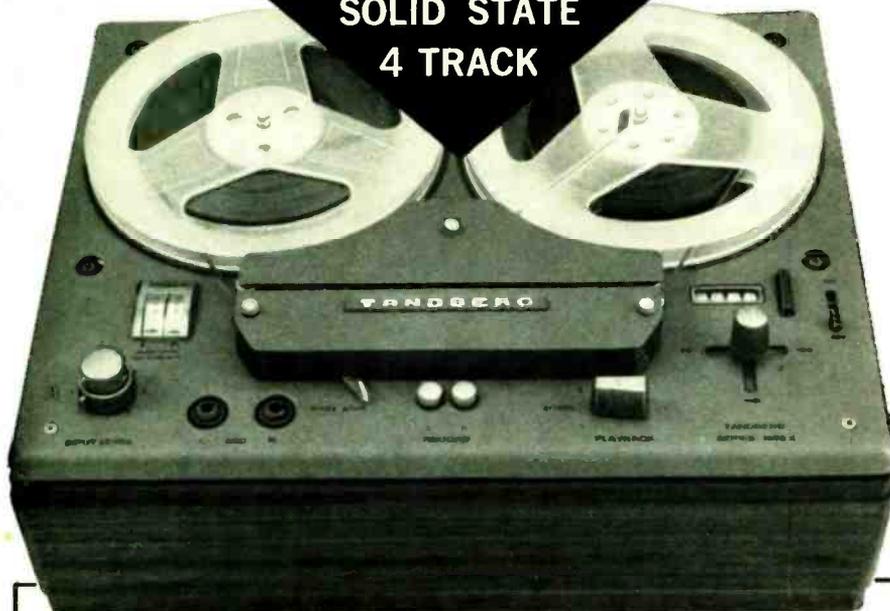
Rod Baum
Brandon, Fla.

Julius Katchen

As Proust's tea-dipped *madeleine* evoked

Continued on page 10

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LETTERS

Continued from page 8

a world of memories, so Ned Rorem's tribute to Julius Katchen [September 1969] restored a rich, music-filled era when each week my mother dispatched all five of us children to the Svet Music Studios in Newark for lessons and orchestra practice. Mandel and Rosalie Svet, products of an east European conservatory, were dedicated teachers of violin and piano, and Julius Katchen was their grandchild. His grandmother was his teacher.

Friday nights at the Studio were obligatory for all students. Orchestra practice was preceded by theory instruction; during intermission, anyone who had something ready played a solo to a highly critical audience of his peers. I recall that Julius' mother, who had studied with Isidore Philipp in France, played the Mendelssohn G minor Piano Concerto with grace and polish; but Julius, as a young boy, threw off the same Concerto with the bravura, speed, and nervous control of a winning auto racer. Disaster seemed inevitable at such speed, but he rounded the curves with confidence.

Concerning his enormous repertory, Mr. Rorem attributes Katchen's learning capacity to "eidetic fingertips," an apt use of a psychological term ordinarily reserved for a clear visual image possessing an external or perceptual character, though recognized as subjective. The eidetic image is a perfectly retained image of something seen once. If, then, Julius had true eidetic imagery as well as "eidetic fingertips"—and, in addition, practiced twelve hours a day—the large, ever-ready repertory comes as no surprise.

Julius died too soon. But he justified his talent and fulfilled his promise, a fulfillment granted to few.

Grace Rubin-Rubson
Los Angeles, Calif.

Mudslingers

I intended to stay out of the "Letters" column of your magazine, but Michael P. Schulman's blast of October 1969 has provoked me into breaking my silence. I have become fed up with the attitude that—"if I don't like his work, he is, therefore, an idiot"—which some of your readers take, such as William Trotter [March and September 1969], and now Mr. Schulman.

In both of his letters, Mr. Trotter's statements about some of the major conductors amount to name-calling and poorly veiled insults: Steinberg is "as close to a total nonentity as one can get and still be sentient," and is referred to as "the Spiro Agnew of the podium"; Leinsdorf "belongs in a second-rate Italian opera house—no second-rate German opera house would have him." Granted that Mr. Trotter is entitled to his own ideas about how a piece of music should be performed; however, just because a certain conductor's ideas about a given piece differ from one's own does not

Continued on page 16

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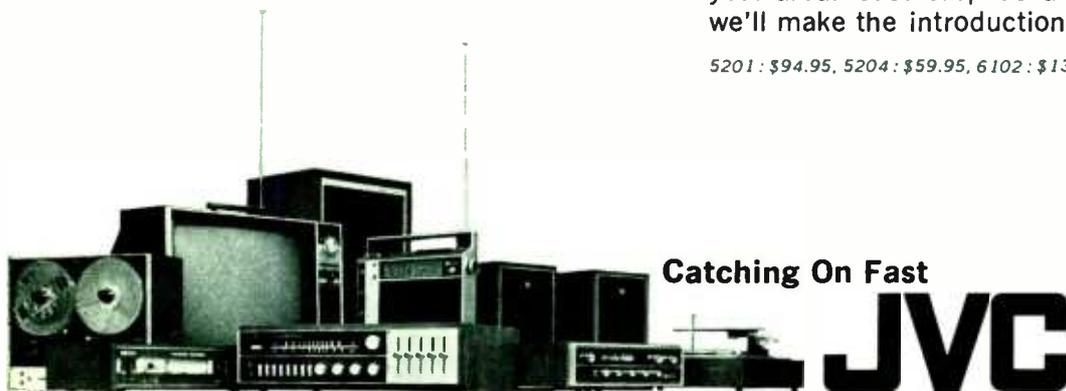
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CIRCLE 14 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

LETTERS

Continued from page 10

mean that the conductor in question is automatically incompetent. Personally, I'm no great admirer of Steinberg's interpretations, but it stops there. I do not resort to mudslinging. My feeling is that if you like a conductor, fine; if you don't, say so, but don't make judgments on his talent or intelligence.

Michael P. Schulman, I feel, makes the same mistake as Mr. Trotter. Mr. Schulman's letter talks about Sibelius as either a first- or second-rank composer, and then goes on to imply that Nielsen is a fifth-rate composer. All questions of merit aside, why must people always

feel a need to put composers in various ranks? Can't people simply listen to a piece of music and determine whether they like it or not without putting it in some sort of dehumanizing numerical rank and file?

James Plank
Reading, Pa.

Antecedents of the Cassette

In the article "Are Cassettes Here to Stay?" [July 1969], the authors appear uncertain as to the exact origins of magazine or cartridge tape recording. I am sure they will be interested to learn that the first cartridge-loaded magnetic recorder was the Peirce Wire Recorder Model 200, introduced in 1948.

This machine introduced the twin spool concept. Cartridges were available pre-loaded with fifteen minutes, thirty minutes, and one hour of magnetic wire. Although wire had problems of breakage which do not exist on tape, this machine was the forerunner of all magazine and cartridge tape recorders.

The second such machine on the market was the "Scribe" dictating machine which utilized a large cartridge of quarter-inch magnetic tape. "Scribe" was invented and first distributed in Canada as the Sonograph machine back in 1952.

You also may be interested to learn that the original Peirce Wire Recorder, the Model 55B, which was sold at Macy's in August of 1945, was the first commercially available magnetic recorder. Peirce, however, devoted their efforts to the dictating machine market rather than the home entertainment and music field.

S.J. Kalow
New York, N.Y.

Musical Truths

Gene Lees certainly took a beating in the October "Letters" column. Weren't there any letters in his behalf? Here is one.

First of all, disgruntled readers, music is the name of the game, and music is what Mr. Lees reviews. The medium of music has been put to many uses by the "now" generation. Music has served as the accompaniment to fœaking out, finding your own thing, putting over the message, etc. If you are going to pick on music as your medium, then make it melodically, harmonically, and rhythmically interesting. Give it an intelligent performance. I trust Mr. Lees's very musical ears to tell me if the music lives up to these requirements. Too much of the rock scene maintains that ugly is beautiful, trivia is profound, mediocrity is great. You simply can't put Mr. Lees down if he says it isn't so, for he speaks the simple, eternal truth.

Michael MacFarland
Tipp City, Ohio

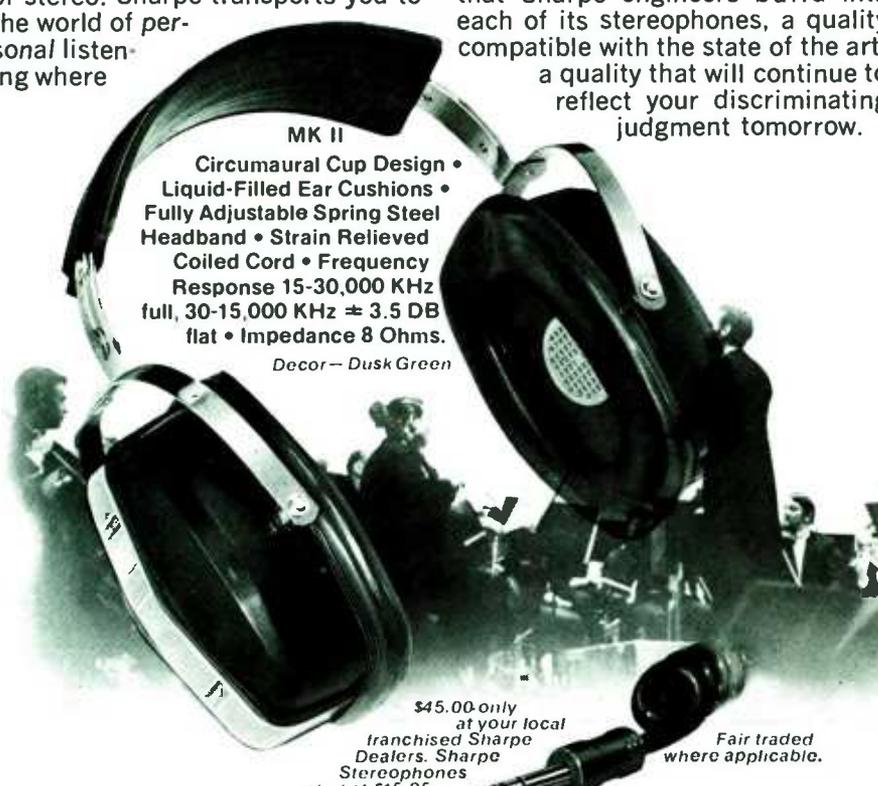


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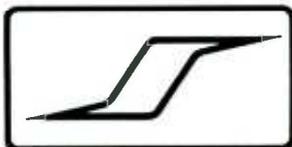


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Editorial correspondence should be addressed to The Editor, High Fidelity, Great Barrington, Mass. 01230. Editorial contributions will be welcomed. Payment for articles accepted will be arranged prior to publication. Unsolicited manuscripts should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

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

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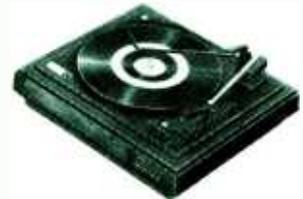


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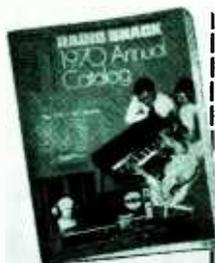
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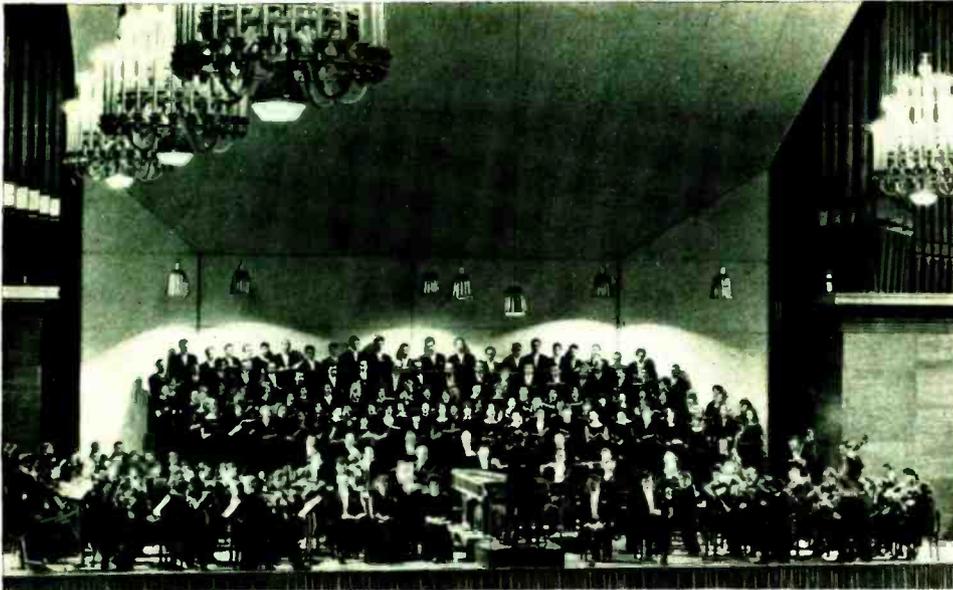
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Karl Richter with his youthful Bach Choir and the ever-changing Bach Orchestra in Munich's Herkules-Saal.

MUNICH

For Beethoven's Birthday— The Mass in C from DGG

The flood of Beethoveniana on disc should reach stupefying proportions before December 16, 1970, the official 200th birth date. Deutsche Grammophon, in fact, has some especially spectacular plans afoot to mark the occasion, although Polydor, DGG's American distributor, is keeping the specifics under jealously guarded wraps until next fall. One small omen of things to come is a new recording of the Mass in C and the rarely heard *Elegiac Song*, Op. 118; both works were taped last summer by Karl Richter and his Munich Bach Choir and Orchestra.

The site of the recording session was Munich's comfortably appointed Herkules-Saal—one of DGG's favorite auditoriums and used in the past for such projects as Rafael Kubelik's complete Mahler cycle, Schoenberg's *Gurrelieder*, and Richter's own Bach cantata series. Although a thoroughly equipped studio on the balcony level is always ready and waiting for action, the hall itself requires a good deal of preparation before sessions can begin. When I arrived on the evening of August 7, the engineers had already set up a network of microphones, the rows of sound-absorbent felt seats had been covered with long sheets of plastic, and from the balcony a crew of Bavarian Television technicians were training their cameras on the proceedings as part of a special film describing the inner workings of a recording session.

To anyone meeting Richter's Bach Choir and Orchestra face to face for the first time, the most immediately striking aspect of the ensemble is its youth. The age of the chorus members ranges from sixteen to twenty-five—older

singers are systematically "retired" by the conductor who likes to maintain the fresh, spontaneous sound of young voices, all of them either amateurs or students. The orchestra is comprised of some of Germany's finest players, the strings drawn primarily from the Orchestra of the Bavarian Radio, the winds and brass often summoned from as far away as Detmold. Not at all a permanent ensemble, the Bach Orchestra is newly contracted for each concert, tour, and recording session—quite a challenge for Richter who must mold a homogeneous group afresh on each occasion. The session I attended began with the very Handelian Credo, and the full orchestra, chorus, and soloists (Gundula Janowitz, Julia Hamari, Horst R. Laubenthal, and Ernst Gerold Schramm) were assembled for a hard evening's work.

Richter's cool, crisp, slightly aloof podium deportment belies the characteristically crackling musical results he obtains from his forces. All of his instructions were delivered so clearly and articulately that it was rarely necessary to go over a passage once the essential musical problems were straightened out. When the music mounted in excitement, however, Richter couldn't resist throwing himself into the fray by jumping up from his chair to emphasize an accent or crescendo—once with a resulting stamp of the foot that marred an otherwise flawless take. These occasional bursts of temperament aside, Richter's work methods were a model of efficiency and he was usually able to anticipate problems before they even occurred. "Instead of a fermata, we'll take one measure rest here," he warned the players, who caught his meaning without missing a beat and the music continued uninterrupted. In order to ensure maximum co-ordination between chorus and orchestra, Richter hit on a unique device: "Sopranos, watch the first violins' bows—that's precisely

how fast your eighth notes should be." It worked, and the rapid passage of simultaneous runs rolled out smoothly without a hint of raggedness.

The sonic perspective changed radically in the control room. Here, through two large speakers in opposite corners of the room, one could hear the balanced sound after it had passed through engineer Klaus Scheibe's mixing panel. Achieving a good blend with so complicated a work is a tricky job: chorus, orchestra, and soloists, each with their separate microphone pickups, must all be in perspective—the responsibility of the musical producer, Rainer Brock. Brock offered forthright suggestions to Richter via an intercom telephone, occasionally pointing out minor infelicities of ensemble and balance. During breaks in the session, Richter visited the control room to hear the complete takes and compare notes with DGG's team. After the evening's work was in the can, the engineering crew stayed behind for on-the-spot editing, and by midnight the master tape of the Credo was completed—another link in DGG's proposed mammoth celebration of the Beethoven year.

PETER G. DAVIS

PARIS

EMI'S New Spoken/Sung Carmen

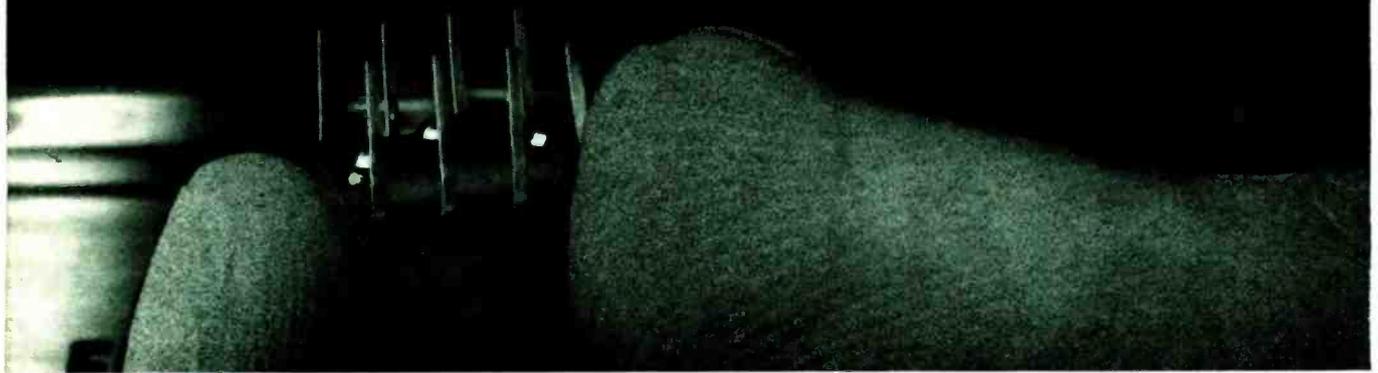
July 1969. Armstrong, Aldrin, and Collins were on their way to the moon. The thermometer in France was mounting to record highs and the humidity was playing exasperating tricks with the pitch of the strings of the Paris Opéra Orchestra. The orange polo shirt of conductor Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos was a vast blotch

Continued on page 22

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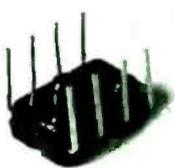
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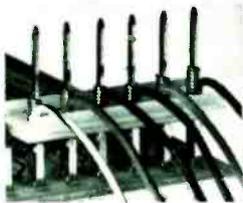


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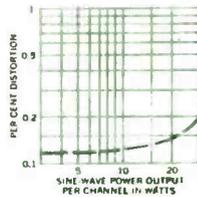
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BEHIND THE SCENES *Continued from page 20*

of perspiration. The bull ring of Seville, occupied by the chorus of the Paris Opéra, was located for stereophonic reasons on the ground floor of the Salle Wagram. Upstairs, on a blue and white checkered stage, Don José—Jon Vickers in brown slacks and a very warm-looking tan sweater—was pleading passionately "there is yet time" to a fatalistic, unyielding Carmen—Grace Bumbry, in a stunning white lace miniskirted dress, white necklace, and white stockings.

Thus began the recording of the latest EMI complete version of Bizet's masterpiece. After a few days, work was halted and was not resumed until September. At this writing there is a possibility that there will have to be additional sessions in January, although these will entail merely the retouching of a few passages. When completed, this may yet be the most spaced-out recording of *Carmen* since the monumentally interrupted De los Angeles/Beecham version of over a decade ago.

But whereas the delay in the Beecham enterprise was due in part to temperament, this time the difficulty has been simply the familiar logistical problem: how to assemble a number of expensive talents that rarely have open dates at the same time. Frühbeck de Burgos, who can whip a surprisingly authentic Spanish accent into Bizet's essentially French music, had an important engagement in his native Spain. Mirella Freni, regarded by EMI as a must for the role of Micaëla, could not get to Paris for even one session last July. Everything was made a bit more complicated by the fact that only one of the principal members of the cast was French: Eliane Lublin in the role of Frasquita. The Mercédès was the Romanian Viorica Cortez, and Escamillo was the Greek Kostas Paskalis.

Moreover, Jean-Louis Barrault was not available until September, and he was important for an interesting reason. As everyone knows and usually forgets, some of the dramatic power in *Carmen* should be credited to the skill of Meilhac and Halévy as librettists. Their skill was originally more apparent than it later became, for the first performance of the work, on March 3, 1875, took place at the Opéra-Comique with the spoken dialogue that was considered proper in that house before our present confusion of genres began.

After the composer's death, however, his friend Guiraud recast the dialogue as recitative, with results that are certainly pleasant enough and often musically effective, but with more than one defect. The recitatives obscure the story line and the motivation of characters in several places; they make some of Bizet's musical transitions meaningless; they destroy some of his quite Wagnerian psychological effects and some of his verism.

Thus, early in the planning stages, EMI decided that its new Angel album would return to the spoken dialogue of the first 1875 performance. The decision involved

doubling the largely non-French cast with French professional actors, since foreign accents that were acceptable when sung would offend all Gallic ears when spoken. But professional actors trained to deliver lines in plays evidently needed some special direction if they were to manage the style of *Carmen*. So EMI called upon Barrault, whose experience with the operatic stage and with recorded poetry seemed exactly right for a "conductor" of *opéra-comique* dialogue on discs.

The singing Don José and the singing Carmen were never a problem for EMI's producers. Vickers made his debut in the role, at the Stratford Festival of 1956. Bumbry sang her part for the first time in 1960 at Basel in German, and then quickly shifted to French for a performance at the Paris Opéra. With Vickers and Freni she scored a triumph at Salzburg three years ago.

In a conversation during a break at the Salle Wagram she came to some conclusions about the seductive gypsy that would probably have satisfied both Bizet and Merimée: "Naturally, over the years I've altered a hundred or more nuances in my singing and acting. You can't stick to a pattern. But I haven't altered my basic idea of the role. It's a character role. You can't just sing. You are in action all the time. Also, although Don José changes during the course of the opera, Carmen does not. She is the same from the *Habañera* right through to the end. She is always a girl who loves only herself and her freedom."

ROY McMULLEN

WARSAW

New Additions to the Polish Repertory

Critics attending performances at the Warsaw Music Festival, devoted to contemporary music (which takes place every fall in the Polish capital), receive a remarkable assist from the state-owned record company, Polskie Nagrania. Within forty-eight hours after each concert, the performances are issued on records—an ideal way to re-enforce one's first impressions of unfamiliar new music. When I arrived in Warsaw at the beginning of October, I was presented with a series of recordings which gave me the opportunity to hear performances that had taken place during the second half of September. These included the world premiere of the Third Symphony by Tadeusz Baird (composed for the Koussevitzky Foundation and completed last April) and Kazimierz Serocki's *Poésies*, sung by the British soprano Dorothy Dorow and played by the Warsaw Opera Chamber Orchestra.

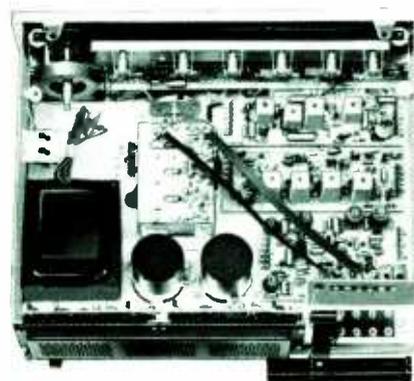
Polskie Nagrania, founded shortly after

Continued on page 28

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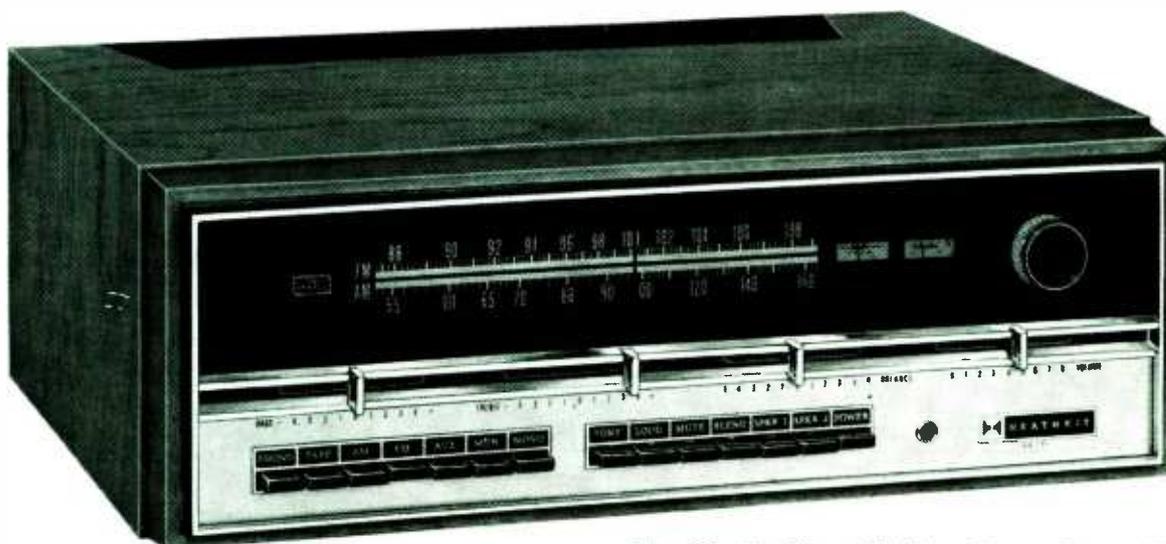
Kit AR-19, 29 lbs. \$225.00*
Assembled AE-19, cabinet, 10 lbs. \$19.95*

PARTIAL AR-19 SPECIFICATIONS — AMPLIFIER: Continuous power output per channel: 20 watts, 8 ohms. **IMF Power output per channel:** 30 watts, 8 ohms. **Frequency response:** (1 watt level) —1 dB, 6 Hz —35 kHz. **Power bandwidth for constant 0.25% THD:** Less than 5 Hz to greater than 30 kHz. **Harmonic distortion:** Less than 0.25% from 5 Hz to 20 kHz at 20 watts rms output. Less than 0.1% at 1000 Hz at 1 watt output. **IM Distortion:** Less than 0.25% with 20 watts output. Less than 0.1% at 1 watt output. **Hum and noise:** Phono input, —65 dB. Phono input sensitivity: 2.4 millivolts; overload, 155 millivolts. **FM: Sensitivity:** 2.0 uV, IMF. **Volume sensitivity:** Below measurable level. **Selectivity:** 35 dB. **Image rejection:** 90 dB. **IF Rejection:** 90 dB. **Capture ratio:** 2.5 dB. **Total harmonic distortion:** 1% or less. **IM Distortion:** 0.5% or less. **Spurious rejection:** —90 dB. **FM STEREO: Separation:** 35 dB at midfrequencies; 30 dB at 50 Hz; 25 dB at 10 kHz; 20 dB at 15 kHz. **Frequency response:** ±1 dB from 20-15,000 Hz. **Harmonic distortion:** 1.5% or less @ 1000 Hz with 100% modulation. 19 kHz & 38 kHz. **Suppression:** 50 dB. **SCA Suppression:** 50 dB. **AM SECTION: Sensitivity:** Using a radiating loop, 130 uV/M @ 1000 kHz. **Selectivity:** 25 dB at 10 kHz. **Image rejection:** 60 dB @ 600 kHz. 60 dB @ 1400 kHz. **IF Rejection:** 60 dB @ 1000 kHz. **Harmonic distortion:** Less than 2%. **Hum & noise:** —40 dB.

See more Heathkit Stereo Receivers next 2 pages

CIRCLE 33 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Introducing The Advanced New Heathkit® AR-29 100-Watt AM/FM/FM Stereo Receiver



The World's Finest Medium Power Stereo Receiver ...
Designed In The Tradition Of The Famous Heathkit AR-15 ... \$285.00*



Quietly distinctive when not in use ... its impressive midnight black and chrome face unmarred by dial or scale markings. A touch of the power switch and the dial and scale markings appear.

All solid-state design ... 65 transistors, 42 diodes and 4 integrated circuits.

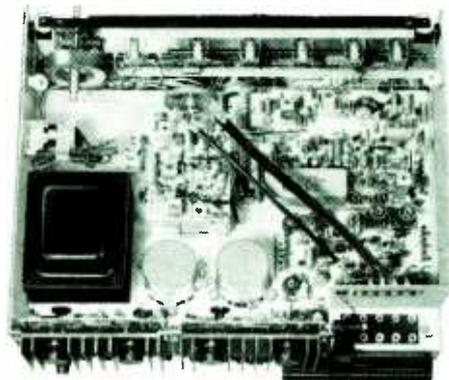
Assembled, aligned FET tuning unit.

Advanced 9-pole L-C Filter for greatest selectivity ... a first in the industry.

Plug-In Circuit Boards for easier assembly, easier service ... another first in kits.

Built-In Test Circuitry for voltage and resistance checks without external instruments during construction and after.

Massive Power Supply ... just loafs along at 100 watts output.



• All solid-state design • 100 watts music power output at 8 ohms • 7-60,000 Hz frequency response • Less than 0.25% Harmonic & 0.2% IM Distortion at full output • Transformerless, direct-coupled outputs with dissipation-limiting circuitry for output protection • Ball-bearing inertia flywheel tuning • Advanced L-C filter gives 70 dB selectivity and elimination of IF alignment • Assembled, aligned FET FM tuner for better than 1.8 uV sensitivity • New Mute Control attenuates between-station FM noise • New Blend Control attenuates noise on FM-Stereo stations • SCA filter • Linear Motion Controls for Bass, Treble, Balance & Volume • Individually adjustable input level controls for each channel of each input keeps volume constant when switching sources • Switches for 2 separate stereo speaker systems • Center speaker capability • Two front-panel meters for precise station tuning • Stereo indicator light • Stereo headphone jack • Swivel AM rod antenna • 300 & 75 ohm FM antenna inputs • Massive, electronically regulated power supply • New Modular Plug-In Circuit Board designed for easy enjoyable assembly

Another Design Leader ... reflecting the heritage of the world-famous Heathkit AR-15. A new milestone in audio history is here; the world's finest medium power stereo receiver ... the Heathkit AR-29.

The Finest Stereo Amplifier In Any Receiver ... delivers a full 100 watts music power, 70 watts continuous — drives even the most inefficient speakers. A giant fully regulated & filtered power supply, 4 individually heat-sunk and protected output transistors and the best specs in the industry add up to unmatched audio fidelity.

The Heath Mark Of Quality: FM Stereo Performance ... now more apparent than ever. The assembled, aligned tuning unit uses FET circuitry for high overload capability, low cross modulation and 1.8 uV sensitivity. Three IC's in the IF give greater AM rejection, hard limiting, excellent temperature stability & reliability. Another IC in the Multiplex section performs four different functions ... assures perfect stereo reproduction.

Kit Exclusive: 9-Pole L-C Filter ... delivers an ideally shaped bandpass with greater than 70 dB selectivity, superior separation and eliminates IF alignment forever.

AM That Sounds Like FM. Three FET's in the AM RF section combine superior sensitivity with greater signal handling capability to give the finest AM reception available. A built-in AM rod antenna swivels for best signal pick-up.

Kit Exclusive: Modular Plug-In Circuit Board Construction ... for simplified assembly ... easier, faster service.

Kit Exclusive: Built-In Test Circuitry lets you not only assemble, test & align your new AR-29, but also completely service it — without external test equipment.

You Be The Judge. Compare the specifications ... exciting styling concepts ... the dozens of features ... the price. You'll find that the new Heathkit AR-29 is, indeed, the world's finest medium power stereo receiver. Order yours soon.

Kit AR-29, (less cabinet), 33 lbs. \$285.00*

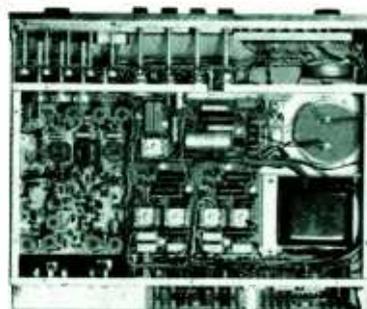
Assembled AE-19, oiled pecan cabinet, 10 lbs. \$19.95*

PARTIAL AR-29 SPECIFICATIONS — AMPLIFIER: Continuous power output per channel: 35 watts, 8 ohms. IHF Power output per channel: 50 watts, 8 ohms. Frequency response: —1 dB, 7-60,000 Hz, 1 watt level. Power Bandwidth for constant 0.25% THD: Less than 5 Hz to greater than 30 kHz. Total harmonic distortion: (Full power output on both channels) Less than 0.25%; 20-20,000 Hz; less than 0.1% (1 watt output, both channels). Less than 0.2% (full output, both channels). Less than 0.1% (1 watt output, both channels). Hum and noise: (phono input) —65 dB relative to 100 uV signal. Phono input sensitivity: 2.2 millivolts (overload 155 millivolts). FM: Sensitivity: 1.8 uV or better. Volume sensitivity: Below measurable level. Selectivity: Greater than 70 dB. Image rejection: 90 dB. IF Rejection: 90 dB. Capture ratio: 1.5 dB. Total harmonic distortion: 0.5% or less. IM Distortion: 0.4% or less. Spurious rejection: Greater than 90 dB. FM STEREO: Separation: 40 dB min. (n) mid-frequencies; 30 dB (r) 50 Hz; 25 dB (r) 10 kHz; 20 dB (r) 15 kHz. Frequency response: ±1 dB, 20-15,000 Hz. Total harmonic distortion: 0.5% or less (r) 1000 Hz, 100% modulation, 19 kHz & 38 kHz. Suppression: 55 dB. SCA Suppression: 55 dB. AM SECTION: Sensitivity: (using built-in rod antenna) 200 uV/M (r) 600 kHz; 300 uV/M (r) 1400 kHz (IHF rated). Selectivity: Greater than 40 dB alternate channel. Image rejection: 60 dB (r) 600 kHz; 45 dB (r) 1400 kHz. IF Rejection: Greater than 50 dB. Harmonic distortion: Less than 2%. Hum & Noise: —35 dB.

CIRCLE 33 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Heathkit® AR-15 150-Watt AM/FM Stereo Receiver...

The One Receiver Judged Superior To All Others



The AR-15 is the most highly praised AM/FM Stereo receiver in the history of the industry. Every leading audio critic, every major electronics editor, leading testing labs and thousands of owners agree that it represents a milestone in the development of advanced solid-state receivers.

The AR-15... design leader... the receiver that started the trend to new concepts in circuitry... and still judged the world's finest. In the AR-15 Heath introduced the crystal filter/integrated circuit combinations that have ideal selectivity and never require alignment... the massive high power amplifier with its superb frequency response and ultra-low IM and harmonic distortion... the wide dynamic range preamp... the ultra-sensitive tuner... and the elaborate noise-operated squelch circuit that quiets between-station noise before you hear it. The AR-15 led the way in these new approaches in design... it continues to be recognized as the leader.

Other features of the AR-15: input level controls, built-in testing circuitry and positive circuit protection by current limiting Zener diodes and circuit breakers. A full complement of controls: dual volume, balance, treble and bass, two tuning meters, adjustable phase control for best stereo, stereo only switch with adjustable automatic stereo threshold circuit to reject weak stereo signals, loudness switch for full response listening even at low levels, tape monitor and speaker on/off. The front panel has two stereo headphone jacks, a stereo indicator light and the popular "Black Magic" tuning scale lighting. Rear-mounted accessory AC sockets (3) are an added convenience to power other components. The AR-15 is the receiver to buy if you want advanced circuitry, the world's most sensitive FM tuner and the most powerful stereo amplifier section. The AR-15 can give you a control room sense of command over concert hall sound. Whether you choose the kit model or the factory assembled and tested version, you have chosen the world's finest stereo receiver.

Kit AR-15, (less cabinet), 34 lbs.....\$349.95*
 Assembled ARW-15, (less cabinet), 34 lbs.....\$540.00*
 Assembled AE-16, optional walnut cabinet, 10 lbs.....\$24.95*

AR-15 SPECIFICATIONS

AMPLIFIER:

Continuous Power Output	100 watts into 8 ohms (50 watt/channel)
IHF power output	150 watts into 8 ohms (75 watts/channel)
Frequency Response	+0, -1 dB, 6 Hz to 50 kHz
THD (full power output on both channels)	Less than .5% from 20 Hz - 20 kHz Less than .2% @ 1 kHz
IM Distortion	Less than .5% (full output, both channels) Less than .2% (1 watt output)
Phono Input Sensitivity	2.2 mV (overload 155 mV)

FM:

Sensitivity	Less than 1.8 uV
Volume Sensitivity	Below measurable level
Selectivity	Better than 70 dB
Image Rejection	Better than 90 dB
IF Rejection	Better than 90 dB
Capture Ratio	Better than 1.5 dB
THD	.5% or less
IM Distortion	.5% or less
Spurious Rejection	Better than 100 dB

FM Stereo:

Separation	40 dB or greater @ middle frequencies 30 dB or greater @ 50 Hz 25 dB or greater @ 10 kHz 20 dB or greater @ 15 kHz ± 1 dB 20 Hz to 15 kHz
Frequency Response	
THD	1% or less @ 1 kHz with 100% modulation
19 kHz & 38 kHz Suppression	55 dB or greater
SCA Suppression	50 dB



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CIRCLE 33 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



AND ON THE 8th DAY,
THERE WAS A SPEAKER SALE. HALLELUJAH.

And it came to pass:

EPI's 8th Day Speaker Sale. Now till January 31, 1970, our \$109 bookshelf speaker is yours for a paltry \$89, at most orthodox EPI dealers. That's a twenty-dollar break on the famous Model 100 omnidirectional speaker that graphs a pancake-flat response from 40 to 15,000 Hz. Thine ears should hear the glory.



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CIRCLE 28 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

STEP UP

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PE-2020

Your records are cut by a stylus with a 15° vertical tracking angle. Play them back the same way for optimum fidelity. The ELPA PE-2020 is the *only* automatic turntable especially designed to track a stack at 15°!

If you're settling for less than the PE-2020 you're making do with less than the best! ELPA PE-2020 \$129.95 less base



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CIRCLE 27 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

BEHIND THE SCENES

Continued from page 22

World War II, devotes equal attention to avant-garde music, the standard repertoire, and Polish music of all periods. This juxtaposition of the old with the new strikes the visitor as soon as he enters the building where Polskie Nagrania has set up its main office: an old monastery, part of which is still inhabited by monks of a highly respected order. Two of the firm's executives, Mme. Alina Osostowicz-Sutkowska and F. Pukacki, led me into one office room that still strongly resembles a monk's cell. The ensuing conversation, however, was entirely secular, although I had expected that my first question, relating to the record series "Musica Antiqua Polonica," would yield information about plans to record medieval Polish religious music. Mme. Osostowicz-Sutkowska discussed instead a project of a different character altogether. "Only recently," she said, "a rather unique collection of seventeenth-century music has been discovered at the Jagellonian Library in Cracow consisting of secular dances, canzonas, and songs. After the music has been transcribed and edited by musicologists, we will record it with the *Fistulatores et Tubicinatores Varsovienses*."

Unearthing musical manuscripts from old archives is also one of the firm's major activities. A case in point is the two-act opera *King Lokietek* by Joseph Elsner, who founded the Warsaw Conservatory in 1821, and taught harmony and counterpoint to Chopin. *King Lokietek* has recently been added to the repertoire of the Warsaw Chamber Opera and is now being recorded under the direction of Stefan Sutkowski. The record will be released in time to mark the 1970 bicentenary of Elsner's birth.

The influence of Polskie Nagrania upon the operatic repertoire in general appears to be remarkable. When the opera house in Poznan prepared to celebrate its fiftieth anniversary, Polskie Nagrania proposed a joint production and recording of an opera by one of Poland's most popular national composers, Stanislaw Moniuszko. The final choice was the one-act opera *Verbum nobile*, recorded under the baton of Robert Satanowski and released last fall. Moniuszko's works of course occupy a central position in the label's catalogue. *Straszny Dwor (The Haunted Manor)*, an opera often found in the repertoire of the Warsaw Opera, is also obtainable on records. *Halka*, Moniuszko's best-known contribution to the stage, has been earmarked for a new complete stereo recording this season. Another recording project is devoted to a collection of songs that appeared during Moniuszko's life under the title *Spiewniki domowe (Song Book for Home Use)* in six volumes; another six volumes containing posthumous works were published after the composer's death. The task of recording these songs has been assigned to the baritone Andrzej Holski, familiar from his performances in numerous recent works by Krzysztof Penderecki.

KURT BLAUKOPF

If you can find an AM/FM stereo receiver with these specifications and features for \$199⁹⁵ —



The Nocturne 330

Power Output:	90 watts, ± 1 db. 70 watts, IHF, @ 4 ohms.
Frequency Response:	$\pm 1\frac{1}{2}$ db 7-50KHZ @ 1 watt.
Hum and Noise:	90 db.
Square Wave Rise Time:	3.5 microseconds.
Stability:	Absolutely stable with all types of speakers
Usable FM Sensitivity:	Better than 2.7 Microvolts, IHF.
Total Harmonic Distortion:	0.5%
Spurious Response Rejection:	75 db.
Image Rejection:	Better than 45 db



Illuminated call outs indicate function that is operating.

Tape Monitor Switch for instant comparison of recorded material and original program.

Headphone receptacle permits personal listening.

Extended frequency response beyond the normal hearing range gives extra realism to the sounds you can hear. Nocturne sound is cleaner, more transparent, more sharply defined.

D'Arsonval movement tuning meter shows when you have tuned to strongest and clearest signal on AM and FM.

Stereo in two rooms, separately or at once. Simple front panel switching eliminates the complexity and expense of external switching devices.

Separate power ON/OFF switch permits you to turn receiver on and off without upsetting other controls.

Contour for low-volume listening. Contour can be switched in or out, at your discretion.

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buy it!

CIRCLE 31 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Only Marantz Has a Built-in

What's a Marantz?

Any audio engineer or stereo hobbyist will tell you Marantz builds the world's finest high-fidelity components. And has for fifteen years.

This message, therefore, is not to engineers but to professional musicians, serious music-lovers, and beginning stereo hobbyists. We'd like to introduce you to Marantz.

Never Heard Of Marantz?

Until this year, the least-expensive Marantz stereo component you could buy cost \$300.00. And our FM tuner alone cost \$750.00! To own a Marantz, you either had to be moderately wealthy or willing to put beans on the table for awhile. But it was worth it. And a lot of experts thought so, too, because the word soon got around, and the products sold themselves.

What The Competition Said

The chief design engineer of a major competitor once said that no one even tries to compete with many of Marantz' sophisticated features; it would be just too expensive. Marantz designs its circuits the same way the aerospace industry designs missiles and jet planes—for utmost performance and reliability.

Built-In Oscilloscope

The unique features of a Marantz component are there for only one purpose: to make possible the highest level of

listening enjoyment.

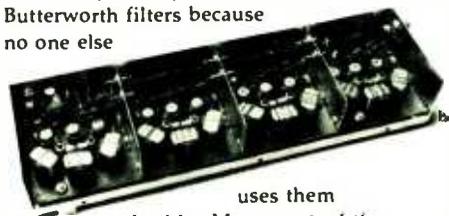
That's why we put an oscilloscope in our best components.

An oscilloscope is kind of a TV tube. But instead of the "Wednesday Night Movie," it shows you a green wavy line. An electronic picture of the incoming FM radio signal, telling you exactly how to rotate your antenna for minimum multipath distortion (ghost signals) and maximum signal strength (clarity) even from the weakest stations.

The "scope" also shows correct stereo phasing; that is, whether the broadcasting transmitter or your equipment is out of phase. And it lets you set up optimum stereo performance and reception to create a solid "wall" of sound.

Features, Not Gimmicks

You've probably never heard of Butterworth filters because no one else



uses them besides Marantz. And the U.S. Military. Other manufacturers feel they can get by without them. And they can. Because their standards don't

have to measure up to Marantz'. Butterworth filters let you hear music more clearly, with less distortion, and, unlike conventional I.F. coils or filters, they never need realignment. They help pull in distant FM stations and separate those right next to each other on the dial.

Although Butterworths cost more, Marantz designed not one but four of them into our Model 18 receiver.

Marantz also offers a different tuning experience because you rotate the actual tuning flywheel. This results in the smoothest, most precise tuning possible.

And this Marantz-exclusive design requires considerably fewer moving parts than conventional systems used by other manufacturers. The benefits: reduced friction, wear, and service problems. We call this patented feature "Gyro-Touch tuning."

Built To Last

Marantz stereo components aren't built in the ordinary way. For example, instead of just soldering connections together with a soldering iron, Marantz uses a highly sophisticated waveflow soldering machine—the type demanded by the Military. The result: perfect, failproof



Oscilloscope!

connections every time.

Even our printed circuit boards are a special type—glass epoxy—built to rigid



military specifications, ensuring ruggedness and dependability.

Marantz Power Ratings Are True

When someone tells you he has a "100-watt amplifier," ask him how the power was rated. Chances are his 100 watts will shrink to about 75 or 50 or perhaps even as few as 25. The reason is that most manufacturers of stereo amplifiers measure power by an inflated "peak power," or "IHF music/dynamic power."

Marantz states its power as "RMS continuous power" because Marantz believes this is the only method of measurement that is a true, absolute, scientific indication of how much power your amplifier can put out continuously over the entire audible frequency range.

But if Marantz were to use the unscientific conventional method, our Model Sixteen 80-RMS-80 power amplifier could be rated as high as 320 watts per channel!

Moreover, you can depend on Marantz

to perform. For example, the Marantz Model 16 can be run all day at its full power rating without distortion (except for neighbors pounding on your wall). That's power. And that's Marantz.

Marantz Speaks Louder Than Words

In a way, it's a shame we have to get even semitechnical to explain in words what is best described in the medium of sound. For, after all, Marantz is for the listener. No matter what your choice in music, you want to hear it as closely as possible to the way it was performed.

In spite of what the ads say, you can't really "bring the concert hall into your home." For one thing, your listening room is too small. Its acoustics are different. And a true concert-hall sound level (in decibels) at home would deafen you.

What Marantz does, however, is create components that most closely recreate the sounds exactly as they were played by the musical performers. Components that consistently represent "where it's at" in stereo design. And no one gives you as much—in any price range—as Marantz.

Every Marantz Is Built The Same Way

Every Marantz component, regardless of price, is built with the same painstaking

craftsmanship and quality materials. That's why Marantz guarantees every instrument for three full years, parts and labor.

Now In All Price Ranges

Today, there is a demand for Marantz quality in other than very-high price ranges. A demand made by music-lovers who want the very best, no matter what their budgets. True, you can still invest more than \$2,000.00 in Marantz components, but now we have units starting as low as \$199. Though these lower-priced models do not have every unique Marantz feature, the quality of all models is the same. Marantz quality.

And quality is what Marantz is all about.

Hear For Yourself

So now that you *know* what makes a Marantz a Marantz, *hear* for yourself. Your local dealer will be pleased to give you a demonstration. Then let your ears make up your mind.



marantz.

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CIRCLE 53 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



too hot to handle

My present system consists of Altec 848A speakers, a Dual 1009F turntable with an ADC 10E Mk. II cartridge, and a Fisher X100B tubed amplifier. The X100B is the only unit remaining from a previous system; it drives the speakers well and never has needed servicing. Would the music I now hear be further enhanced by replacing the X100B with a new transistorized high-power amplifier?—Hilton Rodriguez, Perry Point, Md.

Transistors themselves are no guarantee of quality. And whether a new amplifier would be better or poorer than your X100B will depend solely on the relative characteristics of each amplifier and not on whether or not one incorporates solid-state devices.

Why are frequency response figures—30 to 15,000 Hz \pm so many dB, for instance—never published for speakers as they are for other components? Are speaker manufacturers afraid to publish these specs because most of the ratings would not come up to, say, amplifier specs in a comparable price range? Just describing how “good” a speaker is seems entirely inadequate to me.—William Whitehead, Old Bridge, N. J.

You're right, of course, in assuming that speaker response generally won't be as smooth or as wide-range as that of an amplifier. But of all the components in an audio system, speakers are the most difficult to measure for response. What's more, there is no standard—or even widely accepted—method of measuring them. Finally, whatever method is used, the resultant speaker response curves can only indicate generally, rather than document precisely, the audible response to be expected from them because of several variables, of which room acoustics is the most apparent.

I have purchased a Kenwood TK-140X receiver and two Pioneer CS-99 speakers. In addition to tone controls, the receiver has a loudness control and high and low filters. The speakers have three-position switches for both high and midrange frequencies. This seems a confusing duplication of functions. If I want to emphasize the highs in a particular recording, what would be the best way to do it?—Ens. G. H. Anthes, FPO, San Francisco, Calif.

The speaker controls are intended only to match the speakers to the room in which you use them. Once you have

them adjusted for what strikes you as the best tonal balance with average program material—which may require different settings on the two speakers—you should forget about the speaker controls. Use the filters only to reduce noise—surface noise on records or turntable rumble, for example. Use the tone controls to compensate for any inadequacies you may find in a particular recording or broadcast you are listening to or, as you suggest in your question, to emphasize a particular frequency range. Use the loudness control to restore a more natural-sounding balance when listening at low volume.

I would like to know whether the overhang adjustment gauge supplied with the AR-XA turntable is accurate. I have read elsewhere that the tracking error is lowest when the arm is adjusted for 0.6-inch overhang. Is this correct? Also, is it true—as my local audio dealer tells me—that the damping can be defeated by removing the washer and foam rubber spring from the arm pivot?—Michael J. Roddy, Baltimore, Md.

Optimum stylus overhang depends on the geometry of the arm in use and therefore can differ from one arm to another. An arm's overhang adjustment compensates for differing cartridge designs, usually by keeping the arm's effective length—technically the distance from its pivot to the stylus tip—constant even though the distance from stylus tip to mounting-screw holes can vary from cartridge to cartridge. The overhang specified for a given arm is a compromise setting intended to keep the pickup's axis as near tangent to the grooves as possible while the arm is pivoting across the record—or, putting it another way, to keep lateral-tracking-angle error to a minimum. As far as we can determine, the AR gauge is accurate for the AR turntable and arm. Removing the parts you mention from the arm will not defeat its damping but will degrade the arm's performance. For users who want to eliminate the damping in the AR arm, AR will mail special instructions on request.

I live on an 800-foot hill and there are two FM transmitters within two miles of the house. I can get about forty stations but have problems with overloading, causing the nearby stations to appear all over the tuning band. Cutting out the antenna eliminates the far-away stations. I'm using a Heath AJ-15 tuner. Can you recommend a better

tuner for this problem?—Thomas P. Johnson, M.D., San Diego, Calif.

The technical term for your sort of problem is “imaging,” and you're correct in assuming that it comes from overloading of the input stage of your tuner by excessively powerful signals from nearby stations. The extremely broad dynamic range of FETs (Field-Effect Transistors), which your tuner uses, solves most problems of this sort. That's why they're used in so much current equipment. Since your case is so extreme that even FETs won't solve it, we doubt that another tuner would do significantly better. One solution might be to order RF traps for the frequencies of the two strong stations. Inserted into the antenna lead-in, the traps will reduce the offending signals without significantly reducing the strength of neighboring stations. They're available from manufacturers of master-antenna systems: Jerrold, for instance. But they are fairly expensive and may not solve your problem if enough signal from the two stations is leaking directly into the tuner and thus bypassing the antenna lead-in. In that case, extra tuner shielding—with or without the traps—would be the only cure. Incidentally, a 75-ohm coax lead-in system should be preferable to 300-ohm twin-lead under your circumstances because it will further reduce pickup of stray radiation.

I am in the process of replacing a mono system with stereo equipment. My records, as you might expect, are primarily mono. I have been informed by a local stereo dealer that elliptical styli cannot be used to play mono recordings as the stylus tip won't follow the mono groove. Can you confirm or deny this?—Robert N. Benneyan, Fond du Lac, Wisc.

Your dealer must be thinking of the converse of this matter: that is, a mono stylus can have difficulty in following a stereo groove. Tests conducted over a period of years demonstrate to our satisfaction that an elliptical stylus will not only play mono records but—because it will not ride in the groove precisely where the spherical mono stylus does—may actually improve the quality of the reproduced sound by avoiding the portion of the groove wall that had suffered wear in previous playings. The elliptical stylus, however, should be used in a well-balanced, low-mass tone arm—preferably one with antiskating provision.



Versatility that's surpassed only by performance

A new criterion of excellence in sound has arrived. The Pioneer SX-1500TD AM/FM multiplex stereo receiver was meticulously designed for the audio perfectionist. Its advanced design circuitry, incorporating an FET front end and IC's IF strip, offers an array of features for the ultimate in stereo performance. Music power is at a zenith of 180 watts, rated in compliance with the standards of the Institute of High Fidelity. Extremely versatile, it provides six sets of inputs. The pre and main amplifiers may be used independently. An exclusive highlight is

the unique facility for Dynamic Microphone Mixing which provides simultaneous recording with broadcast music... voice over music announcements... 5-position speaker selection for announcements over speakers in several locations. You can connect up to three different speaker systems. Complementing its magnificent sound reproduction is the subdued elegance of the hand rubbed, oiled walnut cabinet faced with brushed silver and jet. Hear the true sound of quality at your Pioneer dealer. Only \$399.95, including microphone.

 **PIONEER**[®]

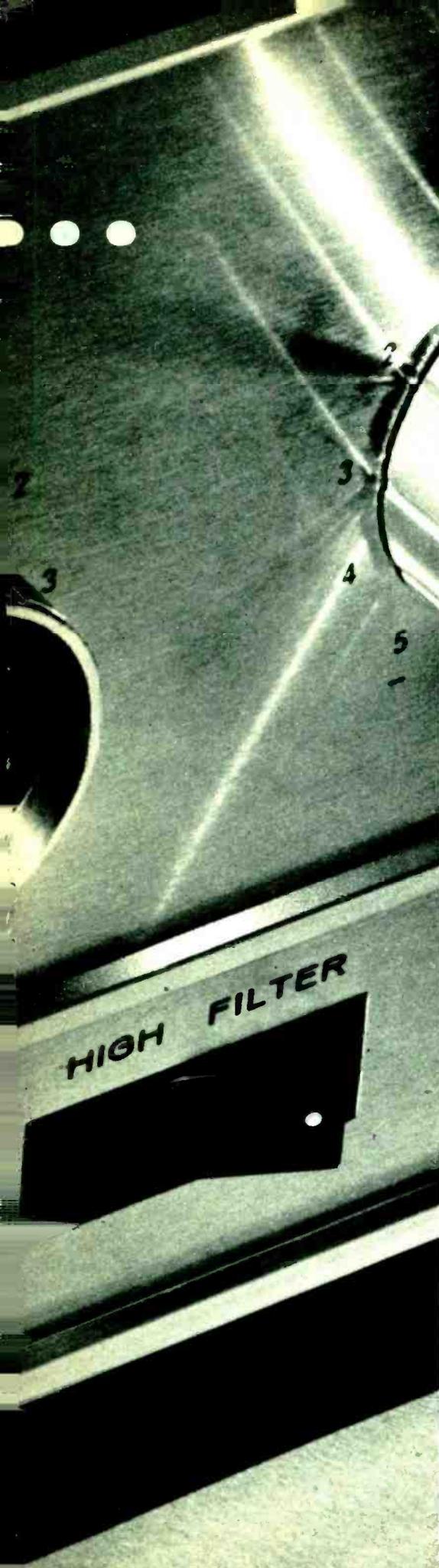
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 JANUARY 1970

CIRCLE 52 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



**eyes hear
before ears do**





... in fact the Voxson Stereo 200 solid state amplifier's exclusive "distortion warning lights" flash on to warn you of distortion coming before it is perceivable to your ears. Perfect musical reproduction is then available, as you always know when to readjust your amplifier within its proper specified range.

This unique feature is combined with other equally important new ideas that refresh both "eyes" and "ears" . . .

- the uncluttered styling is unmistakably "European Modern".
- big-sized amplifiers are impractical and outdated, and the "200" is super trim and slim . . . it is delightfully easy to fit or "hide" away into any furnishing scheme. Dimensions are only 15 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (length), 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (height), 6 $\frac{5}{8}$ in. (width).
- the small sized "200" packs a big wallop in performance: a full 100 watts (IHF) music power. The "200" is proud to show off its characteristics:
- Harmonic distortion of 0.2% or less at rated output.
- Steady-state power of 35 watts per channel.
- Automatic circuit breaker to protect components from overloads.
- Power bandwidth (IHF) 20-25,000 Hz.
- All silicon transistors.
- Four inputs for: phono, tape, tuner and aux.
- Two extra sockets on back of amp. for tape, turntable or tuner provide power supply controllable by amp. on/off switch.
- Outlet for Stereo headphones.
- Tape monitor.

From the same family of quality Hi-Fi components also comes the R-203 Stereo tuner.

The R-203, is of course all-silicon solid state, and has the same trim dimensions as the amplifier.

The R-203 tuner boasts five bands: FM Stereo, FM, LW, MW, SW plus optional wire radio.

These many bands may not be needed in a tuner, but the R-203 is international and was conceived to give a wide variety of programs to choose from. This makes sense, otherwise, why buy a tuner?

Voxson amplifiers and tuners can be found all over the world . . . from Hong Kong to Paris, Tripoli, Caracas, New York, or even tiny Martinique. The owners of these Voxson components vary exceedingly in their tastes and cultures—but all demand one thing in common . . . the right to enjoy quality.

Opportunities are still available to Overseas distributors. For details about Voxson's International Marketing Program write to one of the following:

VOXSON INTERNATIONAL DIVISION
286, Via di Tor Cervara
00155 ROMA (Italy)

VOXSON FRANCE
49, Avenue Kléber
75 PARIS XVI (France)



VOXSON

CIRCLE 78 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

VIDEO RECORDING WITH LASERS AND HOLOGRAMS

SelectaVision is a name you'll probably be hearing a good deal about if you interest yourself in the horse race known as audiovisual technology. Indeed, you may already have heard of it; to announce the process, RCA hosted a fancy junket to its Princeton, N.J., facilities. The result, of course, has been a good deal of publicity for both company and process.

SelectaVision is a system of storing video images, either color or black-and-white, on vinyl tapes in the form of holograms—complex wave-interference patterns that bear no visible resemblance to the images they contain but theoretically have an advantage over conventional magnetic or film media in terms of cramming high-quality ("low-noise") information into minimum space. Moreover, the vinyl tape—which would be marketed in cartridge format—is relatively inexpensive and can be embossed with the holographic image by simple mechanical means closely related to the process of pressing phonograph records.

Reconstruction of images from the hologram requires the use of a laser—not the expensive, high-energy type that was heralded as the first "ray gun" some years ago—but one of the newer, safer varieties that, like all lasers, delivers a continuous beam of "coherent" light but costs relatively little. A video camera "looks" at the picture formed by the interaction of the laser beam with the holographic tape and feeds the reconstituted video to a standard TV screen. This reproducing equipment is expected to cost about \$400 when it reaches the market place in 1972, according to RCA, and tapes should cost around \$10 for a half-hour program.

So, if RCA's projections are correct, in two years or so you should be able to buy, for approximately the price of a good AM/FM receiver, a unit that will give you access to all kinds of program material—the initial library is planned to consist of one hundred programs—for less than the cost of buying those programs on film, even in 8-mm black-and-white.

RCA's Robert Sarnoff denies that SelectaVision is an attempt to counter Columbia's EVR (Electronic Video Recording) system. Indeed, SelectaVision and EVR have only one positive element in common: both are systems for the reproduction of video information through a TV receiver. Technology, materials, prices, and even markets are different. (RCA sees SelectaVision as a consumer product; Columbia is concentrating on EVR's potential for educational and commercial markets able to support its relatively high price tags.) The two systems also have a negative element in common, though: neither can be used for recording—unlike magnetic tape systems.

And home-style magnetic tape units continue to develop apace, albeit behind the scenes. The industry has conceded that three factors would be necessary before any sizable market could be developed for home VTRs: lower prices (say \$700 or less for a complete system), color compatibility, and simplified operation (preferably using some sort of cartridge). So far, all equipment available for home use has been open-reel, most of it has been engineered for black-and-white only, and system prices have yet to make a serious dent in



Interaction of laser beam with SelectaVision's holographic tapes (open-reel in this prototype) produces images that camera feeds to TV receiver.

the \$1,000 barrier. But Avco has shown a prototype of a model that, it appears, would meet all of the above criteria and is presently expected on the market some time next summer. Zenith, too, appears to have such a system in the works, though trade sources presently are picking 1971 as a likely date for its introduction. And a number of other companies—including Hegeman Laboratories, which recently introduced a new line of stereo component kits—are known to be at work in the field.

Symptomatic of the many unheralded projects that could be announced officially at any time is the recent news that Sony Corporation in Japan has developed a color-compatible recorder that would use tape cartridges rather like oversized cassettes. The entire system, which could be hooked into a color or black-and-white TV receiver without modification, would cost \$450. A 90-minute cassette would run around \$20. Of particular interest to us is the double soundtrack, permitting stereo audio with the picture. According to Sony, specifications for a standardized video cassette have been set jointly with Philips and Grundig and the design presumably would be licensed much as Philips now licenses the audio cassette format. Retail availability in Japan is scheduled for late this year; entry into the U.S. market would follow. And hardly was the ink dry on trade-press reports of the Sony development before Matsushita (Panasonic in the U.S.) announced an apparently similar unit for delivery some time in 1972. Philips also is said to be readying a cassette-style recorder.

Home video recording is as much of a horse race as ever, and one in which late entries still stand a good chance of winning public acceptance—if only they can perform as their publicity tells us they will.

Continued on page 38

Man-sized living rooms are Fisher country.

As a reader of this magazine, you probably know that new Fisher receivers are designed to drive the speakers of your choice, cleanly, in the room of your choice. No matter how big or small.

But if your living room is over 2,000 cubic feet (12' x 21' x 8', or bigger) we ask you to consider Fisher floor-standing speaker systems. For the sake of both sound and looks.

Nothing sounds better in a big room than a pair of well designed floor-standing speaker systems.

Look inside either the Fisher XP-12 or the XP-15B and you'll see an uncluttered set-up impossible to achieve in a cabinet of smaller proportions.

The oversized woofer.

One big acoustic suspension woofer (12 inches in the XP-12, 15 inches in the XP-15B) reproduces all the bass frequencies without boom or doubling.

The woofer is designed with a special butyl-impregnated surround, to reproduce bass frequencies down to 30 Hz without resonances or distortion. Bass is natural sounding, not thumpy as with some other floor-standing speakers that promise "good bass."

The big mid-range speaker.

Here's the number one reason why our floor-standing systems sound so natural.

In both cases a single, completely isolated 8" speaker (that's the size of a bookshelf-type woofer) reproduces every nuance of the all-important mid-range frequencies. One big mid-range speaker eliminates the phase interactions that may occur with multiple drivers. This makes for a cleaner, more precise mid-range than most speaker systems can achieve.

You'll hear it as "bite." The extra, chilling quality live music has, that reproduced music almost never has.



The tweeter—wide dispersion where it counts.

Unless you like to listen to music from behind your speakers, Fisher speakers are your best investment.

The special hemispherical dome tweeter used in our floor-standing speakers reproduces the treble frequencies smoothly, and disperses them around the room.

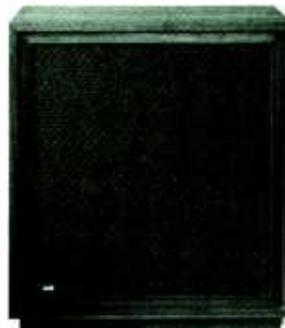
But unlike the new, reflective, omni-directional speakers, Fisher floor-standing speakers do not scatter all frequencies all over the place, and rob you of a natural stereo spread. With a pair of any Fisher speakers you'll be able to pinpoint the location of each instrument in the orchestra.

Look at it this way.

Fisher floor-standing speaker systems, in their console cabinet, are also an elegant addition to your living-room.

Which is important to anyone who's ever tried to convince his wife to spend around \$500 merely for superb sound.

(For more information, plus a free copy of The Fisher Handbook, 1970 edition, an authoritative 72-page reference guide to hi-fi and stereo, use coupon on front cover flap.)



The Fisher XP-12
\$219.95



The Fisher XP-15B
\$289.95

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CIRCLE 30 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

FOUR-CHANNEL STEREO STEALS THE (LOS ANGELES) SHOW

Only five companies—AR, Crown International, Scott, Teac, and Telex—were offering four-channel stereo demonstrations at last fall's Los Angeles High Fidelity Music Show, but the subject of the new technique seemed to dominate everyone's thoughts. Is it a gimmick? What chance does it have of commercial success? How good are the possibilities of cramming four channels of information onto disc? What new directions will it trigger as the industry re-examines the methods by which sound is recorded and reproduced in the home?

The ramifications of these questions—and particularly the last—were discussed almost endlessly, and in almost every exhibit we visited. Some insiders argued vigorously against the four-channel demos that pit rear speakers against those in front of the listener on an equal basis, preferring that the rear speakers be kept for "hall-sound" or ambience information wherever possible. Some were adamant about the respective peak levels of front and back channels, claiming that those at the rear should be kept 10 dB below those at the front for convincing reproduction, even though the Vanguard Surround Stereo tapes are recorded with identical peak levels in all four channels (a hedge against degraded signal-to-noise ratios on the rear channels, no matter what levels they are played at).

It's interesting to note that most of those who expressed themselves forcefully in favor of pre-eminent

front channels also said they were interested primarily in the reproduction of the concert hall repertoire. Pops—particularly rock-and-roll—might benefit from all kinds of gimmickry, they conceded, but it seemed evident that whatever threatened the classic (or classical) concert-hall orientation was accounted by these critics as a new form of "ping-pong" stereo.

In the AR room, we were present when some demo tapes—recorded earlier in the year at Tanglewood—were played. Levels of the rear channels, which carried only ambience and audience sounds, were kept the prescribed 10 dB below front-channel levels. We found that visitors almost invariably faced the front speakers, oriented toward the music much as they would be at a concert. Conditions were quite different when we stopped by the Telex exhibit, where we heard Vanguard's Buffy Sainte-Marie demo and some specially prepared Columbia tapes of Simon & Garfunkel and the "Switched-On-Bach"—all played with rear speakers set for relatively high gain. Under these conditions, with musical material emanating from all four corners of the room, we found that visitors stood every which way to listen. Perhaps the most descriptive terminology for these two techniques, therefore, would be polarized and unpolarized quadriphony, respectively.

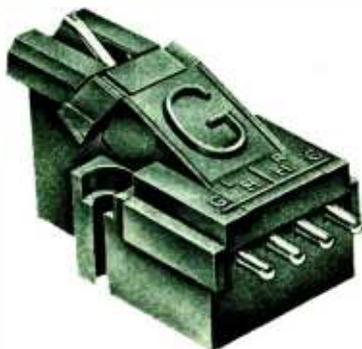
And at least one expert (our own Norman Eisenberg) has publicly stated—on a panel discussion broadcast in late October over New York City's WNYC-FM—that while the former type of quadriphonic sound represents a significant advance in stereo, the latter type may not be stereo at all but a sort of "four-channel mono."

equipment in the news

Four-channel amp a Scott first

Apart from tape decks, the first four-channel stereo component to reach the market is the Scott 499. In effect, it combines two stereo integrated amplifiers, each rated at 35 watts per channel rms into 8-ohm loads, with individual tone controls for each channel. left-to-right and front-to-back balance controls, hi and lo filters, and of course an unusually elaborate mode-switching system to make the unit compatible both with standard two-channel stereo and with mono inputs. Four mike jacks are provided, as are separate VU meters for each channel. Stereo headphone jacks offer a choice of front or rear channels. Selling price is expected to be about \$600.

CIRCLE 146 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

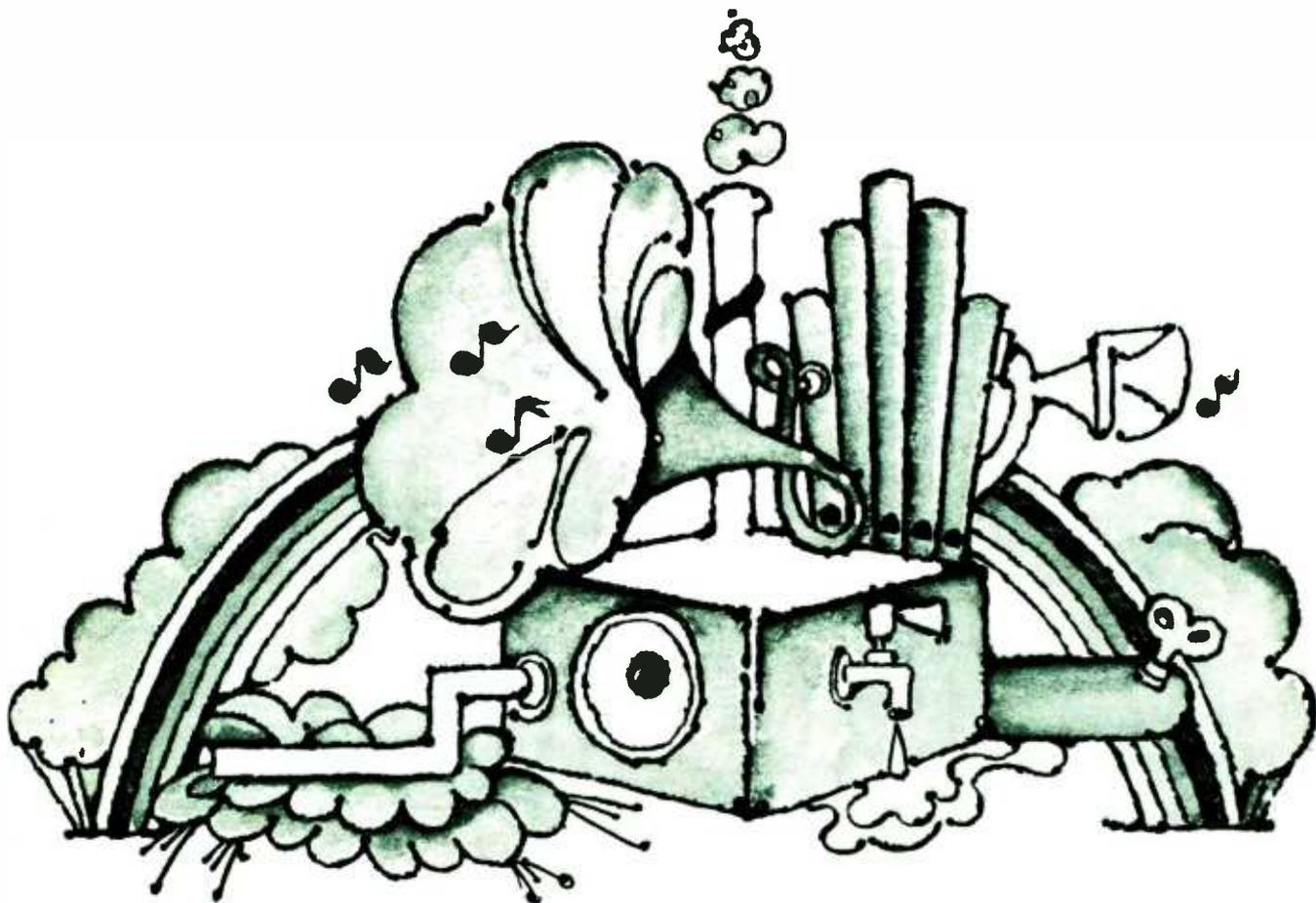


Magnetic pickups from Grado

Grado's recent magnetic cartridge now is available with an elliptical stylus as Model FTE. List price is \$19.95. The conical stylus version continues in the line as Model FTR, \$9.95. The FT series cartridge is designed to track at 1½ to 3½ grams, and the stylus in any model is replaceable by the owner, with the use of a special plastic tool supplied. Signal output is listed as 4 millivolts per channel; specified response is 10 Hz to 35 kHz. For 78-rpm disc owners, a 2.7-mil stylus also is available.

CIRCLE 147 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Continued on page 40



HO HUM

Another major breakthrough

Oh No! Not Again! Yes it seems that every year someone "re-invents" one of the discarded speaker designs of the past. Or they purport to modify the laws of physics by miniaturizing a 32-foot wavelength. They may even write a "technical" article on their revolutionary discovery and succeed in getting it published.

We customarily make an optimistic estimate that these speakers will survive five years. Some make it. Some even get re-invented all over again after a subsequent five years. In the meantime they sell. Because they sound different. Different from all other speakers. Different from the live performance.

We'd sort of miss them if they failed to show up. After all, what would spring be without a new major break-

through? And would it really be fall without the letter edged in black? Pity!

So — aren't you glad you own KLIPSCHORNS?

Paul

Paul W. Klipsch
Klipsch and Associates, Inc.
P.O. Box 280
Hope, Arkansas 71801



P. S. We have a list of over 20 major breakthroughs that have appeared, died and were interred. Your Klipsch dealer will be glad to show it to you. We know some more good prospects for this list. You can't see those names — until next year.



KLIPSCH & ASSOCIATES

Box 280 H-1
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Please send me complete information on Klipsch speakers and Klipsch Wide Stage Stereo. Also include the name of my nearest Klipsch Authorized Audio Expert.

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Occupation _____ Age _____

CIRCLE 40 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

EQUIPMENT IN THE NEWS

Continued from page 38

Black-panel integrated amp from Sansui



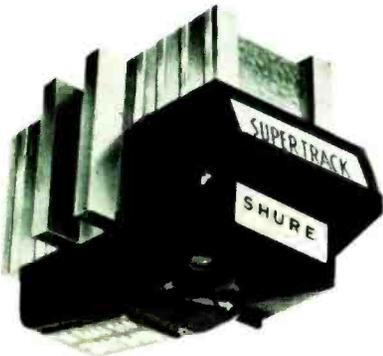
Although Sansui's AU555 amplifier is an integrated unit, it is provided with separate preamp output connections—in addition to the usual tape jacks—to facilitate use with external equalizers or other equipment that requires such connections. Another unusual feature is a two-position damping factor control at the output of the power amp section, which is rated at 25 watts per channel rms into 4 ohms, with wide-band frequency response stretching to 80 kHz. A four-position speaker switch is provided as well. There are two phono inputs—47K and 100K ohms—plus inputs for tape head, microphones, and three auxiliaries. The AU555 sells for \$159.95.

CIRCLE 153 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Superscope introduces cassettes for cars

The Model 20 stereo automobile cassette player is the first such model to be announced by Sony/Superscope. The unit features one-hand loading, and Superscope says that cassettes may be inserted by feel, so that the driver is not required to take his eyes off the road. The cassette automatically ejects and the power shuts off at the end of the tape. The Model 20 is designed for use with any 12-volt system, positive or negative ground, and sells for under \$119.50. Included with the unit is a coupon permitting purchase of a three-pack of Superscope prerecorded cassettes at the introductory price of \$8.85.

CIRCLE 154 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



Shure upgrades the V-15 Type II

"Trackability," a word coined by Shure Bros. to describe the ability of a cartridge to track relatively high groove velocities across the frequency spectrum, was introduced along with the company's V-15 Type II pickup. Now Shure has announced a new version of the V-15 Type II with improved trackability in the mid-bass region, claiming that almost any record can be played at a 3/4-gram tracking force. The newer version is distinguished from its predecessor by the color in which the word "Shure" is printed on the cartridge, red replacing black. Price remains \$67.50. Owners of the previous version can upgrade it by replacing the stylus with the new VN15E elliptical at \$27.

CIRCLE 148 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

New receiver from Kenwood

The Kenwood KR-70 stereo FM receiver incorporates such convenience features as front-panel jacks for headphones and an extra tape recorder. The 70 watts of output implied by the model number constitute the model's IHF rating into 4-ohm loads; it is rated at 56 watts IHF into 8 ohms. Continuous-power ratings are of course lower. Its selling price of \$199.95 includes a cabinet.

CIRCLE 151 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



Speaker system with a choice of tweeters

The Frazier Mediterranean is a floor-standing speaker system housed in a dark oak cabinet. Its complement of speakers includes a twelve-inch woofer, an eight-inch midrange driver, and a choice of tweeters: either two three-inch cone drivers or a compression horn. Model numbers are F12-8M-C for the cone-tweeter version, F12-8M-H with the horn. In either version, the Mediterraneans sell for \$295 each.

CIRCLE 150 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

DYNACO SYNERGISM* OR HOW TWO UNITS COMBINE FOR EVEN GREATER VALUE



We have always tried to give outstanding value at Dynaco; and when we work on new designs, our primary objectives are quality and value—quality second to none, and prices far below the levels of competitive quality. Following this philosophy, we have designed our newest power amplifier, the transistorized Stereo 80, in the tradition of the famous Dynaco Stereo 70—extreme reliability, conservative operation and specifications, outstanding quality, and moderate price. The Stereo 80 is compact (it fits any remote space, but is handsome enough to keep on display), cool-running, simple, and elegant. It delivers 40 watts **continuous** power per channel, with both channels operating simultaneously, from 20 Hz to 20 kHz.

The Stereo 80 and our PAT-4 preamplifier create an outstanding combination which delivers crystal clear sound, free of noise and distortion, and with excellent flexibility as the control center for the most complete hi fi installation.

Further, we have combined these units into a single, transistorized integrated package, the SCA-80, and through careful design have achieved SYNERGISM*, the combination giving

even greater value than the sum of its parts. The SCA-80 has all the qualities of the Stereo 80 plus the performance and many of the features of the PAT-4—center-out tone controls, low noise, multiple input facilities, headphone output, center-speaker output without the need for a separate amplifier, and so on. It provides complete control facility and yet it is simple to operate with a basic two-knob control action for those who do not require sophisticated features such as loudness, filters, blending, and other subtle variations.

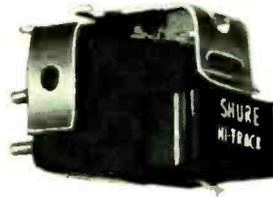
The SCA-80 gives quality plus compact flexibility. The Stereo 80 plus the PAT-4 gives quality, increased flexibility for installation, and greater range of control function. The Stereo 120 plus the PAT-4 gives all this plus extra power plus the benefits of a stabilized highly filtered power supply which makes performance independent of power line variations. In all these choices, quality and value are outstanding—and in the SCA-80, the synergistic benefit enhances the value of the unit.

*SYNERGISM—"Cooperative action of discrete agencies such that the total effect is greater than the sum of the two effects taken independently . . ."

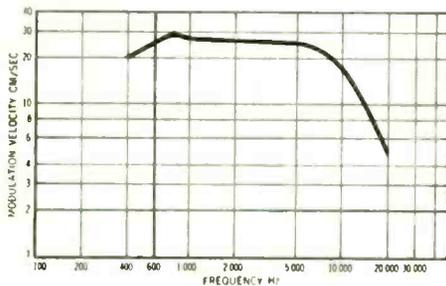
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CIRCLE 24 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



Second to one...



TRACKABILITY CHART FOR M91E

If it were not for the incomparable Shure V-15 Type II (IMPROVED) Super-Track, the Shure M91E Hi-Track would be equal or superior to any other phono cartridge in trackability . . . regardless of price! The astounding thing is that it costs from \$15.00 to \$50.00 less than its lesser counterparts. And, it features an exclusive "Easy-Mount" design in the bargain. Trade up to the M91E now, and to the V-15 Type II (IMPROVED) when your ship comes in. Elliptical Stylus. $\frac{3}{4}$ to $1\frac{1}{2}$ grams tracking. \$49.95. Other models with spherical styli, up to 3 grams tracking, as low as \$39.95.

SHURE

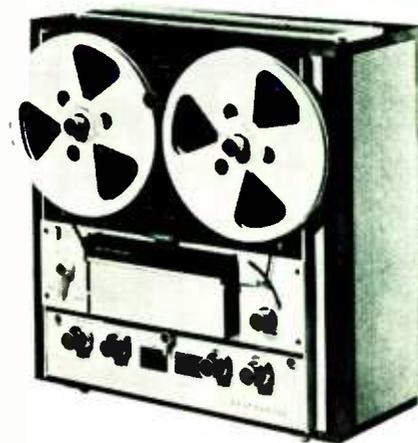
M91E HI-TRACK PHONO CARTRIDGE

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 CIRCLE 68 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

new equipment reports

THE CONSUMER'S GUIDE
TO HIGH FIDELITY EQUIPMENT

UNIQUE RECORDER FOR THE SERIOUS AMATEUR



THE EQUIPMENT: Ferrograph 724, a three-speed, quarter-track stereo tape recorder with built-in record/playback amplifiers and speakers. Dimensions: 16½ by 17 by 9⅝ inches. Price: \$649. Manufacturer: The Ferrograph Co., Ltd., London, England. U.S. distributor: Elpa Marketing Industries, Thorens & Atlantic Aves., New Hyde Park, N.Y. 11040.

COMMENT: The model 724 is a three-motor, three-head (erase, record, and playback), quarter-track stereo recorder in a portable case with a built-in monitor system (amps and speakers plus controls). Other Series Seven models include half-track mono and half-track stereo versions, deck models without the monitor system, and a high-speed model (available in half-track stereo only) that runs at 3¾, 7½, and 15 ips. Other versions include 1⅞ but not 15 ips. The quarter-track deck, Model 704, costs \$549 unmounted and can be bought with a walnut case for \$50 more. All models take up to 8¼-inch reels. An excellent hard-bound manual covers all features in detail, filling seventy-five pages; our report will concentrate on those that are most unusual.

A first glance at the transport mechanism will reveal one of the features that sets the Ferrograph apart from other recorders: the variable-speed fast-wind control which you can use not only to move the tape rapidly back and forth but to hold it stationary. Since the head arrangement allows some signal output in the fast-wind mode, searching for a particular portion of a tape is unusually easy with the Ferrograph. There is a latch on the transport control's stop position so it cannot inadvertently be thrown directly from fast wind into play, damaging the tape. Like some other features of the Ferrograph, the latch takes a little getting used to, but it is well worth the trouble in terms of the extra protection it affords.

Another feature of the transport that is, as far as we know, unique on home recorders is a pair of screwdriver adjustments to raise and lower the reels so that each can be set for optimum height for even winding no matter what sort of reel is used.

The transport is solenoid-operated. This means, for one thing, that the 724 can be operated from a time clock without endangering pressure rollers or other drive parts. It can be preset in the record mode, but the drive mechanism will not engage until the AC power is turned on by the clock. It also can be started and stopped remotely by an accessory switch

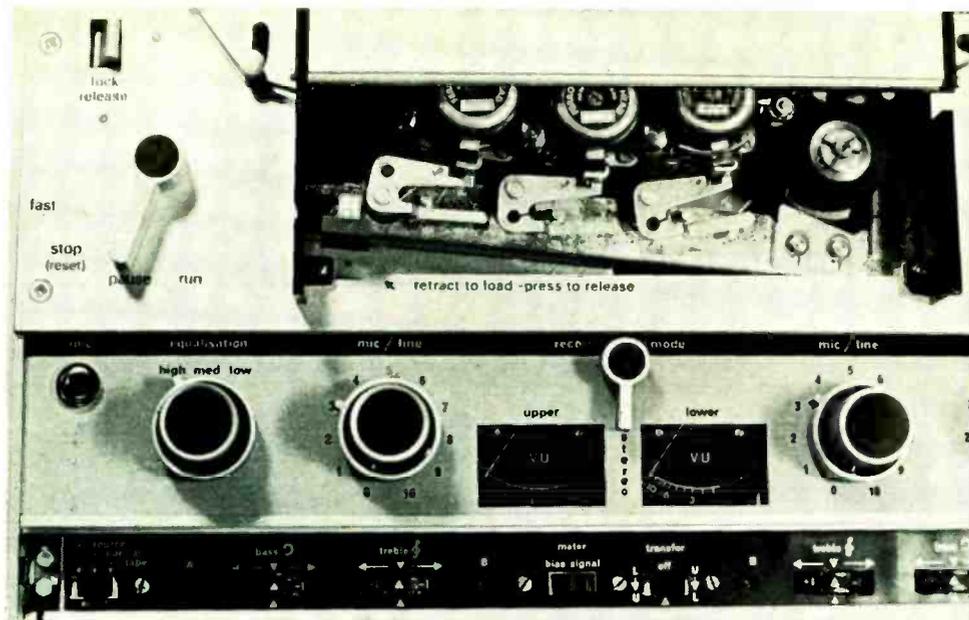
connected through a special DIN receptacle on the jack panel. The start-solenoid is defeated automatically when metal foil passes a sensor to the left of the heads, when the right tension arm touches a conductive stud—as it does if the tape breaks or runs through—or when either the speed-change control or equalization switch is moved. In any of these instances, a "reset" light next to the turns-counter flicks on and the transport stops. To get things going again, the transport control must be set in the "stop" position and the offending condition removed—either by rethreading the tape or by putting tape speed and equalization back in step with each other. The design may sound rather complex and requires some thought at first; but it, together with the fast-wind latch, constitutes a system that works well in use and, in our opinion, offers a lot of protection to both tape and recorder at minimum cost. Curiously, however, loss of tape tension does not stop the transport if, for instance, the take-up reel motor fails. This fault could easily be corrected, and we hope it will be in future models.

The use of separate speed-change and equalization controls will annoy some users at first, since many machines control both with a single switch. One reason for the redundancy appears to be that the Ferrograph is doing more with its equalization switch than a home recorder usually attempts. Not only does it alter response-curve characteristics (equalization in the usual sense) but it changes record bias as well, optimizing it individually for each speed.

Another unusual feature—though it is standard on many professional decks—is a record function that can be activated while the transport is in the play mode. Recorded material can be monitored to pick up a cue, the record button depressed, and new material substituted over the remainder of the old

REPORT POLICY

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



Head assembly and most of control panels

UNUSUAL CONTROLS REFLECT FEATURES THAT SET THE FERROGRAPH APART

With the head cover open, as it is in the top photograph, the threading button at the lower left corner of the well can be used to lock pressure pads out of the way for threading. To the left of the well is the transport control and above it the latch that must be released to move from the fast-wind mode into "pause" or "play."

In the photograph at left, the fast-wind knob is shown set for maximum forward speed. As it is turned counterclockwise, it progressively reduces the speed of tape travel, stops it, then begins rewinding at increasing speed until the knob reaches maximum rotation. The screwdriver control next to the fast-wind knob compensates the tension arm (not shown) for the position—vertical or horizontal—of the machine. Similar screwdriver controls near reels set their height, compensating for different flange thicknesses.

Equalization switch is at left of main control panel and must match setting of the speed control between the tape reels. Otherwise, transport stops and the "reset" light on the turns-counter escutcheon lights, signaling trouble. The same escutcheon also holds the "record" button, which can be pressed in play mode—though head cover just below it protects against accidental activation. The unmarked latch at the upper left corner of the head cover will release the record button without stopping the transport.

The record-mode switch between the meters is set for stereo. Moving it to the left (toward "upper" channel meter) changes mode to mono, recording in the left channel only; to right, recording is on right channel only. Screwdriver controls marked "B" on bottom panel set bias; those marked "A" set playback level. All controls on this black panel are hidden by an aluminum trim strip when they are not in use.



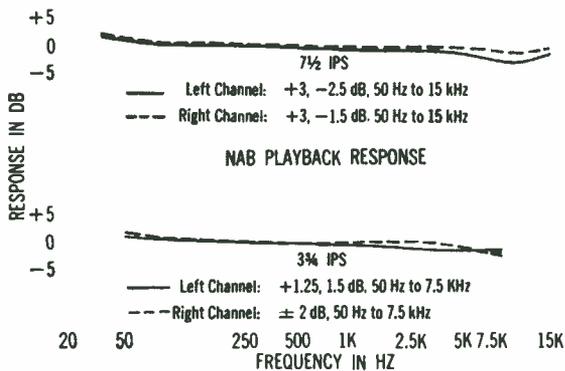
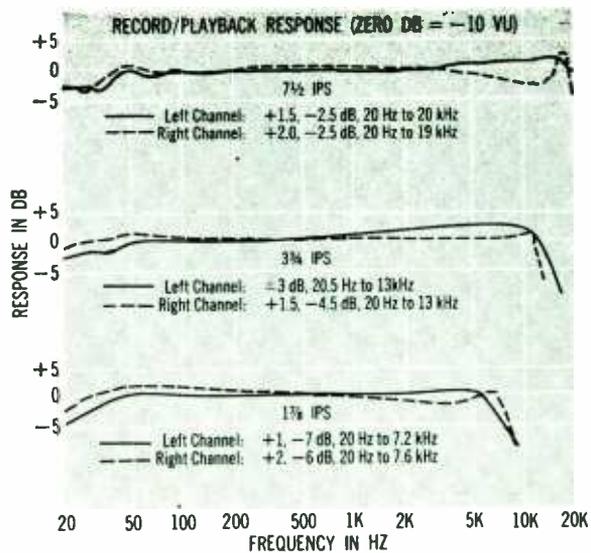
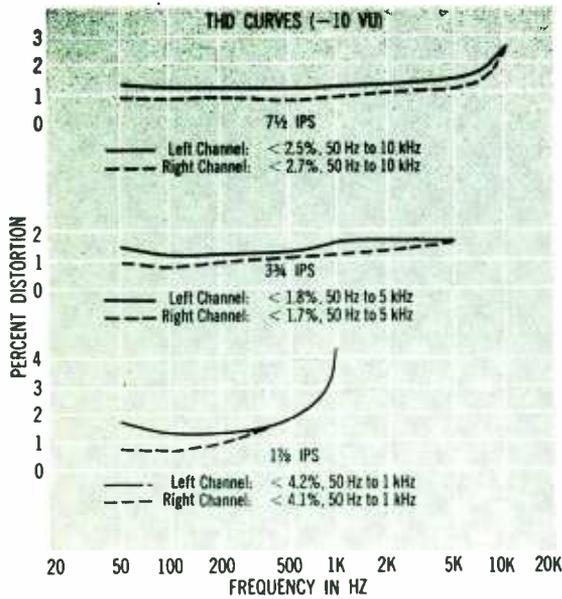
Fast-wind control



Speed switch

Turns counter and record controls





without missing a beat. The catch is, of course, that there is no record interlock: accidental activation of the record button during play will erase the tape. To prevent this, the record button is placed between the reels, beyond the head cover. In practice, that position appears to be out of harm's way; we encountered no situation that threatened accidental erasure during our in-use tests. Without a pilot light or other visual indicator, however, one must examine the record button to tell whether the unit is set for record or for play. We understand that Ferrograph plans to improve the situation by adding illumination to the record meters and lighting them only in the record mode.

The electronics section of the 724 has all the usual controls, including a multiplay (sound-on-sound) feature. In addition, there are features normally found only on professional decks, particularly in the bias and monitor controls, concealed under a trim strip at the front (bottom when the unit stands vertically) edge of the front panel. Bias can be read on the meters and adjusted by separate screwdriver controls for each channel. (The manual lists optimum bias settings for several types of tape, and further explains how to determine optimum bias for any tape.) When the meters are monitoring audio and the monitor switches are set to "normal," both meters and speakers respond to input signals during recording and output signals during playback. But they can also be switched to respond only to input or only to output. In addition, the playback level can be adjusted for each channel so that it will match input level no matter what sort of tape or bias settings are being used. The ability to meter output can be helpful and is, moreover, necessary in setting bias for a tape that is not in-

Ferrograph 724 Additional Data

Performance characteristic	Measurement
Speed accuracy, 7 1/2 ips	105 VAC: 0.66% fast 120 VAC: 0.66% fast 127 VAC: 0.66% fast
3 3/4 ips	105 VAC: 0.76% fast 120 VAC: 1.0% fast 127 VAC: 1.1% fast
1 7/8 ips	105 VAC: 0.6% fast 120 VAC: 1.0% fast 127 VAC: 1.0% fast
Wow and flutter, 7 1/2 ips	playback: 0.08% record/playback: 0.13%
3 3/4 ips	playback: 0.15% record/playback: 0.18%
1 7/8 ips	record/playback: 0.28%
Rewind time, 7-in., 1,200-ft. reel	0 min., 45 sec.
Fast-forward time, same reel	0 min., 43 sec.
S/N ratio (ref. 0 VU)	
playback	l ch: 51 dB r ch: 52 dB
record/playback	l ch: 49 dB r ch: 50 dB
Erasure (400 Hz at normal level)	65 dB
Crosstalk (400 Hz)	
record left, playback right	39.5 dB
record right, playback left	43.0 dB
Sensitivity (for 0 VU recording level)	
line input	l ch: 64 mV r ch: 72 mV
mike input	l ch: 0.28 mV r ch: 0.26 mV
Accuracy, built-in meters	left: 1.75 dB high right: 0.75 dB high
IM distortion (record/play)	
7 1/2 ips, -10 VU	
record level	l ch: 6.0% r ch: 1.5%
3 3/4 ips, -10 VU	l ch: 5.0% r ch: 2.4%
1 7/8 ips, -10 VU	l ch: 7.0% r ch: 4.0%
Output, preamp or line	l ch: 1.5 V r ch: 1.5 V
Low level	l ch: 300 mV r ch: 310 mV
Speaker (8 ohms)	l ch: 12.5 W r ch: 15.1 W

cluded in the manual's table of recommended settings. But for use with standard receiver monitor circuits, it would have been an advantage had the normal position fed input to the meters during recording while continuing to feed output from the tape to the receiver's monitor system for aural quality checking.

There are actually two monitor circuits in the 724. After passing through the switching we have just described, signals are fed both to the normal tape output jacks and—via gain, treble, and bass controls for each channel—to the built-in amps and speakers. On deck models, this second set of signals goes to separate jacks on the rear panel, allowing the use of tone controls as equalizers in dubbing poorly balanced program material to a second recorder. The tone control knobs, mounted with only a portion of their periphery showing at the edge of the hidden control panel, raised some eyebrows during our tests. Calibration is printed on strips of adhesive-backed paper affixed to the edges of the controls. The ends of these strips worked loose during use and, while they did not affect operation, the design seemed incon-

sistent with the over-all quality of the unit. Ferrograph apparently agrees, since we understand that a new method of calibration is being devised.

The quality of the unit is excellent. It is, with some minor reservations as noted, solidly built and well finished—as Ferrographs traditionally have been. Comparing the accompanying specs with those of other recorders, you will find that the 724 generally falls precisely in the class you would expect: among the best of home recorders. And our test results are consistent—within normal tolerance limits—with the specifications published by the manufacturer.

The overriding consideration in evaluating the Series Seven recorders, we believe, is the outstanding combination of features they offer. For the most part, these features strike us as well designed to operate and interrelate effectively as a system. That system requires practice on the part of the user if he is to reap the inherent benefits of its versatility and quality; but thorough familiarity is a requirement for the effective use of any recorder.

CIRCLE 141 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

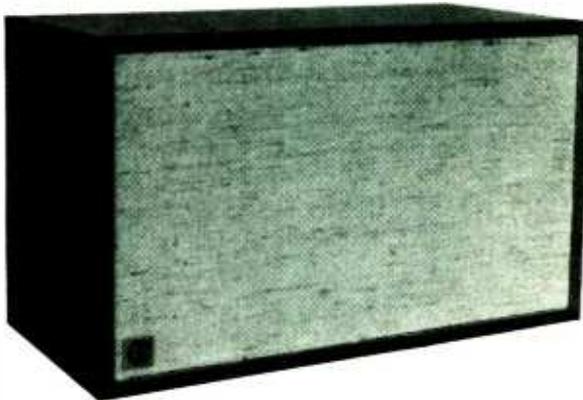
EPI SPEAKER MAKES ITS DEBUT

THE EQUIPMENT: EPI Model 100, a compact, full-range speaker system in enclosure. Dimensions: 11 by 9 by 21 inches. Price: \$89. Manufacturer: Epicure Products, Inc., 539 Centre St., Boston, Mass. 02130.

COMMENT: It takes some courage and design know-how to enter the well-populated speaker market these days, especially in the highly competitive "under \$100" price class. Happy to say, the EPI Model 100—first in what will be a series of products from this company—shows ample evidence of what it takes.

An air-suspension system, the Model 100 consists of an 8-inch woofer, a small dome tweeter, and a dividing network installed in a sealed walnut enclosure fronted with a neutral-tint grille cloth. Hookup at the rear is made via press-to-connect color-coded binding posts. There are no level controls. Input impedance is 8 ohms and efficiency is high enough to permit driving an EPI with 15 watts rms, although it is rugged enough to handle 50 watts rms.

The courage we mentioned earlier in regard to this speaker has to do with the manufacturer's frank, honest description and rating of the unit. For instance, the "dividing network" (which provides crossover at 1,800 Hz) is admitted to be a simple capacitor—which, in this system, does the job economically and effectively. Response, to take another example, is not claimed—as in so many speakers—to cover the "20-Hz to 20-kHz" range, but is acknowledged to roll off below 40 Hz and above 18 kHz, with directive effects becoming noticeable at 13 kHz. And so on. The speaker, in other words, is not touted as being the "ultimate" or "all things to all listeners," but is more realistically being offered as a worthy contender in its size and price class. Which it is—and then some. Actually, what this comes to is something that the audio-sophisticated long have known, but which it has become fashionable not to say too often or too openly: speaker systems do have design limits, closely related to their cost; the trick is not to gloss over those realistic limits or to obscure them from the buyer by means of tricky promotion but rather to work within those admitted limits to produce the best possible speaker system. And then to tell it like it is. The manufacturer, in fact, encloses an individual response curve with each EPI-100.



So much for courage. As for design know-how, it doesn't take long, listening to the Epicure, to recognize it as a superior reproducer for its size and cost. It has a natural, well-balanced, musical quality; its response was smooth, uncolored, and amply dispersed into the listening area. In our tests, the bass end did indeed hold up nicely to 40 Hz. Some doubling (less than average, by the way) was discernible at about 70 Hz, but it hardly increased, as frequency was lowered, until just below 50 Hz. It decreased again and remained surprisingly clean to 40 Hz, below which frequency the response just seemed to bow out quietly, with no audible resonances or cone breakup. Upward from the bass, the response remained extremely linear and smooth, with no audible dips or peaks, and with excellent dispersion characteristics. Up through 10 kHz, the sound was spread over a very wide angle, and tones above 10 kHz could still be heard off-axis. At about 13 kHz, the response became "thinner" and from about 14 kHz it began its slope toward inaudibility. White noise sounded smooth, with no apparent coloration effects and with very good dispersion characteristics.

Handling normal program material, the EPI speaker proved very easy to listen to for long periods of time. It was only by direct comparison with much costlier speakers that we could tell the deepest bottom bass (on some program material) was missing. On all other critical counts, however, the Model 100 proved its mettle as a clean-sounding speaker. At a list price of less than \$90, that's a pretty worthy accomplishment.

CIRCLE 143 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

H-K'S WORTHY NEW CASSETTE RECORDER



THE EQUIPMENT: Harman-Kardon CAD-4, a cassette tape recorder deck (transport with built-in recording/playback preamps). Dimensions: 12 $\frac{5}{8}$ by 3 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches. Price: \$159.50. Manufacturer: Harman-Kardon, Inc., 55 Ames Court, Plainview, N.Y. 11803.

COMMENT: The kind of response we get from today's best cassette machines running at 1 $\frac{7}{8}$ ips is comparable to the response we expected not too long ago from the better open-reel decks running at twice that speed—and, of course, costing much more than a cassette model. And also weighing more, taking up much more space, and a bit too complicated for the average, nontechnical user. But here come the cassette recorders: compact, reasonably priced, simple to operate, and surprisingly good in performance.

Harman-Kardon's entry into this burgeoning field is a neatly styled, walnut-encased model designed to be jacked into an external sound system through which it can play and from which it can accept signals to be recorded. The unit also has standard mike jack inputs for live recording. As is true of all cassette machines tested to date, the CAD-4 uses two tape heads—one for erase, and one for record/playback.

A standard cassette fits into the slot on the upper left-hand side of the unit where it is automatically engaged by the capstan and pinch roller and the pair of spindles that turn the internal hubs. Just above the slot, there's a three-digit tape counter with reset button. Operating controls, arranged on the sloping front portion of the set, include a rocker switch for stereo/mono mode, and six press-to-use buttons for recording, rewind, stop/eject, play/record, fast forward, and pause. Next to these are twin VU meters, followed by respective channel A and B recording-level knobs, and finally the power off/on rocker switch. The first recording button represents a safety feature (it must be pressed together with the record/play button to do your own recording) that prevents accidental erasure of recorded tapes. Below the control buttons a panel lights up, as appropriate, to show the legends "Record" (when recording), "Motor" (when the motor is running), and "Overload" (for too strong a recording signal). The mike jacks are found on the front apron; the line inputs and outputs, and the unit's power cord are at the rear.

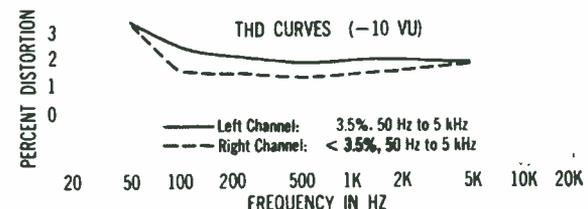
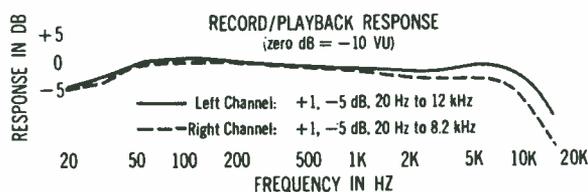
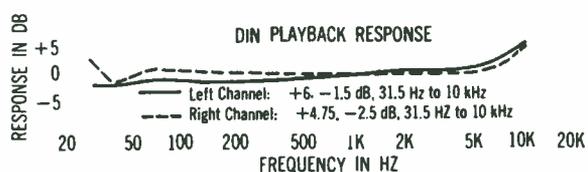
Because it is a new product form, the cassette recorder in general has not yet set clear-cut performance goals vis-à-vis cost. Be that as it may, the CAD-4 strikes us as being right up there with the best that the cassette technology has offered so far. Its performance characteristics are more than reasonably good for a cassette model; indeed, they begin to suggest comparison with larger open-reel decks rather than with the petite cassette format.

Using the CAD-4 is both simple and enjoyable. Its playback of commercial (prerecorded) cassettes is second to none, and it may surprise you with its ability to make its own recordings. Aside from some inevitable hiss and a sense of less ultimate clarity in the highs, cassette tapes dubbed on the CAD-4 from other program sources sound surprisingly like the originals. If you're bothered by the slight difference in the upper midrange response between left and right channels, a slight advance of the right-channel treble knob on your system amplifier will bring it all into balance. Chances are, however, you'll not notice any imbalance on most material.

CIRCLE 144 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

CAD-4 Cassette Additional Data

Performance characteristic	Measurement
Speed accuracy, 1 $\frac{7}{8}$ ips	105 VAC: 2.9% fast 120 VAC: 2.9% fast 127 VAC: 2.9% fast
Wow and flutter, 1 $\frac{7}{8}$ ips	playback: 0.18% record/playback: 0.25%
Rewind time, C-60 cassette	1 min., 33 sec.
Fast-forward time, same cassette	1 min., 9 sec.
S/N ratio (ref. 0 VU, test tape)	
playback	l ch: 48.5 dB r ch: 48.5 dB
record/playback	l ch: 46.5 dB r ch: 48.0 dB
Erase (400 Hz at normal level)	59 dB
Crosstalk (400 Hz)	
record left, playback right	38 dB
record right, playback left	35 dB
Sensitivity (for 0 VU recording level) line input	l ch: 490 mV r ch: 430 mV
mike input	l ch: 0.4 mV r ch: 0.4 mV
Accuracy, built-in meters	left: 3.0 dB high (red area) right: 2.5 dB high (red area)
IM distortion (record/play) 1 $\frac{7}{8}$ ips, -10 VU	l ch: 13.2% r ch: 10.8%
Maximum output	l ch: 1.3 V r ch: 1.2 V



DUAL'S NEW TOP-OF-LINE AUTOMATIC TURNTABLE



THE EQUIPMENT: Dual 1219, an automatic three-speed turntable with integral arm. Dimensions: chassis plate, 14 $\frac{3}{4}$ by 12 inches; allow 4 inches above and 3 inches below. Price, less cover and base: \$175. Manufactured by Dual of West Germany; distributed in the U.S. by United Audio Products, Inc., 120 S. Columbia Ave., Mt. Vernon, N.Y. 10553.

COMMENT: The new top-of-the-line automatic from Dual shows evidence of refinement in significant performance areas. For instance, speed accuracy is greater than in the 1019, wow and flutter are a bit lower, tracking force and antiskating adjustments are more precise. The 1219 is, in fact, outstanding in all these characteristics. We cannot compare its rumble level with that of the 1019 inasmuch as a different test method was used for the older model, but its CBS-ARLL figure of -54 dB represents a good average figure for automatics. In any event, the extremely low arm resonance in the 1219 (an 8-dB rise at 7.3 Hz, when tested with the Shure V/15 Type II) would be a factor in keeping down any intrusion of motor noise.

A three-speed (33, 45, and 78 rpm) model, the 1219, may be used as a single-play turntable with automatic or manual start and cueing as you choose, or as an automatic changer for sequential playing of up to six discs. The unit also can be used to play the same record repeatedly. During automatic operation, you can reject a record at any time; during any mode of operation you can manipulate the built-in cueing device to interrupt and resume play at any portion of a record.

Speed is selected by a three-position lever which is fitted concentrically into a pitch-control knob that varies the speed over a six-per-cent (plus or minus 3 per cent) range—useful for compensating for minor irregularities in line voltage or for deliberately varying musical pitch to suit individual requirements. With this adjustment set for exact speed at the 33-rpm setting, CBS Labs measured speed accuracy for the other speeds and found it to be extremely close at all line voltage inputs (see accompanying table). Absolute accuracy can be achieved readily by the user with the help of the three-speed strobe disc supplied with the unit. In addition to the speed controls there's a start/stop lever and a record-diameter adjustment with settings for 7, 10, and 12 inches. The platter itself weighed in at 7 pounds, 13 ounces (slightly heavier than the old 1019). Its average wow and flutter measured a very low 0.05 per cent.

The tone arm is a metal tubular type fitted at its pivot end with a removable and adjustable counterweight, a stylus tracking-force adjustment, an anti-skating system which includes a dial calibrated separately for use with conical and elliptical styli, and a novel adjustment for optimizing vertical tracking angle for either single-play or stack-and-play. The stylus-force calibration is virtually lab-accurate, with the following figures measured (first number is the setting on the built-in gauge; second number is the

actual stylus force measured): 1.0, 1.0; 1.5, 1.5; 2.0, 2.1; 3.0, 3.1. The antiskating, or bias, compensation introduces (correctly) slightly higher compensation for an elliptical stylus than for a conical. The vertical-angle adjustment raises the arm at its pivot end to compensate for the change in attitude undergone by the arm when playing more than one disc on the platter. The change mechanism performs smoothly and quietly; the change cycle takes eleven seconds and requires a very low 0.07-gram of stylus force to activate the automatic trip. Arm friction, laterally and vertically, is negligible.

The pickup-end of the arm is fitted with a lightweight shell that has a removable platform onto which you install the cartridge. A plastic gauge, supplied, helps zero in for accurate stylus overhang. The cueing device permits the arm to descend very gently onto a record, and the arm rest and latch hold the arm securely when not in use. As we found in previous Dual models, everything works smoothly and flawlessly, and the chassis plate's spring-loaded mounting system makes it easy to install on its base while also lending the unit a high immunity to external shock.

The 1219 comes with a single-play spindle, an automatic spindle, a 45-rpm doughnut adapter, the three-speed strobe disc, the stylus overhang gauge, and prewired signal and power cables. An optional walnut base costs \$14.95 (if you don't fashion your own base from the template supplied), and a dust cover lists for \$12.95.

CIRCLE 142 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Dual 1219 Turntable

Speed Setting (rpm)	Speed Accuracy (percentages slow)*		
	105 VAC	120 VAC	127 VAC
33	0	set exact	0
45	0.1	0.1	0.1
78	0	0	0

*Measurements made with vernier speed control set for exact speed at 33-rpm setting, using 120 volts AC, 60-Hz power line. Control may be adjusted by user for exact speed (i.e., zero error) at other settings and for varying power line voltages.

REPORTS IN PROGRESS

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CIRCLE 38 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

the tape BY R.D. DARRELL deck

New Year's Resolutions usually demand either giving up things one likes but shouldn't or taking up things one doesn't like but should. Neither course is easy, but the latter does promise a slightly better chance of success. In any event, the arrival of the new year strikes me as an apt time for tackling a mounting stack of tapes devoted to a wide variety of "new" music for both conventional and electronic instruments. Bolstering my own courage (and I hope that of "Tape Deck" readers) with an inspirational paraphrase of Terence—"If I am a true audiophile, nothing sonic can be wholly alien to me!"—I've plunged in, and here are the results of my discoveries.

If given a fair hearing, the best of this new music will command the respect of even conservative listeners, for it is music which speaks with unmistakable authority and eloquence despite the strangeness of the tonal language. One may not "understand" many of these pieces, much less "like" them on first hearing; but one can recognize immediately that what the composer has written is genuinely meaningful, promising substantial rewards if one is willing to listen attentively, rehearse frequently, and study sympathetically. And for such purposes, recorded tapes are ideal, especially when heard through headphones: a headset not only helps to focus one's aural attention, but also spares less sympathetic members of the family from overexposure to unfamiliar sonic idioms.

Henze, Johnston, and Stockhausen. The most impressive discoveries for me are Hans Werner Henze's gripping *Double Concerto* for Oboe, Harp, and Strings (1966) and vitally expressive *Sonata for Strings* (1957-58). Also included is a more easily assimilable, if more superficial, *Fantasia for Strings* (1966). All three works are admirably played by the Collegium Musicum of Zürich under Paul Sacher and recorded with extraordinary sonic richness and warmth (Deutsche Grammophon/Ampex EX+ 7½-ips reel C 9396, \$7.95).

Another persuasively eloquent work, despite its highly sophisticated use of the microtonal idiom, is Ben Johnston's *Second String Quartet* (1964). The appealing, highly skilled performance by the Composers Quartet will undoubtedly be overshadowed by its coupling, a shortened version of the notorious *HPSCHD* for three harpsichords and computer-produced tape materials by John Cage and Lejaren Hiller (Nonesuch/Ampex 3¾-ips reel E 1224, \$4.95). This bold multimedia work may well be quite

spectacular in its full five-hour live performance; but in the twenty-one-minute tape reduction, I found its extremely busy piping, popping, fluttering, buzzing, and clattering only mildly amusing. I was rather annoyed by the failure of the tape edition to include the additional computer print-out instructions promised on the box cover and actually supplied with the disc edition.

Unfortunately, a similar dearth of annotation is only too common with open-reel (and cassette) releases, while no notes of any kind are ordinarily supplied with endless-loop cartridge tapings. One notable exception is my third outstanding example of major new works: Karlheinz Stockhausen's dramatically active *Gruppen* for three orchestras (1955-57) which, coupled with the same composer's *Carré* for four orchestras and four choruses of 1960, I reviewed last August in its open-reel edition. It's now also available in an imported cassette (DGG 921022, \$6.95) and an Ampex-produced 8-track cartridge (M 87002, \$6.95).

Starting Out for the Far-Out. Listeners with a sense of humor may well respond to Lukas Foss's *Baroque Variations*, rather ribald avant-garde variations on themes by Handel, Domenico Scarlatti, and Bach. The borrowed materials are chopped up and mixed with some highly spiced interpolations by Foss, who helpfully enhances the digestibility of the concoction by his virtuoso performance with the Buffalo Philharmonic. The coupling, Cage's *Concerto for Prepared Piano and Orchestra* (with Yuji Takahashi as soloist), appears to be a more synthetic mosaic of odd bits and pieces: nevertheless, it has a wistful, palely oriental atmosphere which I found by no means unpleasantly hypnotic (Nonesuch/Ampex 7½-ips reel E 1202, \$4.95; 8-track cartridge M 81202, \$6.95). Foss and his Buffalo musicians have also bravely tackled far more difficult scores by two leading European experimentalists: *Akrata* and *Pithoprakia* by Xenakis, *Capriccio for Violin and Orchestra* (starring Paul Zukofsky), and *De Natura Sonoris* by Penderecki (Nonesuch/Ampex 3¾-ips reel E 1201; 8-track cartridge M 81201).

Also from Nonesuch, which has become extremely active in this field, are two large-scale works for electronic synthesizer commissioned from Morton Subotnik (of earlier *Silver Apples of the Moon* fame) and Andrew Rudin. Subotnik uses a Buchla-built instrument for the relatively orthodox but often quite impressive tonal effects in *The Wild*

Bull, which is based on an ancient Sumerian poem. Rudin uses the better-known Moog instrument in his four-movement *Tragoedia*, which is also inspired by ancient literature, in this case Greek drama. Both works, like so many of their kind, seem to exhaust the potentials of their basic materials rather early in the game; but the ideas themselves often are distinctive and the working-out can sometimes be genuinely exciting. Both are released in \$4.95 reel and \$6.95 8-track cartridge editions (Subotnik: E 1208 and M 81208; Rudin: E 1198 and M 81198).

Modern No More. After hearing a good sampling of what may or may not be the music of the future, one unexpected reward for such violent stretching of aural sensibilities may be an increased appreciation for the relatively mellifluous dissonances of earlier modernists. In any case, one may well detect hitherto unrealized "classical" virtues in the first tape editions of Prokofiev's *Seventh* and *Eighth Piano Sonatas*, entrancingly played by Ashkenazy; the pianist is even more poignantly eloquent in the composer's own arrangements of two movements from the *Romeo and Juliet* ballet music. The recording is admirably clean, but rather close and not particularly bright (London/Ampex EX+ 7½-ips reel L 80213, \$7.95). Another, less distinguished but undeniably more popular, aspect of Prokofiev dominates the first tape edition of his Op. 110 suite of waltzes drawn from his *Cinderella* ballet, *War and Peace* opera, and *Lermontov* film score. They are given an appropriately romantic treatment by Rozhdestvensky and the Moscow Radio Symphony; the same artists, however, bring much more gusto to Janáček's infectiously vital *Sinfonietta* (Melodiya/Angel 3¾-ips reel Y1S 40075, \$6.98)—a version superior in terms of sheer élan, if inferior in orchestral precision, to Szell's October 1966 taping for Columbia.

Another former Russian *enfant terrible*, Shostakovich, and his onetime shocking *Seventh Symphony* (*Lenin-grad*) with its infamously repetitive and intentionally vulgar march tune in the first movement, no longer seems as hard on one's ears and nerves as many concertgoers and discophiles once found it. Yevgeny Svetlanov's reading is earnestly vigorous if not particularly eloquent, but the Russian recording of this first tape edition is outstandingly natural and expansive as well as robustly muscular (Melodiya/Angel 3¾-ips reel Y2S 4107, double-play, \$9.98).

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Full-size Professional VU Meters. These internally lighted instruments provide the precision metering necessary for really serious recording.

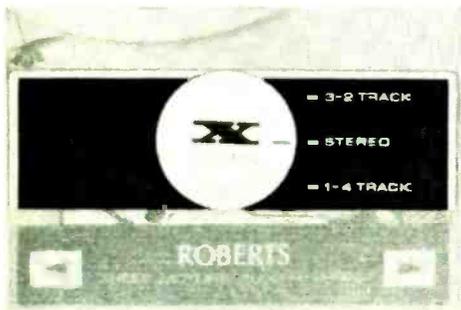
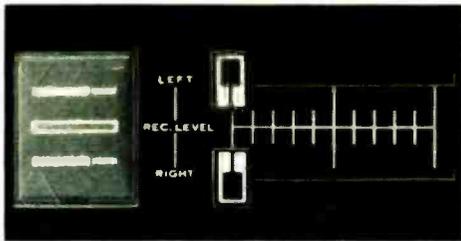
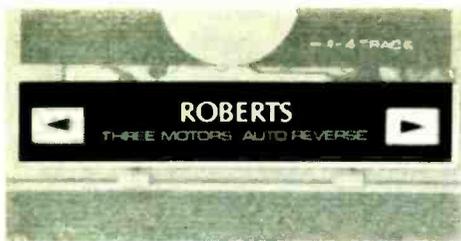
Built-in Sound-on-Sound. Three heads permit professional recording techniques, such as echo effect, sound-on-sound and speaker or earphone monitoring of either input source or actual tape while recording for immediate audible comparison.

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Sony Model 630 Solid-State Stereo Tape System. Includes two Sony F-26 dynamic cardioid microphones and other accessories. Less than \$449.50. **Also available:** The Sony Model 630-D Stereo Tape Deck Recorder, complete with walnut base and plastic dust cover is available for less than \$299.50. For a free copy of our latest catalog, write to Mr. Phillips, Sony/Superscope, 8144 Vineland Ave., Sun Valley, Calif. 91352.



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CIRCLE 61 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

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The Mamiya/Sekor DTL has a built-in, behind the lens *averaging* meter system. It measures different parts of the subject area and averages the exposure. If you select this system, and there is a strong light behind the subject, you've made your first mistake...the subject will be greatly under-exposed.

The Mamiya/Sekor DTL also has a built-in, behind the lens *spot* meter system (Yes, two systems in the same camera!) This system measures 6% of the picture area. Now, if you are photographing a landscape and

select this system, and the spot meter measures the darkest area in the picture, you've made your second mistake...the picture will be greatly over-exposed.

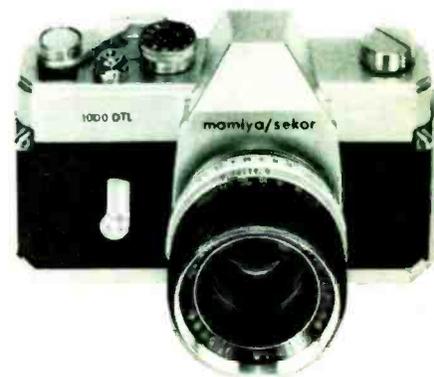
To be perfectly fair to ourselves, all fine 35mm SLR cameras have one of these systems. So, if you goof with an *averaging* system on our camera, you would make the same mistake with all the other cameras using this system. If you goof with the spot meter on our camera, you would again make the same mistake with all the cameras that use a *spot* meter system.

Therefore, if you're a real goof-off, with careful planning, you can make twice as many mistakes using the two systems built into the Mamiya/Sekor DTL.

Of course, we think you're smart enough to use the exposure reading system that would best fit your subject and allow you to get perfect exposures every time. And we think you're entitled to a choice of expo-

sure systems so your creative abilities will not be cancelled out by incorrect exposures. The Mamiya/Sekor DTL is the only 35mm SLR that gives you this FAIL SAFE protection. Priced from less than \$180, plus case.

See a demonstration at your dealer or write for folder to **Ponder&Best**, Corporate Offices: 11201 West Pico Blvd., Los Angeles, California 90064.



CIRCLE 51 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

**Why an
automatic turntable
from Swindon, England
has made it big
in the States.**



At the risk of seeming immodest, we've had a smashing success in the United States.

There are more Garrards being used in component stereo systems here than all other makes combined.

Even we find this curious.

But the die was cast thirty-odd years ago.

Not parity, but superiority

H. V. Slade, then Managing Director of Garrard Limited, decreed, "We will sell a Garrard in the U.S. *only* when it is more advanced than any machine made there."

A commitment to, not parity, but absolute superiority.

That policy has not changed to this day.

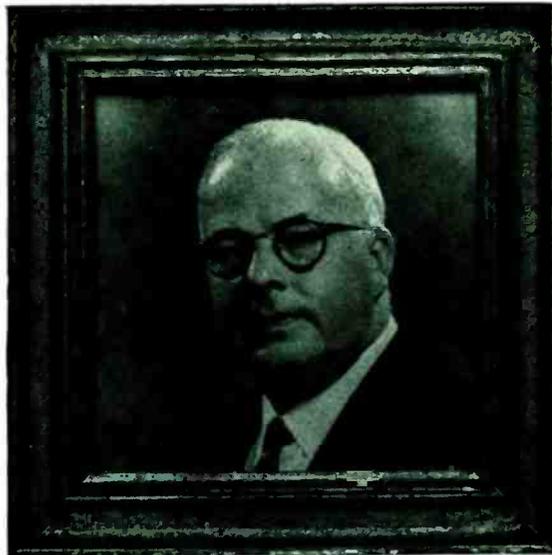
Spurred by it, Garrard of England has been responsible for every major innovation in automatic turntables.

In the thirties, Garrard pioneered the principle of two-point record support. Still the safest known method of record handling. Oddly, still a Garrard exclusive.

In the forties, we introduced the aluminum tone arm. Today, widely used by makers of fine equipment.

By 1961, increasingly sensitive cartridges had led us to adapt a feature originally developed for professional turntables: the dynamically balanced tone arm, with a movable counterweight to neutralize the arm and an adjustment to add precisely the recommended stylus tracking force.

In 1964, we added an anti-skating control, and patented the sliding



H. V. Slade (1889—1961)

weight design that makes it permanently accurate.

Then, in 1967, Garrard engineers perfected the Synchro-Lab motor, a revolutionary two-stage synchronous motor.

The induction portion supplies the power to reach playing speed instantly. The synchronous section then "locks in" to the 60-cycle frequency of the current to give unvarying speed—and unvarying reproduction — despite variations in voltage.

"We're bloody flattered"

This year one of our competitors has introduced a copy of our Synchro-Lab motor on its most expensive model.

To quote Alan Say, our Head of Engineering, "We're bloody flattered.

"After all, being imitated is a rather good measure of how significant an innovation really is."

The new Garrard SL95B features still another development we expect will become an industry standard.

Some years back we pioneered viscous damped tone arm descent for gentler, safer cueing. Ever since, we've been troubled by the logic of offering an automatic turntable with a damped tone arm that wasn't damped in automatic cycle.

This year we've added a linkage system between the changer mechanism and the damped tone arm "jack."

So, for the time being at least, Garrard has the only damped tone arm that is also damped in automatic.

Other 1970 Garrard refinements include a counterweight adjustment screw for balancing the tone arm to within a hundredth of a gram. A window scale on the tone arm for the stylus force gauge. And a larger, more precise version of our patented anti-skating control.

Un-innovating

At the same time, we've eliminated a feature we once pioneered. A bit of un-innovating, you might say.

Garrard's disappearing record platform is disappearing for good.

We've replaced it with a non-disappearing record platform. A larger, stronger support with an easy-to-grasp clip that fits surely over the record stack.

A small thing, perhaps.

But another indication that H.V.'s commitment remains with us.

\$44.50 to \$129.50

Garrard standards do not vary with price. Only the degree of refinement possible for the money.

There are six Garrard component models from the SL95B automatic turntable (at left) for \$129.50 to the 40B at \$44.50.

Your dealer can help you arrive at the optimum choice for your system.

Garrard

CIRCLE 103 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



Beethoven's Conversation Books

The deaf composer's recourse to written conversations provides us with the closest thing to candid tape recordings from the early 1800s

by Karl-Heinz Köhler

WHEN LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN was twenty-six years old he began to be aware of a weakness in his auditory senses. As it became progressively worse, this malady was to lead to the loss of that most important faculty to a musician: hearing. The physicians of his day not only found themselves unable to cure his suffering, they were unable even to reduce it.

The tragedy of Beethoven's illness formed his life; it shaped his very character. He shunned social gatherings with his family and acquaintances, yet ever yearned for companionship; he maintained a heart-felt devotion to friends, yet he was constantly suspicious of their intentions; he tended to let his temper erupt, yet he willingly made up quickly; his inner turmoil drove him to change residences often, to constantly lead a generally abnormal life, and in at least one stage of his career even to contemplate suicide (see opposite page). These aspects of his personality become understandable only if viewed against the background of his illness.

Gradually, but finally—sometime between his fortieth and forty-fifth year—Beethoven became completely deaf. From then on his friends and visitors could communicate with him only by writing. Wax tablets were sometimes employed; they could be reused by wiping them clean. More often Beethoven availed himself of notebooks of various sizes; in them visitors wrote their remarks, usually in pencil.

Dr. Köhler is director of the Music Department of the German State Library (Deutsche Staatsbibliothek) in East Berlin, where he heads a staff that is preparing to publish Beethoven's conversation books for the first time in their entirety.

Such is the origin of what are no doubt the most curious documents in the history of music, Ludwig van Beethoven's conversation books. We do not know whether they were preserved purposely or by chance. Yet they *were* preserved and tradition has it that after his death four hundred such books were found. They came into the possession of Beethoven's friend of many years, Anton Schindler, the composer's first biographer. Unfortunately, Schindler destroyed about five-eighths of the documents he had inherited, for reasons of his own. [Translator's comment: Schindler is suspected of having done away with these books because they contained information derogatory to himself or contrary to the picture of Beethoven as the matchless hero Schindler was trying to paint.] Thus, according to today's reckoning, there are extant one hundred and thirty-nine conversation books (plus a few loose-leaf sheets) of which one hundred and thirty-seven are housed in the Deutsche Staatsbibliothek (German State Library) in [East] Berlin; the other two units belong to the Beethoven House in Bonn, which obtained them from a private Swiss collection.

Anton Schindler worked up these books with numerous comments about the writers of the entries and the dates of the conversations. Here his memory often played him false. In 1843 he sold the collection along with other Beethoven manuscripts in his possession to the musical archive of what was then the Royal Library in Berlin. He received in recompense a considerable annuity.

Since that time, all biographers of Beethoven worthy of that designation have examined these books—above all, the American scholar Alexander Wheelock Thayer who, working in the nineteenth



Maurice Feldman, Public Relations Counselor, City of Vienna

The house in Heiligenstadt, now part of Vienna, where Beethoven wrote his heartbreaking testament. Situated on Probusgasse 6, it will soon become a museum.

The Heiligenstadt Testament

For my brothers Carl and Beethoven

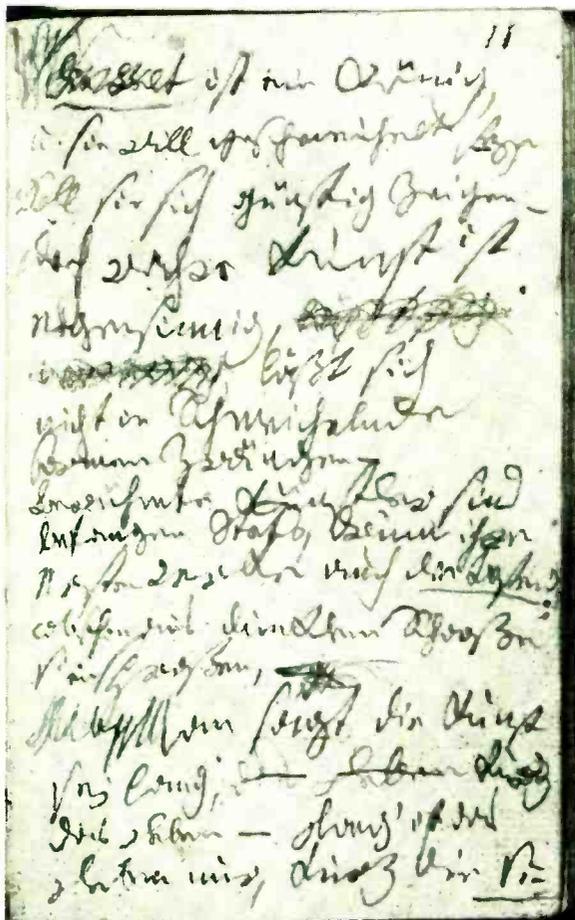
Oh you men who think or say that I am malevolent, stubborn or misanthropic, how greatly do you wrong me. You do not know the secret cause which makes me seem that way to you. From childhood on my heart and soul have been full of the tender feeling of goodwill, and I was ever inclined to accomplish great things. But, think that for 6 years now I have been hopelessly afflicted, made worse by senseless physicians, from year to year deceived with hopes of improvement, finally compelled to face the prospect of a *lasting malady* (whose cure will take years or, perhaps be impossible). Though born with a fiery, active temperament, even susceptible to the diversions of society, I was soon compelled to withdraw myself, to live life alone. If at times I tried to forget all this, oh how harshly was I flung back by the doubly sad experience of my bad hearing. Yet it was impossible for me to say to people, "Speak louder, shout, for I am deaf." Ah, how could I possibly admit an infirmity in the one sense which ought to be more perfect in me than in others, a sense which I once possessed in the highest perfection, a perfection such as few in my profession enjoy or ever have enjoyed.— Oh I cannot do it, therefore forgive me when you see me draw back when I would have gladly mingled with you. My misfortune is doubly painful to me because I am bound to be misunderstood; for me there can be no relaxation with my fellow-men, no refined conversations, no mutual exchange of ideas. I must live almost alone like one who has been banished, I can mix with society only as much as true necessity demands. If I approach near to people a hot terror seizes upon me and I fear being exposed to the danger that my condition might be noticed. Thus it has been during the last six months which I have spent in the country. By ordering me to spare my hearing as much as possible, my intelligent doctor almost fell in with my own present frame of mind, though sometimes I ran counter to it by yielding to my desire for companionship. But what a humiliation for me when someone standing next to me heard a flute in the distance and I heard nothing, or someone heard a shepherd singing and again I heard nothing. Such incidents drove me almost to despair, a little more of that and I would have ended my life—it was only my *art* that held me back. Ah, it seemed to me impossible to leave the world until I had brought forth all that I felt was within me. So I endured this wretched existence—truly wretched for so susceptible a body which can be thrown by a sudden change from the best condition to the very worst.—*Patience*, they say, is what I must now choose for my guide, and I have done so—I hope my determination will remain firm to endure until it pleases the inexorable Parcae to break the thread. Perhaps I shall get better, perhaps not, I am ready.—Forced to become a philosopher already in my 28th year, oh it is not easy, and for the artist much more difficult than for anyone else.—Divine One, thou

In 1802 the thirty-one-year-old Beethoven, growing progressively deafer, was advised by his physician, Dr. Schmidt, to spare his hearing as much as possible. That summer he temporarily left the city noises of Vienna for the nearby countryside where, in Heiligenstadt, contemplating suicide, he wrote the following remarkable and touching document. For some strange reason, he left the name of his brother Johann blank throughout. The translation is taken from *Thayer's Life of Beethoven*.

seest my inmost soul, thou knowest that therein dwells the love of mankind and the desire to do good.—Oh fellow men, when at some point you read this, consider then that you have done me an injustice; someone who has had misfortune may console himself to find a similar case to his, who despite all the limitations of Nature nevertheless did everything within his powers to become accepted among worthy artists and men.—You my brothers Carl and as soon as I am dead if Dr. Schmidt is still alive ask him in my name to describe my malady, and attach this written document to his account of my illness so that so far as is possible at least the world may become reconciled to me after my death.—At the same time I declare you two to be the heirs to my small fortune (if so it can be called); divide it fairly; bear with and help each other. What injury you have done me you know was long ago forgiven. To you, brother Carl I give special thanks for the attachment you have shown me of late. It is my wish that you may have a better and freer life than I have had. Recommend virtue to your children; it alone, not money, can make them happy. I speak from experience; this was what upheld me in time of misery. Thanks to it and to my art I did not end my life by suicide—Farewell and love each other—I thank all my friends, particularly Prince Lichnowsky and Professor Schmidt—I would like the instruments from Prince L to be preserved by one of you, but not to be the cause of strife between you, and as soon as they can serve you a better purpose, then sell them. How happy I shall be if I can still be helpful to you in my grave—so be it—With joy I hasten to meet death—If it comes before I have had the chance to develop all my artistic capacities, it will still be coming too soon despite my harsh fate and I should probably wish it later—yet even so I should be happy, for would it not free me from a state of endless suffering?—Come when thou wilt, I shall meet thee bravely—Farewell and do not wholly forget me when I am dead, I deserve this from you, for during my lifetime I was thinking of you often and of ways to make you happy—please be so—

Ludwig van Beethoven
(seal)

Heiglstadt [sic], October 10th, 1802, thus I bid you farewell—and indeed sadly—yes, that fond hope—which I brought here with me, to be cured to a degree at least—this I must now wholly abandon. As the leaves of autumn fall and are withered—so likewise has my hope been blighted—I leave here—almost as I came—even the high courage—which often inspired me in the beautiful days of summer—has disappeared—Oh Providence—grant me at last but one day of pure joy—it is so long since real joy echoed in my heart—Oh when—Oh when, Oh Divine One—shall I feel it again in the temple of nature and of mankind—Never?—No—Oh that would be too hard.



Notes by Beethoven, written during the proceedings in the appeals court on March 11, 1820:

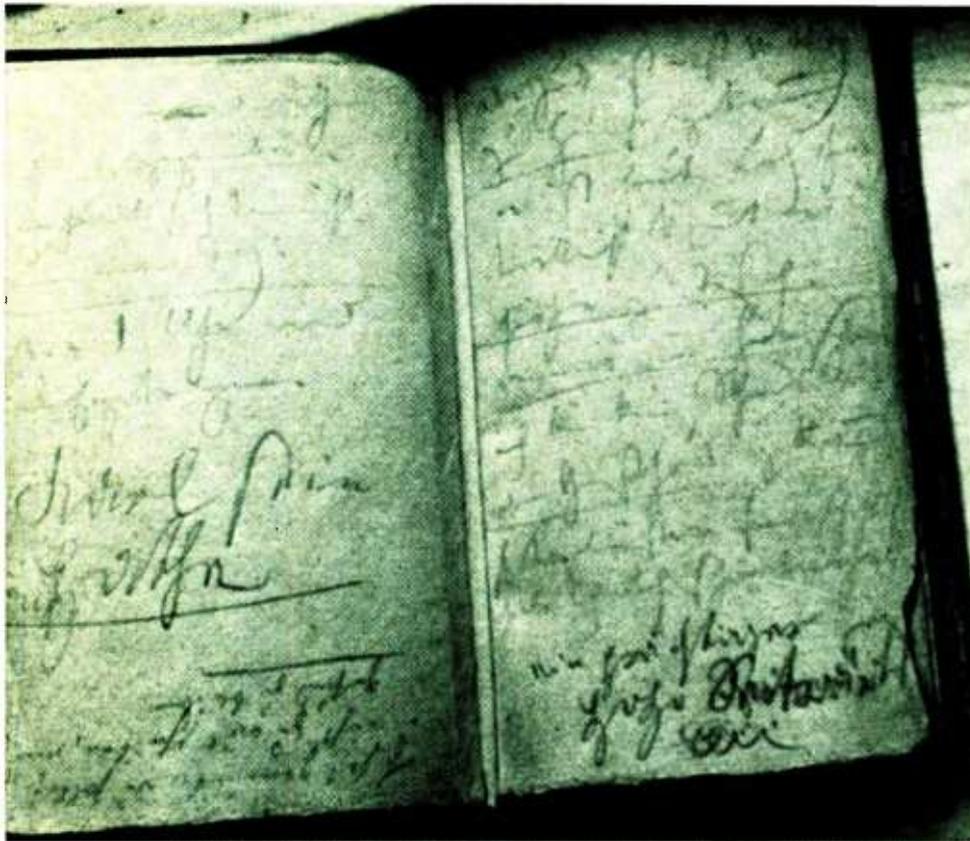
"The world is a king and wishes to be flattered. It should show itself favorably—though true art is obstinate, cannot be forced into flattering shapes. . . ."

century, appended to many pages scraps of paper containing important suggestions as to the meaning of the entries. Yet these testimonies of Beethoven's life have never been fully transcribed or published, much though the scholarly world has desired such publication. Two attempts were stymied almost from the beginning, and at best they were beset with numerous errors. Walter Nohl, a nephew of the Beethoven biographer Ludwig Nohl, failed after World War I because of the then prevailing depressed economic conditions. The second attempt was made by Georg Schünemann, who was director of the Music Division of the German State Library (then the Prussian State Library). He had to stop prematurely because of the outbreak of World War II. All the same, Schünemann was able to publish thirty-seven of the books, in three volumes, and furnish them with his commentary. At the end of the war the documents were in Berlin.

Five years later the conversation books became the victims of a sensational robbery. A thief by the name of Krüger—who, curiously enough, was for a short time able to trick his way into the position of director of the Music Division of the State Library—took possession of the books under the pretense that the Russians were interested in these documents. He spirited them away to West Germany. Only after Krüger was caught during another large theft in Göttingen were the books, after lengthy negotiations, returned to their rightful owners. It took more than a decade to do so.

In the autumn of 1963—twenty years after Georg Schünemann had had to interrupt his labors—the work of interpretation was begun anew, this time with the help of the Ministry for Culture of the DDR, which apportioned the necessary financial aid. Five years after this, that is, at the end of 1968, the first volume of the new project appeared; it was eagerly awaited by admirers of Beethoven, and it began where Schünemann left off.

The editors have before them a very difficult task, particularly since modern techniques of editing demand a considerably higher degree of exactitude than, for example, Schünemann could hope to reach a quarter of a century ago. No single scholar can any longer master this task. It has become a question of teamwork. Such a team is working at the Library. In addition, we call on a special correspondent in Vienna to undertake for us the necessary researches in archives and libraries. For the deciphering of particular problems, we have at our disposal appropriate specialists and scientific institutes. For example, parts in which the writing has faded are being strengthened back to legibility through new photographic methods developed by the Institute of Criminology of Humboldt University in Berlin.



In the last entry here, in darker pencil, Beethoven's "human side" interrupts Schindler's musical discourse—apparently when a pretty girl entered the cafe where they were "chatting"—with: "Ein prächtiger Popo seitwärts (a magnificent behind, from the side)."

Curious scribblings, which were shown to an expert in stenography, turned out to be, in point of fact, a form of German shorthand which came into use around 1823.

The one-sided nature of the entries creates special problems. One has to keep in mind that though Beethoven could hear nothing, he could speak fluently. Thus you find in these pages entries written by his friends far more frequently than entries written by Beethoven: the conversation is usually presented to us without Beethoven's part in it or Beethoven's response. We, the readers, find ourselves in a situation similar to that of an eavesdropper listening to only one side of a telephone conversation. The various books only rarely contain sequential conversation; often there are great gaps in between them. The contents of the talk held in the last decades of the composer's life appear before us in broken scenes, a little as if they were film clips.

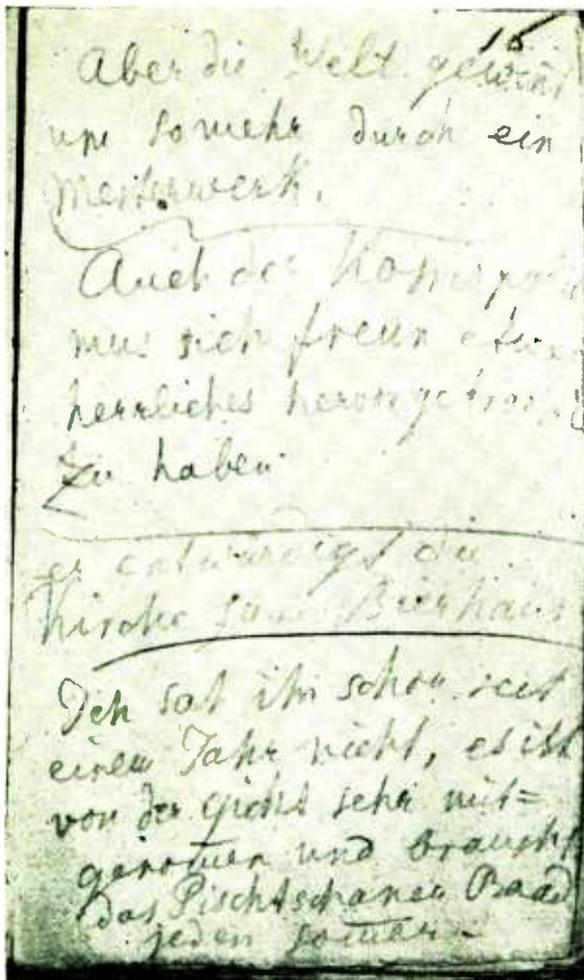
Generally the handwritings are quite legible. The writers can be identified without too much trouble either through the substance of what has been written or through comparisons of their penmanship with other samples. Beethoven's handwriting poses a special puzzle, though, as I have stated, his contributions are comparatively infrequent. His hand, while unmistakable and characteristic, is extraordinarily difficult to decipher. Beethoven responded in writing to questions put to him by his interlocutors mainly when they found themselves in a public place and the composer feared that he would be overheard

by an unwelcome eavesdropper. (See the above illustration.)

In addition he sometimes used the conversation books as notebooks. He jots down newspaper announcements, notes numerous titles of books, or records what he needs in the way of household articles or daily victuals. From these jottings we make the surprising discovery that to the end of his days Beethoven did not know how to multiply! If he needs to multiply, say, 12 by 18, he writes 18 down twelve times and adds.

The final result of these documents will be of far-reaching importance because they will substantially alter the picture of Beethoven's life and personality. His human side emerges tangibly. His relationship with the world around him appears in a new light. His habits become more comprehensible. Yet the publication will not only benefit the musical historian—especially, of course, the Beethoven scholar—but will mirror general history, elucidate cultural trends, and illuminate the life of the times. The conversations help us understand obtuse aspects of the fluctuation of monetary values, prevailing medical methods, and literary tendencies. Current theories of education are discussed, the standard of living of Beethoven's contemporaries defined. In short, the conversation books will increasingly nourish our broad historic knowledge.

The books cover the last decade of Beethoven's life, the first beginning in February 1818, the last closing three weeks before his death on March 5,



An entry by Carl Czerny, in the latter part of August 1825, the year of the Ninth Symphony, about which he writes:

"But the world is enriched all the more through a masterpiece."

The rest of the page reads:

"Even a cosmopolite must rejoice in having produced something so marvelous."

"He degrades the Church into a beer house."

"I haven't seen him for a year now. He had a bad case of gout and has to take the Pischtschaner baths every summer."

1827. There are considerable numerical differences between the various years: from 1818 only one book remains; from 1819, four; 1820, eleven; none at all in 1821; 1822, only two. The greatest number belongs to the year 1823, with a total of thirty-four books; 1824 and 1825 are documented by twenty-four books each; 1826 by twenty-nine; and the few weeks of 1827 by ten. Evidently Schindler preserved those very books which deal with the dramatic highlights of Beethoven's last years. They could be divided roughly into six chapters: (1) 1819-20, the lawsuit over his nephew; (2) 1823, the year of the Ninth Symphony; (3) 1824, the first performance of the Ninth; (4) 1825, the last quartets; (5) 1826, the tragedy of the nephew; (6) 1826-27, his last illness.

The story of Beethoven's guardianship of his brother's son, which he assumed in 1815 when Karl was nine years old, and whom he loved as if he had been his own son . . . his struggle with Karl's mother, Johanna, whom he tried to prevent from participation in Karl's education . . . the litigation resulting from this family quarrel, and the terrible issue caused by the intransigence of all concerned—all this forms the background to the first set of notebooks. Johanna had no scruples as to the means she used to fight Beethoven. Under her influence, Karl neglected his scholastic duties and even ran away from boarding school in the fall of 1818. In an entry dated March 1820 Beethoven characterizes Johanna: "Born for intrigue, well-schooled in cheating, expert in all the arts of dissimulation."

Johanna unsuccessfully sued Beethoven in connection with the guardianship, but in the framework of the Lower Austrian Land Code she was at least able to obtain an important decision: the Dutch "van" was not recognized as emblematic of nobility, and consequently another court, the Vienna Magistrate Court, took jurisdiction in the matter. Beethoven was deeply hurt, and not primarily because he wanted to be a member of a privileged class: in his mind nobility meant a certain attitude of mind and heart. This attitude was reinforced when information was disseminated in an encyclopedia that Beethoven was the illegitimate son of Friedrich Wilhelm of Prussia. Referring to this, privy councilor Peters, whom Beethoven was consulting in matters of education, wrote in December 1819: "You do not need to have the glamour of the king fall on you—the opposite is the case."

For a time his sister-in-law was successful in front of the magistrate court. Beethoven countered with a brief to the court, but in the fall of 1819 he was relieved of his rights as guardian. Only as late as April 1820 did the Vienna Court of Appeals decide in Beethoven's favor, the decision being confirmed by the emperor in September.

The long, complicated negotiations form the main topic of conversation of these years. We read the advice such friends as the lawyer Dr. Bach, the editor Joseph Bernard, and Franz Oliva gave to the composer. Ironically, although Beethoven continues to compose and plan his greatest works—the *Missa*

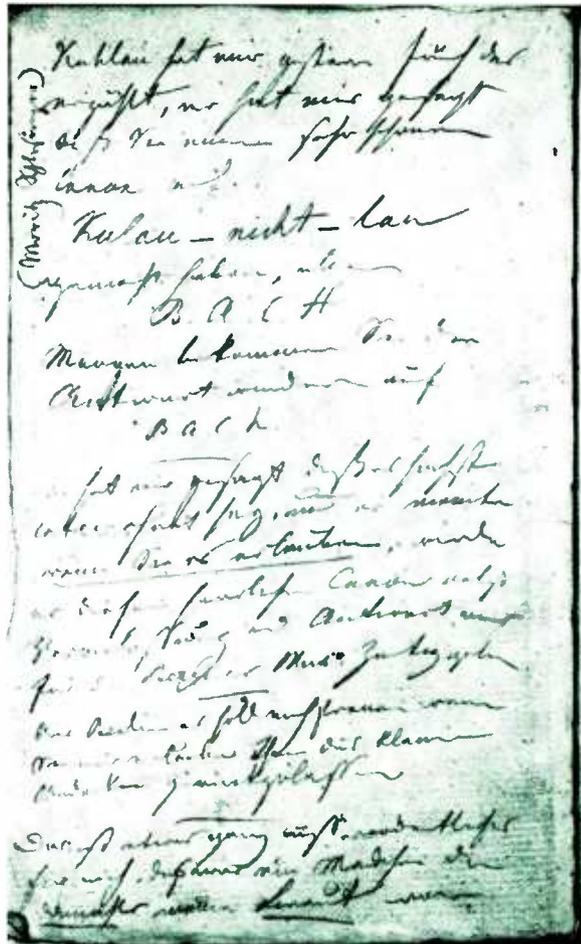
Solemnis occupied him from 1819 on—there isn't a word about the genesis of these works to be found in the conversation books. A curious taboo! Similarly, in 1823, after he has finished the *Missa* and taken up again for a few weeks the composition of the *Diabelli Variations* (which were published in June of that year), he devotes the second half of the year to the composition of the Ninth Symphony: not once is the symphony mentioned in the conversations. On the other hand, plans which Beethoven never executed are freely discussed, particularly the composition of an opera to the libretto *Melusine* by Franz Grillparzer, intellectually perhaps the most worthy conversational partner of Beethoven. Anton Schindler enters the scene and discusses with Beethoven questions of the proper tempo of his piano sonatas and symphonies. The analysis of these remarks can be helpful to the interpreter. We learn about Beethoven's move from Baden to a summer residence in Hetzen-dorf, after he quarreled violently with his landlord. Beethoven writes: "Base slave. miserable fox."

We hear of the successful graduation examinations of the nephew at Joseph Bloechlinger von Bannholz' highly regarded school in Vienna, and become witnesses to the moderately happy life Beethoven and Karl are leading during their initial months together.

We get reports about important artistic happenings, such as the performance of Carl Maria von Weber's *Euryanthe* in October 1823 and the concerts by Ignaz Moscheles at the end of the year, for which Moscheles borrowed Beethoven's English piano. We are apprised of performances of Beethoven's works, especially those by violinist Ignaz Schuppanzigh; we share Beethoven's financial worries; we are told about a painful eye infection. Yet we frequently come across conversations which take a jocose turn and bring us closer to Beethoven's humanity. Behind all this there remains the fascinating process of the Ninth Symphony's creation to which Carl Czerny perhaps alludes when he writes in Baden at the end of August, "But the world is enriched all the more through a masterpiece."

After completion of the two great works, the *Missa* and the Ninth Symphony, Beethoven devoted himself to preparations for their performance. Envoys of European courts in Vienna are asked to subscribe to the works in advance. Beethoven's copiers have ample work in completing the ordered copies: instructions are given in the conversation books.

The preparation of the great works is dramatic. Beethoven did not at first consider an *Akademie* (concert) in Vienna. His friends were dismayed. Count Moritz Lichnowsky, a close friend of Beethoven, authored a memorandum—which was signed by many aristocrats, musicians, and publishers in Vienna—imploping Beethoven not to introduce "his youngest children to their place of birth as aliens." He finally decided to prepare the concert for Vienna while his friends Schindler, Lichnowsky, and Schuppanzigh took on all the difficulties of the negotiations. However, the fussy master has a hard time making



Moritz Schlesinger's request to Beethoven in September 1825 to publish the latter's pun-and-puzzle canon "Kühl, nicht lau" (cool, not lukewarm) together with the solution. (The writer's identification, in the upper left margin, is by Schindler).

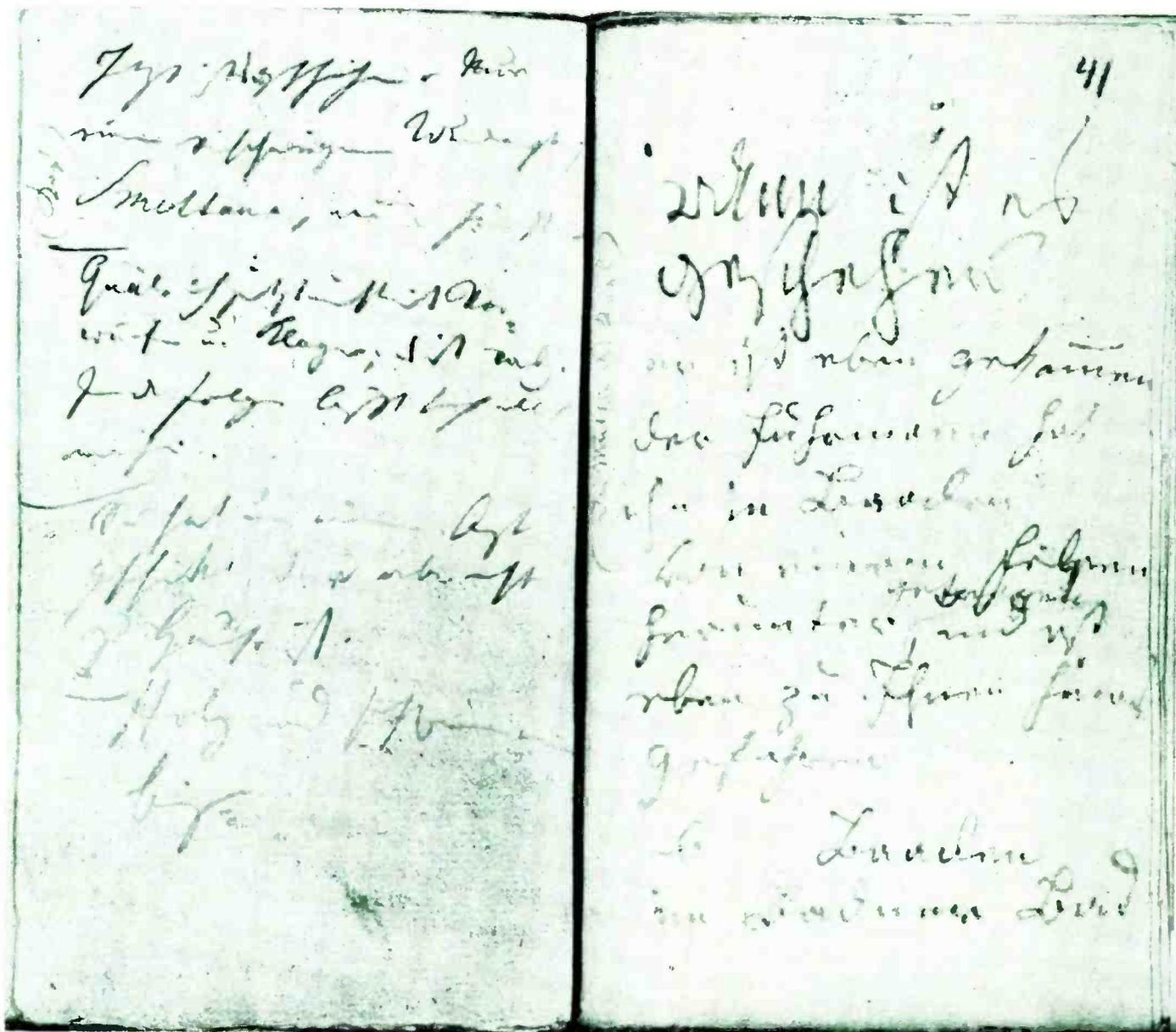
The entire page reads as follows:

"Kuhlau told me yesterday morning that you have written on a very nice canon on Kuhlau [sic—Ed.]—nicht—lau on [the notes] B-A-C-H. Tomorrow you will get his solution to B-A-C-H."

"He told me that it is very interesting and with your permission he thought he would give me this marvelous canon as well as the occasion [that prompted it] and the solution for the Berlin Music Journal."

"From Berlin it would give me pleasure if you would allow me to leave you this little souvenir behind."

"For me this is something quite out of the ordinary. This was a girl who at that time was my fiancée."



These dramatic entries were made during the time of Karl's attempted suicide on July 30, 1826. Although Beethoven's excited conversation with his sister-in-law is on the page after the nephew's writing, it undoubtedly came first.

(Right-hand page):

Beethoven: "When did it happen?"

Johanna: "He arrived just now. The coachman carried him down from a rock in Baden and has just now driven into town to you."

(Left-hand page):

Karl: "Now it is over, I want a discreet surgeon;

Smettana [misspelled; should be Smerana, a surgeon who had operated on Karl for hernia—Ed.], if he is in town."

"Don't plague me with reproaches and accusations. It's over with. Presently everything will be all right."

And after a question, apparently from Beethoven, "She has sent for a doctor. But he is not home."

"Holz [a young violinist friend of Beethoven] will [look in (?)—illegible]."

decisions. When his friends try to force Beethoven to clarify certain basic questions he becomes upset. Every phase of these dramatic preparations for the concert, organizational work as well as rehearsals, we find ourselves witnessing in the talks of 1824.

The concert of May 7, 1824, in the Kärntnertheater proved a triumph for Beethoven. Schindler writes: "Never in my life did I hear such frenetic and yet heartfelt applause as today. The second movement of the symphony was interrupted several times." Yet the financial result of the concert (420 gulden) turned out to be so disappointing that Beethoven rashly accused his friends of having cheated him. Then he quickly sought forgiveness. This time he has to accept Schindler's reproof: "You create such scenes, I nearly decided never to come to you again. You can be neither counseled nor helped."

In the center of Beethoven's late works stand the magnificent last five quartets of 1824–26, the first three of which were commissioned by the Russian Prince Galitzin. The hope for financial gain may explain this extraordinary creativity. The Parisian music publisher Schlesinger visits Beethoven in September 1825 and remarks, "If you write quartets you will earn more money than with the rest of your great works. He who lives among wolves must learn to howl. The world these days is a wolves' den."

Schuppanzigh performed the E flat Quartet in March 1825, but "it was not quite fully baked." Beethoven was able to hire violinist Joseph Boehm for a second performance and supervised the rehearsals himself: although he could not hear anything, he judged the tempos by watching the bow movements of the performers. Shortly before the A minor Quartet is premiered he gives a jocular puzzle canon on the notes B-A-C-H [in German, B is B flat, H is B natural] to the Danish composer Kuhlau who visits him in September. The words, a pun on the Dane's name, are "Kühl, nicht lau" (cool, not lukewarm). Then Schlesinger asks Beethoven for permission to print the canon, with its solution, in the *Berlin Music Journal*. (See the illustration on page 61.)

Now new friends come to the foreground in the conversations, like the young violinist Holz and the friend of his youth Gerhard von Breuning; we hear of the visit of the Berlin poet Rellstab; again Beethoven negotiates about material for an opera; we hear of a serious illness Beethoven contracts and about the warnings of his physician, Dr. Braunhofer.

In the conversation books of 1825 we can once again follow the fate of the nephew in the increasing tension which a year later led to catastrophe. The relationship of Beethoven to his nephew changes

frequently with jumpy rapidity. Now he utters bitter reproach, now the entries testify to a touching fatherly tenderness. Surely life with the often suspicious and quickly enraged uncle, a man laboring with fierce concentration, could not have been easy for the youngster. The nephew undertook philological studies at the University of Vienna in the fall of 1823. After but one year he was unable to pass the necessary examinations and in the spring of 1825 he renounced his studies. All his teachers testified to his intelligence and endowment; yet his own frivolity led him astray. He skipped lectures and neglected his studies. He changed over to the Polytechnic Institute and prepared himself for the career of a merchant. Here too, in the summer of 1826, the fear of the exams, the demands of which he did not feel equal to, took hold of him. Though Beethoven conceded him the liberty to occupy a room of his own in the city, the uncle's psychological difficulties and complexes overwhelmed Karl. Whether he also contracted gambling debts, as Schindler asserts, cannot be proved. On July 30 the nephew discharged two pistol shots against his head. The attempted suicide was unsuccessful but Karl was severely wounded. In a conversation book we take part in this calamity. (See opposite page.)

After two months' recuperation in a hospital the young criminal (attempted suicide was considered a criminal act) spent one night at the police station. (Schindler's description would make it appear that he spent four weeks there!) A priest gave him the necessary absolution, yet he had to leave Vienna. Beethoven took him to the estate of his brother Johann in Gneixendorf. There, in October 1826, he composed the last quartet. Returning to Vienna at the beginning of December, Beethoven fell seriously ill.

The mortal illness lasts four months. We become witnesses to the four operations—punctures to relieve the swelling caused by dropsy—performed by Professor Wawruch. Days of unspeakable suffering pass before us. A temporary and last flickering of health prompts his friends to congratulate him on his "recovery." Beethoven's mind remains wakeful and active. One of the last documented conversations is one he holds with Schindler—about Shakespeare.

To mine the content of these conversation books fully will be possible only when they are available in their totality (ten volumes are planned). Schiller's words about Kant—Kant is twice mentioned in the conversation books—are applicable to Beethoven: "When the kings build, the carters are kept busy."

Article translated by George Marek; conversation book excerpts by Dagmar Rios, Peter Stadlen, Leonard Marcus.

Beethoven's American Boswell



by George Marek

Alexander Wheelock Thayer

The U.S. Consul at Trieste devoted nearly fifty years to researching and writing his *Life of Beethoven* for an American readership—yet the now classic biography appeared only in a German translation during his lifetime

IN HIS YOUTH he looked like Alexander Hamilton. In his old age, with a long white beard, he resembled Walt Whitman. At all times he spoke, acted, and appeared as what in fact he was: a gentleman from New England.

How did it happen that such a man—born not in Bonn but near Boston, not a musician by training but solely a lover of music, a biographer who came into the world too late ever to have seen or spoken to his subject—wrote the first truly trustworthy biography of Beethoven? How did it happen that this man devoted his entire working life to the production of one book, one so painstakingly produced that it has remained a source to be siphoned by all subsequent biographers?

As every admirer of Beethoven knows, the gentleman's name was Alexander Wheelock Thayer. The name alone indicates how far he was removed from any connection with Austria or the Rhineland, how little his background had in common with the Schindlers, the Kalischers, the Schiedermairs, the Frimmels, and the Nottebohms whose sternly Teutonic names stand as the signposts of scholarly Beethoven literature. One wonders what Beethoven himself would have made of "Wheelock"; he could not manage to spell Bridgetower, the name of the violinist for whom he originally wrote the *Kreutzer* Sonata: "Brishdower" was the nearest he could come to it.

It is never possible to trace that spark which lights the fire of enthusiasm. What prompted a Colonel G. F. Young, C.B., for instance, to spend all his time compiling the authoritative work on the Medici; and how was it that a young man born of a good family in Putney-on-Thames and destined for a safe career in the church abandoned that career to write the *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*? Perhaps even Edward Gibbon himself could not give us the answer. In Thayer's case we may theorize that his early environment and schooling led him toward European, and especially German, culture which at that time dominated New England thought, and that the Yankee habit of doubting led him to examine the life of a genius who, by the middle of the nineteenth century, had become

famous enough to have his portrait encrusted with innumerable legends.

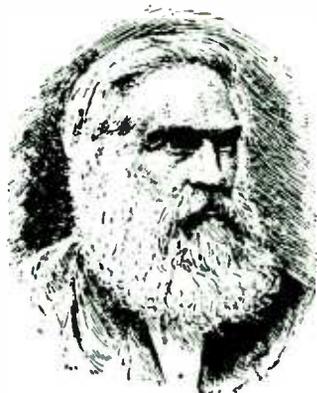
Thayer was born in Natick, Massachusetts, a little village seventeen miles from Boston. The year was 1817. His father, Alexander Thayer, a physician, died when the boy was six years old, and the son was brought up by his mother. There was enough money to assure Alexander junior a good education. He went to Andover and then to Harvard University. He was graduated from Harvard College in 1843 and from the Law School five years after that. To help the family finances, he worked as an assistant in the university library.

German music, German philosophy, and the German literature of the Romantic Movement formed part of Thayer's New England ambience. Emerson, another New Englander and a contemporary of Thayer, was stimulated by the German tradition and was as great an admirer of Goethe as was Emerson's close friend Thomas Carlyle. Thayer became interested in philosophy and in dialectics and joined the Harvard Debating Society. (There exists a record of a topic which Thayer debated: "Which Has Caused the Most Unpleasant Meditation—the Sword or Strong Drink?") A cousin of his, Calvin E. Stowe, went to Germany, studied the Prussian system of education, and reported his findings to the Ohio Legislature. Thayer had the opportunity to become acquainted with Beethoven's symphonies through performance: between 1841 and 1847 he could, and no doubt did, hear Boston performances of six of the nine symphonies.

In the Harvard Library he came across Anton Schindler's book on Beethoven, which was first published in 1840. (Schindler was, for some years, Beethoven's companion and man-of-all-work.) The more he pondered the matter, the more he became convinced that Schindler's biography was inadequate and in some respects mendacious. Nor did the other personal recollections and panegyrics penned by Beethoven's admirers convince him. He felt the need for a more judicial approach to the great man.

Mr. Marek, whose latest book, Beethoven, Biography of a Genius, was published in October by Funk & Wagnalls, is vice-president of RCA Records.

Thayer



Finally, in 1849, Thayer made his decision. He sailed for Europe. His first stop was Bonn. There he perfected his German and began collecting facts about Beethoven.

He supported himself by various forms of journalistic work, but his money soon gave out and he had to return to America to look for regular employment. He found this on the editorial staff of the *New York Tribune*. He worked for that newspaper at night and thought about Beethoven during the day. His health broke down from overwork; he never entirely recovered.

After two years Thayer returned to Europe, to Berlin, to study Beethoven's conversation books and the other documents then housed in the Royal Prussian Library, now the Deutsche Staatsbibliothek in East Berlin. Once again his self-imposed task, pursued for long hours within library walls where the lighting was poor and the air stale, proved too much for him. Once again he had to return to America: his Berlin friends believed that he was going to die. He did suffer a long, severe illness, plagued by maddening headaches; but he recovered, and finally two high-minded friends, Lowell Mason, the composer and musicologist who had employed Thayer to catalogue his music library, and a Mrs. Mehetabel Adams of Cambridge, Massachusetts, became sufficiently interested in Thayer's project to provide the funds which enabled him to return to Europe and to spend the rest of his life researching material in various countries. In later years he did obtain a small post in the United States Legation in Vienna and was afterwards appointed United States Consul at Trieste by President Lincoln. Trieste remained his home until his death, if it can be said that he had a home. He never married. He lived, as did Beethoven, in a modest flat with a housekeeper who took care of him *tant bien que mal*.

Most of the time he was away hunting; he hunted every scrap of paper connected with Beethoven's life and sought out every man or woman who had known the composer. Berlin, Bonn, Cologne, Düsseldorf, Frankfurt, Paris, Linz, Graz, Vienna, Salzburg, London: wherever Beethoven's steps had left an imprint, there was Thayer. He interviewed Schindler, with whom he must have had many a sharp brush because Schindler walked around as a kind of official Beethoven representative, as a keeper of the keys: Schindler was even supposed to have proffered visiting cards upon which were imprinted the words

"*l'ami de Beethoven*" underneath his name. Thayer interviewed Anselm Hüttenbrenner, the friend of Schubert who happened to be present when Beethoven died; Caroline Beethoven, the widow of nephew Karl; the English musicians who had journeyed to Vienna to learn from Beethoven and to persuade him—in vain—to journey to London; men such as Charles Neate, Cipriani Potter, and that fine conductor and forthright and admirable character, Sir George Smart, who had done much for Beethoven's music in England. He spoke to Ignaz Moscheles, the famous composer and pianist who had been entrusted with the task of writing the piano score of *Fidelio*; Joseph Mähler, who had painted a number of portraits of the composer; Gerhard von Breuning, who as a boy had brought a little cheer and comfort to Beethoven's sickroom. He also approached some of the women with whom Beethoven had been in love, most of them now grown old and feeble and uncertain of memory. Slowly and carefully he piled up testimony, weighing one man's word against another.

From the first, Thayer's book was intended for English-speaking readers. In an autobiographical sketch, which is preserved in the Beethoven House in Bonn, Thayer tells us that originally he had meant to prepare the book for an American edition.

After seventeen years, only the first volume of the biography was ready, a volume so full of detail that it covered Beethoven's life only to the year 1796, when Beethoven was twenty-six years old and had hardly composed any of the music which makes Beethoven Beethoven. There now seemed little prospect of publishing the incomplete work in English. Thayer decided therefore to have the work translated into German. (His reason for this, according to the Krehbiel edition of his *Life of Beethoven*, was that he was "unable to oversee the printing in his native land, where, moreover, it was not the custom to publish such works serially." This was probably his polite way of saying that no publisher wanted to risk the money required for publication.) In Bonn he had met another scholar, Hermann Deiters, who had edited Otto Jahn's biography of Mozart. Thayer asked Deiters to collaborate and to begin to prepare the German edition. This Deiters agreed to do. We have therefore the curious case of a book written by an American for Americans, published first in a German translation. The first German volume duly appeared in 1866. It was immediately recognized, at least in Germany, as an important work.

Thayer kept on with his labor, the second volume appearing in 1872 and the third in 1879, both translated by Deiters. Still no English edition. Now the story of Beethoven's life had been brought up to the fateful year in which the troubles with his nephew Karl began. But eleven years were still to be covered. Thayer's health worsened. The headaches increased in frequency and in severity. Thayer could do other work, writing which he thought less consequential: a slim volume arguing against the theory that Bacon wrote Shakespeare's plays and a few miscellaneous essays and children's stories. But, as he himself said, an hour or two devoted

to Beethoven brought on a wracking headache and made him unfit for labor of any kind.

The years rolled on without Thayer's being able to finish the task. More and more of the world's scholars and Beethoven enthusiasts learned about the incomplete project, and many were concerned with the possibility that it would never be finished. They were right. Thayer died in 1897 at the age of eighty. The book was still incomplete. He left the papers containing the facts about Beethoven's last years—which Thayer had unearthed by particularly meticulous research—to Deiters. Deiters first brought out a revision of volume 1 and then undertook the labor of finishing the book from Thayer's notes. Volume 4 was in the hands of the publisher when Deiters died, but even this volume only brought Beethoven's life up to the year 1823. Still lacking were the final four years before his death—eventful and tragic years which saw the first performance of the Ninth Symphony and the composition of the last quartets. In the meantime, Breitkopf and Härtel had purchased the copyright from the original publisher; they chose Hugo Riemann, another highly knowledgeable and respected scholar, to complete what Deiters had left incomplete. Volumes 4 and 5 were brought out in 1907 and 1908, and revised versions of the earlier volumes under Riemann's editorship appeared somewhat later. These were all still German versions.

The demand for an English version increased. Who was to undertake it? When Thayer died, his belongings and manuscripts had been shipped to America, to be taken care of by his niece. It was she who asked Henry Edward Krehbiel, the music critic of the New York *Tribune*, to take charge of the material and prepare the English version. Yet he could not immediately do so because part of the papers had been shipped back to Germany to enable Deiters and Riemann to complete their task. Eventually the material once again crossed the Atlantic and Krehbiel set about the formidable task of sifting it and translating the text. He had virtually completed his work by 1914 when World War I plus other complications prevented the book from being published. Finally, after the war, the Beethoven Association of New York, composed of high-minded and devoted musicians, insisted that Thayer's magnum opus must be given to the English-speaking world for which it was intended. In the season of 1919-20 they organized a series of concerts of Beethoven's chamber music. O. G. Sonneck, the musicologist and editor of the *Musical Quarterly*, and Harold Bauer, the pianist, were the prime movers of this project. The proceeds of the concerts were to be utilized for underwriting the publication of Thayer's biography. The concerts were highly successful and enough money was raised for the first edition in English to be published by G. Schirmer, Inc., in 1921.

Now a new mystery entered the already fogged fortunes of this book. Thayer's papers were, as I have said, in Krehbiel's possession. When Krehbiel died in 1923, they unaccountably got lost. To this

day nobody knows what happened to them. Not only that, but virtually all of Krehbiel's own notes have disappeared. Elliot Forbes, in his introduction to the current edition of Thayer's *Life*, writes:

Unfortunately, the legal files of the estate of the widow, Mrs. Marie Krehbiel, have all been destroyed. Krehbiel's Beethoven library was left to the Beethoven Association in New York upon his death in 1923. When this society disbanded in 1940, its collection of books was left to the New York Public Library. Neither in the 125th St. Warehouse, nor in the old Beethoven Room (alas, no more in existence), nor in the basement vaults of the Library have these boxes shown up. All that is left of the papers is a loose-sheet draft of the Thayer-Krehbiel collaboration, consisting of some sheets in Thayer's handwriting, some with Krehbiel's writing pasted over parts or all of them, and the rest in Krehbiel's own characteristic red ink.

The net result of all this is that it is extremely difficult to tell what parts of the biography represent Thayer's own writings and what parts were the contributions by and emendations of his editors Deiters, Riemann, or Krehbiel. Beethoven, as portrayed by Thayer, remains a character in search of four authors.

In 1949 the copyright of the book was assigned to Princeton University. They commissioned Elliot Forbes of Harvard to prepare a new edition of the work, adding facts about Beethoven that had been unearthed over the last thirty years, and correcting the relatively few mistakes that had crept into previous editions. This edition was published in 1964 and it is the one which is now in circulation.

We have before us, then, a highly patched garment, one which has been sewn by several tailors. Yet the original garment was fashioned of such durable material that it still holds together. Thayer's *Life* is still considered a classic in its field.

What were the qualities which distinguished Thayer as a biographer? First, his honesty. Thayer had no preconceived notions. He neither defended nor attacked. He ground no axes. He rode no pet theories. He was not an idolatrous biographer. Though Beethoven was his hero and the polestar of his life, he did not burke a description of his faults. When he went wrong he did so because of insufficient evidence, not because he bent a fact to support a belief. Later research has proved as untenable Thayer's choice of Therese Brunsvik for the woman to whom the famous "Immortal Beloved" letter was addressed. Yet no scholar after him can assert that he has found the solution to the puzzle in spite of all the detective work. Thayer was far more often right than wrong, and this rightness was due to his passionate drive to find the truth and tell it. There were still enough people around who had known Beethoven, and, though "old men forget," enough of them remembered enough to pile anecdote upon anecdote from which Thayer chose what seemed probable to him. Alexander Wheelock was a doubting Thomas, to whom it was not easy to tell fairy tales. All this is by way of saying that he was indefatigable: if

one considers that it was hardly child's play to journey extensively across the frontiers of Europe in the middle of the nineteenth century—and surely such journeys were then a lot more expensive than they are today—one marvels at how often Thayer appeared in various locales, pad and pen in hand.

His early training in library work had given him an instinctive feeling as to where to look for facts. He was remarkably successful in locating the lode in archives and newspaper files.

Perhaps most important, he had great personal charm. He nudged and beguiled and gently persuaded. The New England straightness of his personality, combined with his enthusiasm, gave people the impression that here was someone they could trust. He made many friends who were willing to go to a good deal of trouble to give him what he wanted. And he wanted a lot. "Will that content you?" ends one long letter from a man who related to him his personal experiences with Beethoven.

Thayer's shortcomings as a biographer were principally two: he was not a sprightly writer. In vain does one look for graphic style or plastic portrayal; in vain does one seek the kind of writing one finds at its most vivid in Boswell's *Life of Johnson* or—to use a lesser example—in the recent Troyat biography of Tolstoy. Francis Hueffer, in an early review of the book (1880), said it was "anything but lively reading." Thayer's *Life* is largely an orderly storehouse of facts, and therefore more of a reference book than a reading book. But then, as Carlyle said, "a well-written life is almost as rare as a well-spent one." Thayer himself was never satisfied, and had his strength held out he undoubtedly would have recast the work.

His second shortcoming can be traced to his upbringing and environment. He lived in Victorian times and was a "proper Bostonian." When he discusses Beethoven's love life Thayer seems uncomfortable. The internal evidence suggests more than once that he slid away from the subject and even suppressed certain facts in his possession. This suppression had been particularly noted by Ernest Newman in his book *The Unconscious Beethoven* (still one of the most perceptive of all the books about the composer). For example, Thayer comments on a statement by Beethoven's friend Franz Wegeler that during the composer's first three years in Vienna he made several conquests which "if not impossible for many an Adonis would still have been difficult." Thayer writes: "Let such matters, even if detail concerning them were now attainable, be forgotten" and then hurries on. He hints that Beethoven "did not always escape the common penalties of transgressing the laws of strict purity," but does not particularize what these penalties were.

The names of two married women might here be given, to whom at a later period Beethoven was warmly attached; names which have hitherto escaped the eyes of literary scavengers, and are therefore here suppressed. Certain of his friends used to joke to him about these ladies, and it is certain that he rather enjoyed their jests even

when the insinuations, that his affection was beyond the limit of the Platonic, were somewhat broad; but careful enquiry has failed to elicit any evidence that even in these cases he proved unfaithful to his principles.

[From the Forbes edition]

If that was so, why did Thayer not give the names of the two married women? This vagueness or this suppression—if it was suppression—becomes important when one tries to weigh the evidence as to whether Beethoven did or did not suffer from a venereal infection. The first public statement of such a possibility appeared in the original *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians*. The statement is accompanied by a footnote: "This diagnosis, which I owe to the kindness of my friend Dr. Lauder Brunton, is confirmed by the existence of two prescriptions, of which, since the passage in the text was written, I have been told by Mr. Thayer, who heard of them from Dr. Bartolini [sic]." Sir George Grove was a man of high probity and a careful scholar, even though he did misspell Dr. Bertolini's name. (Bertolini was one of Beethoven's physicians for ten years and Thayer knew him.) There can be no doubt that Thayer did tell Grove of these prescriptions. Yet they have not been found, nor does Thayer mention them at any time. To do Thayer justice, it is possible that he felt the evidence was insufficient, and not being entirely convinced of the validity of his data thought it best not to discuss the matter. Still, Thayer's silence seems suspicious. It is all the more regrettable because if we had been told the truth it might have cleared up some equivocal and despairing entries in Beethoven's journals and diaries and could help to elucidate further the composer's character.

Yet, as I have tried to show, Thayer's virtues as a biographer outweigh the defects sufficiently for the book to remain a valid document.

Beyond question it was a labor of love. Two years before he died, Thayer wrote to Sir George Grove:

I have no expectation of ever receiving any pecuniary recompense for my 40 years of labor, for my many years of poverty arising from the cost of my extensive researches, for my—but enough of this also.

[Quoted from Krehbiel's Introduction]

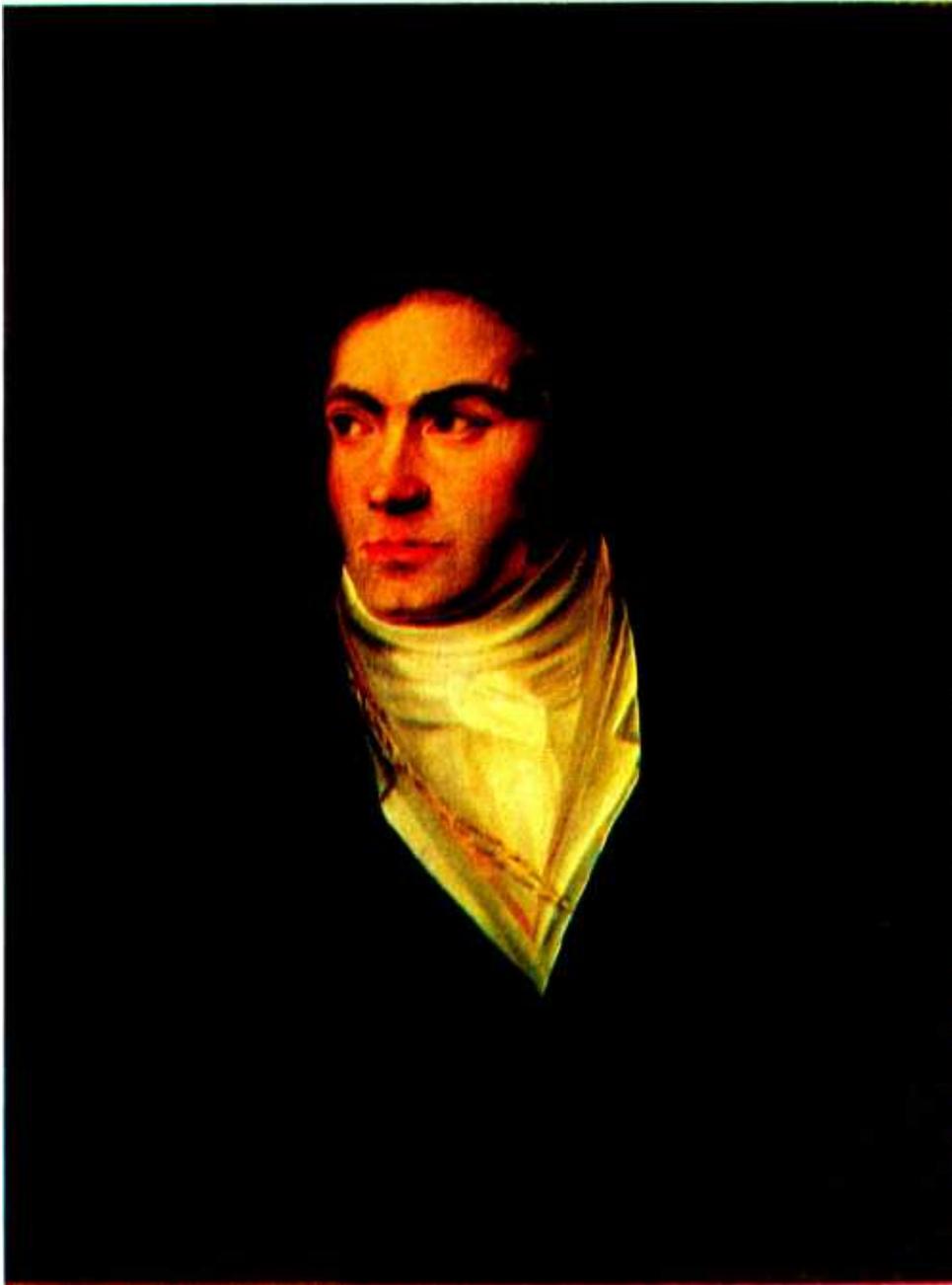
Krehbiel comments:

In explanation of the final sentence in this letter it may be added that Thayer told the present writer that he had never received a penny from his publisher for the three German volumes; nothing more, in fact, than a few books which he had ordered and for which the publisher made no charge.

Yet Thayer did leave a respectable estate. According to an article by Christopher Hatch, *The Education of A. W. Thayer* [*Musical Quarterly*, July 1956], he bequeathed thirty thousand dollars to Harvard University, the income from which was to be spent to help indigent students, preferably named Thayer. This stipulation was not necessary to hand down to posterity the name of Alexander Wheelock Thayer.

Beethoven

A Pictorial Essay by H. C. Robbins Landon

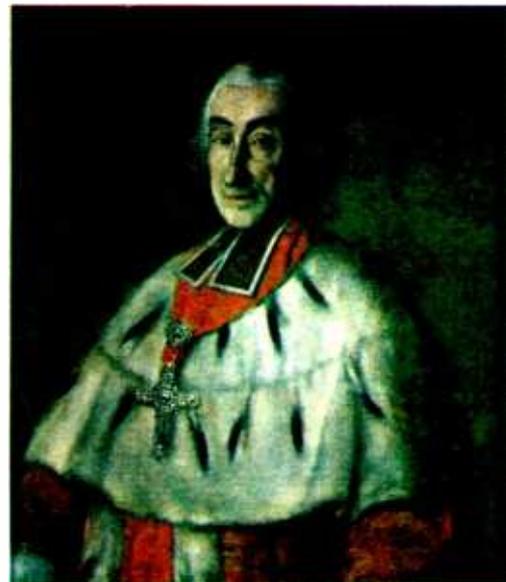


Beethoven. Portrait in oils by Isidor Neugass, 1806. Mme. Françoise de Cossette. Paris.

This portrait, of which Neugass made another copy for Prince Lichnowsky, was commissioned by Count Brunsvik. For many years the portrait was lost and was only recently rediscovered in Paris. This is its first reproduction in color. It shows the elegant Beethoven who moved freely in aristocratic Viennese society and was even something of a dandy. Beethoven wore a lorgnette at this period in his life and the painter has included the string to which the lorgnette was attached.



The castle at Bonn. Colored engraving by Johann Zeigler, from a drawing by Laurenz Janscha, dated 1798. *Städtische Sammlungen, Bonn.*



The Elector and Archbishop of Cologne, Maximilian Friedrich, Count von Königsegg-Aulendorf. Anonymous portrait in oils: *Städtische Sammlungen, Bonn.*



Three Sonatas for Piano (Kinsky, WoO 47, first edition) by Beethoven, published in 1783 by Bossler in Speyr and dedicated to the Elector Maximilian Friedrich.

Bonn was a quiet, provincial town, prettily situated on the Rhine; Beethoven was born there on December 15, 1770, and received his earliest musical education from his father, who was a tenor. Beethoven's great musicality showed at an early age, and his father thought to make a Wunderkind out of Ludwig, using Mozart as his model. Beethoven later studied with Christian Gottlob Neefe and became a viola player in the court orchestra. He also became the court organist.

The Elector of Cologne, Maximilian Friedrich, Count von Königsegg-Aulendorf, who was also Archbishop of Cologne, resided in Bonn. An efficient and respected ruler, he brought an international glitter to the otherwise provincial atmosphere. The Elector died in 1784 and the Hapsburg brother of Emperor Joseph II became the new ruler of Bonn.

The year before Elector Maximilian Friedrich's death, Beethoven's three earliest sonatas were published and dedicated to him. These sonatas were well received by musical connoisseurs and did much to establish Beethoven's name in Germany. He was thirteen when they were published.



Prince Innocenz d'Erba Odescalchi and Princess Babette nee Countess von Keglevich de Buzin. Anonymous portraits in oils: Prince Odescalchi, Rome.



Silhouettes of Haydn and Mozart by Hieronymus Löschenkohl. H. C. Robbins Landon, Buggiano Castello.

Friends in Bonn sent Beethoven to Vienna in 1787 to study with Mozart; the younger composer had had only a few lessons before the news reached him that his mother was dying; he returned to Bonn and had to support the family after his mother's death, for his father was by now a drunkard and Ludwig had two younger brothers to care for. In 1790 Haydn passed through Bonn on his way to London, and either at this time or on his return journey met Beethoven, who gave Haydn his latest work, the Cantata on the death of the Emperor Joseph II. Haydn was impressed by the young man and agreed to take him on as a pupil. Beethoven left Bonn in 1792 to study with Haydn in Vienna and never again returned to his native city. Haydn was not a conscientious teacher but Beethoven learned from him many of the tricks of the trade; relations between the two men were never very cordial, but Haydn immediately realized the young man's genius and wrote in 1793, "the time will come when Beethoven will be Europe's leading composer and I shall be proud to have been known as his teacher."

Beethoven soon made many friends among Vienna's aristocracy, and the list of subscribers in his Op. 1 (three piano trios), published in 1794, reads like an extract from the *Almanach de Gotha*. Beethoven's patrons included people like Haydn's Princess Marie Hermenegild Esterházy, Prince Carl Lichnowsky (a pupil of Mozart), Baron van Swieten (author of the textbooks to *The Creation* and *The Seasons*, to whom Beethoven dedicated his First Symphony), and the Odescalchis, members of a rich and ancient Roman patrician family. Princess Babette took piano lessons from Beethoven and among the various pieces that the composer dedicated to her, the Piano Concerto in C, Op. 15 is outstanding.



Masked ball in Vienna's Redoutensaal. Colored engraving by Joseph Schütz, c. 1800. Professor Hans Swarowsky, Vienna.



Josephine Countess von Deym, nee Brunsvik. Anonymous miniature portrait; Beethovenhaus, Bonn.



Countess Giulietta Guicciardi, later Countess von Gallenberg. Anonymous portrait in oils on wood. Formerly from the Brunsvik castle at Korompa, CSSR.



Countess Marie Erdödy, nee Niczky. Anonymous miniature on ivory from Beethoven's possession, now in the Beethovenhaus, Bonn.

Vienna became Beethoven's second home; apart from occasional concert journeys before he lost his hearing and a number of summer trips, he spent the rest of his life in the Austrian capital. When he arrived in Vienna, the city was already enjoying an enormous reputation as a musical center: Haydn and Mozart had made it famous throughout musical Europe.

Beethoven's first major orchestral work in Vienna was a set of dances for the famous Redoutensaal balls, for which Haydn and Mozart had composed some of their most beautiful dance music. Beethoven composed for the season of 1795 *Twelve German Dances and Twelve Minuets for full orchestra*, which were great successes and did much to spread his popularity from Germany to Austria.

Beethoven fell in love many times in his life, and being something of a snob, most of his girl friends were members of the aristocracy. One such love affair was with Josephine Countess von Deym; Beethoven was very fond of the whole Brunsvik family, and to Josephine's brother Franz he dedicated the *Appassionata Sonata*. He was also an intimate friend of Countess Therese Brunsvik. Beethoven wanted

very much to marry Josephine, who was at that time a widow; she was attracted to Beethoven but considered, quite rightly, that he would not have the economic means to support her and her young children. Beethoven was heartbroken at her refusal.

Giulietta was a cousin of the Brunsvik family and studied piano with Beethoven, who then proceeded to fall passionately in love with her. He dedicated to her the famous *Moonlight Sonata*, Op. 27, No. 2, in 1801. Her mother thought the match unsuitable and Giulietta was married off to Count Gallenberg, a profligate and degenerate aristocrat who composed second-rate ballets. There is a note in one of Beethoven's conversation booklets, wherein the composer notes: "She [Countess Guicciardi] loved me much more than she loved her husband. . . ."

Countess Erdödy, separated from her husband, was herself an excellent pianist and a dear friend of Beethoven; at one point they even shared lodgings. It is not known whether their relations were intimate, but Beethoven biographers have suspected that they may have had a love affair. Countess Marie helped Beethoven to get over his violent love affair with Countess Guicciardi.



The city walls of Vienna damaged by French artillery in 1809. Aquarelle by Franz Jaschke; Historisches Museum of the City of Vienna.



Gold 40-franc coin struck in Paris, 1805, a year after Napoleon crowned himself Emperor. The "T" below bust stands for the engraver, Tiolier. American Numismatic Society, New York City.



The original title page of the Third Symphony before it became the "Eroica": "N.B. I. Cues for the other instruments are to be written into the first violin part—*Sinfonia grande*." Underneath this, two words are obliterated; one, partially torn, is "Bonaparte." "804 im August [this refers to the year 1804]—de Sigr—Louis van Beethoven." Under this, one can still make out Beethoven's erased penciled script, "Composed on Bonaparte." "Sinfonie 3—Op. 55—N.B. 2. The third horn is so written that it can be played by by [sic] a primario as well as a secundario." This entire score was purchased in 1827 by the Viennese composer Joseph Dessauer for 3 florins, 10 kreutzers—less than a dollar. Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, Vienna.

French troops twice occupied Vienna, once in 1805 (when Beethoven was producing his opera, *Fidelio*) and again in 1809. Haydn died on May 31, 1809, and Beethoven was composing his *Emperor Concerto* as Napoleon's artillery was razing the city's fortifications. At one time Beethoven had been a fervent admirer of Napoleon and had written the *Eroica Symphony* in his honor. When he heard that Napoleon had crowned himself Emperor in 1804, he tore the original title page and gave the Symphony its new name, *Sinfonia eroica*; later he said about Napoleon, "I made a mistake about that shit-head."



Beethoven. Two drawings by Joseph Daniel Böhm, c. 1820. André Meyer, Paris.

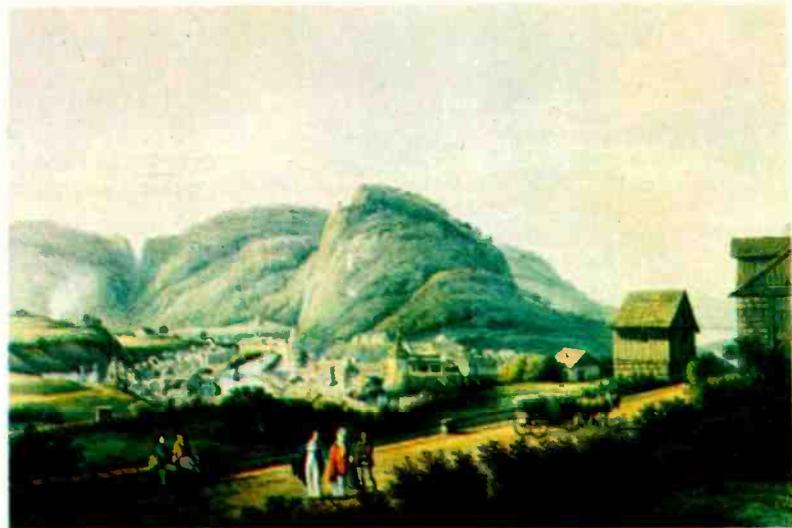
Soon Beethoven became a familiar figure as he walked around and on Vienna's city walls and in the country suburbs. The talented young artist Böhm has given us the nearest thing to a contemporary photograph in these vivid little sketches.

Before his hearing began to deteriorate, Beethoven made concert trips as far away as Dresden, Leipzig, and Berlin. He also had great successes as a pianist/composer in what is now Budapest, in Prague, and in the charming city of Pressburg on the Danube, about a day's carriage drive from Vienna down the great river.

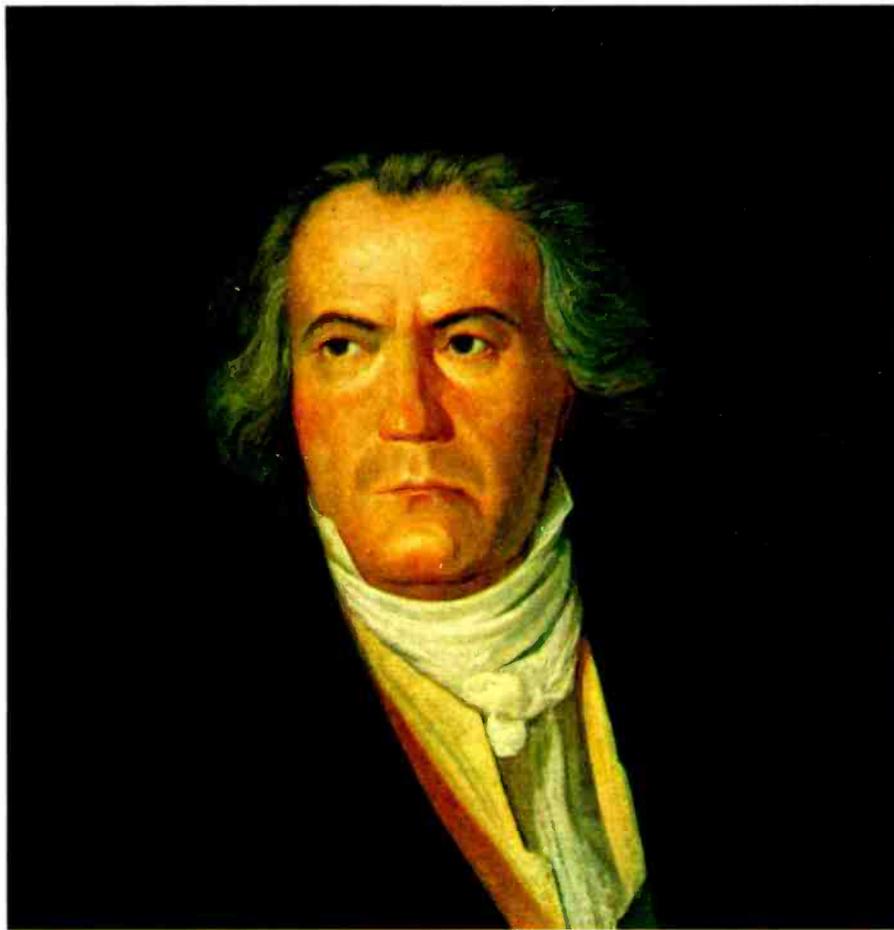
Beethoven also grew very fond of the Bohemian spas and was a frequent visitor at Teplitz, Karlsbad, and Franzenbad. At Teplitz in 1812 he met the sophisticated Goethe, who found Beethoven too loud and somewhat vulgar. He spent several summers in Mödling, a delightful medieval town at the edge of the mountains south of Vienna, and particularly loved to walk in the surrounding countryside, carrying his little sketchbooks and working out his compositions. At Karlsbad in 1815 he went to visit his still unidentified "Immortal Beloved."



Mödling: the Rathaus. Aquarelle by Rudolph von Alt. Niederösterreichisches Landesmuseum, Vienna.



Karlsbad. Colored engraving by F. W. Rothe from a design by J. G. Jentsch. Freies Deutsches Hochstift, Frankfurt Goethe museum.



Beethoven. Portrait in oils by Ferdinand Georg Waldmüller, 1823. From a photograph of the original, which belonged to Breitkopf & Härtel in Leipzig and was destroyed during World War II.



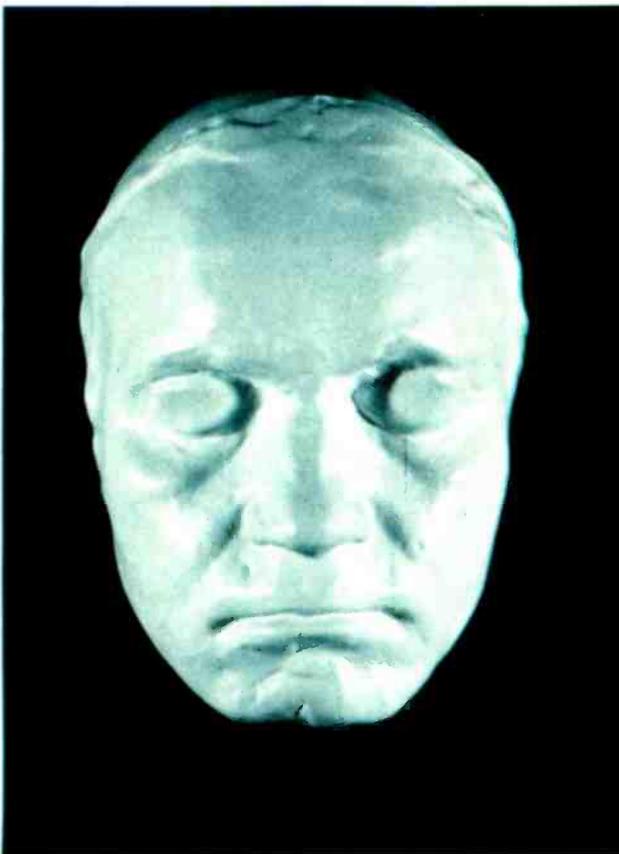
Symphony No. 9 in D minor, Op. 125. First edition, published by Schott in Mainz. Hans Hammelmann, Vecoli.

The Ninth Symphony was performed for the first time in May 1824 at a benefit concert Beethoven gave in Vienna. It created an enormous impression and the audience broke into spontaneous applause during the kettledrum entries in the Scherzo. At the end, Beethoven, his back to the audience and by now totally deaf, was unaware of the tumultuous applause. The pretty soprano Karoline Unger gently turned the gray-headed master around so that he could see, if not hear, the acclaim. (Later, Beethoven sold the publication rights to the great German publishers Schott, a firm that is now the leading music publisher in Europe.)

Beethoven had become very irritable. As his hearing began to fail, he cut himself off more and more from society. He would not, for instance, grant Waldmüller — certainly the greatest artist who ever painted him — more than one sitting, so that what we have in the above painting is somewhat of a compromise. At any rate, it shows something of the defiant genius in a world of his own.

Death came to the composer on March 26, 1827. Beethoven was never a healthy man and suffered from intestinal disorders throughout his life. In the late autumn of 1826 he caught pneumonia riding back from the country to Vienna in an open carriage. His doctors managed, miraculously, to cure the pneumonia, but dropsy ensued, and after a hideously long illness, which he bore with great courage, Beethoven finally succumbed. Several contemporaries describe a curiously unsettling and violent thunderstorm which broke over Vienna as Beethoven was dying. The thunderclaps were reported to sound as loud as cannon shots, and Beethoven raised himself up from his deathbed and shook his fist at the heavens before he lay back to die. Some 20,000 people attended his funeral and the great Austrian poet Grillparzer wrote the funeral oration. One of the pallbearers was Franz Schubert, himself to follow Beethoven to the grave the next year.

Ludwig van Beethoven. Plaster cast ("life mask") by Franz Klein. Beethovenhaus, Bonn.

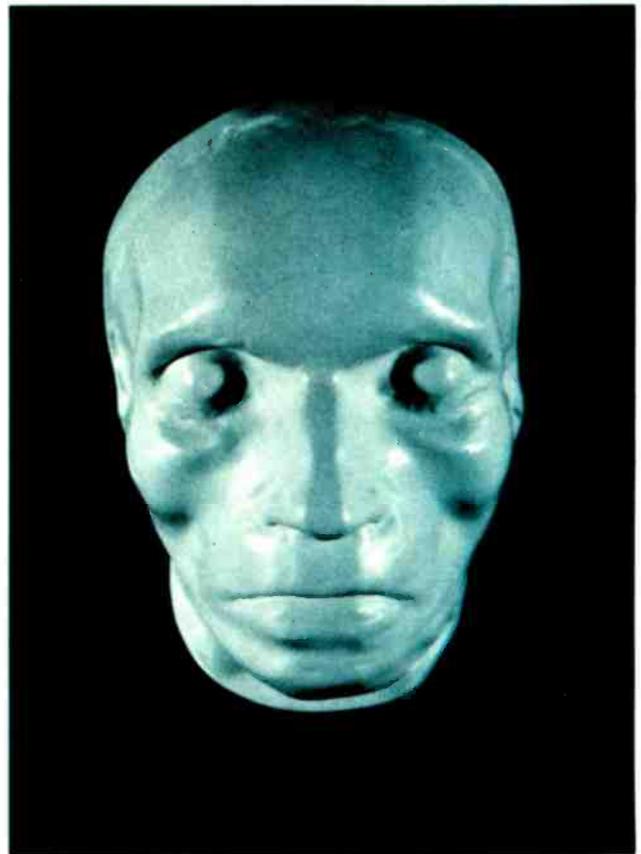


In 1812 Beethoven's friend, the piano maker Johann Andreas Streicher, commissioned the sculptor Franz Klein to make a bust of the forty-two-year-old composer. Klein at first made a plaster mask of Beethoven's face, which was accomplished with considerable difficulty because Beethoven imagined he would suffocate: the composer seems to have ruined

Beethoven on his Deathbed. Pencil sketch by Joseph Eduard Teltscher. Mrs. Eva Alberman, London.



Ludwig van Beethoven's death mask, by Joseph Danhauser. Historisches Museum of the City of Vienna.



the first attempt. The second was, however, eminently successful. The Beethovenhaus in Bonn owns two copies of this mask. There are three other copies in Vienna. The death mask was made by Danhauser a day after Beethoven's death. Again, the Beethovenhaus owns a copy. The Vienna mask, far preferable, once belonged to Franz Liszt.



by Jan Meyerowitz

Do We Overestimate Beethoven?



THIS QUESTION IS not necessarily irreverent if it is asked in the sense of Goethe's request that we must earn the right to call our inheritance our possession—by making it alive and by rebuilding it in our mind. It is not primarily this noble purpose, however, that suggests our present inquiry. Beethoven's glory has not been immune against the trend toward tearing down the traditional image of great men. This anti-personality movement stems partly from the conviction that many of the great figures of the past—whether political or intellectual—have not exactly proven to be a blessing to mankind. The most articulate Anti-Great-Man Crusade was led by Bert Brecht, who opposed them in principle because "they exude too much sweat" and because "they are too miserable to just sit there quietly in the company of a woman."

In the gallery of "Immortals" Beethoven has been placed in the special category of "Heroes," of "Supermen," and therefore could not escape being challenged today. When Beethoven was alive, many musicians and music lovers, especially women, felt a spontaneous recognition of the composer's magnitude (his elder colleague Ignaz Pleyel went as far as to kiss Beethoven's hands). For a brief period and for the wrong reasons, Beethoven enjoyed a short span of popularity in 1813 after the Napoleonic wars; but the living artist tends to get in the way of his work, especially if he is a very major figure. Beethoven was furthermore a difficult, fierce man—according to Prince Metternich, he was "downright impossible"; Cherubini labeled him a "rude boor." It is actually

astounding that Beethoven got along as well as he did; the remarkable tolerance of some members of the aristocracy in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries for the uncouth extravagances of talented men has not been lauded as much as it deserves.

After Beethoven's death, sketches of the *Missa Solemnis* brought only pennies and provoked no bidding at the public auction of the master's belongings, but Beethoven's reputation soon grew to taboo proportions. The famous critic, Ludwig Rellstab, declared that Beethoven was a major figure of world history. Thanks to men like Rossini ("Not I, *he* is the greatest composer of our age"), Moscheles, Mendelssohn, the rabidly adoring Berlioz, and Liszt (who spoke of Beethoven's "gigantic brain"), the cult spread internationally. Beethoven's rank among musicians became as secure as that of Jupiter among the gods. We read the official expression of this consensus in the famous *History of Music* by Emil Naumann: "Beethoven is the most Excellent among the Unexcellables." The German Nobel laureate, Paul Heyse, apotheosized Beethoven with these words:

Thanks for the golden treasure, your Legacy!
My spirit is all vertigo, all tremor before you,
O venerable Superman who is too high even for
our love. . . .

The opinion of the French was expressed as early as 1828 in Beethoven's obituary in the *Journal des*

Mr. Meyerowitz, composer and lecturer, was last represented in these pages with How Seriously Can We Take Rossini's Serious Operas?, November 1968.

Do We Overestimate Beethoven?

Débats: "Beethoven unites in his inspiration all the existing musical powers." The famous heretic Abbé Lamennais wrote in his most widely read *Philosophical Sketches* that "out of Beethoven's symphonies we can hear the voice of creation itself." Negative criticism was limited to some (supposedly) minor works or some very special aspects of Beethoven's art. Eduard Hanslick earned his undeserved reputation as a crank as much by his few reservations about Beethoven's works as by his anti-Wagnerian stand (he disliked *Christ on the Mount of Olives*; he criticized—ununderstandably—the two finale of *Fidelio*; and he argued—convincingly—that the title "Eroica" was not appropriate for the Third Symphony). A real danger to Beethoven's supremacy could have been the monotheistic fanaticism of the admirers and disciples of Wagner, had not Wagner himself given Beethoven the highest place in his personal Parnassus, and proved his sincerity by exploring Beethoven's most difficult works: Wagner must be credited with teaching the world that the Ninth Symphony is not a fearsome eccentricity but an attractive, edifying repertory piece. The first effective challenge to the master's monarchic position was made outside Germany: the rather sad credit for this first major irreverence goes to Debussy, who called Beethoven "*le vieux sourd*" (the deaf old man). This remark had nationalistic as well as "aesthetic" overtones and did not go unheeded. Many French-oriented musicians aligned with Debussy. Even today we see its reflection in Stravinsky's insensitive remarks about Beethoven. I once heard the Belgian composer Jean Absil publicly declare that Beethoven was "quite rhetorical most of the time" and therefore "certainly not the ideal composer for the Latin taste." Yet these challenges were not more than a few private growls. Even a great Debussian like Alfredo Casella wrote in 1936 that he remembered Busoni playing the C minor Concerto by Mozart and that "it sounded almost as great as a composition by Beethoven."

The extremist movements of the right and the left have generally annexed Beethoven as one of their prophets. In Nazi Germany, Beethoven was to the concert hall what Wagner was to the theater. The Party newspaper *Völkische Beobachter* stated in December 1934: "Beethoven is now for us a fortification against the danger that music would become again (as it was before 1933, in the Kurt Weill-Alban Berg era) an empty play of sounds, a sport [*sic*] of dissonances, an exercise in harmonic obscenity, and a chaos of form." But we may speculate that a victorious war would have changed this attitude. Some ominous remarks by the ultraracist Alfred Rosenberg indicate this rather clearly: one could not be too sure about the composer's origins; his foreign ancestors could not be traced too far back. The of-

ficial philosopher of the Party wrote this staggering sentence: "We witness the triumph of the Germanic spiritual essence in a man who was corroded by uncanny racial forces of the lowest human level that come to the surface here and there like those grotesque barbarous gargoyles on a Gothic cathedral." The preferences of extreme rightist movements go to romantic art with inflated nationalistic attitudes. It is probable that a victorious Nazi state would have degraded Beethoven for his "outlandish" individuality and his unequivocally democratic attitude.

The movements of the left saw in Beethoven a partisan, but this was a purely political seal of approval based on superficial reasoning. The most telling and impressive fact in Beethoven's posthumous political career is that performances of his opera *Fidelio* are "discouraged" both in rightist and leftist authoritarian countries.

We can gather from the foregoing that our question implies two considerations: the validity of the romantic belief that Beethoven is the greatest composer of all times and—for those who will not admit that there is a Greatest Composer—the discussion of Beethoven's caliber in his own realm and time.

The idea of The Greatest Composer is often dismissed as a purely subjective whim, but by examining one's conscience and thought it is perfectly possible to distinguish between such a whim and a higher conviction. This writer will argue that Beethoven is *objectively* the greatest creative musician of all times.

The purpose of music is the ideal spiritual organization of time (that empty flow of empty moments into an empty infinity, so burdensome to the mind) into an event of meaningful beauty, into an artistic experience. No other creative work can do this as richly or as meaningfully as music. No other artistic endeavor (such as poetry) has the same impact on time or can give time the absolutely concrete form music can create. And there is reason to believe that no other composer has ever fulfilled this task as well as Beethoven, for he is the master not only of musical characterization, but of the purely musical creation of definite shapes of sculptural clarity. Beethoven's immense capacity for molding musical materials into clear musical imagery is easily discernible in his few program pieces. These "programs" are executed with a perfect balance between the poetic idea and the musical form: the first movement of the Sonata *Les Adieux* is a very sensitive and humorous union of the story (the stagecoach leaves . . . disappears . . . reappears . . . there is the excited waving of arms, possibly handkerchiefs . . . and then the stagecoach disappears for good) with a cunningly conceived sonata form. But far more impressive than this fusion of action and musical design is the clarity, the evidence of the multiform invention found in all of Beethoven's music. The public has tried to over-explain the always perfectly self-explanatory musical content with apocryphal titles. We may wistfully accept the spurious names given to some Chopin etudes or some Mendelssohn pieces, but in the case of the *Moonlight* Sonata or the *Appassionata*, these sur-

names seem blasphemous. The "Moonlight" movement is infinitely more than a mood piece and "Appassionata" is a vague, sentimental title for the work. Only our musical imagination can grasp the character and the meaning of this music. Even the strangest pieces strike us as completely clear in their characterizing intentions: the second and the last movement of the Eighth Symphony, the mad conclusion of the Scherzo of Sonata Opus 106, and the majestic lunacy of the toccata that introduces the finale of the same work. Beethoven, the greatest musical sculptor, has chiseled out of his musical materials hundreds of tonal images that leave no doubt about their unequivocal significance.

In this power of shaping music into characteristic imagery, Beethoven is unexcelled. Although Mozart—of a more Italian, nonexpressionistic musicality—created the most sensitive, most flexible, most intelligent and subtle *inflections* in the general musical language of his time (this capacity is so prodigious that it appears to many as the peak of all artistic creativity), he did not create the kind of rugged, sharp distinctiveness we admire in Beethoven.

The third contender for the highest place in music is J. S. Bach, Beethoven's equal in at least one respect: the shaping of themes. We have only to examine the forty-eight subjects of the fugues of the *Well-Tempered Clavier*: each one has in its few notes a strikingly distinct musical physiognomy. But the developmental characteristic of Bach's time is fundamentally different. Although Bach's music has touches of great dramatic intensity and even traits of sharp theatricality, the growth of the pieces from the theme is like the growth of a plant: the texture sprouts from a small seedling of great generating power, it shoots up, sprawls, and expands until the inner impact fades and the possibility of further variation and development runs out (or—to be just a little blasphemous—until Anna Magdalena calls for supper). Except for the obvious beginnings and some emphatic endings, there are only very general, if not vague, structural characteristics with which a musical passage must be endowed. But even with very little training we can place any short quotation from a Beethoven movement in the exact spot where it belongs in the piece, where it fulfills a very definite function in the whole structure. You can recognize whether it is a first or a second theme, an episode, a transition or a retransition, a coda, a beginning, a climax, the end of a development, etc. Each passage, each motif is so clearly devised for its very special, exclusive function that we can place it in its correct spot *in a composition we do not even know!*

We can compare Bach's music to flora, Beethoven's music to fauna. The growth of Bach's music (except in simple songs and arias) is, like that of a vine, only partly controllable: its parts actually flee from the root and branch out, of their own volition; in terms of their life-giving source they are—in a deeper sense—*lost*. Or, to change the analogy, its development is comparable to the White Queen's addition: "One and one and one . . ."—not the attaining of a final, ideal,

rounded, preconceived form (although this, to be sure, might not be the native task of music). Beethoven's compositions have the properties of a flesh-and-blood organism, all parts of which are differentiated as to their form, function, dignity, and place and are related to the "inner heart" (not to the immovable root they leave behind them). You can cut a piece from a Bach work and "put it into a vase." It will be a pleasant, living branch and still carry the image of the entire organism. If you cut a piece from a Beethoven movement, it is as if you have cut an ear, a leg, or the nose from an animal: it is mutilation, horror—and who does not understand this has never understood anything about Beethoven. (And who thinks that this paragraph is a derogation of Bach has not read it thoughtfully but emotionally.)

Bach's music is *spun, woven*; Beethoven's music is *constructed*. This difference is, of course, one of historical evolution: the baroque masters did not conceive the art of integrating contrasting elements into one musical form, an ideal which the "classics" achieved. The quite impossible question raises itself: what would Bach have done in Beethoven's time? We are not ready for such a rash speculation.

Mozart's and Haydn's sonatas and symphonies are as beautifully organized as Beethoven's, but they are infinitely less pronounced as dramas—that is why they seem to be more "beautiful," more "purely musical," so completely without rhetoric. The difference between the earlier masters and the latter is especially noticeable in the middle sections of their sonata movements: Mozart and Haydn—with vigorous drive and infinite imagination—will usually expound and expound the meaning, the characteristic content, the qualities of their themes (this can be studied, for instance, in the development of the first movement of Mozart's *Jupiter* Symphony where all the intervals, rhythms, phrasings, inflections of one of the themes are demonstrated in emphatic fragmentation). In a Beethoven development more is done: the themes grow beyond their original stature—they will create a plot, a struggle; they will show higher aspirations; great and terrible things will happen to them. The most striking study of Beethoven's power of development can be made by following the course and destiny of one theme throughout a movement. No score-reading, no special knowledge is needed for this adventurous endeavor. The composer's capacity to say the strongest, the weirdest, even the most complicated things in such simple terms that even the "man in the gallery" can comprehend, is one of the reasons Beethoven occupies his supreme position.

In the *Eroica* the principal theme of the first movement consists of eight tones that spell out a chord broken into a melodic figuration. There is no fixed ending; in its flow the theme seems to create the following ideas, the other *dramatis personae*. The shape of the theme changes from commanding firmness to searching unrest, then to an angular figure. The ending of the first section is stunning: the theme undergoes a shrinking process; the solid outline be-

comes a twisted discordant design—then it shrivels to an uncanny crawl in half steps. There are innumerable transformations of the theme in the further course of the movement, especially in the suspenseful anticipation of its return as “recapitulation” which does not come as a formal repeat but as a rebirth after a tremendous, spasmodic pregnancy.

Another example, chosen at random, is the second theme of the finale of Sonata Opus 27, No. 2, which is usually played as an agitated but lovely melody. In reality it is a fearsome motif: a melody blocked from its flight and expansion by an inexorable top note that holds a lid of stone over the imprisoned soul of the melody. Twice during the piece the captive energy succeeds in breaking that obstacle: the first time (in the development), it sinks, exhausted, into dark regions; the second time, near the end, it does take flight after the breakthrough, only to find another obstacle, another lid of stone above the one it crushed. There it is shattered and never heard again. (One may think I am indulging in a kind of pseudopoetry, but I have actually described only purely technical features, only purely musical images.)

More difficult to grasp is Beethoven's energetic, Herculean concept of the theme-and-variations form. While, in general, these compositions are more like a picture gallery than like an organic work of art, the master can give the sequence of variations such coherence that the work becomes a majestic drama, a new and *unique* musical form. The most overwhelming example is the second movement of the last piano sonata. The most opposed regions of thought alternate in perfect order and serenity; the words of the German poet August von Platen are realized: “You move the heaviest masses with a turn of the hand.”

“*The most violent battle that resolves itself into beautiful concord. It is the discordant concord of creation, the perfect image of the world that rolls on carrying the turbulent multitude of innumerable creatures, but maintains itself and endures through perpetual destruction.*” Thus Schopenhauer describes Beethoven's symphonies. Beethoven never fails in matching the exigencies of his task with his inspiration; the whole gamut of musical form and expression is at his absolute command. It is therefore an untenable notion (held by Stravinsky, for one) that Beethoven “is not a melodist.” Beethoven creates melodies, even cantabiles—in their dramatically right and proper context—and most of them are supremely beautiful. The cantabile is only one form of expression in the many musical forms that go into the building of a great work. Beethoven chooses sovereignly and freely among them to create these “perfect images of the world.”

How do the later composers fare when compared to Beethoven? What about that “Tenth Symphony by Beethoven,” the First by Brahms? That “successor” may deserve all the praise in the world except this designation.

The romantic style is concerned with moods, with the author's own person, with “ideas,” and, in spite of its often painful egocentric intensity, it is undramatic, undialectic in its essence. Mendelssohn's *Fingal's Cave*, that masterpiece of evocation with its brilliant sonatalike arrangement, can be grasped by us after a few pages, if not after a few measures: in a deeper sense, the piece is then already over, and the mood, the idea, the locale, the landscape, the humidity are already evoked. But one could evoke the mood, the idea, the locale, the landscape in the mind . . . and skip the piece.

Even the hardworking, intense Brahms cannot recreate “that most violent battle, that perfect image of the world”; the drama, the events in this later music are subjective and small—private dolors, whims, ironies, changes of atmosphere, of light.

Some Beethovenian *features*, though, have remained alive in later masters. Berlioz has a fine, almost thievish ear for Beethoven's colors and phrases and they enrich his programmatic *Symphonic fantastique* with authentic accents. Contemporaries praised Meyerbeer for his successful emulation of Beethoven (others, like Schumann, were scandalized by this idea). Meyerbeer understood better than anybody else in his time the art of integrating contrasts into a large dramatic frame; he may have made a “technique” out of this, but, thanks to his abilities, he created the operatic style of the nineteenth century; through him some powerful remnants of Beethoven's achievements live on in Donizetti, Verdi, Wagner. In the last-named we encounter this second-hand influence and also a direct inheritance: Wagner's “infinite melody” draws its vitality from the impressive art of thematic transformation. It closely follows poetic and psychological intentions rather than genuinely musical designs, but there is enough of the classic master's spirit to overcome the dangers of that extramusical method. The dissolution of the horn call in *Tristan*, the mutation of the Rheingold motif into the motif of the Gibichungen in *Götterdämmerung*—these wondrous inspirations and skills are of the school of Beethoven.

It has not been pleasant to speak roughly about other beloved composers; but this is the unavoidable result of a view from the heights where Beethoven dwells. He made more out of music than it may have been destined to be. It was the immense spiritual and intellectual struggle that went into his work that earned Beethoven the title of “Hero.”

Many readers will continue to think that the idea of a man who represents the peak of music history is a Spenglerian fiction; they will prefer the more humane relativistic concept that will consider each period capable of its own perfection and its own greatness. This is no place for philosophical acrobacy to reconcile the two concepts (which is possible). My task was to demonstrate that we do by no means overestimate Beethoven. In any case, the notion of his being the Supreme Composer may have been . . . a good working hypothesis.

Beethoven on Records

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

by George Movshon Part I: *Fidelio* and the Songs

BEETHOVEN STRUGGLED with opera projects and librettists all his working lifetime, planning such ambitious stage works as a *Macheth*, an *Attila*, a *Ulysses*, and a *Romulus*; but *Fidelio* was the only opera to get off his drawing board. He revised it twice ("Nothing," wrote a friend, "has caused Beethoven so much vexation as this work") but he never felt entirely satisfied with what he had wrought.

The first version of the *Fidelio* libretto (for the 1805 score, then titled *Leonore*) was adapted from a French play of Jean Nicolas Bouilly by Joseph Sonnleithner. The Vienna premiere was a failure and Stephen von Breuning reduced the opera to two acts the following year; Georg Friedrich Treitschke reshaped it again for the 1814 edition—which has remained ever since *Fidelio's* standard and accepted form. The story is one among dozens of similar "rescue" plays and operas that abounded at the time of the French Revolution; it was a genre as popular then as the spy movie is today. "Wedded Love" is the subtitle of Beethoven's opera and it is clear that he was deeply moved by the figure of Leonore and her selfless struggle to free Florestan.

Fidelio—whether in the theater or on discs—cannot be considered simply as another musico-dramatic offering. Beethoven's opera is a spiritual experience and, in a unique sense, a political experience. These values do not diminish its defects or excuse them—it's too late for that anyway—but they explain why the flaws of *Fidelio* are not really relevant to any performance that combines both soul and skill.

The flaws, to be sure, are there. A perceptive and critical listener who approaches *Fidelio* for the first time may smile at Leonore's simplistic character and feel skeptical about the credibility of Marzelline's crush on the heroine. He may be embarrassed at the overt theatricality of the gun-point rescue in the dungeon. Nor will he immediately be won over by all of the music, intense and sublime as most of it is. He will note that the work has three separate identities, and gravely lacks a stylistic unity. The first act is a *Singspiel*, radiating sunshine and peasant charm. Then, at Pizarro's entrance, it suddenly becomes music-drama, and remains so through the dungeon scene until Florestan's deliverance, when there begins the concluding "movement" of *Fidelio*, a glorious cantata of brotherhood.

The same critical appraiser will ask what these three compositions have to do with each other and, receiving no satisfactory answer, will move on to point out some less-than-proficient work in the score: bits of tum-ti-tum, reminiscent of an organ-grinder; unfeeling cruelty to tenor and soprano in their enormous dungeon scene duct; a really substandard principal aria for the soprano—"Komm Hoffnung"—with those belching horns in the coda.

Yet *Fidelio* breasts all such failings and overcomes them triumphantly. *Fidelio* endures. Indeed, it is an indispensable opera, the irresistible commitment of music to the cause of personal freedom, and vital to every music lover or, for that matter, anyone who cares about liberty and hates tyranny. It is an opera about freedom, and there is no other fit to be mentioned in the same breath. Hear it performed in any country where people are imprisoned for their political ideas and you will have no doubt that everybody present knows what *Fidelio* is all about, and who is intended by the figure of Pizarro.



Fidelio on Records

THE EARLIEST RECORDING of any part of *Fidelio* seems to date from 1903 when, according to Bauer's *Historical Records*, an obscure and long-forgotten basso named Robert Biberti put Rocco's aria onto a seven-inch Zonophone disc. Biberti was followed by a long line of artists who left recordings of their own conceptions of moments from the opera. The most frequently recorded excerpts are the obvious ones—Leonore's *scena*, Florestan's aria, and the Canon Quartet—and each was available in a variety of interpretations during the age of 78 rpm.

There was no complete *Fidelio* on records, nor even an abridgement, until after World War II, though some private (or semipublic) aircheck recordings of Metropolitan Opera broadcasts in the late Thirties and early Forties capture the important achievements of artists famous in this music: the conducting of Bruno Walter, for instance, who never made a complete recorded *Fidelio*; and the singing of two Leonores renowned in the interwar years, Lotte Lehmann and Kirsten Flagstad. Lehmann's "*Abscheulicher!*" (1927) was for a time available on Angel COLO 112, Flagstad's (of 1937) on RCA Camden 462, and Frida Leider's (1928) on Angel COLH 132; but all three records have been deleted—

though we may hope for the reincarnation of Lehmann and Leider some day on Seraphim. Certainly, listeners who remember hearing these legendary artists will not wish to be without a memento of their quality.

As we enter the LP era, mention should be made of two other complete recordings of *Fidelio*, neither of them presently listed in Schwann and neither heard by me: they are noted here simply for the sake of completeness. One is an early postwar recording made in Leipzig, conducted by Gerhard Pflüger, and once available on the Oceanic label, now defunct; the other is a late-Fifties Moscow recording conducted by Alexander Melik-Pasheyev and starring Galina Vishnevskaya.

The chart (see below) of the versions currently listed in Schwann reveals a quite astonishing richness of choice. Together, these nine recordings encompass the work of virtually every conductor and singer who has in the last quarter-century achieved an international reputation as a *Fidelio* interpreter. Moreover, as I listened to each set in turn, it became clear that none of the issues could be rejected out of hand, for each contained at least one peerless slice of virtue, some uniquely excellent feature not quite equaled in the other editions. Nobody will want nine complete *Fidelios*, but if there is some special aspect of the

opera that is important for you, then you may look for it in the following lists.

Overtures

Each recording begins with the so-called *Fidelio* Overture, the bumpy and brief prelude that Beethoven firmly fixed to the 1814 version of the score, after having discovered what others will find out if they try to begin the opera with the *Leonore Overture No. 3*: it is no overture at all, but an immense symphonic poem; any operatic performance prefaced by this music has thereafter nowhere to go but down and, certainly, the first act of *Fidelio* becomes a palpable anticlimax.

Gustav Mahler placed *Leonore No. 3* between the scenes of Act II, that is, after the duet and before the big choral finale; and many opera houses now observe the Mahler tradition. But even this arrangement has its critics, who point out that the audience has just experienced a vast release from tension with the deliverance of Florestan and may not be ready to be switched on again so soon.

Five of the nine sets here considered include *Leonore No. 3* and in each case you will find it in the Mahler position. Few of us would buy a *Fidelio* solely, or even principally, for its *Leonore No. 3*, but it may be useful to have a brief ac-

FIDELIO COMPLETE ON RECORDS—

	RCA Victor LM 6025	Artia ALS 504 or Vox OPBX 167	Seraphim IC 6022	DGG 138390/91
No. of discs	two*	three	three*	two
Price	\$11.96	\$8.94	\$7.47	\$11.96
Date of Recording	1944	about 1949	1953	about 1957
Mono/Stereo	mono	Artia: rechanneled stereo Vox: mono	mono	stereo
Conductor	Toscanini <i>diver</i>	Böhm	Furtwängler <i>noble</i>	Fricsay <i>best, urgent</i>
Leonore	Bampton	Konetzni -	Mödl	Rysanek <i>fine</i>
Marzelline	Steber	Seefried <i>delectable</i>	Jurinac	Seefried
Florestan	Peerce	Ralf <i>Mellen</i>	Windgassen	Häfliger <i>intense</i>
Jacquino	Laderoute	Klein	Schock	Lenz
Don Fernando	Moscona	Neralic	Poell	Engen
Don Pizarro	Janssen	Schoeffler <i>best</i>	Edelmann	Fischer-Dieskau
Rocco	Belarsky	Alsen	Frick	Frick
Orchestra	NBC Symphony	Vienna State Opera	Vienna Philharmonic	Bavarian State Opera
Chorus	NBC	Vienna State Opera	Vienna State Opera	Bavarian State Opera
Set includes Leonore Overture No. 3	Yes <i>superb but sound poor</i>	Yes	Yes	No

count of these performances. Vox/Artia may be eliminated at once for its sub-standard sonics, Seraphim for its unbearably slow introduction and indifferent sound, Westminster for Knappertsbusch's idiosyncratic tempos and slackness. This leaves a superb Toscanini reading, which is, however, recorded in totally airless mono. The only satisfactory stereo choice: Karl Böhm's beautifully planned Dresden performance, recorded on the new DGG issue in well-sculptured stereo.

RCA VICTOR: First heard (and still unforgettably by those who were at their radios) as an NBC broadcast in December 1944, first released on discs ten years later, this remains a milestone issue. Marred by the omission of the spoken dialogue (except for the Rocco/Leonore "melodrama" and some other essential bits) and particularly by the unyielding boxiness of Studio 8H's acoustics (which becomes less bothersome as you listen on), there is nevertheless much to admire in Jan Peerce's elevated if detached Florestan. Rose Bampton's Leonore is warmly and cleanly sung, but lacks power in the climaxes. The four-some in "Mir ist so wunderbar" sounds a mile away from a microphone. Wonderfully precise orchestral playing and, of course, masterly conducting from Toscanini—as taut and dramatic as you might wish in the climaxes but unexpect-

edly sympathetic to the problems of Peerce and Bampton in their big arias.

VOX/ARTIA: Repulsive sound in Artia's phony stereo—I haven't heard the Vox mono version, but Conrad L. Osborne found it grisly in a 1961 review—reveals (or rather obscures) an affectionate, almost sentimental performance by Karl Böhm. Torsten Ralf is an excellent, touching, and sensitive Florestan, but Hilde Konetzni's Leonore was recorded when she was well past her best years: she huffs and puffs and goes off pitch frequently. Irmgard Seefried (whatever happened to that agreeable artist?) sings a delectable Marzelline, but the treasure of the set is Paul Schoeffler's Pizarro, the best on records, with faultless tone and relentless dramatic power. The performance is worth having for that alone.

SERAPHIM: A 1953 recording with (essentially) the cast of the Vienna State Opera's production of that year—rather than the more prestigious company Furtwängler used to assemble for the Salzburg Festival in those days (a few years earlier, EMI might have had Flagstad for their Leonore). Whatever the flaws, it is excellent to have (and at a budget price) this conductor's immensely grand architecture of the score, a plan of the most generous and noble dimensions. Things start roughly, with

an imperfect overture and a rather slow view of the Marzelline/Jacquino scene. But from the quartet onward, everything is as it should be. Nor are Furtwängler's tempos anywhere near as slow as I had imagined them. Martha Mödl is a sincere and deeply moving heroine, but there are occasional rough spots and some insecurity in the climaxes. Sena Jurinac, in supreme voice, makes Marzelline a full-weight dramatic soprano, rather than a soubrette, but sings perfectly. Wolfgang Windgassen is tame but clean; Otto Edelmann makes nice sounds but no great impression of evil, as Pizarro should. Frick is here (as in his two other Rocco performances) solid and strong. The sound remains perfectly clean and acceptable, but the absence of all dialogue (except the "melodrama") is a barrier to smooth flow and dramatic development.

DGG (1957): Leonie Rysanek was recorded at a magical moment: her artistic maturity was well-nigh complete, and she had not yet developed those vocal "varicose veins" for which she must these days compensate with her redoubled dramatic intensity. A fine Leonore, on all counts. And a fine recorded *Fidelio* too, planned imaginatively for the home, with a cast of speaking actors doing the dialogue and blending uncannily with their singing

BUYER'S CHOICE FOR BEETHOVEN YEAR

Westminster WMS 1003	<i>Best</i> Angel S 3625	London OSA 1259	Nonesuch HB 73005	DGG 139288/90
three \$9.98	three \$17.94	two \$11.96	two \$5.96	three \$17.94
about 1961 stereo	1962 stereo <i>"glory of the catalog"</i>	1964 stereo	about 1965 stereo	1969 stereo
Knappertsbusch	<i>masterly</i> Klemperer	Maazel	Bamberger	Böhm <i>best Böhm</i>
Jurinac	Ludwig +	Nilsson	Kuchta	Jones
Stader	Hallstein →	Sciutti	Muszely	Mathis
Peerce	Vickers <i>best of his</i>	McCracken	Patzak	King
Dickie	Unger +	Grobe	Kretschmar	Schreier
Guthrie	Crass +	Prey	Wenk	Talvela
Neidlinger	Berry -	Krause	Rehfuss	Adam
Ernster	Frick <i>best of his 3</i>	Böhme	Kümmel	Crass
Bavarian State Opera	Philharmonia	Vienna Philharmonic	North German Radio	Dresden State Opera
Bavarian State Opera	Philharmonia	Vienna State Opera	North German Radio	Dresden State Opera
Yes	No	No	No	Yes <i>Best</i>

*omits dialogue

counterparts. Irmgard Seefried gives us another plump-voiced, nubile Marzelline, while Ernst Häfliger delivers a Florestan distinguished by fine musicianship and deep involvement. The young Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau is a wholly malevolent (and wholly effective) Pizarro. Ferenc Fricsay (a real loss, the death of that fine conductor) leads a sharply dramatic account of the score, as taut and urgent a reading as you could ask for. Sound: very advanced for its time, with subtle dynamics.

WESTMINSTER: Some fine work here but also lots of quirky tempos from conductor Knappertsbusch, who takes the duet "*O namenlose Freude*" at a lazy adagio instead of the allegro vivace Beethoven asks for. Sena Jurinac is not quite the Leonore she might have been eight years earlier, when she sang Marzelline in the Seraphim release; but she is warm, human, beautifully controlled and shapely in all but the most climactic passages. Jan Peerce sings a more involved Florestan than we get in his reading for Toscanini, and sounds in excellent voice. Gustav Neidlinger somehow never gets going with Pizarro's music, though he communicates a lot of the venom. Murray Dickie and Maria Stader both do well as the youngsters. Good stereo sound, an excellent chorus, and more than adequate orchestra; but the late Hans Knappertsbusch had some ideas about pacing that take a lot of getting used to.

✓ ANGEL: This set is going to drain me of superlatives, for it is a glory of the record catalogue. Klemperer's vision of the score is one for the ages, a secure and masterly unfolding of each flower in *Fidelio's* garden, and a deeply revealing traversal of Beethoven's genius. It is slow but never loses momentum, firm without a hint of brutality, supremely well judged and balanced. Christa Ludwig is a mezzo-soprano, but handles most of Leonore's music with exquisite command and manages the high notes (up to a B) with entire comfort. Jon Vickers is perhaps too vibrantly alive to suggest a haggard and emaciated Florestan, but he sings with such opulence, freedom, and beautiful tone that



Klemperer's vision is one for the ages.

all such quibbles are banished: there can have been few Florestans to equal him in the entire history of the role. Gottlob Frick here provides the most mature and sympathetic of his three Roccas, and Franz Crass is all plangent benison in his decree of pardon. The hand of Wilhelm Pitz is manifest in the precision and subtlety of the choral work, while the Philharmonia Orchestra's sonorities are most ably caught by Angel's microphones. One faint disappointment is Walter Berry as Pizarro, who explodes too often in his pursuit of intensity and mars the singing line. But all in all, a superlative set.

LONDON: Those Decca/London wizards of technology have created atmospheric environments and acoustic perspectives to support the dramatic action with a skill no other company can match. The moment we hear Florestan's voice, we know what his dungeon is like: a brick cavern, dark and cold. Lorin Maazel's conducting is ardent, mercurial, taut—sometimes too taut, for the lyrical passages do not breathe as they should. But his hairline precision has its own compensations, and orchestra and chorus (Wilhelm Pitz again) keep up with him all the way. Birgit Nilsson's way with Leonore is impressive: she makes the pathos believable, hurls thunderbolts of hate at Pizarro, and is, of course, matchless in the rapturous "*O namenlose Freude*," where the notes sting across like so many bullets. But she does less with the words than she might, and somehow her Leonore lacks a final touch of humanity. James McCracken is frankly disappointing, yielding a thick-voiced and graceless Florestan, albeit one totally involved. Graziella Sciutti also has word trouble, losing too many of them, and proves not quite at ease in the high music. Hermann Prey comes across as a Don Fernando of amiability and beneficence, which is just as it should be. The Pizarro of Tom Krause has lots of fire and bite, but his intensity causes an occasional dent in the vocal line. In sum, a version, often very exciting, that goes all out for drama and pays with musical shortcomings.

NONESUCH: A neat, professional, well-integrated performance with musically deft and dramatically effective direction from Carl Bamberger and fine precision from his orchestra and chorus. Chief interest here centers upon the Florestan of Julius Patzak, a legendary characterization in Vienna and elsewhere twenty years or so ago. Even here (around 1961) his work had a haunting potency, though the singing was that of a veteran guarding his resources. He managed the aria with only a little strain but was not now up to the rigors demanded by his duet with Leonore at the end of the dungeon scene. Nor, for that matter, did Gladys Kuchta measure up to those demands, though her singing elsewhere was forceful and apt, if sometimes hard-edged. Melitta Muszely's Marzelline was a pert and clear-voiced soubrette portrayal of the role and a delightful one too, while Heinz Rehfuss created a real-life Nazi Gauleiter for his Pizarro. The

sound is acceptable, if not up to Nonesuch's best. And if you are looking for a budget *Fidelio*, then this one is the bargain of the lot.

DGG (1969): This newest recording has not been reviewed in our regular columns (and won't be), so it demands a little more detail. It contains Karl Böhm's mature thoughts on *Fidelio*, a conception of immense dignity, grace, and structural soundness. Böhm shapes with a more relaxed hand than some conductors, is sometimes content to let good things happen rather than to decree each event rigidly. Here he works with the East German musicians and choristers of Dresden, a city where his work has been heard and revered for nearly forty years. It may be my imagination, but these qualities somehow come out of the records, and a gentle affinity, disciplined but generous, seems to bind all the participants together in a common musical cause.

This is not to say that standards are allowed to drop. On the contrary, the playing and singing are of the highest precision and the horns positively bloom in their moment of customary embarrassment, the "*Abscheulicher! . . . Komm Hoffnung*." Only Toscanini gets comparable horn performance at this point in the score.

Gwyneth Jones may some day be the Leonore your grandchildren will remember, but she is not that yet, despite sensitive characterization and a wealth of beautiful singing tone. She handles all of the quiet music with honeyed ease; but she does not negotiate the big climaxes with anything to spare. "*Abscheulicher!*" is powerful, indeed riveting; but there are bits that are gusty and not firmly controlled. "*Komm Hoffnung*" finds her again very expressive and in lovely voice.

James King sings a powerful Florestan but he too shows occasional strain, and he misses opportunities: the chance, for instance, to ease up and change direction at the line "*In des Lebens Frühlingstagen*." Vickers makes something unforgettable of this, and King does not.

Miss Jones and Mr. King combine beautifully in "*O namenlose Freude*" and, helped by Böhm's sympathetic hand at the wheel, produce one of the better versions of this hazardous ensemble.

Theo Adam is the Pizarro, and very good too, though his vibrato becomes bothersome on occasions. His Act I duet with Rocco is a high point of the recording, both men generating profound intensity and making it clear that a conflict exists between them that must, for the time being, remain suppressed. Edith Mathis and Peter Schreier provide superior performances as the young couple and Martti Talvela lends his deep black bass to the finale, where he sings Don Fernando's lines with as much resonant nobility as they have ever been given.

The DGG engineers have apparently been liberated from their company's traditional conservatism, for here they assert a welcome new freedom with stereo perspectives and produce handsome and rich recorded sound.

Still, if I had the choice of only

one Fidelio to take to a desert island, it would have to be Angel's.

The Songs

"Trinkets in a great workshop." That is how musicologist W. H. Hadow once described the songs of Beethoven. The lied was one of the few fields of composition where Ludwig's mighty foot passed without leaving a decisive or permanent stamp. Many of the songs are enjoyable enough: melodious, touching, moving, even masterly—but few can rightly be called great, or stand comparison with those of his younger contemporary, Franz Schubert. You may look among Beethoven's songs for bridges between Mozart and Schubert, but you are likely to find only tenuous ropeways, supported mainly by the imagination.

"I don't like writing songs," Beethoven once said, and clearly the act of grafting his music onto a poet's words made him uncomfortable. He was often brutal with his texts, insensitive not only to their meter but even to their spirit. And only rarely would he endow the piano accompaniment (as did Schubert) with its own narrative and emotional supplement to the words. In this respect the early strophic songs, in particular, can grow monotonous, and singers are wise to abridge them. *Urian's Journey*, for example, offers fourteen musically identical verses, punctuated by a two-line chorus.

And yet the songs are by no means negligible. It is too easy to exaggerate their demerits: perhaps they are neither diamonds nor emeralds, but is that any reason to knock honest amethysts, opals, or even garnets from a uniquely gifted hand? There are considerable pleasures to be found here, and it is fascinating to trace the development from the early years, Salieri-dominated, to the later, more romantic pieces. Compare the classical arias and hymn-tunes of Beethoven's youth (*Adelaide* of 1796 or the Gellert songs of 1803) with, say, *Wonne der Wehmut* of 1810 and you will find that the maturing process so evident in the symphonies and the sonatas had its parallel in the lieder too.

The Beethoven songs have always been a respectful if minor share of the recital repertoire: singers are happy to sing a Beethoven group, and audiences to hear one. There are no great demands on the extremes of the voice or upon the technique of the pianist. The favorites have included *Ah perfido!* (1796), a big scena for dramatic soprano and orchestra; the song cycle *An die ferne Geliebte* (1816): the classical aria *In questa tomba oscura* (1807); and a number of the Goethe settings. Among the Goethe songs is Mephisto's ballad of the flea (about 1800) which was later to get much itchier treatment at the hands of Modest Musorgsky, and also Mignon's nostalgic *Kennst du das Land* (1810), the poem which was later to inspire (in turn) Schubert, Schumann, and Hugo Wolf. But there are as many good fish still swimming about in Beethoven's sea of lieder as have so far been caught; and you might think the phonograph an ideal way to troll these waters, most specially during the Beethoven Year. But you

would be wrong, for the current catalogue is notably poor when it comes to the songs of Beethoven.

The Kalmus score of the complete songs contains sixty-four entries, if you omit the two items from *Egmont* and the three early (and superseded) versions of *Sehnsucht* (1808). Of these, only twenty-three are presently available on domestic releases—which means that almost two-thirds of the Beethoven lieder literature is outside the easy reach of the American record buyer. Others are to be had as imports—notably in DGG's European catalogue, more of which may possibly be released here as the bicentenary unfolds—but short of waiting or sending overseas or grubbing in your dealer's back room for cut-outs or deleted items, the following represents the total presently accessible. Only *Ah perfido!* and *An die ferne Geliebte* exist in competitive versions, so the other songs are treated under their performing artists.



Definitive singing by Fischer-Dieskau.

Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, baritone: Jörg Demus, piano. Deutsche Grammophon 139197. In Europe this disc is part of a three-record album containing almost every song Beethoven wrote suitable for the male voice (there is apparently a possibility that the other two discs may appear soon). The contents are: *An die ferne Geliebte* (1816); *Schilderung eines Mädchen* (1783); *Als die Geliebte sich trennen wollte* (1806); *Sehnsucht* (1815); *Ruf vom Berge* (1816); *An die Geliebte* (1812 version); *Adelaide* (1795); *Andenken* (1809); *Zärtliche Liebe* (also known as *Ich liebe Dich*, 1803); *Dimmi, ben mio* (1810); *T'intendo, si mio cor* (date unknown); *L'anante impaziente* (two different settings, dates unknown); *Vita felice* (pub. 1803); *La partenza* (1798); *In questa tomba oscura* (1807).

This is definitive singing, as confident and artistically accomplished as can be imagined. Everything has been planned to a hair: the precise weight of each song, the shading of tempo and dynamics, the exact relationship of singer and accompanist. Both artists fit together temperamentally, and the total result sets the standard in this music by which other performances must be judged. There is an occasional feeling that it is all too smooth, homogenized, and processed: but objections are swept aside as Fischer-

Dieskau and Demus devotedly reveal the freshness and individualism of each succeeding song. The baritone's way of shaping words is marvelous for the German songs, perhaps not quite so apt for the Italian ones: the sounds aren't quite sufficiently open to be completely natural. But that is the sheerest quibble. An indispensable record.

Gerard Souzay, baritone: Dalton Baldwin, piano. World Series PHC 3-019. This three-disc opera and lieder recital contains the following songs by Beethoven: *Aus Goethe's Faust* (about 1800); *Mailed* (1792); *Wonne der Wehmut* (1810); *Neue Liebe, neues Leben* (1800).

Souzay's voice is less smooth, perhaps a trace more individual, than Fischer-Dieskau's and this recording (actually made in 1963) catches it as it began to darken. This is perceptive singing, a bit more intense than the opposition but not quite so well proportioned: Souzay tends to push now and then. This works well enough in the *Faust* song (about the flea) but not quite so aptly in *Neue Liebe*. Highly recommended.

Fritz Wunderlich, tenor: Hubert Giesen, piano. Deutsche Grammophon 139125. This record contains Schumann's *Dichterliebe* and five Schubert songs in addition to the following Beethoven songs: *Adelaide* (1795); *Resignation* (1818); *Zärtliche Liebe* (1803); *Der Kuss* (1822).

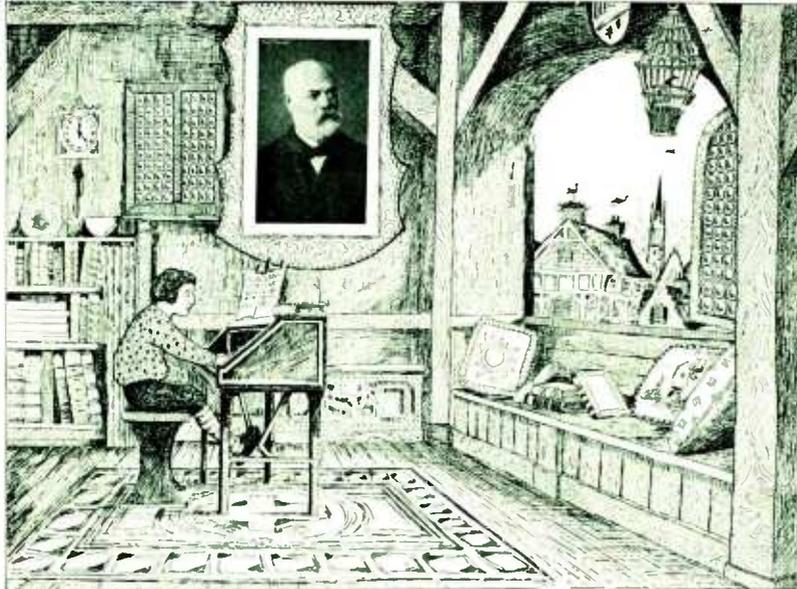
Recorded a year or so before the death of this fine tenor, Wunderlich reveals himself as a rather less ingenious lieder singer than his operatic achievements might have led one to believe. There is a certain matter-of-factness about these performances, a perfunctory air that may appeal to some; but there is certainly more to these songs than Wunderlich conveys. Very smooth and—as sheer vocalism—satisfactory; but naïve.

Strange to relate, these three listings comprise the only substantial groups of Beethoven songs to be found presently in Schwann. But a few odds and ends deserve mention, occasional Beethoven items tucked into recorded recitals of other music. Thus *Der Kuss* and the flea song are sung with excellent humor by Walter Berry in the collection shared with Christa Ludwig ("A Most Unusual Song Recital") on Seraphim S 60087. Hermann Prey records two of the Gellert songs, *Die Himmel rühmen und Bitten*, in effective arrangements with chorus and orchestra on London OS 26055 ("A Festive Evening").

An die ferne Geliebte (1816). The six disparate poems which Beethoven linked together with a continuous piano accompaniment were written by a Viennese physician, Alois Isidor Jeiteles. They are held by some to refer to the "immortal beloved" whose identity has never been established. The cycle is perhaps Beethoven's most thoughtful and elaborate presentation in the lieder field: the music is certainly among his better efforts for the voice, and the closing reprise of the

Continued on page 124

The Bettmann Archive



Young Henselt at a silent piano, with portrait at a later age.

Forgotten Romantics Remembered

The entertaining, astonishing, exhilarating, and unaccountably neglected repertoire of the nineteenth century

by Harold C. Schonberg

STRANGE THINGS ARE happening. Not long ago the weekly listings of concert programs in the *New York Times* listed a pianist who had programmed a Kalkbrenner piece—*Friedrich Kalkbrenner*?—and another who was playing a set of Czerny variations: not the *Ricordanza* that Horowitz had introduced about two decades back but a work unknown even to specialists. Nobody keeps files on this sort of thing, but it is a safe bet that neither had been played in New York for generations, if ever. In Indianapolis there are annual festivals of Romantic music, and the Midwest has been blooming to the tune of Rubinstein's *Ocean Symphony* and Raff's *Im Walde*. In Newport last summer, three concerts a day for ten days explored music by early Romantics, to the bewilderment of the tourists and the vast enjoyment of a handful of Victorian types, who had journeyed for miles to bathe themselves in the lucubrations of such as Karl Reinecke, Peter Cornelius, Camille Saint-Saëns, and Pauline Viardot-Garcia. Leonard Bernstein programs Karl Goldmark's *Rustic Wedding Symphony* (the original German title, *Ländliche Hochzeit*, is so much more attractive) and Erich Leinsdorf comes up with the Scharwenka B flat minor Piano Concerto. Something is in the air.

And the record companies usually are the first to scent it. They are beginning to think very seriously about minor Romantic music. The baroque craze has

about run its course, they are saying, and maybe it is time to cash in on something else. And not on another recording of the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto or the Stravinsky *Firebird*. The groaning catalogue of that material is supersaturated. And old memories go back to the success the smaller companies had with the baroque revival, when Corelli, Vivaldi, Locatelli, Fasch, Geminiani, and the others became all but household names. Maybe Hummel, Spohr, Heller, Hiller, Moszkowski, Joachim, Godard, Reinecke? Maybe? Maybe?

Maybe. The toe is already in the pool, as witness the simultaneous release of Adolf von Henselt's Piano Concerto in F minor by Columbia and Candide. It used to be a popular work. But like most bravura concertos, it lay forgotten for generations until Raymond Lewenthal revived it at the Romantic Festival in Indianapolis about three years ago. Now he has recorded it, with a much better orchestra. So has Michael Ponti, with the Philharmonia Hungarica and somebody named Othmar Maga. Then there is the Scharwenka B flat minor. Like the Henselt, it had a big run in its time. Old-time critics, headed by James Huneker, adored it. They would gather at Lüchow's and, over great seidels of beer, discuss modern concertos and wonder if any modern composer had ever come up with a theme as beautiful as the second subject of the first movement. Those of us who respond to this kind of music do not take works like the

Henselt and Scharwenka as seriously as Huneker and his cohorts. All we claim is that they are fine period pieces, as worthy of exhumation as some dry, formula-ridden concerto grosso of Vivaldi. We say that such music helps bring an age to life, and that it still has validity when approached in the proper, *i.e.*, noncondescending, spirit.

The point about such works is that they do not pretend to anything they aren't. They were written to entertain, astonish, and exhilarate, and they were also written by thorough professionals who themselves were eminent instrumentalists. Those men knew their craft. If they did not have the imagination and originality and earth-moving statement of the big men, they at least could come up with original ideas in the way of technique. Henselt certainly did, and so did Scharwenka.

The Henselt is a good case in point. Adolf von Henselt (1814-1889) was a Bavarian-born pianist who was considered the peer of Liszt and Thalberg. But he had one drawback. He was too nervous to play in public, and he gave very few recitals during his long life. For many years he was resident in Russia, and his influence on the Russian school is a story yet to be told. His technical trick was left-hand extensions. Apparently his hands were not large, but he practiced so much and devoted so much time to left-hand stretches that he could encompass a Rachmaninoffian grasp.

He composed his Concerto around 1840 (nobody seems to have come up with the exact date, but Clara Schumann was playing it by 1844). That makes it about ten years younger than Chopin's F minor Concerto, and the debt is clear. Not only is the key of Henselt's concerto the same but there also is a decided similarity in thematic material. What is different, and amazingly so, is the keyboard approach. It is much more massive, considerably more difficult, and amazingly sophisticated. A mighty powerful pianist is needed to play this work. And its material is good. Not very original, but good. The themes are forceful and attractive. Chopin is combined with some Schumann, Mendelssohn, and Thalberg. To dislike it for this reason is to dislike Paisiello because he is not Mozart. Whatever its derivations, this Henselt F minor is a strong work with an unexpected amount of charm, and it is a terrific piece for a big virtuoso.

Completely different approaches are offered by the two pianists. Ponti is a literalist, Lewenthal a romantic. Ponti, who does have the notes in hand—more so than Lewenthal, who makes a grander effect but often is blurred—tends toward square rhythms and concentration on detail. Lewenthal worries much less about detail than about the big picture. He is more apt to take a chance, whatever casualties in the way of missed notes occur, and the difference between the two pianists is best illustrated in the last movement. Ponti is deliberate and careful, while Lewenthal, with a much faster tempo, creates a kind of electricity missing from the competition. His playing is also more nuanced (compare the two in the nocturnelike slow movement), with more of a feeling for the Romantic conventions (though he ignores some of the inner voices and stepwise bass progressions notated so carefully by Henselt). Lewenthal adds five measures of piano at the first movement finale. Ponti, the literalist, stops where the piano part stops. As between the orchestras, the London Symphony under Mackerras is a much finer group than the Philharmonia Hungarica, and has been given better recording.

Thus, if I had to choose, it would be the Columbia disc. But I shall have to keep both records because of the couplings. Lewenthal has selected the Liszt *Totentanz*, while Ponti comes up with the first recording in history of the Henselt Etudes (Op. 2). These are fascinating. They come out of Chopin, Schumann, and Mendelssohn, but the piano textures and sonorities look far ahead to Godowsky. All of these Etudes have names (undoubtedly added after the music was composed). The only familiar one is No. 6, *Si oiseau j'étais, à toi je*

volerais. Rachmaninoff and Moiseiwitsch recorded it in the old days, and it is the prettiest of the Henselt Etudes. But others are effective too, and it is surprising that they have dropped from the repertory. Ponti plays them in a rather hard and percussive manner. His finger work is marvelous, but his musical approach lacks the delicate adjustments and tone colors needed for an ultimate statement.

In the *Totentanz*, Lewenthal has combined the familiar piece for piano and orchestra with another Liszt version. New material includes a short introduction and a lengthy interpolation in the middle of Variation 27. Lewenthal then picks up at the cadenza, follows with still more new material, and goes from Variation 28 to the end. Excisions include half of Variation 10 and the chorale-like solo in Variation 22. (In a 7-inch LP that comes with the record, Lewenthal, in his sepulchral bass voice, explains where he got the new material; and he also discusses Henselt in relation to Rachmaninoff and the Russian school.) He plays the *Totentanz* with virility and tremendous gusto. This is his kind of music, and there is a kind of technical security not always apparent in the Henselt, brilliant as the latter is.

Now the Scharwenka. Xaver Scharwenka (1850-1924) was a well-known Polish pianist and teacher. What student has not at one time or another engaged his Polish Dance in E flat minor? (He recorded it, too, around 1915, for American Columbia.) The B flat minor Piano Concerto dates from 1877, when Scharwenka was twenty-seven. Liszt helped launch the work, and it promptly entered the repertory. It is a large-scale work, colorfully orchestrated, with a murderous piano part. There is scarcely a rest for the soloist. He has to keep moving in this obstacle course of arpeggios, chords, prestissimo scale passages, leaps, double notes, octaves, and crazy figurations. Scharwenka, like Henselt, may not have been an original thinker, but he knew how to give the pianist a workout. The Scharwenka B flat minor is a fine minor work, considerably more than camp (as has been charged), and belongs with such pieces as the Rubinstein D minor.

I was a little disappointed in the recording. At the actual concert, Earl Wild played with finesse coupled with raw power in the bravura passages. But here the effect is one of raw power only, and that is probably because of the close-up recording. The piano is so favored that it obscures not only details of the orchestration but frequently the entire Boston Symphony itself. Wild is not that percussive a pianist. And what a technician he is! I am told that one of the Boston critics called him a dilettante pianist. If that is so, the same is true of Vladimir Horowitz and Jorge Bolet. Wild's fingers are in that league, and he is not ashamed to display them. In this kind of music, anyway, that would be fatal. The entire effect of the Concerto depends on the pianist's combination of bravura and ability to shape the Romantic kind of melody. Wild delivers. He has the attitude of Moriz Rosenthal, who was once asked if he wasn't ashamed of having so big a technique. "Is Rockefeller ashamed of his money?" Rosenthal answered.

It is too bad that Wild's playing is so overpowering in relation to the orchestra. But at least we have a good idea of what this likable Concerto is about. And Wild has come up with some original material for the reverse side of the record—Balakirev's *Reminiscences of Glinka's "A Life for the Tsar,"* Nicolas Medtner's Improvisation (Op. 31, No. 1), and Eugen d'Albert's Scherzo. The Balakirev is a wild work, thin in substance, fertile in piano resource. Composers all over Europe at the time (1855) were writing operatic potpourris and fantasies, and Balakirev's is representative of the genre. It does go on a little too long. The Medtner is an attractive work in the Taneiev and Rachmaninoff tradition, and the D'Albert Scherzo, once popular, is a flashy work-

out and a lot of fun for what it is. Wild plays these three pieces with enormous thrust and virtuosity. In this literature he is a champion athlete.

Ivan Davis' disc, "The Art of the Piano Virtuoso," is a bit of a gimmick record. The idea was to honor eight great pianists by playing a work associated with them. Chopin is represented by his *Andante Spianato* and *Polonaise*; Liszt by his *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 6*; Clara Schumann by Robert Schumann's *Abegg Variations*; Anton Rubinstein by Serge Liapounov's *Lezghinka*; Josef Lhevinne by Moszkowski's *Carmen Fantasy*; Josef Hofmann by Moszkowski's *Caprice espagnole*; Rachmaninoff by the Rimsky-Korsakov-Rachmaninoff *Flight of the Bumblebee*, and Vladimir Horowitz by the Mendelssohn-Liszt-Davis *Paraphrase on Mendelssohn's "Midsummer Night's Dream."*

Davis has some interesting ideas on playing this material. He has one aspect of the Romantic attitude, in that he is not afraid to touch up the music. In the Liszt Sixth Rhapsody he adds a little cadenza of his own at one spot and, at another, puts a little growl in the bass: a cute touch, that. In the Liszt *Midsummer Night's Dream* he has made a few cuts and supplied a Horowitz-like ending of his own. The other music he leaves alone. At least one piece on this disc was needed—the *Abegg Variations*. There does not seem to be an available LP of this remarkable Opus 1. Moszkowski's *Carmen Fantasy*, based largely on the *Chanson bohème*, is a tricky show piece. I am glad to have heard it, and having heard it, glad to forget it, much as I like pianistic tightrope walking.

There are many nice things about the Davis performances. He has a spotless technique, intelligence, and an obvious relish for fireworks. Yet he is still too much a child of his time to enter fully into the Romantic world. His tone is a shade too brittle, his touch somewhat percussive, his organization too neat. The quality

of improvisation that the old pianists used to get is missing; nor does Davis have the pedal secrets of a Lhevinne or Hofmann. Everything is scrubbed too clean, and the smile is mechanical. Like the smile of the girls in the old Rheingold ads. Pretty, but shallow.

HENSELT: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, in F minor, Op. 16. LISZT-LEWENTHAL: Totentanz for Piano and Orchestra. Raymond Lewenthal, piano; London Symphony Orchestra, Charles Mackerras, cond. Columbia MS 7252, \$5.98. Tape: ●●MQ 1121, 7½ ips, \$7.95.

HENSELT: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, in F minor, Op. 16; Etudes Caractéristiques (12), Op. 2. Michael Ponti, piano; Philharmonia Hungarica, Othmar Maga, cond. (in the Concerto). Candide CE 31011, \$3.98.

SCHARWENKA: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1, in B flat minor, Op. 32. BALAKIREV: Reminiscences of Glinka's Opera "A Life for the Tsar." MEDTNER: Improvisation, Op. 31, No. 1. D'ALBERT: Scherzo, Op. 16, No. 2. Earl Wild, piano; Boston Symphony Orchestra, Erich Leinsdorf, cond. (in the Concerto). RCA Red Seal LSC 3080, \$5.98.

IVAN DAVIS: "The Art of the Piano Virtuoso." LISZT: Hungarian Rhapsody No. 6; Paraphrase of the Wedding March and Dance of the Elves from Mendelssohn's "A Midsummer Night's Dream." CHOPIN: Andante Spianato and Grande Polonaise brillante, Op. 22. MOSZKOWSKI: Paraphrase of the Gypsy Song from Bizet's "Carmen"; Caprice espagnole, Op. 37. SCHUMANN: Theme and Variations on the Name "Abegg," Op. 1. LIAPOUNOV: Lezghinka, Op. 11, No. 10. RIMSKY-KORSAKOV: Sadko: Flight of the Bumblebee (arr. Rachmaninoff). Ivan Davis, piano. London CS 6637, \$5.98.

Callas and Tebaldi — Yesterday and Today

Two new releases shed light upon the careers of the divas who once monopolized an operatic era

by George Movshon

IF RECORDINGS CAN be said to be reflections of a musical age, then both these sets deserve to be encased in amber and kept in a time capsule. Song fanciers of later generations will then have some inkling of what was right, operatically, with our era, and what was wrong. Consider the polarities represented here.

The Tebaldi album is all new and explores some strange territory where few thought she would ever venture.

The Callas album consists entirely of reissued material, a retracing of familiar paths, mostly pleasurable, a few painful.

Tebaldi sings the majority of her selections in Italian, including Wagner, Bizet, and Massenet. The Spanish songs are performed in that language, and the very last bit, *If I Loved You*, is done in a quaint and captivating variant of our own sweet tongue.

Callas sings each item in its original language—which means the Italian arias in Italian, the French ones in French. (A quibbler could point out that "*Convien partir*" comes from an opera by Donizetti that began life in Paris with a French text.)

The Tebaldi album comes with a fat booklet of few words but over 100 pictures, some of them full-page, and all of her. There is even a happy snap showing her



Callas (right) greets her still-active former "rival" Tebaldi, at opening of *Met*, 1968. Between them from left: Franco Corelli, Anselmo Colzani, and manager Bing.

in the company of Maria Callas and Rudolf Bing (see previous page).

The Callas album includes an hour-long interview (one complete disc) with Edward Downes, originally broadcast on a Metropolitan Opera matinee intermission several years ago. The interview is at least as revealing of Callas as the pictures are of Tebaldi.

How incredible that these two singers were ever rivals, that the partisans of one rose in the theater to hiss the other, that a feud was believed to rage between them! No two sopranos were ever more dissimilar, nor differed so drastically in style and temperament. Can you imagine cheering mink and booing sable, hailing gouda and scorning cheddar, clapping Laurel and hissing Hardy? Not only were they divergent in approach and manner, but they were in a real sense complementary to each other: each would have been less without the presence of the other in the same art and age. The age—and let us hope it is not yet over—may go down in the performance history of Italian opera as the Callas/Tebaldi period, though there are some (and they are not hard to find) who hold that Milanov and De los Angeles were the equals of the other ladies, and sometimes their betters.

How easy it is to fall into the same trap as the partisans—as I have just done—and start calling one artist “better” than another without bothering to detail what they are better in or better at. And how irrelevant to the simple truth: the opera and the record catalogue need both the silk of Tebaldi at her best and the steel thrust of Callas at hers.

Both are indispensable. Think of Tebaldi as Desdemona (is this not her best role?) with its melting, limpид pathos; her Puccini heroines, all heart and melody; her Aida and Elisabetta, revealing agony and inner turmoil in the shapeliest musical lines imaginable.

And Callas, whose anger as the betrayed Norma cannot be described in words, whose presence on any stage dominates the action totally, whose inventiveness, insight, and thrusts at truth are unique in opera. Even when her voice says no and refuses to follow her command, she makes her intentions plain. Listen to the appalling flubbed tenuto that ends the *Cenerentola* aria in this collection—as awful a beat as you will find on a professional record—and see if you don't agree that what it is really saying is: “There! That's all my voice will allow. But I am showing you what I *intend*: that's the important thing.” And in the interview record she sums it up more tightly still: “Art,” she says, “is more than beauty.”

As far as one can be sure of such things, both ladies are now forty-six years old, and both have in recent years encountered severe vocal problems. Callas showed trouble first, the high notes deteriorated badly, her repertory shrank, there was a brief flirtation (on records, chiefly), with the mezzo literature, and then . . . silence. She has not sung in public nor has she made any new recordings for some years, though there are rumors and talk now and then of a possible Violetta . . . or maybe a Carmen . . . or maybe a Verdi Requiem in Dallas. But so far they have proved just rumors.

In the early Sixties, Tebaldi seemed to lose confidence in her high register. The soft, floated notes vanished and a new, hard element became apparent in the voice. Over much of the range it was still the loveliest soprano sound imaginable; but in approaching anything above the stave she tended to tighten up and belt out the notes. Judging by these records, things are still not entirely right—and perhaps they never can be. But she is again capable of achieving a melting beauty at the top of the range. That is clear in the closing notes of Dalila's second aria, where she takes the high option most beautifully.

The Callas discs, as noted, are all reissues and they are drawn from complete recordings and recital discs originally made between 1953 and 1961. The performances are classic and irreplaceable, showing a great artist in a wide variety of her roles: all told they amount

to a strong portrait of Maria Callas, depicting justly both her glories and her deficiencies. Callas fans will have most of this material already; and what is more they will have acquired the knack of listening *past* (or *through*) the vocal wounds to the noble concept that often lies beyond. The interview is most informative. Technically, the transfers have been cleanly done, and the mono items have been rechanneled with commendable conservatism and restraint.

Tebaldi requires more elaboration. The Wagner items (once the novelty has worn off) are quite easy to listen to, though they are not deeply conceived or strikingly revealing. Elisabeth's greeting lacks boldness, but Elsa's Dream has a fine, visionary quality, especially at the last modulation. Tebaldi has sung in Italian performances of both *Tannhäuser* and *Lohengrin*, but she has not done an Isolde and is most unlikely to. Yet the *Liebestod* fits her emotional nature like a glove, and she sings the soft contours of this scene with outstanding loveliness. It still sounds strange in Italian, but the vocal quality is delectable.

The French items are less commendable. Tebaldi finds a good chesty rasp for Carmen in the *Habanera* but it really isn't done with the necessary pointed *sexiness*; hers is a ladylike Carmen, more likely to take tea than a romp in the hay. And Guadagno's accompaniments, both here and in the Dalila songs, tend to sag. There is a lot of good singing tone in the Saint-Saëns but nowhere near enough intensity. Best of the French lot is the Massenet pair, with Tebaldi most poetic in the *petite table* apostrophe but spoiling things with a dramatic gasp at the end.

Aida's “*Ritorna vincitor*” is an acceptable interpretation, but not to be compared with her 1959 reading (for Karajan), which in turn was a notch below her 1952 version for Erede. Musetta's Waltz lacks sparkle and does not take off. The three songs of Rossini's *Regata* are most enjoyable and Tebaldi conveys much, if not all, of the humor. The Spanish songs (as well as the Italian ones and the Richard Rodgers) tend to be a bit overpowering—*Granada* in particular—but there is still much to like.

Tebaldi fanciers will want it all. For the others, a single disc might have been enough.

RENATA TEBALDI: “A Tebaldi Festival.” WAGNER: *Tannhäuser: Dich, teure Halle; Allmächt'ge Jungfrau; Lohengrin: Elsa's Dream; Tristan und Isolde: Liebestod.* **BIZET:** *Carmen: Habanera; En vain pour éviter.* **SAINT-SAËNS:** *Samson et Dalila: Amours, m'aider; Mon cœur s'ouvre à ta voix.* **MASSENET:** *Manon: Adieu, notre petite table; L'Oiseau qui fuit.* **VERDI:** *Aida: Ritorna vincitor.* **PUCCINI:** *La Bohème: Musetta's Waltz.* **ROSSINI:** *La Regata Veneziana.* **LARA:** *Granada.* **POCE:** *Estrelita.* **CARDILLO:** *Catari, catari.* **TOSTI:** *A vucchella.* **DE CURTIS:** *Non ti scordar di me.* **RODGERS:** *Carousel: If I Loved You.* Renata Tebaldi, soprano; New Philharmonia Orchestra, Richard Bonyng and Anton Guadagno, conds. London OSA 1282, \$11.96 (two discs).

MARIA CALLAS: “La Divina.” BELLINI: *Norma: Casta diva; Dormono entrambi; I Puritani: Qui la voce . . . Vien, diletto.* **VERDI:** *Il Trovatore: D'amor sull'ali rosee; Ernani: Ernani, involami.* **ROSSINI:** *Il Turco in Italia: Non si da la follia; La Cenerentola: Nacqui all'affano . . . Non più mesta.* **DONIZETTI:** *Le Figlia del reggimento: Convien partir.* **MOZART:** *La Nozze di Figaro: Porgi amor.* **GLUCK:** *Alceste: Divinités du Styx.* **GOUNOD:** *Faust: Jewel Song.* **THOMAS:** *Hamlet: A vos jeux . . . Partegez-vous mes fleurs.* Maria Callas in conversation with Edward Downes. Maria Callas, soprano; Philharmonia Orchestra; Paris Conservatoire Orchestra; French National Radio Orchestra; Nicola Rescigno and Georges Pretre, cond. Angel SCB 3743, \$11.96 (three discs).

Must A Great Violinist Play In Tune?

by Robert C. Marsh



Yes, as
Zukerman
demonstrates

VIOLINISTS CAN BE DIVIDED into two groups: those who play precisely on pitch and those who do not. While there may be great artists in both groups, for my taste, tightly focused pitch is often the indispensable key to the highest levels of interpretive success.

Pinchas Zukerman has it. You can listen to him for the pure and simple pleasure that comes from hearing every note fall precisely in place as if it were governed by a crystal-controlled oscillator circuit. Of course there is more to Zukerman than that. Not only has he exceptional mastery of intonation, he has exceptional mastery of everything that goes into playing a violin—superb control of the bow and the ability to match tone quality with musical content through the sensitive application of vibrato.

In this debut recording, the Tchaikovsky Concerto

provides the best examples of the way in which Zukerman sees a phrase as a flowing sequence of tones, each of which must be produced in a slightly different manner—a little vibrato more or less, an adjustment in the bow, an unusually apt fingering—to yield the specific results he has in mind. His harmonics are accurate and gorgeous.

Significantly, when there is a slight departure from written pitch, it is upward, a revealing contrast to the legions of violinists who tend to play flat or conceal fuzzy intonation under a consistently wide vibrato. Zukerman knows how to produce beautiful sounds, but he also knows that tonal opulence means little unless guided by musicianship, and thus his response to a given passage always seems calculated in terms of his total view of the work. There is no show of fine fiddling for its own sake.

It follows that both these performances are extremely rewarding, among the best in the catalogue, both musically and (believe it if you will) intellectually stimulating to a high degree. The excitement obviously carried over to the orchestras and conductors involved. Dorati and the Londoners provide first-class support in the Tchaikovsky, and Bernstein, an exemplary Mendelssohn conductor when properly motivated, comes up with an unusually fine account of the orchestral portion of the Concerto. Both works are extremely well recorded, with the soloist forcefully projected without distorting the natural balances of the score.

This could be the most important debut recording of the season.

MENDELSSOHN: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in E minor, Op. 64. TCHAIKOVSKY: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in D, Op. 35. Pinchas Zukerman, violin; New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein, cond. (in the Mendelssohn); London Symphony, Antal Dorati, cond. (in the Tchaikovsky). Columbia MS 7313, \$5.98.

by Harris Goldsmith



Not if he's
Thibaud

THE STYLISTIC revolution, vis-à-vis performance practice, has affected string playing to an even greater degree than it has pianism. Over the years, the attitude toward shifting and sliding, in particular, has changed from one of warm tolerance to almost total self-denial. And today, while many fiddlers think nothing of using a wide vibrato, the extravagant yet genuinely musical portamento used here by Jacques Thibaud (1880–1953) would doubtlessly inspire derisive laughter from those same “enlightened” souls. Moreover, it cannot be denied

that Thibaud was not overly fond of practicing. The violinist's compatriot, Pierre Monteux, made it quite plain that Thibaud—a champion tennis player—far preferred that game to violinistic drudgery. And, to be sure, on this disc Thibaud does not always play in tune. Yet there is so much mind, heart, and intellect in these readings that I will gladly overlook all the squeezed tones and intonational lapses—and even the questionable cadenzas in the Concerto—for the joy of the performances.

I urge all sensible music lovers to hear this recording. If they can make allowances for the *démodé* instrumental address and also for the fact that Thibaud is rather off form in the Chausson, they will rediscover one of the century's sublime interpretive souls. Thibaud's sweet, pungent sound and exalted élan produce an elevated, aristocratic Mozart and a Chausson *Poème* with more genuine strength and less sentiment than one ordinarily hears.

Both accompaniments are sympathetic and unpolished, with Paray's Mozart the better of the two. The sound (from early postwar Polydor shellacs) is dated but kindly. The Mozart, especially, has a warm ambience behind its whiskers.

MOZART: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 3, in G, K. 216. CHAUSSON: Poème for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 25. Jacques Thibaud, violin; Lamoureux Orchestra, Paul Paray, cond. (in the Mozart); Eugène Bigot, cond. (in the Chausson). Turnabout TV 4257, \$2.98 (mono only).

classical

reviewed by

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HARRIS GOLDSMITH
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BACH: Magnificat in D, S. 243; Cantata No. 10, Meine Seel' erhebt den Herren! Elly Ameling, soprano; Hanneke van Bork, soprano; Helen Watts, alto; Werner Krenn, tenor; Tom Krause, bass; Marius Rintzler, bass. Vienna Academy Choir; Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra, Karl Münchinger, cond. London OS 26103, \$5.98.

The Magnificat, one of Bach's most popular works, receives a highly polished performance from Karl Münchinger, five topflight soloists, and a first-rate choir. For the first solo number, Münchinger has wisely chosen a mezzo (Hanneke van Bork) rather than the customary alto: Miss Van Bork manages the high tessitura with ease and agility—although I suspect that Helen Watts might well have been as successful here as she is in her beautifully turned performance of the lower-pitched *Esurientes*. In her aria, sung with bell-like purity and perfect coloratura, Elly Ameling proves once again to be the Bach soprano par excellence. In the Cantata, she carries off a vigorous and agitated aria stamped from the same florid mold as the solo Cantata, *Jauchzet Gott*, with confidence and élan. Krause, too, is especially attractive in this repertoire, and his one aria in the Magnificat is done with beautiful tone and expressivity. The weakest soloist is Marius Rintzler, who has only the one bass aria in the Cantata. He possesses a large, booming voice, of the sort that I associate with the mustache-twirling villain of an Italian opera. The sound is very impressive, but he is not always centered precisely on pitch; nor does he command the agility to manage the barn-storming effect Münchinger seems to be after.

The chorus is a rather large ensemble with a clean, open, assertive tone. Despite the fact that the women occasionally tend to use too much vibrato, they are very exciting in the Magnificat and in the energetic chorale fantasia that opens the Cantata.

London's recorded sound is spectacular and miles ahead of any other version. C.F.G.

BACH: Trio Sonatas: No. 1, in E flat, S. 525; No. 5, in C, S. 529. VIVALDI: Sonatas for Lute and Continuo: in C; in G minor. Julian Bream, lute; George Malcolm, harpsichord. RCA Red Seal LSC 3100, \$5.98.

Hats off to Julian Bream for editing these two Bach Trio Sonatas (probably organ works) for lute and harpsichord. He is not the first to adapt them; others have performed them in versions for violin/viola/clavier and violin/piano—and the temptation to have a go at different instrumentation is explained in a statement by Karl Geiringer: "The lack of a truly idiomatic organ style can hardly be overlooked. The thematic elaboration is that of the trio sonata for one or two solo instruments with basso continuo . . . it is debatable whether [certain] arrangements are not better suited to revealing the intricate beauties of these

superb works than Bach's own setting for the organ."

Mr. Geiringer gets *my* vote, and so does Bream. The sonatas come through magnificently here. The delicately contrasting timbres of lute and harpsichord seem wedded in a perfect union, tossing forth their imitative phrases with just the right amount of individuality, just the right amount of kinship. The fast movements cascade along with a natural momentum and complete continuity; the slow movements (especially that of No. 5) move at a lazy drift with an almost sinuous intertwining of lines. The recording manages to balance the instruments perfectly—something that, I would guess, is very difficult to do in an actual concert.

Vivaldi shows up rather shakily in such company. The textures sound thin, the writing repetitious. Bream and Malcolm make virtuoso display pieces out of both last movements—at a headlong pace quite out of keeping with Vivaldi's time but much in the spirit of ours. S.F.

BEETHOVEN: Sonatas for Piano: No. 13, in E flat, Op. 27, No. 1; No. 24, in F sharp, Op. 78; No. 31, in A Flat, Op. 110 (on VCS 10055); No. 12, in A flat, Op. 26 ("Marcia funebre"); No. 14, in C sharp minor, Op. 27, No. 1 ("Moonlight"); No. 25, in G, Op. 79 (on VCS 10056). Bruce Hungerford, piano. Cardinal VCS 10055/56, \$3.98 each (two discs).

The third and fourth installments of Hungerford's projected complete Beethoven sonata cycle for Vanguard/Cardinal uphold the very high musical standards set in the initial release last year. The Australian-born pianist is a scrupulous technician and an artist of rarefied goals. He has a superbly controlled virtuosity at his disposal, but rarely does he choose to show off his technique for its own sake. What makes him such a satisfying Beethovenian is the purity and discipline of his conceptions. For one thing, Hungerford is capable of all sorts of delicate colors and shading; yet his sonority retains a biting *secco* touch that allows those characteristic sforzandos to make a full effect. Hungerford shares this ascerbic quality with Kempff, Schnabel, and a few other renowned Beethoven players. Secondly, Hungerford is willing to take a chance with Beethoven's dramatic tempo contrasts. The middle section of the Op. 27, No. 1 first movement is as fast and eruptive as the composer would have

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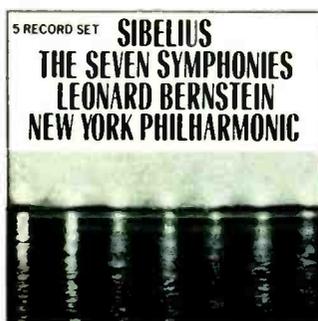
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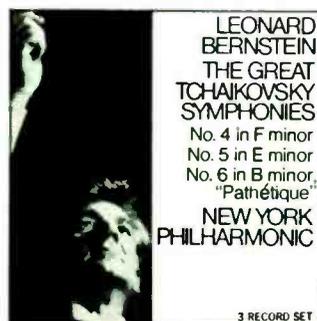
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wished, though the fingerwork and control are well-nigh faultless. Finally, there is an element of rhythmic discipline in these accounts that furthers the thrust and excitement of the writing without in the least diminishing its lyrical, expressive qualities. Here is a brief evaluation of each performance.

Op. 26. Not quite Hungerford at his best. The Andante of the theme and variations sounds a bit rigorous and heavy at this almost adagio tempo. Schnabel suggested a similar weight, but managed to be freer and less oppressively severe. The remaining movements, though, are admirably done.

Op. 27. No. 1. Aside from the already mentioned spurt in the first movement, Hungerford's truly *alla breve* rendering

of this Sonata's finale takes one's breath away. He also realizes to the full the fervor of the Adagio. A magnificent interpretation, admirably played.

Op. 27, No. 2. This is a beautiful *Moonlight*. The Adagio sostenuto first movement is on the brisk side, but also warm and flexible. The Allegretto is fleet and assured (with a minimum of rhythmic mauling at the phrase endings). Hungerford's achievement in the stormy finale is another high point. He uses very little pedal, thereby giving the muttering left-hand figurations a coiled, hypertense spring. The series of loud chords that end each phrase of the principal theme are purposefully agitated a bit for dramatic impact.

Op. 78. Hungerford does the first-

movement introduction in an expansive manner that prepares the listener for a broader, more-introspective-than-usual statement of this little gem. Once the Allegro is under way, the reading becomes brisk and alert. Though the tonal colorations are beautiful, I have heard this work played with even greater imaginative freedom and introspective shaping by Arrau, Serkin, Schnabel, Kempff, and one or two others.

Op. 79. Hungerford romps through this frothy Sonatina in an ebullient fashion. A first-class performance, ranking with the best.

Op. 110. A great work which is here given a cameolike presentation: everything is wonderfully wrought with a marvelously fleet and unaffected touch.

Introducing Anthony Newman

by Clifford F. Gilmore

HERE IS SURELY the freshest, most startlingly original debut recital to come along in many a day. Anthony Newman is neither a "romantic" nor a "purist" in the usual sense but, rather, exists in a unique world of his own: each of the six works on this disc offers a powerful example of a highly individual spirit at work. The opening measures of the Passacaglia generate a special kind of electricity telling us that this disc won't be an ordinary recital; and one soon discovers that Newman's technical mastery is the equal of any keyboard artist today. He also possesses a kind of wild-eyed impetuosity that makes each performance an unforgettable experience, whether or not one agrees with all his ideas.

Virtually every piece here is heavily ornamented, particularly those played on the pedal harpsichord. The C minor Fantasia offers the most flamboyant example: not a single measure passes without adjustments of some kind in the form of a wide variety of ornaments, double-dotting, and *notes inégales*. I've often wondered why no one has accepted the invitation to supply a cadenza eight measures from the end of the fugue of the C minor Passacaglia at the climactic Neapolitan chord—Newman does just this and executes it brilliantly. A similar cadenza graces the climax of the G major Fugue, at the fermata before the final stretto entries of the subject. For the most part, the ornaments and rhythmic alterations accurately adhere to the French styles of Couperin and Rameau. To my knowledge, no one has ever tried to apply this

style so extensively to Bach, but Newman brings it off with virtuosity and panache.

Other prominent features of these readings are Newman's rapid tempos and generous rubato; without exception, tempos range from fast to unbelievably fast. He paces the last movement of the Trio Sonata, for example, at about 132 quarter notes to the minute—Karl Richter seems speedy in this piece at 104 (DGG), and Walter Kraft (Vox) has difficulties in keeping up with his metronome setting of 92. It works brilliantly in this case, though, and Newman's is without doubt the most irresistibly exciting version of the Sonata I've heard. Harder to accept, perhaps, are his eccentric rubatos, which are present everywhere *except* in the Trio Sonata. Long-lined rubatos, in which phrase endings gradually accelerate or ritard need not be offensive, but here we have an irregularity of rhythm, often from beat to beat, which can only be described as jerky. More careful listening reveals that the irregularities are not simply random hesitations but are logically placed in an attempt to delineate phrases and subdivisions of phrases. In practice however the effect causes the G major Prelude and Fugue, in particular, to sound disjointed—even casual and flip.

Mr. Newman's Columbia debut also signals the debut of the new Von Beckerath organ in New York City. It is a fine three-manual tracker instrument of about forty stops, voiced in a strictly classical manner, and is one of the few instruments of its kind in this country. It is all the more to be regretted therefore that

Columbia has given it such disagreeably strident, shrill, and microscopically close-up recorded sound when in fact the organ has a much warmer and more resonant quality. The reproduction boasts great clarity, though, and anyone with a less perfectly secure technique than Newman's would be shown to poor advantage.

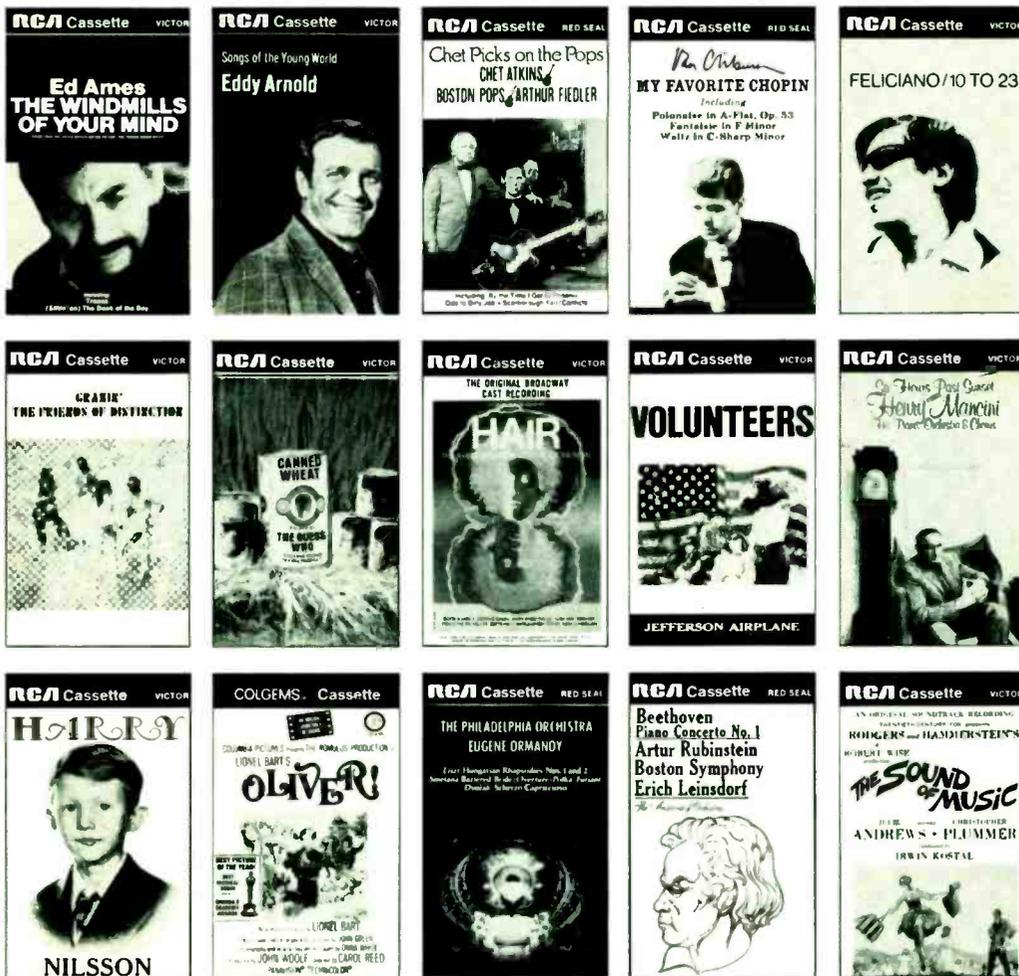
The harpsichords built by Eric Herz of Boston have a fine, warm, even, dark-hued sound, but when subjected to Columbia's larger-than-life recording techniques, the instruments sound more like the clanky Pleyel that Landowska was so fond of. Again, all the contrapuntal lines emerge cleanly but the sound is totally unreal.

Traditionalists beware: these performances have very little in common with the currently accepted approach to Bach; and yet this is by no means another show-off album for the latest young virtuoso in town. Anthony Newman has made a remarkable recording, and I recommend it highly.

BACH: Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor, S. 582; Fantasia and Fugue in C minor, S. 537; Prelude and Fugue in B minor, S. 544 (played on a pedal harpsichord built by Eric Herz of Boston); Prelude and Fugue in G, S. 541 ("Great"); Trio Sonata No. 1, in E flat, S. 525 (played on the Von Beckerath organ at St. Michael's Church, New York City); Fantasia and Fugue in G minor, S. 542 (played on the pedal harpsichord and organ). Anthony Newman, organ and pedal harpsichord. Columbia MS 7309, \$5.98.

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Other artists have perhaps suggested more of the metaphysical here (those amazing recitativos of the third movement, for instance), but rarely has the whole added up to a more imposing totality. Listen to the way Hungerford executes the accelerando in the Sonata's final two pages: has this ever been done with greater simplicity and less obvious calculation? Great music need not sound less great when played without pretense and "suffering"—a fact that all too many artists tend to forget. Bright, ringing, crystalline sound. H.G.

BERLIOZ: La Mort de Cléopâtre; Sara la baigneuse, Op. 11; Méditation religieuse, Op. 18, No. 1; La Mort d'Ophélie, Op. 18, No. 2. Anne Pashley, soprano (in Cléopâtre); St. Anthony Singers (in Opp. 11 and 18); English Chamber Orchestra, Colin Davis, cond. Oiseau-Lyre SOL 304, \$5.95.

It would be interesting to speculate on the reaction of the 1829 Prix de Rome judges if they had been told that Berlioz's *Mort de Cléopâtre*—to which they refused a prize—would still be listened to with attention and pleasure 140 years later. For that matter, the composer himself might have been somewhat nonplused by this news, for he never published the cantata, preferring to cannibalize its central section (for the *Chœur des Ombres in Lelio*) and a phrase from an earlier section (for *Benvenuto Cellini*). The piece is certainly worth its recent attention, especially for the dramatic and imaginative final pages. An earlier recording, by Jennie Tourel and Leonard Bernstein (Columbia CMS 6438) may not have been as vocally sumptuous as this new one, but Tourel's stylistic mastery, linguistic command, and dramatic sensitivity are not really approached by the talented Miss Pashley, nor does the recording bring out some crucial lower-register orchestral detail.

However, no Berliozian will want to be without this record, for the three



Hector Berlioz—three rarely performed choral works and *La Mort de Cléopâtre*.

choral works (all first recordings) are absolutely first-rate. *Sara la baigneuse*, a poem by Victor Hugo about an indolent young lady bathing in a pond, was first set for male quartet in 1834, but in 1850 Berlioz made the version at hand, for triple chorus and orchestra. Despite the nominal elaborateness of the choral forces, the setting is very delicate, with the subdivisions of the choruses separating and recombining in a variety of colors, the melodic line passing through different voices, and decorated all the while with short, light phrases in the instruments and the other voices. *Sara* partakes somewhat of the virtuosity of the *Queen Mab* Scherzo, and the performance, although a bit roughly recorded, brings out much of this quality.

The other two pieces form two thirds of the collection that Berlioz entitled *Tristia*; the third piece is the *Funeral March for the Last Scene of Hamlet*, an imposing piece of Shakespeareana that I trust will turn up in Davis' series. The *Méditation religieuse* dates from Berlioz' stay in Rome (he finally won the Rome Prize in 1830), but was rescored in 1849; a somber setting of lines by Thomas Moore, it is well made but not as imaginative as *La Mort d'Ophélie*, which was first written as a solo song (and so recorded by April Cantelo on Oiseau-Lyre SOL 305, reviewed last month). The version for female chorus and orchestra was made in 1848 and is vastly more effective, the weak piano tremolos transmuted into the rustling of muted strings, and the plaintive, obsessive refrain passed among the winds and violins. This piece is particularly well done in this recording, which is, all in all, a very desirable addition to the catalogue. Texts and translations are included on an insert. D.H.

BORODIN: Quartet for Strings, No. 2, in D—See Tchaikovsky: Quartet for Strings, No. 1, in D, Op. 11.

BRAHMS: Ein Deutesches Requiem, Op. 45; Vier ernste Gesänge, Op. 121. Montserrat Caballé, soprano; Sherrill Milnes, baritone; New England Conservatory Chorus; Boston Symphony Orchestra, Erich Leinsdorf, cond. (in the Requiem); Sherrill Milnes, baritone; Erich Leinsdorf, piano (in the songs). RCA Red Seal LSC 7054, \$11.96 (two discs).

Leinsdorf has always been fond of performing large choral works and one of his favorites is evidently the Brahms *German Requiem*. He gave the work quite frequently throughout his tenure as Boston's musical director, and finally recorded it during his last season with the BSO. His conception is poised, clear, and tasteful, with crisply precise orchestral work, two admirable soloists, and acceptable singing from the New England choristers. His tempos are sound, balances are excellent, and he avoids the cloying *Gemütlichkeit* that so many other musicians of Viennese origin deem *de rigueur* for this music.

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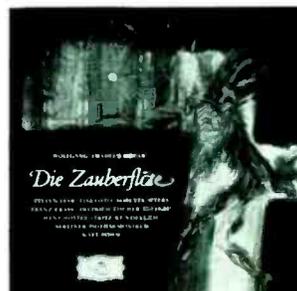
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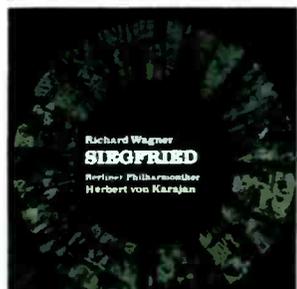
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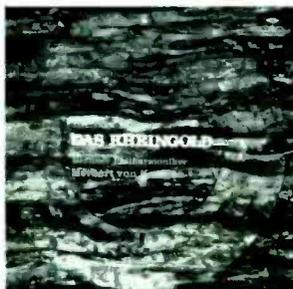
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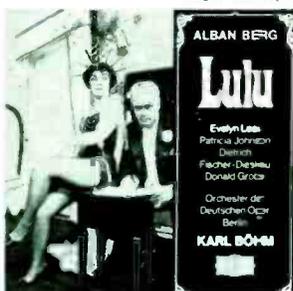
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I feel that I ought to like the performance better than I do. For the most part, however, I find Leinsdorf's well-intentioned direction rather antiseptic. He gets a finely arched line in the first section and brings out many relevant details, but there is something aesthetically strait-jacketed about his inflexible, metronomic beat. In the processional second movement, where the pulse ought to be carved out of granite, Leinsdorf, for all his exactitude, sounds stodgy and listless. Why does he permit his timpanist to use soft sticks here? Both Karajan (DGG) and Toscanini (Arturo Toscanini Society) insist upon hard sticks in this section, and the inexorable heartbeat comes across with fervent and, in Toscanini's case, shattering power. The Boston maestro's misplaced stringency at the end of this second movement vitiates any sense of a true climax and RCA's rather

arch effort to achieve a "churchly" effect through distant microphoning further aggravates the situation. The muscular sixth section also suffers from Leinsdorf's caution (though the engineering from the third movement onward does have more impact). At any rate, the quasi-contrapuntal writing here sounds much less effective under Leinsdorf than it does under the magnificently broad, muscular ministrations of both Karajan and Toscanini. Caballé sings her fifth-movement solo with lovely tone and impeccable lyricism, but Agnes Giebel and Ernest Ansermet are more appealing in their intimate, leisurely reading for London. All the conductors thus far mentioned do well with the fourth section, though Toscanini and Ansermet supply the sprightliest rhythmic pointing and instrumental detail. Sherrill Milnes is a tasteful artist, but he sounds a bit light

and reticent for an assignment that ideally calls for a weightier voice with a darker timbre such as Jerome Hines (Ormandy) or Herbert Janssen (Toscanini).

When Seraphim has made the masterful Kipnis/Gerald Moore version of the *Four Serious Songs* available once again for a pittance, there seems little reason to settle for any other edition. RCA's fourth-side filler in the present album is, nevertheless, not without interest. Most praiseworthy is Leinsdorf's work in the meaty keyboard part. His piano playing is incisive, authoritative, and directional. He is patently more interested in shape than in color, but the economy of means befits the prevailing grim mood of the music. Milnes too is admirably straightforward and disinclined to soften the severity as Fischer-Dieskau did (to cite the worst offender), although Milnes's young voice does tend to sound rather collegiate and raw. H.G.

Boulez' Debussy—Lucid and Illuminating

by David Hamilton

THIS IS PIERRE BOULEZ' first recording with the Cleveland Orchestra, of which he is currently principal guest conductor. Although the characteristic wind timbre of this orchestra is no more typically French than that of the New Philharmonia (who played for Boulez' first Debussy record), this is otherwise a remarkably fine recording. It would certainly be interesting some day to hear Boulez conduct a French orchestra in this music, for the sake of that leaner, brighter tone color that we hear, for example, in his recording of Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* (Nonesuch H 71093)—but, on the other hand, one can hardly imagine any present-day French orchestra rising to the heights of virtuosity exhibited here by the Clevelanders.

There is more to this than simply the ability to play together in intricate passages at fast tempos, although that certainly helps. The very first chord of *Ibéria* is a good touchstone of the precise balancing and refinement of attack and release that result from the Boulez ear and the players' supple response



to his instructions. First, there is absolute unanimity of attack. Next, the trumpets are carefully balanced within the chord so that their force of attack counts without dominating the sound—unlike Toscanini's recording, where they cover up the rest of the harmony and do not release fast enough. Then, the timpani notes are short and tight, so that they don't muddy the harmony—unlike Ansermet's recording (where the problem is compounded by a ragged attack on the first chord).

To a very large extent, this sort of thing is what conducting is about, and one could go through both sides of this record pointing out such details—except that they aren't merely "details." Sonorities are basic to these pieces, and if they don't really *sound*, the substance of the music isn't there at all. This is the most lucid and illuminating performance of the *Images* that I know, and the *Dances* are equally accomplished.

Some incidental points: when Boulez played the *Images* at his 1967 Cleveland concerts, he used the sequence *Rondes-Gigues-Ibéria*; for some reason this is reversed on the record. The program notes fail on two important matters, giving a wrong date of composition (it should be 1906-12), and omitting the fact that the orchestration of *Gigues* was completed by André Caplet because of Debussy's poor health in 1912.

DEBUSSY: Images for Orchestra; Dances sacrée et profane. Alice Chalifoux, harp (in *Dances*); Cleveland Orchestra, Pierre Boulez, cond. Columbia MS 7362, \$5.98.

HENSELT: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, in F minor, Op. 16. LISZT-LEWENTHAL: *Totentanz for Piano and Orchestra.* Raymond Lewenthal, piano; London Symphony Orchestra, Charles Mackerras, cond. **HENSELT: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, in F minor, Op. 16; Etudes Caractéristiques (12), Op. 2.** Michael Ponti, piano; Philharmonia, Othmar Maga, cond. For a feature review of these recordings, see page 87.

HENZE: Ode an den Westwind; Concerto for Violin and Orchestra. Wolfgang Schneiderhan, violin (in the Concerto); Siegfried Palm, cello (in the Ode); Orchestra of the Bavarian Radio, Hans Werner Henze, cond. Deutsche Grammophon 139382, \$5.98. Tape: 923103, \$6.95.

Both these concertos are examples of "early" Henze: the Violin Concerto dates from 1947 when the composer was twenty-one and the *Ode to the West Wind* (a cello concerto in all but name) was written six years later. If today's flashy fiddle virtuosos have not yet discovered Henze's Violin Concerto, the reason can only be sheer laziness. This is a juicy, sure-fire display vehicle that effectively digests the slashing rhythmic effects of early Stravinsky, intense Bartókian melodic lines, and a harmonic romanticism via Alban Berg. There's nothing especially original about this spicy, eclectic stew, but the music's racy vitality and the easy security of the young composer's manipulation of his materials are dazzling. Wolfgang Schneiderhan has been playing the piece for years and it's good to have his colorful, big-toned interpretation on disc at last. The brilliantly played accompaniment and DGG's flawless engineering leave nothing to the imagination.

The *Ode* is quite a different sort of piece. Each of its five movements are presumably meant to interpret the five stanzas of Shelley's poem (the one that concludes with the familiar optimistic

observation, "If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?"). Here Henze is wearing his avant-garde hat—or at least what seemed fashionably avant-garde in 1953. The large orchestra is used in a chamberlike fashion, supplying pointillistic dabs of color around the solo cello which declaims, sings, and occasionally simply meanders through a maze of Webernesque gestures. Although Henze manages to sustain interest with his flair for sensuous orchestration and his clever development of rhythmic patterns, the work seems to stand still—certainly it bears very little relation to the fantasy and vibrant imagery of Shelley's words. One can now see why the composer never proceeded further in this direction for he hardly appears comfortable working in the idiom. Again, the performance is a fine one, and Siegfried Palm surmounts the difficult solo part with ease, drawing as much expression from the music as he possibly can. P.G.D.

been forced into this decision, he could in later years have changed his mind (as he changed his mind about many other things). The significant fact is that he didn't. I therefore insist that the Symphony in the four-movement form of the Gesellschaft edition of 1967 should be regarded as representative of the composer's final thought about the design of this work. If the cultists are going to try to force performers and recording artists to restore the form of 1894, what we may need is a society to protect Gustav Mahler from his admirers: or, as the saying goes, with friends like this, who needs enemies?

I do not mean that an occasional performance or recording of the five-movement form is to be condemned. Quite the contrary, especially if the results are of the level that Ormandy achieves here. What I insist is that this should not become a new critical paradigm for the performance of this work.

The *Blumine* movement was initially recorded on Odyssey by the New Haven



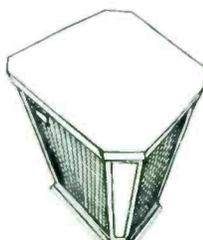
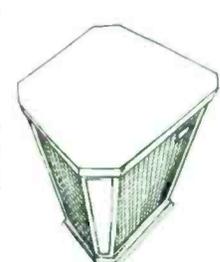
Eugene Ormandy projects Mahler with melting emotionalism and eloquence.

MAHLER: Symphony No. 1, in D. Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond. RCA Red Seal LSC 3107, \$5.98. Tape: RK 1133, \$6.95.

The division between the Mahler cult and Mahler scholarship is clearly evident in the present state of the First Symphony.

What the cultists want to hear is a five-movement Symphony No. 1 with a double exposition in the opening movement. This, they feel, is the real McGustav. The scholar must protest that Mahler, in twenty-five years as a conductor and composer of increasing reputation, did not follow these performance practices. Although the double bars for the repeat appeared in the printed score, there is reliable contemporary evidence that Mahler did not observe them in his own later performances. Moreover, the *Blumine* movement (second in the original sequence of the score) was dropped after 1894 and there is no evidence that Mahler wanted it restored. Even if, as a young composer, he had

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sions of the score (Solti or Walter) or simply sticking with New Haven all the way. The recording is technically unspectacular, but adequate.

Ormandy projects the mauve decade romanticism of the *Blumine* movement through the entire work, with melting emotionalism in the trio of the (now renumbered) third movement and the most completely prettified hunter's funeral I can recall. (It's supposed to be ironic—Mahler never left any doubts about that.)

The first movement (with a single statement of the exposition) is remarkable for the quality and energy of the ensemble-playing, but the style is highly emotional. Here, and in the finale, one is obliged to think of a remark by the late Hans Rosbaud, that Mahler must "sound Austrian." Ormandy's passions, though eloquent, appear to be geographically misplaced.

Thus the primary strengths of the recording are its consistency, making it the ideal choice for anyone who wants to see Mahler from this viewpoint, and its flattering sound which, perhaps more than any other recent RCA set, justifies the return to the Academy of Music and shows that the engineers are learning to work successfully in that environment.

R.C.M.

MENDELSSOHN: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in E minor, Op. 64. TCHAIKOVSKY: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in D, Op. 35. Pinchas Zukerman, violin; New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein, cond.; London Symphony, Antal Dorati, cond. For a feature review of this recording, see page 91.

MOZART: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 3, in G, K. 216. CHAUS-SON: Poème for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 25. Jacques Thibaud, violin; Lamoureux Orchestra, Paul Paray and Eugène Bigot, cond. For a feature review of this recording, see page 91.

MOZART: Symphony No. 40, in G minor, K. 550. SCHUMANN: Symphony No. 4, in D minor, Op. 120. London Symphony Orchestra, Antal Dorati, cond. Mercury SR 90511, \$5.98.

The Mozart performance here may well be a reissue of the recording paired with Haydn's *Farewell* Symphony and issued several years ago. (A still older Dorati reading, with the Minneapolis, was available in prestereo days coupled with Mendelssohn's *Italian*.) Whether new or remastered, the present performance retains its distinction: Dorati has seldom done such distinguished work for the phonograph. This is not a G minor bursting with such molten passion and energy as, say, the recent Casals, nor is it a completely solemn, melancholy statement either. Dorati strives for straightforward, unaffected delicacy and achieves his quest with notable success. The first movement is rather moderate in tempo and neatly pointed. The slow movement flows gravely and quietly and the minuet, taken

at an unusually jaunty clip, is mercurial and almost understated. In the finale, Dorati observes the repeat of the opening section. Beecham, in his old London Philharmonic version, pursued a similar path, if memory is accurate. So does Benjamin Britten, whose recent London disc has the questionable virtue of containing every last repeat—even the one in the second movement. I most admire a passionate, emotional G minor myself, such as the Casals, the Turnovsky (Crossroads), the Furtwängler (Odeon), or the long-vanished Toscanini 78s. But in its own class, I think that Dorati's smoothly, brightly reproduced disc is pre-eminent.

The overside Schumann is completely new and, alas, rather perfunctory. Dorati, to be sure, gets good playing from his forces, but his broadly accented reading is a bit square and prosaic. Must his phrasing in the first movement be so cut and dried? And couldn't that little violin solo in the central part of the second section have been shaped with greater allure and poetry? Dorati also earns a black mark in the coda of the finale by slowing down at the point where Schumann has clearly indicated *schneller*; indeed, Dorati virtually halves the tempo here, and completely nullifies any sense of cumulative exhilaration. I also felt uncomfortable with Dorati's exceedingly brisk tempo for this last movement: it creates a rather disjointed effect after the broad, almost cumbersome speeds adopted in the earlier portions of the score. The reproduction is quite smooth and very clear—but I found the string tone a bit scraggly and lacking in nuances for such a romantic work. H.G.

PAGANINI: Concertos for Violin and Orchestra: No. 1, in D, Op. 6; No. 2, in B minor, Op. 7. Shmuel Ashkenasi, violin; Vienna Symphony, Herbert Esser, cond. Deutsche Grammophon 139424, \$5.98. Tape: ●● L 9424, 7½ ips, \$7.95.

There's no mistaking the fact that Shmuel Ashkenasi has what it takes to render Paganini as writ: superb bow control, a sweet tone, fine intonation, a formidable left hand. The trouble is he tends to put too much into this music. Paganini is so heavily seasoned as it is that an overdose of rubato, a bit too much portamento in the lyric passages, an even slightly overwrought rhythmic emphasis, and you've tipped the scales into sheer camp. I found this occasionally happened in Concerto No. 1 (that second theme really *can* touch the heart if it is allowed to sing in a simple kind of way): Concerto No. 2 offers less temptation along these lines, and seemed much less self-conscious.

Meanwhile, though Paganini may be slighted here and there, Ashkenasi himself comes through as the master of almost any technical challenge that is put before him, and the Vienna Symphony provides exceptionally clean, crisp, and well-balanced accompaniments. S.F.

PALESTRINA: Veni sponsa Christi (antiphon, motet, and Mass); Hymnus in

CIRCLE 1 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Adventu Dei; Jesu rex admirabilis; Exultate Deo; Tua Jesu Dilectio; Magnificat VI toni. Choir of St. John's College, Cambridge, George Guest, cond. Argo ZRG 578, \$5.95.

Palestrina's *Missa Veni sponsa Christi* is called, in musicological parlance, a parody Mass, a work based on a pre-existent polyphonic composition—in this case the composer's own motet. As this motet, in turn, draws its melodies from the original Gregorian antiphon *Veni sponsa Christi*, we have the opportunity here of seeing this charming and simple melody grow into a complex and wonderful organism before our very eyes—or more properly ears—for Argo presents the antiphon, the motet, and finally the Mass in that order. The effect of organic expansion is heightened by the parody technique of the Mass itself. The initial Kyrie quotes the motet model almost verbatim, while in later movements Palestrina expands each of the themes by skillful contrapuntal spinning, creating a larger and more elaborate web. The variety of treatment within the very limited confines presented by the original material is amazing. Each movement, for example, opens with the same melodic motive from the beginning of the antiphon and the motet, but in the Gloria this takes the form of a jaunty duo, while an open blend of luminous sound supports the Sanctus.

Palestrina's real masterpieces were his Masses, but he was such a consummate musician that everything he wrote shows the finished touch of a craftsman. His hymn settings (three are included here) are the equal of Dufay's in their exquisite simplicity. *Exultate Deo* is a joyous motet of somewhat subdued brilliance compared to other contemporary settings—Palestrina never sought to rival the more outspoken emotion of composers like Lasso or Victoria. The Magnificat, one of Palestrina's thirty-five essays in that form, is a well-made work but perhaps the least interesting item on this release. The alternate plainsong verses, however, add a note of variety.

George Guest is a masterful conductor of this repertoire. I commented some time ago on the extraordinarily expressive singing he elicited from the Choir of St. John's College, Cambridge, on their recording of the Victoria Requiem. Although Palestrina's style precludes the choir's emotional approach on that earlier release, the purity of tone and musical sensibility of the ensemble are still unsurpassed. I have only one complaint: Argo has supplied a beautiful-sounding disc complete with notes, texts, and translations but encased in a flimsy paper wrapper—as if no one would want to keep this marvelous package for more than a few months. S.T.S.

PROKOFIEV: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 5, in G, Op. 55—See Weill: Kleine Dreigroschenmusik.

RILEY: Poppy Nogood and the Phantom Band; A Rainbow Curved in Air. Terry

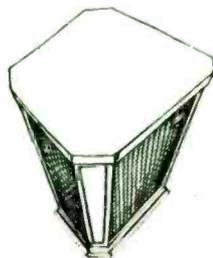
Riley, various instruments. Columbia MS 7315, \$5.98.

Poppy Nogood and the Phantom Band is one of the season's masterpieces. It is a long work for soprano saxophone and electric organ, both presumably played by Riley, but not, presumably, all at once. He is a great virtuoso on the soprano saxophone, which he plays like no one else in the world—with a big, full-bodied tone and astonishing nimbleness. Here it has a sustained, quavery, somewhat Oriental sound: the *tarogato* which inspired so much of Bartók must have sounded like that, but nothing in Hungarian music could be much like the solid wall of tone with which Riley's electric organ backs up his saxophone. Few things on records make so impressive a case for the composer as performer as this grand, solid, somber score.

A Rainbow Curved in Air is less impressive. It takes its title from a poetic vision of the future, apparently by Riley himself. It is a hippie version of *The Big Rock Candy Mountain*, and it is for electric organ, electric harpsichord, rock-sichord, dumbec, and tambourine, once again all played by Riley. (What is a rocksichord and what is a dumbec?) The optimism of the poem dictates a fabric very much—and somewhat monotonously—major in mode and harmony, and the color of the electronic instruments is all on the artificial side. This is plastic music; it's just too good to be true. A.F.

SCHARWENKA: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1, in B flat minor, Op. 32. BALAKIREV: Reminiscences of

Continued on page 106



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Monteverdi's Magnificent Musical Drama

by Susan Thiemann Sommer

IF YOU DON'T already own a recording of this superb pathbreaking opera, you will probably want to after hearing Telefunken's brilliant new edition. Although billed as the first complete version with authentic instruments, Harnoncourt's approach is very similar to both August Wenzinger's fine Archive recording of some years ago (now deleted) and the recent Musical Heritage release conducted by Michel Corboz. All three performances share a restrained interpretation with proper respect for Monteverdi's orchestration and sparing use of ornamentation. Telefunken and Archive rejoice in magnificent casts, perfectly equipped to handle both the musical and dramatic demands of a comparatively unfamiliar style; Musical Heritage's weaker casting is compensated by the thrilling Orfeo of Eric Tappy. After carefully listening to the three versions, however, I would give Telefunken the edge in most details.

When one considers *Orfeo's* tautly constructed plot, the myriad forms of musical expression, the flexible rhythms and jarring harmonies which underline the dramatic and emotional meaning of the text, it seems impossible that Monteverdi had virtually no models to draw on as he framed this new musico-dramatic form. True, he used the musical language of his day, but *Orfeo* is light years from its nearest rival, Jacopo Peri's musically constructed setting of *Euridice*. It is a measure of Monteverdi's achievement that, with over 350 years of later operas sounding in one's ears, one can and does compare *Orfeo* with the best of them. Even the one missing ingredient—the great melodic sweep

familiar to us from Verdi, Mozart, and Puccini, and which Monteverdi himself introduced in the melting lyricism of his later operas—is here in a nascent form. You may hear it in the ritornellos and especially in Orfeo's two songs, "*Vi ricordi o boschi ombrosi*" with its lilting triple meter and closed form, and the exuberant "*Quale onor di te fia degno*," where Orfeo, overjoyed at regaining Euridice, breaks into an enthusiastic melody of a distinctly Verdian cast.

The great moments in the opera are the dramatic ones—the arrival of the messenger in the midst of the wedding celebrations with news of Euridice's death; Orfeo's bitter grief and the despair of "*Tu se' morta*"; and, one of the most touching moments in all opera, Euridice's cry "*Ahi vista troppo dolce*," when Orfeo looks back at her and loses his wife forever.

The big role of course is Orfeo, who is on stage for almost the entire opera and sings over half the music in the last three acts. The vocal range of the part is rather narrow (about an octave and a half), and the tessitura is often quite low. It is natural, therefore, to assign Orfeo to a baritone. Lajos Kozma is a tenor, and closer, I think, to the quality that Monteverdi probably had in mind for the role. The middle and lower parts of his voice are firm; the top opens out into a ringing head tone that makes phrases like Orfeo's final plea to Charon, "*Ahi sventurato amante*," particularly exciting. Although Kozma lacks the passion of Eric Tappy's Orfeo, the robust quality of his voice suggests a more virile hero. In moments of dramatic intensity Kozma gives a little extra bite to

his consonants and shades his lines slightly more dramatically than Helmut Krebs on the Archive version, though neither singer really explores the full emotional potential of the role. Kozma is at his very best in the bravura show-piece "*Possente spirito*," and copes brilliantly with each florid, rhapsodic strophe. His performance captures something of the spirit that must have kept the Mantuan and Florentine courts spellbound when a Caccini or a Peri sang.

The other roles are equally well cast and match or surpass their counterparts on Archive (Musical Heritage doesn't even compete in this department). Three ladies share six female roles and it is fascinating to see how each of them has managed to differentiate the separate characters. Cathy Berberian plays the Messenger not as a god-sent herald of doom but as a shy and hesitant girl overcome with the bad news she must bring Orfeo. A shepherd does describe her as "gentle Sylvia," one of Euridice's girl friends, but I had never suspected this human side to her character before. As Speranza, Miss Berberian is somewhat more majestic, as befits this allegorical personage. Eiko Katanosaka convinces as both a light soprano soubrette (*La Ninfa*) and a warm-voiced mezzo (*Proserpina*), while Rotraud Hansmann's touching humanity as the luckless Euridice is in sharp contrast to her impersonal *La Musica* of the prologue. Charon and Pluto are splendid in their infernal roles. That both Archive and Telefunken could find basses to cope with the tessitura of Charon's part is extraordinary—that they are both so good is a miracle.

Monteverdi was quite careful in describing the constituency and use of the large, diverse orchestra available to him in Mantua for the first performance in 1607. Festival productions in princely courts regularly featured a great variety of instruments and the most famous virtuosos in Italy had been summoned for this occasion. Monteverdi divided the ensemble into two choirs to symbolize the realms of the earthly (strings and recorders) and the infernal (trumpets and cornetts). Continuo instruments were chosen both for variety and their suitability as accompaniment for particular characters. The low buzzing of the regal, for example, perfectly conjures up the menacing figure of Charon. Harnoncourt assigns most of Orfeo's accompaniment to the harp, a happy choice musically as well as symbolically since the broken chords on the harp contrast nicely with the stolid progressions of the little organ, another stalwart of the continuo section. Telefunken's stereo layout sets earth and its representatives on the left, the underworld and its inhabitants on the right, an arrangement that further enhances these instrumental contrasts. As we have come to expect, Harnoncourt's ensemble is superb. The string tone in particular is outstanding: soft yet clear, producing a chamberlike ambience wholly appropriate to a work that was originally intended for performance in a

Continued on page 104

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

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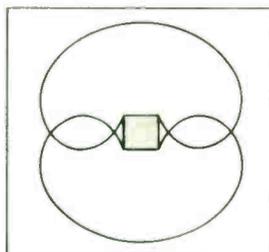


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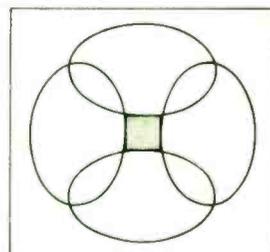
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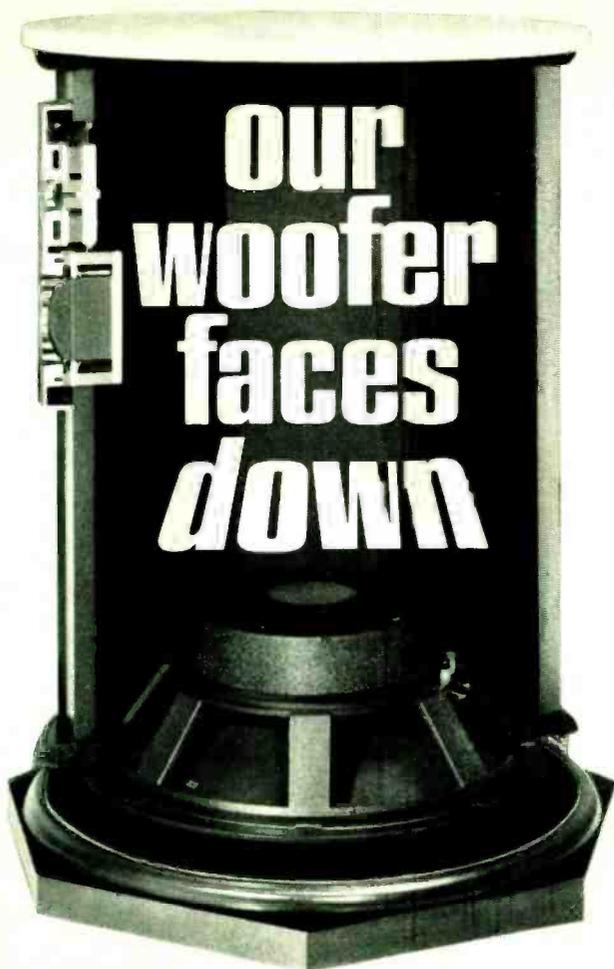
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MONTEVERDI *Continued*

very small hall. The recorded sound, I should mention, is glorious.

Like Wenzinger and Corboz, Harnoncourt is cautious if not downright ascetic in his application of vocal ornamentation. The conductor argues in the liner notes that since Monteverdi went to the trouble of writing out what decoration he wanted (in some places), he obviously didn't want anything further added. Yet the contrast between the spots where the composer did specify particular embellishments and the great bald patches where he did not, strongly suggests to me that he expected some sort of cadential ornamentation but wasn't especially concerned about which of the standard formulas the singers elected to use. Moreover it seems like a waste of a splendid opportunity, given the extraordinary abilities of the cast. Cathy Berberian's trillo (a trill not on two notes but on one) is absolutely perfect; I long to hear it more often.

Harnoncourt's second argument against ornamentation is equally familiar but, I suspect, more treacherous. "In our opinion," he says, "embellishment should be applied even more sparingly in a recording since every improvisation is fundamentally something unique which, when heard again . . . becomes ridiculous." Surely discreet cadential formulas and expressive trills are no more ridiculous than the extravagant ornaments Monteverdi wrote out for "*Possente spirito*." What underlies Harnoncourt's statement, however, is the assumption that a recording is not a performance caught as it might exist in time, but a ponderously authoritative permanent record. This dangerous approach could lead to some pretty deadly results—I foresee Rameau and Couperin without ornaments, expressionless Chopin played without rubato, the *Art of Fugue* on a computer—all to preserve the purity of the text.

Telefunken has assigned each of the five acts to one side, and instead of filling out Side 6 with an appropriate selection of madrigals, songs, or dances, we are given a lecture in German on the instrumentation chosen for the performance. This is fine for practicing your German—Harnoncourt speaks slowly and clearly and is much easier to understand than I had expected—but still rather redundant since most of the information is available in the excellent notes.

MONTEVERDI: Orfeo. Rotraud Hansmann (s), Euridice and La Musica; Eiko Katanosaka (s), Proserpina and La Ninfa; Cathy Berberian (ms), Messaggiera and La Speranza; Lajos Kozma (t), Orfeo; Nigel Rogers (t), Pastor 2 and Spirito 1; Kurt Equiluz (t), Pastor 3 and Spirito 2; Günther Theuring (ct), Pastor 1; Max van Egmond (b), Apollo, Pastor 4, and Spirito 3; Nikolaus Simonsky (bs), Caronte; Jacques Villisech (bs), Plutone; Capella Antiqua; Concentus Musicus, Nikolaus Harnoncourt, cond. Telefunken SKH 21, \$17.85 (three discs).

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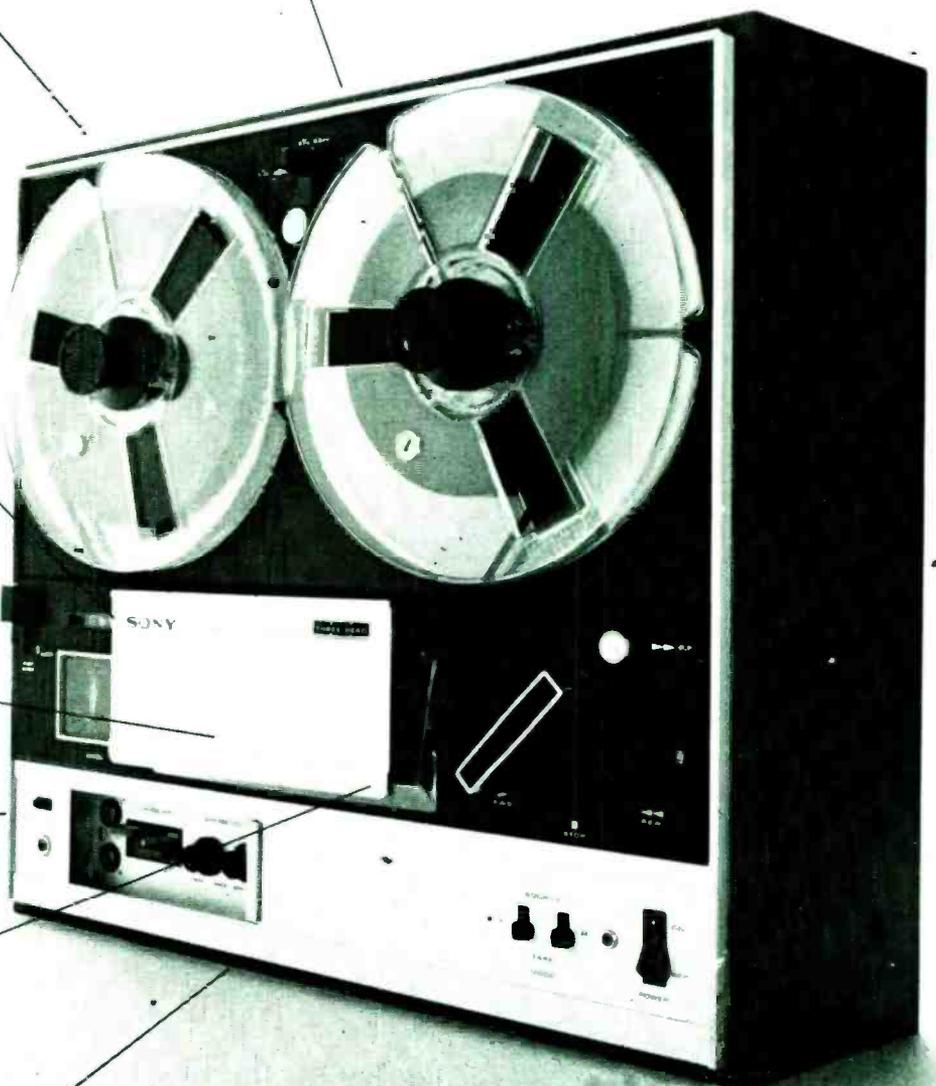
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Glinka's Opera "A Life for the Tsar."
MEDTNER: Improvisation, Op. 31, No. 1. D'ALBERT: Scherzo, Op. 16, No. 2. Earl Wild, piano; Boston Symphony Orchestra, Erich Leinsdorf, cond. For a feature review of this recording, see page 87.

SCHOENBERG: Chamber Symphony, Op. 9; Variations for Orchestra, Op. 31. Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, Zubin Mehta, cond. London CS 6612, \$5.98.

Now that we have five recordings of Schoenberg's First Chamber Symphony in its original fifteen-instrument version, perhaps someone will turn his attention to Opus 9b, the composer's own re-scoring for full orchestra. The problems of balance in the first version—string quintet against eight winds (including two horns)—are serious, and the later version not only simplifies these, but gives the entire work a larger and more comfortable dynamic range.

In any case, Mehta's performance adds very little to our knowledge of the original, except to underline, by negative example, the extreme importance of really precise ensemble and accurate intonation. It isn't very well recorded, either—a dull and woolly sound, quite uncharacteristic of London's usual product.

The full orchestra sound, as recorded in the Variations, is different, but not much better; these complex textures require much more focus. I don't care much for this aimless, rather fuzzy performance; Craft's is distinctly preferable, even if his orchestra is undermanned. Perhaps Vox/Candide will let us have the Rosbaud radio tape on German Wergo 60013 which, although not really well recorded, does show a firm grasp of the piece's long line. These two works are very important, but nothing less than superlative playing and persuasive interpretation will convey this to the as-yet-unconverted. D.H.

SCHUBERT: Lieder—See Schumann: Frauenliebe und Leben, Op. 42.

SCHUBERT: Symphonies: No. 8, in B minor, D. 759 ("Unfinished"); No. 9, in C, D. 944; Overtures: Die Zwillingsbrüder, D. 647; "In the Italian Style," in D, D. 590; "In the Italian Style," in C, D. 591; Alfonso and Estrella, D. 732. Menuhin Festival Orchestra, Yehudi Menuhin, cond. Angel S 36609 and S 36626, \$5.98 each.

Menuhin crowns his recorded cycle of the Schubert symphonies with an attractive account of the *Great C* major. We are given none of the perversities of pace and accent that mar Furtwängler's account; tempos are not only rather brisk in the Toscanini manner, they also (like Toscanini's) intelligently relate different sections and transitional passages one to the other. And if you're dubious about hearing this heroic work performed by

a chamber orchestra, I can assure you that the forces here, while not overly large, are by no means puny. I doubt if Bruno Walter's final Columbia Symphony version used any larger complement of players. Menuhin's prevailing blend of classical purity and easygoing yet precise technical discipline rather reminds me of Kubelik's fine, bygone edition with the Royal Philharmonic.

Menuhin's *Unfinished* shares with the excellent Klemperer an observance of the first movement repeat. His reading is clean limbed, moderately paced in the first movement, and rather brisk in the second. While there is less vibrant drama and ferocity than one finds in the magnificently impassioned Casals account recently issued by Columbia in its "Music from Marlboro" series, the beloved melodies sing here in a lyrical, unfettered fashion. The four rarely heard overtures on Side 2 are agreeable makeweights: *Die Zwillingsbrüder* is particularly inventive and convincing.

Now that Maestro Menuhin has recorded all of the "standard" Schubert symphonies, dare we hope that he will see fit to give us a much needed up-to-date record of the attractive and utterly neglected Symphony No. 7, in E, orchestrated by Felix Weingartner? H.G.

SCHUMANN: Concerto for Cello and Orchestra, in A minor, Op. 129. TCHAIKOVSKY: Variations on a Rococo Theme, Op. 33; Pezzo Capriccioso, Op. 62. Maurice Gendron, cello; Vienna Symphony, Christoph von Dohnanyi, cond. World Series PHC 9114, \$2.98.

Schumann's sole concerto for cello has never enjoyed the adulation and respect accorded his Piano Concerto. Yet it is an agreeable opus, imbued with a ripe and free lyricism that is quite remarkable in the light of the composer's frightening and sorrowful insanity at the time of the work's composition. The second movement is top-drawer Schumann in its beautifully articulated, introspective songfulness.

Cellist Gendron is second to none in his ability to make the cello sing; one is always moved rather than merely "impressed" by his lyrical playing and ever-present warmth of conception. These execrable qualities are tailor-made for the emotional demands of Schumann's Concerto and, not surprisingly, Gendron's performance is entirely winning. In its utterly nonaggressive way (and here Starker represents the antithetical approach) Gendron has placed this Concerto in its most attractive perspective: here is an honesty and unaffected flow of sentiment that can't fail to enchant.

Tchaikovsky's fine set of variations and the *Pezzo Capriccioso* are treated similarly, and once again the results are rewarding. Gendron produces an endearingly lovely tone and ties the seven variations together as one heartfelt sigh. Even in the final bustling codalike variation Gendron's deft and light fingerwork serves to bolster the song element rather than the virtuoso writing.

The sound is pleasant though definitely not of the demonstration record variety. Surfaces are OK. S.L.

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SCHUMANN: Frauenliebe und Leben, Op. 42. SCHUBERT: Lieder: An die Musik, Lachen und Weinen, Die Forelle, Seligkeit, Frühlingstraube, Heidenröslein, Ave Maria, Liebhaber in allen Gestalten. Teresa Stich-Randall, soprano; Robert Jones, piano. Westminster WST 17160, \$5.98.

Teresa Stich-Randall's voice has taken on a darker coloration with the years, and her performance of the Schumann cycle benefits from it. Avoiding the extremes of twittering detachment or lugubrious overimmersion, she steers a middle course, never less than completely poised, yet always committed. Throughout her career, Miss Stich-Randall's trademark has been one of formidable refinement, in the artistic sense as well as in her almost uncanny intonation. This serves her well in the more introspective Schumann work, which she illumines with a well-considered variety of dynamic gradations.

But in the freewheeling innocence of the Schubert songs, something is lost in such an approach. Spontaneity, extroversion, a sense of freshness: all of these must be conveyed if we are to get anything from another hearing of *Die Forelle* or *Seligkeit*. Instead, Miss Stich-Randall indulges far too much in overrefined warbling. The vocal technique itself becomes a bit distracting when, in her leaps to the upper register, she produces a squeezed canarylike sound quite different from the tone she had employed on the previous note.

Unlike the singer, pianist Robert Jones proves unmusical on *both* sides of the record. His fault, that of brittle inexpressiveness, is almost ruinously incongruous with the subtlety and restrained passion of the soprano's Schumann. J.H.

SCHUMANN: Symphony No. 4, in D minor, Op. 120—See Mozart: Symphony No. 40, in G minor, K. 550.

SHCHEDRIN: The Humpbacked Horse: Second Suite. Bolshoi Theater Orchestra, Algis Zuraitis, cond. Melodiya/Angel SR 40106, \$5.98.

Although Shchedrin's first ballet was not staged until the 1959-60 season, it was composed in 1955—the year of the gifted young composer's graduation from the Moscow Conservatory. As might be expected from his later sensational *Carmen* Ballet, this first recorded representation of the earlier work is most remarkable for its highly imaginative and colorful instrumentation. The thematic materials are considerably less distinctive, to be sure, but Shchedrin never seems to lack for at least usable ideas; and while, like most brilliant orchestrators, he often relies too heavily on effects, his consistently animated and evocative score commands the attention, and obviously must be theatrically arresting when staged. Less controversial than the Shchedrin-Bizet *Carmen* disc (which I reviewed just a year ago in these pages), the present release

should please not only balletomanes but a more general audience. Its strictly musical qualities are persuasively enhanced by Zuraitis' fine performance, the admirably transparent stereo recording, and jacket notes which tell the charming story of the ballet in some detail.

R.D.D.

SOR: Etudes for Guitar (24). Narcisco Yepes, guitar. Deutsche Grammophon 139364, \$5.98.

This disc is a good representation not only of Sor's art but of Yepes'. The performances are poised, shapely, serene, straightforward, totally accurate. Yepes doesn't go in much for color, and in general he understates, not out of timidity but out of confidence. He doesn't generate the excitement of John Williams, who has recorded many of these same etudes for Westminster, but he deserves respect. He also gives a goodly amount of pleasure. Sor explored all kinds of guitaristic problems, at least the problems that arose within his classical framework, and there is a soothing fascination in following this item-by-item display of rocking accompaniments, running double stops, chordal progressions, and jaunty march tunes, punctuated—very occasionally—by a little burst of fireworks.

DGG makes a mistake in not telling us something about the monster eleven-string guitar Yepes is tuning in the cover photo. It is an instrument he has developed himself with certain practical advantages in mind, but what they are, we are left to guess. S.F.

STRAUSS, R.: Tod und Verklärung, Op. 24. WAGNER: Siegfried Idyll. San Francisco Symphony, Pierre Monteux, cond. RCA Victorla VICS 1457, \$2.98.

When Pierre Monteux died in 1964 he left a number of unreleased recordings including two with the San Francisco Symphony, the orchestra he led with distinction for seventeen seasons ending in 1952. The Wagner was issued some months ago as Side 2 of the Monteux/London Symphony disc of the Beethoven Fourth Symphony, but the Strauss is new to the catalogue. Moreover, it is the only representation of that composer in the Monteux discography, a strange state of affairs for a conductor who performed this part of the literature so well and for so many years.

Whether you want to regard it as a bargain, pure and simple, or a historic set of uncommon appeal, the maître's last word from San Francisco is a particularly eloquent illustration of how well a French conductor can play German music. The Strauss is impassioned and achieves a sense of nobility in the final pages rather than the romantic hokum some performances offer. Baby Siegfried is serenaded in loving strains that suggest an affectionate *grandpère* is in charge. The sound of both recordings is thoroughly acceptable for the early Fifties, providing a strong sense of presence. For the many to whom memories of Pierre Monteux will always be evoca-

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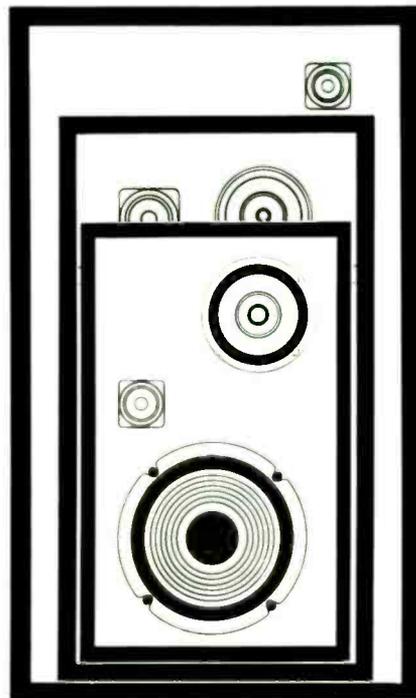
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Rectilinear

tions of great nights in the concert room, this is a legacy to be cherished. R.C.M.

TCHAIKOVSKY: Quartet for Strings, No. 1, in D, Op. 11. **BORODIN:** Quartet for Strings, No. 2, in D. Drolc Quartet. Deutsche Grammophon 139425, \$5.98. Tape: ●● L 9425, 7 1/2 ips, \$7.95.

This is *the* Tchaikovsky Quartet—with the Andante cantabile—just as the Borodin is *the* one with the *Notturmo*. Both movements, Stokowski-ized for string orchestra, have long led independent lives apart from the larger work in which they were first cast. However, in both cases the composer's ideas seem to be best expressed in their original quartet form. Stereo versions of the Borodin are not scarce, but this is the only two-channel edition of the Tchaikovsky currently available.

Hearing this music as the Drolc Quartet plays it, one is reminded that the Borodin was harmonically adventurous for its day; this music gives a convincing testimonial to the potential of its composer, had he been able to borrow more time from science for music. Tchaikovsky, in contrast, was always more academic and professional, although there is a youthful freshness and charm to this quartet that is rare in his later music. (The work falls chronologically between the first two symphonies.)

The Drolc performances are extremely well recorded and reveal a stylistic balance that makes good use of the Russian flavoring in the material without the self-consciousness and exaggeration of an artificial Slavic manner. The over-all refinement of the playing and the sensitive, well-polished phrases are the hallmarks of a first-class group performing music with both mastery and respect. R.C.M.

TCHAIKOVSKY: Variations on a Rococo Theme, Op. 33; Pezzo Capriccioso, Op. 62—See Schumann: Concerto for Cello and Orchestra, in A Minor, Op. 129.

VIVALDI: Sonatas for Lute and Continuo: in C; in G minor—See Bach: Trio Sonatas: No. 1, in E flat, S. 525; No. 5, in C, S. 529.

WAGNER: Siegfried Idyll—See Strauss, R.: Tod und Verklärung, Op. 24.

WEBER: *Der Freischütz*. Birgit Nilsson (s), Agathe; Erika Köth (s), Aennchen; Elisabeth Hellman (s), First Bridesmaid; Hildegard Steinmeier (s), Second Bridesmaid; Nicolai Gedda (t), Max; Wolfgang Anheisser (b), Ottokar; Jürgen Förster (b), Kilian; Walter Berry (bs-b), Caspar; Franz Crass (bs), Hermit; Dieter Weller (bs), Cuno; Wolfgang Büttner (speaker), Samiel; Chorus and Orchestra of the Bavarian State Opera, Robert Heger, cond. Angel SCL 3748, \$17.96 (three discs).

For an opera so seldom seen on U.S.

stages, *Der Freischütz* has been more than generously treated by the record companies, and this new Angel release enters a crowded field. The performance is a strong one and only seriously challenged by EMI's own earlier version, at one time available complete on three imported Odeon pressings and now readily at hand, but without the dialogue, on two Seraphim discs. Much of the credit for the new album's excellence goes to veteran conductor Robert Heger. This is a weighty, lush, romantically expansive, almost Wagnerian reading; it's quite similar to the one recently offered by Von Maticic on Everest but far more persuasively brought off. Heger paces the score in a leisurely fashion without losing the dramatic pulse, and the exceptional orchestral playing fully justifies his lingeringly affectionate approach—the velvet-textured strings, plump and mellow brass, dewy-fresh woodwinds all blend into a rich, well-balanced instrumental ensemble. Joseph Keilberth also gets excellent results in the Odeon/Seraphim set: this is a leaner, more tautly conceived performance, but equally convincing in its fashion.

Perhaps Angel's biggest vocal surprise is Walter Berry's Caspar. While this difficult role ideally requires a flexible black bass on the order of a Kipnis, Berry compensates for his lighter bass-baritone timbre with effortlessly produced and ringing high F sharps and a secure, agile coloratura that easily negotiates the flights and flourishes of his "Schweig, schweig" aria. Furthermore, Berry leaves no doubt about who the villain is here in his venomous projection of the music and spoken dialogue. A splendid performance all told, and quite the best I've ever heard in the role.

Gedda, too, surpasses expectations. Sometimes this tenor can sound rather bland and unconcerned, but not here. He fully captures Max's bitter frustration



Walter Berry—a venomous projection of the evil Caspar in Weber's *Freischütz*.

and only an occasional strained phrase mars his finely judged, elegant musical performance. Even when he seems to be a bit overparted in the role's more desperate moments, Gedda's singing is far and away preferable to the rather beefy tenorizing one hears on the rival recordings. Odeon/Seraphim splurged by casting Hermann Prey and Gottlob Frick as Ottokar and the Hermit, but Angel has also done well by these brief yet important roles. Wolfgang Anheisser, a name new to me, sings Ottokar's few lines with a resonant high baritone of impressive quality, and the Hermit, who can easily degenerate into a sermonizing bore, benefits enormously from Franz Crass's appealing, benign bass.

The ladies pose something of a problem and it's here, I feel, that EMI's earlier version with Elisabeth Grümmer (Agathe) and Lisa Otto (Aennchen) has the edge. Nilsson does not really seem comfortable as Agathe for all her careful phrasing and fine pointing of the text. She attempts to scale her heroic soprano down to more intimate proportions but the limpid legato and creamy tone so beautifully conveyed by Grümmer in "Leise, leise" and "Und ob die Wolke" simply elude her. Of course when the music allows Nilsson to open up, as in "All' meine Pulsen schlagen," the effect is quite thrilling. Still, for this retiring, virginal character one wants a softer, more pliant lyric soprano in the Rethberg/Lehmann tradition. Erika Köth is bright-eyed and charming as Aennchen, although her tone occasionally turns hard and wiry above the staff.

Angel's engineering yields a rich, vibrant acoustic with slightly less presence than the brilliantly recorded Odeon/Seraphim set; the more distant perspectives are wholly appropriate, though, for they permit Heger's large-scale approach plenty of room to expand and luxuriate. Some of the more elaborate production effects of the earlier recording have been dispensed with here (such as the thud of the dead eagle shot by Max in Act I or the noises accompanying the casting of the magic bullets), but there's enough chatter from the townsfolk and stereo movement to give the performance a lively sense of theater. The dialogue has been pruned but not severely, and the omission of the short spoken scene between Caspar, Max, and the three huntsmen that opens Act III is hardly a crippling factor.

Since the Odeon *Freischütz* is now all but unobtainable, Angel's complete, well-recorded version is definitely the one to have. Still, for its special musical merits and especially Grümmer's matchless Agathe, Seraphim's budget-priced, albeit dialogueless, edition of the Odeon set should be sampled by anyone who loves this ever-fresh opera. P.G.D.

WEILL: *Kleine Dreigroschenmusik*. **PROKOFIEV:** Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 5, in G, Op. 55. John Browning, piano (in the Prokofiev); Boston Symphony Orchestra, Erich Leinsdorf, cond. RCA Red Seal LSC 3121, \$5.98.

A recording of Weill's Suite from the

Three Penny Opera has been urgently needed since the recent deletion of the Angel version conducted by Klemperer. Leinsdorf takes quite a different view of the music than did his predecessor: he never lets you forget that this is essentially light music. The former Boston maestro presents the Overture in a brisk, very staccato, scherzando fashion, and throughout, his instrumentalists (all mentioned by name on the record jacket) furnish gleaming, polished sonorities and brightly defined ensemble. Some of the livelier movements (*The Song of the Big Guns* Charleston, especially) go at a terrific clip, and the whole enterprise is done, as Toscanini used to say, "with smile." Klemperer, on the other hand, indulged in much more poker-faced humor. His unrelentingly accented Overture emphasized how very much like Stravinsky's *Histoire du soldat* that piece can sound; throughout the score, in fact, the low-keyed, slightly stiff-jointed approach to the cabaret rhythms made for a raspy, slightly uncouth effect that one imagines Weill had in mind. If both records were still readily available, I myself would choose the Angel, even though Klemperer omitted the *Anstatt dass* song included in the Leinsdorf presentation. Both approaches, however, are valid and well executed.

Prokofiev's last Piano Concerto was given its world premiere in 1932 amid the same festering German atmosphere that had spawned the Weill/Brecht score a few years earlier. The conductor was Wilhelm Furtwängler and the soloist, of course, was the composer himself. It is a difficult score to hold together convincingly, but John Browning succeeds. As in his other Prokofiev concerto performances (the present record completes the cycle), the American pianist understates lyricism and color, and strives for as lean and classical a statement possible. He is less percussive and fiercely brittle than Lorin Hollander (RCA, also with Leinsdorf and the BSO), less fuzzy around the edges than Samson François (Angel), and less oppressively Teutonic than Alfred Brendel (Turnabout). But to my mind, Sviatoslav Richter (DGG) remains supreme in this music. The Soviet virtuoso obtains a wealth of nuance and color, plus a degree of playful humor, sardonic wit, and sheer lyricism that make his well-recorded performance a treat. With all due respect to the present team, the Browning/Leinsdorf collaboration is not in the same league. H.G.

XENAKIS: Herma—See Jolas: *Quatuor II*.

recitals & miscellany

MARIA CALLAS: "La Divina." For a feature review of this recording, see page 89.

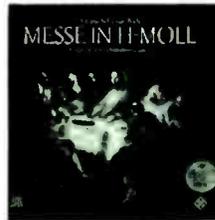
RICHARD CROOKS: "Opera Recital." **GOUNOD:** Faust: Salut! demeure; Roméo et Juliette: L'amour. . . Ah! lève-toi soleil! **MASSENET:** Manon: Le Rêve; Ah! fuyez, douce image; Werther: Pourquoi me réveiller? **BIZET:** Les Pecheurs de perles: Je crois entendre encore. **LALO:** Le Roi d'Ys: Aubade. **RIMSKY-KORSAKOV:** Sadko: Chanson hindoue. **MOZART:** Don Giovanni: Il mio tesoro. **DONIZETTI:** L'Elisir d'Amore: Una furtiva lagrima. **PUCCINI:** Tosca: E lucevan le stelle. **GIORDANO:** Fedora: Amor ti vieta. **CILEA:** L'Arlesiana: Lamento di Federico. **WAGNER:** Die Meistersinger: Preislied; Lohengrin: In fernem Land; Lohengrin's Abschied. Richard Crooks, tenor; various orchestras, Wilfrid Pelletier, Rosario Bourdon, and Nathaniel

Shilkret, conds. RCA Victorla VIC 1464, \$2.98 (mono only, recorded between 1928 and 1939).

Richard Crooks sang at the Metropolitan Opera for about ten years, starting in 1933. He was heard frequently as Faust, Roméo, Des Grieux, Ottavio, and Cavaradossi. It was the climax of a log-cabin-to-Broadway story, for the tenor was a good-looking six-footer from Trenton, New Jersey: as a young beginner Crooks hadn't been able to afford music lessons and painted buildings to earn his keep before he finally made it big, sharing the Met limelight with the likes of Muzio, Rethberg, and Ponselle.

Continued on page 114

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Lorin Hollander took his electric piano to the kids.

Classics for the Now Generation

by Jack Hiemenz

THE EVENT HERE recorded—Lorin Hollander's recital of classical music on the new Baldwin electronic piano at one of New York's headquarters for rock—has its cinematic counterpart in Jean-Luc Godard's *Weekend*. The Frenchman's vision is that of a savage society, where hippie hill-tribes trap, slaughter, and devour stray motorists. In the midst of this, somehow managing to survive, a pianist drives about the countryside. He is burly, heavily mustached, plaid-shirted. The truck contains his piano. He drives from farm to farm, wheels the piano out into the middle of the barnyard, and there, drawing inspiration from a stubby cigar, he proceeds to play Mozart sonatas for the workers.

In equally savage New York City (where subway posters now carry an advertisement by a school offering both piano lessons and a course in judo-karate), Lorin Hollander—wearing fashionable mod attire and addressing his audience very much in the current idiom of enlightened city kids—has done the same: rather than join the chorus of kvetching over our kids' avoidance of classical music, he has

taken his piano to them. The resulting concert took place last February. Fillmore East was not packed that Sunday evening, but the audience was sizable enough and from the evidence of this record, they seem to have enjoyed themselves. The experiment, insofar as it proved that kids *will* listen to Bach and Prokofiev, was a success. But there are other cheerful implications to this album. Even if the traditional concert ritual completely deteriorates, I suspect that Mr. Hollander will be among the performers who refuse to say die, and will take music into the barnyards and the streets for no other reason than the sheer love of it. Already San Francisco has a young flutist who stands at a corner on Montgomery Street and plays Bach for the stockbrokers.

The experimental aspect of this record is not confined to the nature of the audience and performer. Mr. Hollander here introduces the Baldwin Electro Concert Grand Piano (the ED-1). This instrument has been fitted with two additional pedals, so that the player can adjust the volume of tone to suit any acoustical circumstances.

The piano has no soundboard. Vibrations are conveyed from the strings by way of ferroelectric cantilever transducers to an amplifier outside the piano, then back to a system of loudspeakers within the piano. In addition, there are timbre controls which widen the instrument's coloristic scope.

Using the electronic piano at Fillmore East was perhaps something of a come-on, and I understand that at the actual concert, Mr. Hollander took time off from music in order to demonstrate the instrument's more lurid high-volume capabilities. These shenanigans, fortunately, are not preserved on the record. The piano tone one hears is wholly convincing, its artificial origin undiscernible. Bass passages are never muddy, the upper octaves chime richly, and the pedals produce sustained tones that admirably support the pianist's floating Bach performance.

The record contains truly delectable music-making. The Bach may not please every taste, but it certainly pleases mine. Hollander's conception is honestly felt and never flabby, despite its lack of crisp baroque flavor. Once one accepts the dreamy premise, everything proceeds with complete naturalness and ease. It's a rather hallucinatory kind of Bach, well tailored for the Fillmore audience.

A more strenuous approach is taken with the first movement of the Prokofiev, where rhythmic drive curtails the music's more introspective or coloristic potential. The second movement receives a full measure of singing sweetness, and during the third, Hollander's masterly technique and the piano's massive yet clear sonorities bring everything to a roaring climax.

Hollander's own composition, as he explains to his audience, is dedicated to everyone who is "Up Against the Wall." Admitting to his own sheltered origins and comfortable upbringing, he claims it is still possible to sense what it's like. Well, he's been living in Greenwich Village and maybe he does know. Obviously, from the tone of this committed and stirring piece, he knows *something*.

LORIN HOLLANDER: "At the Fillmore East." **BACH:** Partita No. 6, in E minor, S. 830. **HOLLANDER:** Toccata, "Up Against the Wall." **DEBUSSY:** Preludes, Book II: Feu d'artifice. **PROKOFIEV:** Sonata for Piano, No. 7, in B flat, Op. 83. Lorin Hollander, piano. Angel S 36025, \$5.98. Tape: 8XS 36025, \$7.98; 4XS 36025, \$5.98.

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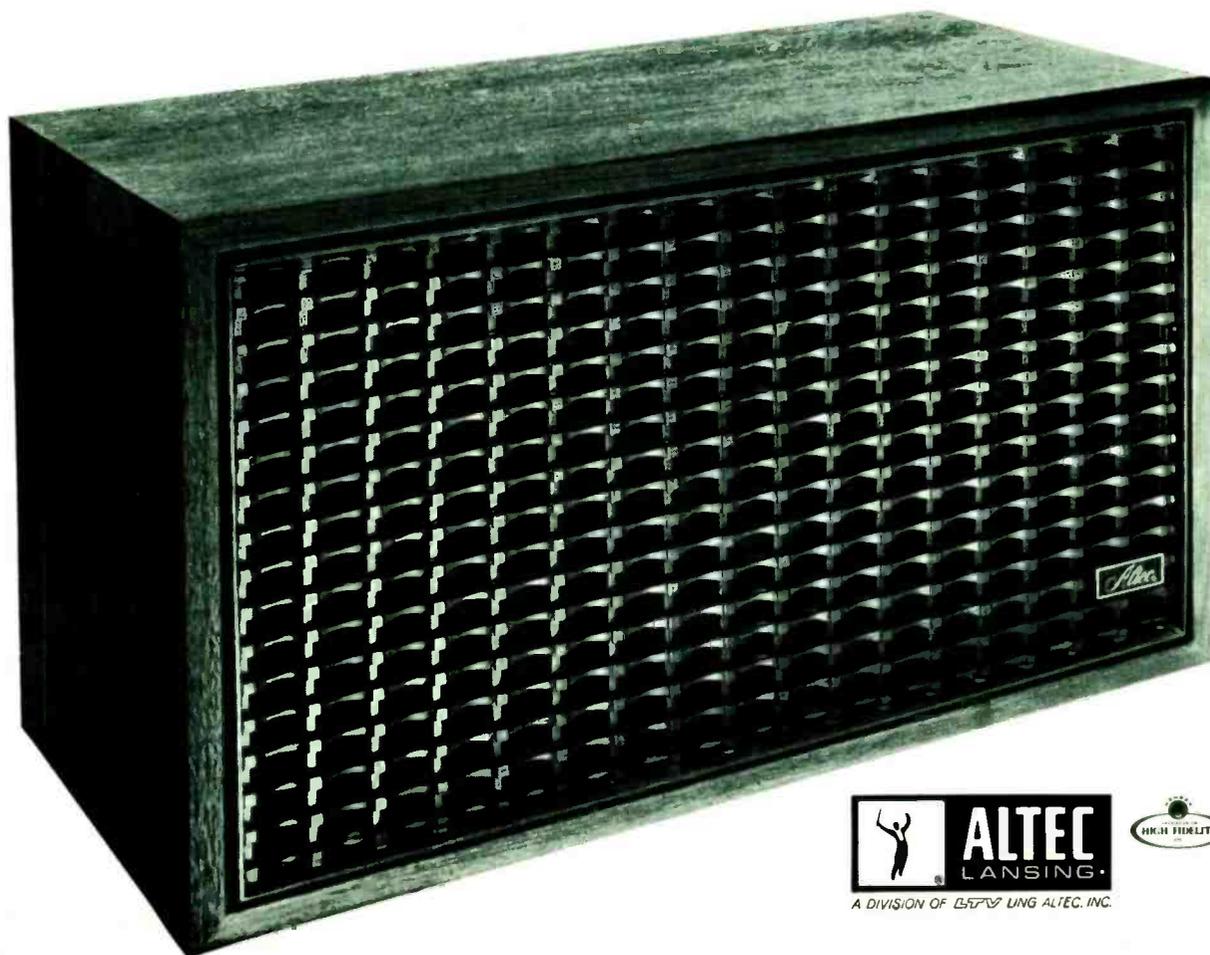
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CIRCLE 50 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Continued from page 111

The public liked his work rather better than the critics—one reads of "passable" Ottavios, "adequate" Fausts and Roméos—but there was never any doubt of his success on records, for they sold solidly right into the Forties: not only the operatics but the religious items as well—some of the surliest devotional "arrangements" ever offered.

To my ears the best things on this record are the Massenet arias, most specially the two from *Manon*, which have warm and well-spun lines. Nadir's romance from *Les Pecheurs* is taken very slowly, but here again the long phrases are most artistically done. Faust sounds slack, and Roméo is a sissy.

The *Sadko* item is, of course, "The Song of India," so often pre-empted by salon orchestras or swiped by sopranos, but here heard in its original voice register and, what's more, decently and un-sentimentally sung.

Another agreeable surprise—for I had not thought of Crooks as a Wagnerian—is the excellent Lohengrin narration, as well judged as any performance I know of. The *Tosca* aria is also likable and the Cilea is well polished in its pianissimo, if not quite perfect at the close. This is a generous and well-engineered disc that is likely to fetch the nostalgic and fiftyish opera lover, but deserves a trial from those both younger and older. The sleeve contains a warm and informative essay by Francis Robinson, but watch out for a mistake in the listing: here (and also on the label) Bizet and Lalo are given in the wrong order. The sequence given above is that on the pressing. G.M.

IVAN DAVIS: "The Art of the Piano Virtuoso." LISZT: Hungarian Rhapsody No. 6; Paraphrase of the Wedding March and Dance of the Elves from Mendelssohn's "A Midsummer Night's Dream." CHOPIN: Andante Spianato and Grande Polonaise brillante, Op. 22. MOSZKOWSKI: Paraphrase of the Gypsy Song from Bizet's "Carmen"; Caprice Espagnole, Op. 37. SCHUMANN: Theme and Variations on the Name Abegg, Op. 1. LIAPOUNOV: Lezhinka, Op. 11, No. 10. RIMSKY-KORSAKOV: Sadko: Flight of the Bumble Bee (arr. Rachmaninoff). Ivan Davis, piano. For a feature review of this recording, see page 87.

GRANT JOHANNESSEN: "25th Anniversary Concert." BACH: Fantasia and Fugue in A minor. BEETHOVEN: Sonata for Piano, No. 31, in A flat, Op. 110. SCHUMANN: Fantasiestücke, Op. 12. FAURE: Ballade, Op. 19. ROUSSEL: Sonatine. POULENC: Thème Varié. DEBUSSY: Suite bergamasque: Clair de lune. JOHANNESSEN: Improvisation on a Mormon Hymn. Grant Johannesen, piano. Golden Crest GR 40866, \$11.96 (two discs).

Last season the American pianist Grant Johannesen celebrated the twenty-fifth

anniversary of his New York debut with a recital at Philharmonic Hall. "This album," the sleeve informs us, "re-creates that concert." What sort of re-creation is it? The large-hall acoustics would appear to be those of Philharmonic, and an occasional fluff in the playing would seem to indicate live-performance conditions (one does not expect to hear even minor slips in the approved recordings of so accomplished a performer as Johannesen). On the other hand, there is not an iota of applause between the selections, and the audience is so suspiciously quiet that one feels certain that they are not there! Perhaps this was a dry run of the program in an empty hall. In any case, a bit of clarification is in order.

The performances are pretty much what one would expect from one of this country's most distinguished middle-generation pianists. Johannesen has always impressed with a clear-cut, unaffected style and a tonal and technical approach similar to his mentor Robert Casadesus. His Bach is direct and uncluttered. Color is present in just enough quantity to preclude percussiveness and put a bit of expressive meat on the music's austere classical bones. Beethoven's Op. 110 Sonata receives a rendition remarkably akin to the one Casadesus recorded for Columbia years ago. For all the patrician spareness and lack of ostentation, the treatment is a bit oversimplified and brittle for my taste. The Op. 12 Fantasy Pieces by Schumann come across with finesse and proportion, though they too are somewhat cool in mood.

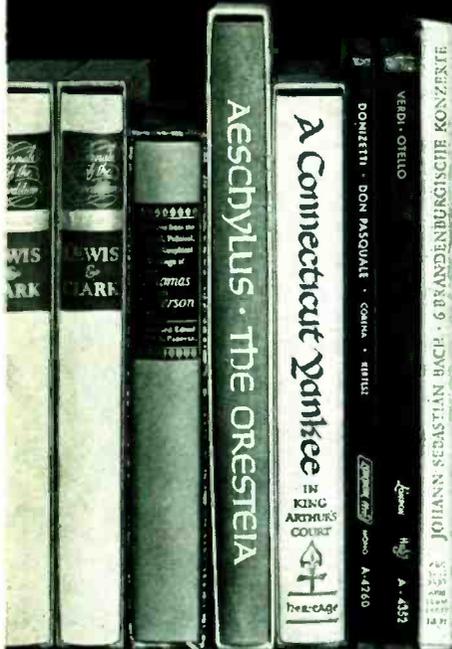
Fauré's Ballade, Op. 19, is better known in the revision which divides the material between piano and orchestra. Johannesen plays the original here and brings it off triumphantly. His tone is glistening and opulent, the general view of the music admirably healthy in its nuanced unpretentiousness. The pianist also provides a measure of dramatic excitement. The Roussel and Poulenc are both presented with class, and the encores (even taking into account the slightly overtout *Clair de lune*) are most enjoyable.

Some of Golden Crest's releases have given me trouble in the past, but here the sound is luscious and the processing exceptionally good. H.G.

ALEXANDER KIPNIS: "The Art of Alexander Kipnis, Volume 2." GOUNOD: Faust: Le veau d'or; Serenade (in German). TRAD. RUSSIAN: Soldier's Song; Kalinka. VERDI: Don Carlo: Ella giammai m'amò (in German). WAGNER: Parsifal: Good Friday Music. STRAUSS, R.: Der Rosenkavalier: Herr Kavalier! BRAHMS: Von ewiger Liebe; Die Mäinacht; Erinnerung; O wüsst' ich doch den Weg zurück; Ein Sonnett; Sonntag; Ständchen; Vergebliches Ständchen; Verrat; An die Nachtigall. Alexander Kipnis, bass; various accompanists. Seraphim 60124, \$2.49 (mono only).

Although many of the best-known Kipnis records were used in Seraphim's Volume 1, there is still plenty of good material

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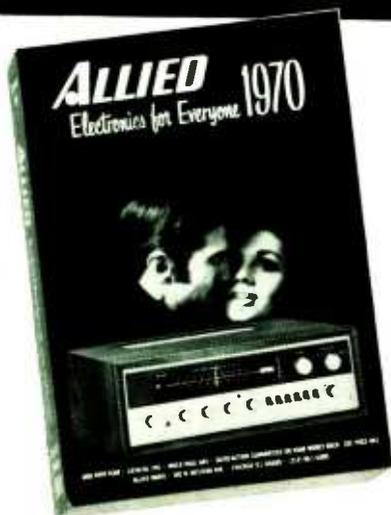
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here, again dating from the years when the voice was at its peak.

To begin with, the sheer sound of this voice is almost irresistible—a rich, rolling, plangent bass that amazingly maintains its firmness and legato at even the softest pianissimo levels. Further, this exceptional smoothness of emission is not marred by narcissistic tendencies toward crooning or similar distortion of the music; the line always moves along, and the phrasing is always alive and sensitive. Once or twice, the considerable brute force available is overapplied (as in the 1928 *Faust* arias), but the best of this singing—e.g. the *Don Carlo* aria, where the Verdian line survives even the German translation—is really beyond comparison.

There is one major problem, if you are at all sensitive to the sound of the German language: the heavy accent. That *Don Carlo* aria begins “*Syee hat mich nyee gelyeebi*,” and the Kipnis Baron Ochs clearly comes from a province far, far to the east of Vienna. Just something you have to live with, I guess; it’s more pronounced on some tracks than on others.

As I’ve said, the *Don Carlo* aria is most impressive; Kipnis made an earlier acoustic version in Italian, but that is uncomfortably rushed, and was wisely passed over for reissue. The 1931 *Rosenkavalier* may not be idiomatic, but it is exceptionally well sung by both Kipnis and Else Ruziczka, the Annina. The *Parsifal* scene has been around before; it’s taken from the 1927 Bayreuth set of excerpts (Odeon 33QCX 10464), and was also included in the Odeon Bayreuth sampler (E 83387). Kipnis is wonderfully expansive, Fritz Wolff is a tolerable Parsifal, and Siegfried Wagner himself conducts. (I question Kipnis’ story, in the liner note, that Karl Muck refused to record this passage unless it could be fitted on one 78-rpm side; actually, Muck had recently finished a nearly complete recording of Act III for HMV, and was therefore probably enjoined from doing the same music again for Columbia—hence Siegfried took over the Act III excerpts in this set.)

The second side of this disc completes the reissue of the first (1936) Brahms Song Society set (the *Ernste Gesänge* were included in Seraphim’s Volume 1). The celebrity of that cycle has tended to overshadow the remaining songs in the set, so this separate reissue may draw more attention to the imposing *Erinnerung*, the evocative *O wüsst’ ich doch*, the miraculously light and playful *Sonntag*. Some of the repertory is hardly suitable for this type of voice, but it is amazing that Kipnis can bring off something like *Vergebliches Ständchen*. The style is of its period—a more scoopy legato than today’s preference, the rhythm sometimes free—but these are performances of great authority and undoubted feeling for the idiom.

The accompanist is Gerald Moore, who, in his autobiography, accounts Kipnis “the most consummate musician of all the basses I have partnered”—but adds that “he was mortally afraid of the piano tone being too heavy for him. . .

In compliance to this foible of his my piano sounds as if I were playing in the next room in our record album of Brahms Lieder. . . .” Well, almost—the balance is lopsided, but not hopeless in these dubbings; Moore keeps the piano parts remarkably clean, even though all the songs except *Verrat* (originally for bass) are transposed down three or four semitones.

The two Russian folksongs recur on Victrola VIC 1434 with a balalaika orchestra; the more conventional ensemble in Seraphim’s 1931 versions may be less atmospheric, but the voice sounds more solid and forward.

The dubbings are reasonably good, with some evidence left of declicking in the *Rosenkavalier* and *Verrat*, and an awkward splice in the *Parsifal* that could not be avoided (I know, having made this splice myself years ago when dubbing the 78s). A leaflet with texts is included. I hope there will be a Volume 3 ere long, and nominate the arias from *Freischütz*, *Walküre* (the Farewell), *Meistersinger* (Sachs’s last speech), *Tannhäuser*, *Martha*, and *Die lustigen Weiber* for a start.

D.H.

“THE MOOG STRIKES BACH.” BACH: Toccata and Fugue in D minor, S. 565. **MOZART:** Eine kleine Nachtmusik, K. 525; Sonata for Piano, in A, K. 331; Turkish March. **CHOPIN:** Etude in G flat, Op. 10, No. 5. **RACHMANINOFF:** Vocalise, Op. 34, No. 14. **PROKOFIEV:** Prelude, Op. 12, No. 7. **WURMAN:** Thirteen Variations on a Theme of Paganini. Hans Wurman, synthesizer. RCA Red Seal LSC 3125, \$5.98.

The difference between Columbia’s “Switched-On Bach” and RCA’s “The Moog Strikes Bach” is essentially the difference between Walter Carlos and Hans Wurman, the transcriber/performer of the present disc. Whereas Carlos displayed a brilliance bordering on genius, Wurman is simply dull. Carlos was able to illuminate and elucidate Bach; Wurman merely gives the music of Bach, Mozart, Chopin, Rachmaninoff, and Prokofiev a “different” sound. What he does to his own composition, a weak effort in any event, is his own business.

Imagine, if you will, organ transcriptions of the above-listed works—all right, this “organ” has a greater number and variety of stops than usual—and you will get some idea of what Wurman has accomplished. Perhaps, I mused, after hearing Wurman’s first band (Chopin’s *Black Key* Etude), Carlos had simply been smart enough to choose an all-Bach program for his effort. Bach, after all, is a hard enough rock to withstand any type of “arrangement.” And I remembered that even the Swingle Singers could not continue their success with Bach into the realm of other composers.

I then heard the Mozart *Turkish March*, where Wurman’s artistic contribution is limited to the insertion of a few introductory measures of tinkly-Turkish percussion. Rachmaninoff and Prokofiev fared no better. Then came Wurman’s own *Thirteen Variations on a Theme of Paganini* (guess which one).

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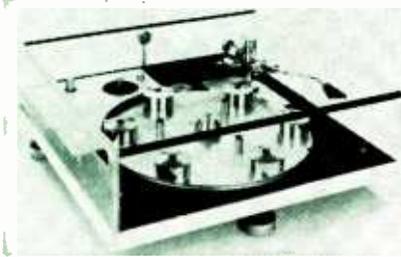
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Although the enclosed notes mention Wurman's claim that this piece was "specifically composed for Moog and four-track recorder," it sounds like a master's thesis he had once written for piano (or organ), tucked away in his desk, and then transcribed for Moog when the present project offered him a chance to get into the Schwann catalogue. Finally, the Bach. Another organ transcription gone wild. By the time I had listened halfway through the final band, *Eine kleine Nachtmusik*, I realized that not one performance on this disc would give the slightest indication of why anyone would have bothered to go to the trouble of Moogifying any of these works.

In conclusion: a well-rounded disc, consistently transcribed and performed. L.M.

PURCELL CHORUS: "Voices and Brass." SCHUTZ: Psalm 24; Ich beschwöre euch; Freue dich. SCHEIDT: Canzon cornetto; Courant dolorosa; Psalm 103. SCHEIN: Zion spricht. Purcell Chorus of Voices; Philip Jones Brass Ensemble, Raymond Leppard, cond. Argo ZRG 576, \$5.95.

I have often been tempted to call Raymond Leppard the Stokowski of the early baroque. On this disc his taste for opulent sound is perfectly in keeping with the flamboyant nature of the music—the Venetian style of Monteverdi and Gabrieli brought north to Germany by the three Ss, Schütz, Schein, and Scheidt.

The opening fanfare is a rousing canzona much in the same character as the most spirited of Giovanni Gabrieli's instrumental works. Psalm 24, a paean of praise, "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof," is cast in a magnificent double chorus with alternating soloists and brass. Schütz had no qualms about the Lord's reception, hammering out "Atollite portas" ("Lift up your heads ye mighty gates") with firm resolution. "Who is the king of glory?" questions the solo voice and the chorus thunders its reply. Schütz's Venetian studies were put to full use in this imposing work.

Ich beschwöre euch, on the other hand, has a languorous sensual text from the Song of Solomon. Cast in the form of a dialogue—no brass here—it features an extraordinary quartet of four sopranos who weave their luxuriant lines into a shimmering pattern worthy of the Eastern splendors of Solomon's court. As a wedding piece—the notes say it was possibly written for Prince John of Saxony and Magdalena Sybilla of Brandenburg in 1638—it is almost too graphic. *Freue dich*, another wedding composition for full ensemble including trombones and cornetti, is more suitably ceremonial but not without its moments of melting chromaticism.

Side 2 opens with another Scheidt canzona, followed by an elegiac lament *Courant dolorosa*. *Zion spricht* is a choral lament, a form in which its composer, Johann Hermann Schein, excelled. The echo effects, double choruses, and abrupt contrasts between high and low voices

are cleverly underlined by the stereo recording techniques, a modern touch not at all out of place in this highly dramatic music.

Scheidt's Psalm 103, a surprisingly extended work, was written at a time when most composers' thoughts were comparatively short-winded. Using a trio of male soloists in varying combinations with instruments and full chorus, the motet has something in common with the English verse anthem, but the melodic material is all derived from that most Germanic of devices, the chorale, which appears in its full homophonic glory at the close of the work much in the manner of the chorale concluding a Bach cantata.

The brass, the singers, and the unsung strings who join in the Scheidt motet are all absolutely first-rate. Leppard moves things along at a brisk pace, and Argo has provided suitably brilliant sound. All in all, this release should be a real treat for lovers of baroque splendor. S.T.S.

RENATA TEBALDI: "A Tebaldi Festival." For a feature review of this recording, see page 89.

UNFORGETTABLE VOICES IN UNFORGOTTEN PERFORMANCES FROM THE GERMAN OPERATIC REPERTOIRE. Various artists (see listing in review). RCA Victrola VIC 1455, \$2.98 (mono only).

More tidbits from the vaults at Camden, once again interesting because most of them are new to LP (only the Rethberg has previously appeared on RCA reissues; the Schumann-Heink is also available from Rococo), and once again a decidedly mixed bag. These are all very distinguished performers, whose names call to mind a notable quarter-century of Wagnerian performance at the Metropolitan; the nostalgia that they induce may be sufficient for you. In the following capsule comments, I have tried to view the performances on this record as objectively as possible for the benefit of those not subject to nostalgia.

Eleanor Steber: "*Martem aller Arten*" (sung in English) from Mozart's *Entführung* (1947). A souvenir of the Met's only production ever of this work—ambitious and full of instinctive musicality, but lacking sufficiently magisterial technique.

Set Svanholm: "*Gott! welch' Dunkel hier*" from Beethoven's *Fidelio* (1950). The hero on this track is the superb oboist; however photogenic (heaven knows, a rare enough quality among *Heldentenor*s), Svanholm was not very phonogenic, and this music cruelly exposes his choppy articulation and incipient tremolo. A Wagner selection would have been better, such as his impressive Rome Narrative.

Maria Jeritza: "*Und ob die Wolke*" from Weber's *Der Freischütz* (1926). Even when slowed down to correct pitch (the dubbing is a semitone sharp), this is a moodless, jumpy performance, lacking commitment and security of intona-

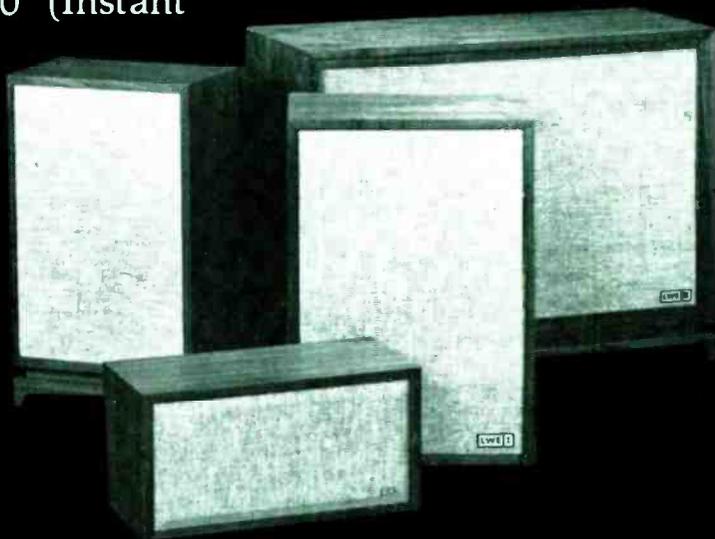
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2	Acoustic Research, Inc.	7	
	Acoustical Mfg. Co. Ltd.	139	
4	Allied Radio Corp.	116	
3	Altec Lansing	113	
	Angel Records	86	
5	Astrocom/Marlux	Cover III	
6	Audio Sales	138	
	Audio Unlimited, Inc.	141	
8	Benjamin Electronic Sound Corp.	131	
9	Bose Corp.	5	
70	Boston Audio Co.	136	
	Bozak	115	
103	British Industries Co.	54, 55	
36	BSR (USA) Ltd.	135	
11	Carston Studios	134	
12	Clark, David, Co., Inc.	10	
13	Clark Music Industries	134	
	Classified Ads	136	
14	Columbia Record Club	12-15	
15	Columbia Records	93	
16	Concord Electronics Corp.	117	
17	Coronet Recordings	124	
18	Crown International	6	
19	Deutsche Grammophon Gesellschaft	97	
20	Dixie Hi Fidelity Wholesalers	134	
21	Downtown Audio, Inc.	141	
22	Dressner	140	
23	Dual	107	
24	Dynaco, Inc.	41, 129	
25	Electro-Voice, Inc.	96	
26	Electro-Voice, Inc.	96	
27	Elpa Marketing Industries	28	
48	Empire Scientific Corp.	104	
28	Epicure Products, Inc.	28	
30	Fisher Radio Corp.	Cover II, 1, 37	
103	Garrard	54, 55	
29	Gramophone, The	124	
31	Harman-Kardon, Inc.	29	
32	Harmony House	139	
33	Heath Co.	25-27, 137	
34	Hi-Fidelity Center	141	
35	International Hi-Fi & Camera Exchange	140	
37	JVC America, Inc.	11	
38	Kenwood	49	
39	King Karol Records	10	
40	Klipsch & Associates	39	
41	Lafayette Radio Electronics	133	
42	London Records	106	
43	LWE, Acoustron Corp.	119	
53	Marantz Co., Inc.	30, 31	
44	McGraw-Hill Records	111	
45	McIntosh	132	
47	Olson Electronics	134	
27	Perpetuum Ebner	28	
49	Pickering & Co.	2	
52	Pioneer Electronics U.S.A. Corp.	33	
19	Polydor, Inc.	97	
51	Ponder & Best	53	
50	Rabco	114	
54	Rabsons-57 St., Inc.	138	
55	Radio Shack	17	
56	RCA Stereo Cassettes	95	
58	Record Club of America	9	
59	Rectilinear Research Corp.	109	
60	Revox	108	
61	Roberts	52	
62	Sansui Electronics Corp.	18, 19	
64	SCA Services	138	
100	Scott, H. H., Inc.	21, 99, 101, 103	
66	Sharpe Instruments, Inc.	16	
65	Sherwood Electronics Laboratories, Inc.	Cover IV	
68	Shure Brothers, Inc.	42	
69	Sony Corp. of America	127	
63	Sony/Superscope, Inc.	51, 105	
67	Sony/Superscope, Inc.	22	
10	Sound Reproduction, Inc.	136	
71	Stanton Magnetics, Inc.	123	
72	Stereo Corp. of America	140	
73	Superex	135	
74	Tandberg	8	
75	Teac Corp. of America	129	
76	Transaudio, Inc.	118	
23	United Audio Products, Inc.	107	
78	Voxson	34, 35	
1	Westminster Records	100	

tion. Hardly in a class with Lehmann or Lemnitz—why not the famous *Tote Stadt* aria instead?

The remainder of the record is devoted to Wagner.

Helen Traubel: *Elsa's Dream* from *Lohengrin* (1940). Since Odyssey's "Fabulous Forties" disc included Traubel's 1945 version—more expansive, more smoothly and expressively sung, and beautifully accompanied by the Philharmonic under Rodzinski (with exceptional wind playing)—this earlier one is of limited interest. A lovely voice, but the singing became smoother with experience.

Elisabeth Rethberg: Senta's Ballad from *Der fliegende Holländer* (1930). Although lacking a chorus (replaced by woodwinds), this is complete, and a clean, musical reading—if without the impact of Flagstad or the gutsy enthusiasm of Rysanek.

Kirstin Thorborg: "So ist es denn aus" and "Deiner ew'gen Gattin" from *Die Walküre* (1940). Two "bleeding chunks" from the Fricka/Wotan hassle, sung with vigor and the appropriate curled-lip manner; the big, generous sound occasionally gets out of hand.

Kirsten Flagstad: *Liebsted* from *Tristan* (1935). A good choice; the very first time she recorded this piece, with a sound that is lighter, more feminine than it later became. A few notes are not perfectly in tune, but the phrasing is as broad as ever (the final "Höchste Lust" in one breath, of course). The conductor (Hans Lange) is good, but the climax not a patch on Furtwängler's.

Ernestine Schumann-Heink: Waltraute's Narrative from *Götterdämmerung* (1929). I'm glad this was included; it's abridged (to leave out the strenuous part), and the sixty-eight-year-old singer hasn't much reserve of breath, but despite some huffing and puffing she delivers the text with great authority and expressivity.

Lauritz Melchior: "Amfortas! Die Wunde!" from *Parsifal* (1938). A different version from that in the complete set of the Act II duet, this is conducted by Ormandy and splendidly sung (barring a few characteristic rhythmic inaccuracies). An oboe lines out Kundry's single phrase, but even Marcel Tabuteau is no substitute for Kirsten Flagstad; since the complete duet is still available on LM 2763, I'd have been even happier to have the companion disc of Parsifal's final apostrophe, one of the most overwhelming examples of Melchior's art.

The dubbings have all been made with skill and discretion (the Jeritza pitch aside). I hope this series will continue—there are many more treasures in those Victor vaults. D.H.



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31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45
46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60
61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75
76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100	101	102	103	104	105
106	107	108	109	110	111	112	113	114	115	116	117	118	119	120
121	122	123	124	125	126	127	128	129	130	131	132	133	134	135
136	137	138	139	140	141	142	143	144	145	146	147	148	149	150
151	152	153	154	155	156	157	158	159	160	161	162	163	164	165

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31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45
46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60
61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75
76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100	101	102	103	104	105
106	107	108	109	110	111	112	113	114	115	116	117	118	119	120
121	122	123	124	125	126	127	128	129	130	131	132	133	134	135
136	137	138	139	140	141	142	143	144	145	146	147	148	149	150
151	152	153	154	155	156	157	158	159	160	161	162	163	164	165

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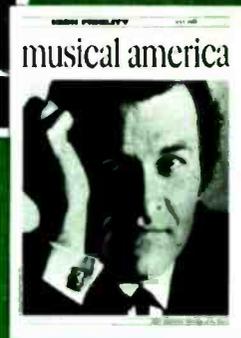
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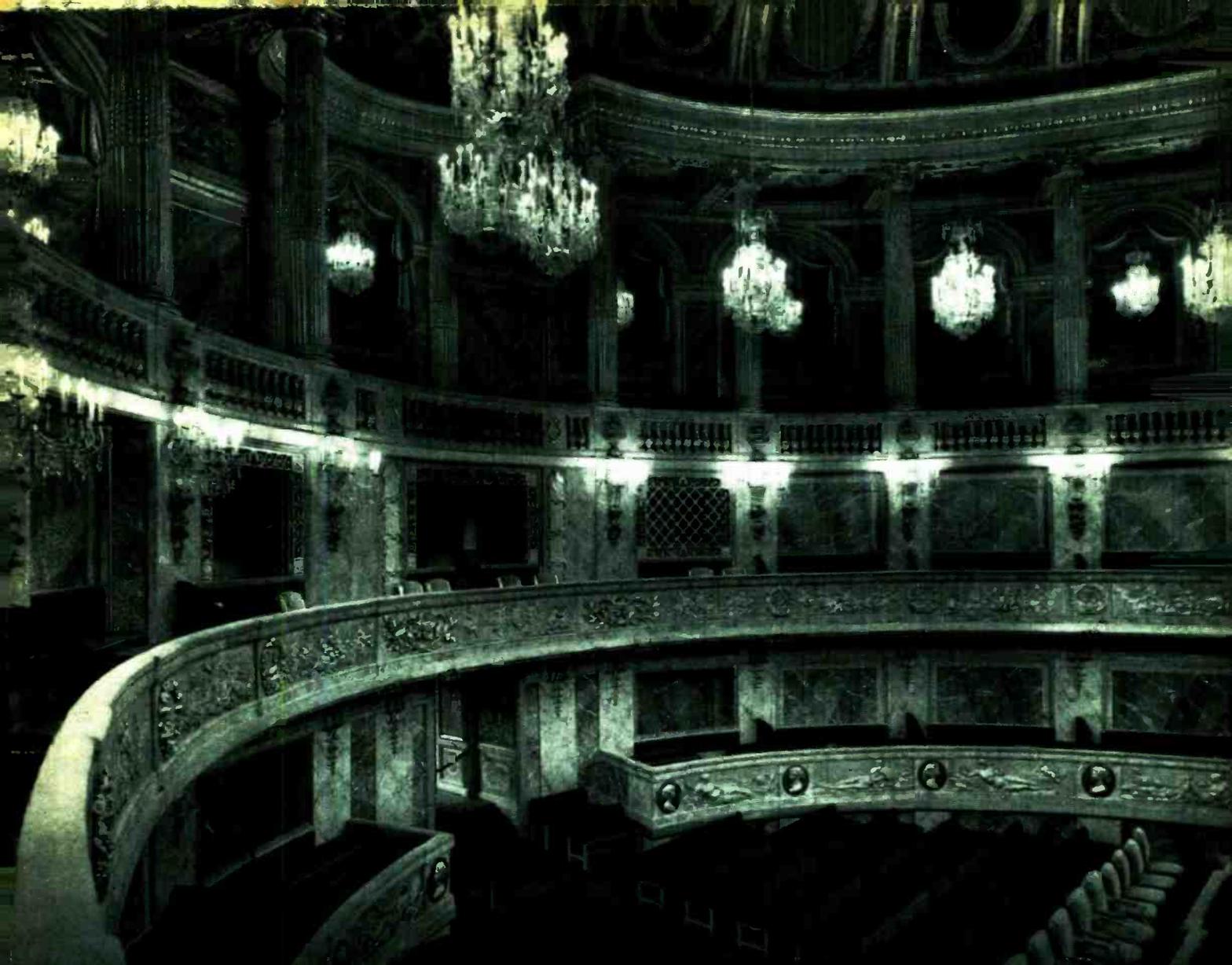
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BEETHOVEN ON RECORDS

Songs—Continued from page 85

first melody gives satisfying unity to the entire cycle.

Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau and Jörg Demus include the cycle on their Beethoven disc described above. The only other currently available version is by tenor Ernst Häfliger with Erik Werba on Heliodor HS 25048 (with Schumann's *Dichterliebe*). Both discs offer sensitive and thoroughly masterful singing, excellent recording, and fully proficient accompaniments. For sheer beauty, the Fischer-Dieskau version must be preferred; but Häfliger shows fine imagination and marvelous spirit.

Ah perfido! (1796). She hates him, she loves him, she hates him. Beethoven's full-scale double recitative and aria is perhaps the most operatic vocal piece he ever wrote and has long been a show-piece for powerful sopranos. It was written in Prague for Josepha Duschka, the lady for whom Mozart had composed several concert arias: *Ah perfido!* in fact, is a close kin to Elvira's aria "*Mi tradi*" in *Don Giovanni*. The catalogue presently lists the following performances: Maria Callas (Paris Conservatoire Orchestra, Nicola Rescigno. Angel S 36200); Régine Crespin (New York Philharmonic, Thomas Schippers. CBS 32 11 0040); Birgit Nilsson (Philharmonia Orchestra, Heinz Wallberg. Angel SCB 3745); Teresa Stich-Randall (Vienna Radio Orchestra, Brian Priestman. Westminster WST 17140); Gwyneth Jones (Vienna Opera Orchestra, Argeo Quadri. London OS 25981).

Five very potent ladies, and five different responses to the challenge. For tonal beauty, choose between Gwyneth Jones, where some of the dramatic force is sacrificed in the search for delectable sound, and Birgit Nilsson (recorded in 1959), where the words go for very little but the imperious tone is invincible. Stich-Randall starts off well, but after a while seems to lack thrust; however, the adagio (the main body of the aria) is very well delivered. Crespin has an ideal voice for this music and her intensity is welcome, but she turns whiny and loses dignity in the adagio—so much so that one begins to guess the reason the lady was jilted.

The Callas is something else again. Recorded around 1964, the voice shows extreme wear—but the intensity she mobilizes in both the "hate" and the "love" passages is unequalled. The whole experience is rather like biting into a fresh onion: raw, intense, vibrant, not entirely pleasurable—but quite capable of bringing a tear to the eye. Rescigno is, to my taste, the best of the conductors, changing his styles sensitively at the required places. All versions are adequately recorded, with CBS and London outstanding in this respect.

Oldies, deletions, and imports. No discography of Beethoven lieder would be complete without some mention of recordings that were once available but are no longer listed, or without indicating what treasures may be available in the catalogues of other countries.

There were some superb performances in the days of 78 rpm, notably of *An die ferne Geliebte* by Gerhard Hüsch on Victor and Heinrich Schlusnus on Polydor. Other songs were memorably recorded by Lotte Lehmann, Aulikki Rautawaara, and Kirsten Flagstad. We are unlikely now to see these transferred to LP, but specialist shops may be able to help.

Special mention should be made of an *Ah perfido!* recorded by Kirsten Flagstad with Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra in 1937, and once available on RCA Camden 462. Even in something less than supreme voice she gives a vaulting interpretation of the scena. A Frida Leider version of the same song survives on Scala 835, but I haven't heard it. Other versions of this scena have flamed during the mono era and since disappeared, among them interpretations by Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (Angel), Astrid Varnay (DGG), Inge Borkh (London), Gre Brouwenstijn (Philips), and Eileen Farrell (Columbia).

Collections of substantial groups of the songs have been in and out of the catalogue at various times; some of them are still available as imports. The artists have included Walther Ludwig (HMV), Alfred Poell (Westminster), Max Lightegg (London), Herta Glaz (M-G-M), Aksel Schjötz (whose *Geliebte* cycle was once on Columbia), and Kim Borg (DGG). Fischer-Dieskau was at work early, recording his first Beethoven batch for HMV in 1953 (with Gerald Moore at the piano) and a later group, also for HMV, with Hertha Klust in 1956.

Among current, stereo-age imports, the most valuable is the complete Fischer-Dieskau/Demus three-disc collection on DGG 139216/8 which contains forty of the songs. There is also an entire Electrola disc (ST 80635) devoted to Beethoven songs, as performed by Hermann Prey and Gerald Moore in 1963.

Auld Lang Syne, The Pulse of an Irishman, et al. In 1813, Beethoven embarked on an unusual activity, something akin to moonlighting (if you'll excuse the term). The Edinburgh publishing house of George Thomson commissioned him (as they had earlier contracted with Haydn) to make arrangements of Scottish, Irish, English, and Welsh folk songs, "songs of such a meagre, vulgar, and indelicate character as could no longer be sung in good company." Over the next four years, Beethoven turned out no fewer than 126 of these arrangements, providing cosmopolitan accompaniments for a trio of violin, cello, and piano.

Only a handful of the Irish melodies are at present in the catalogue, exquisitely sung by Fischer-Dieskau and Victoria de los Angeles, with Gerald Moore, Eduard Droic, and Irmgard Poppen as the instrumentalists (Angel S 35963). You may still be able to find a deleted DGG disc (138706) where the ubiquitous and indefatigable Fischer-Dieskau sings six of the Beethoven Scottish folk songs, together with other Scottish melodies arranged by Haydn and Weber.

Next month: Part II, The Choral Music by H. C. Robbins Landon.

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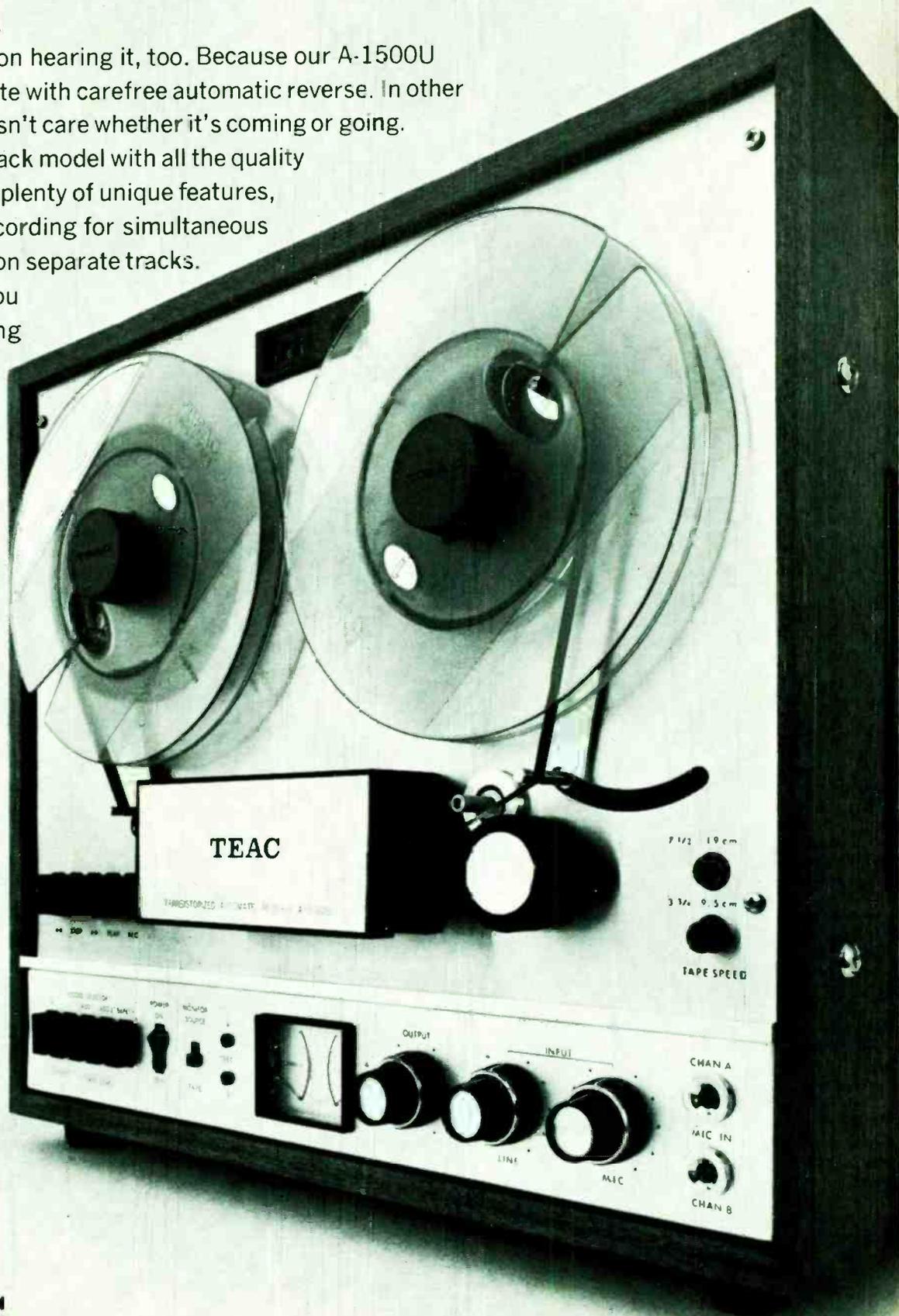
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in brief

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HANDEL: "The Great Handel Choruses." Choruses from Samson, Judas Maccabaeus, Messiah, Saul, Israel in Egypt, Xerxes, and Zadok the Priest. Mormon Tabernacle Choir; Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond. Columbia MS 7292, \$5.98. Tape: ●● MQ 1158, 7½ ips, \$7.98.

MENDELSSOHN: Concerto for Violin, Piano, and String Orchestra, in D minor. Carroll Glenn, violin; Eugene List, piano; Vienna Chamber Orchestra, Ernst Maerzendorfer, cond. Westminster WST 17166, \$5.98.

TAKEMITSU: Asterism; Requiem; Green; The Dorian Horizon. Yuji Takahashi, piano; Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Seiji Ozawa, cond. RCA Red Seal LSC 3099, \$5.98.

TCHAIKOVSKY: Symphony No. 6, in B minor, Op. 74 ("Pathétique"). Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Max Rudolf, cond. Decca DL 710166, \$5.98. Tape: ●● 6-10166, \$7.98.

OBERLIN FACULTY WOODWIND QUINTET: Works by Stravinsky, Mozart, Hindemith, Bach, Cambini, and Bozza. Oberlin Faculty Woodwind Quintet. Coronet 3650, \$5.95.

CHRISTOPHER PARKENING: "Romanza." Christopher Parkening, guitar. Angel S 36021, \$5.98.

Cortot's 1934 rendition of the Chopin Waltzes (which have been constantly at hand since 1958 or so) are, to my mind, the least successful of the pianist's efforts on behalf of this composer. The Etudes and Preludes (neither of which have ever been reissued domestically) show the Cortot style and rhythmic liberties to far greater advantage, but here his aberrations verge on absolute anarchy. This disc, then, is for the experienced Cortot admirer only. H.G.

The title given to this recording gives away the whole story: this is overstuffed Handel, sung from discredited scores full of phony additions. This sort of thing is really no longer excusable *sub titulo* "innocence"; there are many fine recordings of the oratorios from which the excerpts were taken, and there is no law that would prevent choir directors from keeping informed about the present state of their art. The lack of finesse, of clear choral definition, the largely unvarying dynamics, and the abominably distorted orchestrations really make this recording a relic from the Crystal Palace, c. 1869. P.H.L.

Mendelssohn's characteristic gifts for attractive melody, open thematic lines, and well-calculated orchestration are quite evident here. What is missing is the kind of inspired thought that makes his familiar Violin Concerto a masterpiece. Everything in this work is pleasant and craftsmanlike, but it is the poet's everyday verse. The performance is not the type to make the music seem any better than it is: a simple, direct statement of the material that is inclined to be square rather than sensitive. R.C.M.

The Dorian Horizon—a hushed, mysterious, immensely spacious composition, like a chain of islands glimpsed in fog—is by far the finest thing here. The other works are indeed extremely disappointing. They all sound like ersatz Alban Berg: that international post-Schoenbergian schoolboy style with which we should have been finished twenty years ago. And yet they are all recent works. A.F.

Rudolf leads a brisk, intelligent, unsentimental performance that eschews both languor and hysteria and yet manages to be red-blooded and flexible when those qualities are *de rigueur*. What it does not manage to do is *sound* beautiful. Part of the problem is the close-to, almost clammy hall acoustics; another problem is the Cincinnati Orchestra itself, which plays cleanly and accurately, but does not make a truly beautiful, ingratiating sound. Even so, I much prefer this honest, if rather raw-toned statement, to stodgy, perfunctory "refinement." H.G.

If you can get past the appallingly amateurish jacket notes here, you'll find that the Conservatory's flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, and horn professors demonstrate exemplary individual expertise, and that the obvious didactic purposes of this disc are admirably served by its transparent, well-differentiated, if rather lightweight recording. But the four short pieces are musically lightweight too: Bozza's unashamed Scherzo imitation of *The Flight of the Bumblebee*, and the transcriptions of Stravinsky's youthful *Pastorale*, a Mozart Andante, and Bach Sarabande. And there have been previous—and much more stylistically authoritative—recordings of Hindemith's *Kleine Kammermusik*, Op. 24, No. 2, and Quintet No. 3 by Giovanni Giuseppe Cambini. R.D.D.

Young Mr. Parkening made an auspicious recording debut with his classic and Spanish programs of last January. The consummate executant skills displayed again here seem almost incredible for a youngster of twenty. Again, too, he is effectively recorded—a bit larger than life perhaps, but not so closely miked as to pick up distracting incidental noises. The present selections, however, are mostly familiar Spanish-flavored encore pieces: an anonymous Romance and Catalan Air; Tarrega's *Capricho Arabe*; Albéniz' *Rumores de la Caleta*; Castelnovo-Tedesco's *Melancolia*; Mompou's *Cuna*; Villa Lobos' Etude No. 11 and Preludes Nos. 1 and 3; Carcassi's Study No. 19; and the Segovia transcription of a Schumann Andante cantabile. R.D.D.

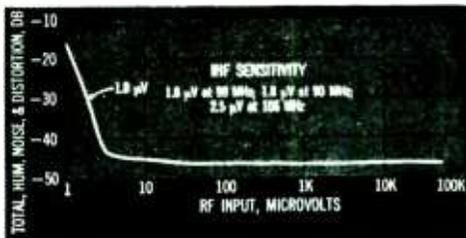
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A SELECTIVE GUIDE TO THE MONTH'S REISSUES

MASSENET: Manon. Victoria de los Angeles (s), Henri Legay (t), Michel Dens (b), Jean Borthayre (bs), et al.; Chorus and Orchestra of the Théâtre National de L'Opéra-Comique, Pierre Monteux, cond. Seraphim ID 6057, \$9.92 (four discs, mono only) [from RCA Victor LM 6402, 1956].

Few will question the "Great Recordings of the Century" rubric that beams proudly from the cover of this set. French opera has never fared too well on discs, but the Monteux/De los Angeles/Opéra-Comique *Manon* is a genuine classic—quite on a level with HMV's magnificent thirty-year-old *Pelléas et Mélisande* conducted by Desormière, probably the only other recorded performance of a French stage work in the GROC category (and well worth Seraphim's attention).

Although France has not produced many great singers of late, it's doubtful that a *Manon* on discs would fare as well divorced from its home ground at the Opéra-Comique. In fact, much of this performance's stylistic elegance is due to the flavorsome contributions from the many expert comprimario singers and actors that flesh out the large cast. Monteux's supple, graceful, and subtly nuanced presentation of the score is a constant delight and De los Angeles, far more at ease and secure before the microphones than in her Manons at the Met during the mid-Fifties, creates a bewitching portrait of the fragile, willful heroine. True, Henri Legay accomplishes more through clever subterfuge than sheer vocal quality, but his Des Grieux is splendidly alive and committed. Seraphim has ingeniously brightened the excellent mono sound and provides a complete text and translation. There is currently no other *Manon* in the catalogue; even if there were, this recording would be required listening.

MOZART: Opera Arias. Ezio Pinza, bass; Orchestra of the Metropolitan Opera, Bruno Walter, cond. Odyssey 32 16 0335, \$2.49 (mono only) [from Columbia ML 4036, recorded in 1946].

Probably more than any singer, Ezio Pinza helped to spark the Mozart revival at the Metropolitan Opera during the Thirties and Forties. Imagine twenty-one years without *Don Giovanni* or twenty-two seasons between productions of *Figaro*—yet such was the case when Pinza sang the Don at the Met in 1929 and *Figaro* in 1940. The basso's inimitable rich sonority and virile presence undoubtedly contributed immeasurably to the immense success of the operas, for he virtually owned these roles for the rest of his career.

This disc unfortunately caught Pinza at his worst: the voice had lost much of its richness in the upper registers and there is a good deal of uneasy vocal compromise in the more difficult arias. Osmin's triumphant vengeance aria, for instance, sounds badly frayed up top and the rapid passages find the singer almost gasping for breath. Leporello's "*Madamina*" is sluggish and ungainly, while Sarastro's "*Qui sdegno*" lacks a truly smooth legato line. The concert aria "*Mentre ti lascio*" and Figaro's two arias give a better idea of the Pinza charisma, but even here one is slightly let down by the rather effortful delivery. Bruno Walter's accompaniments add nothing special to this program, and the disc's twenty-six-minute duration is short measure even by bargain-price standards.

VERDI: Aida. Zinka Milanov (s), Fedora Barbieri (ms), Jussi Bjoerling (t), Leonard Warren (b), Boris Christoff (bs), et al.; Chorus and Orchestra of the Rome Opera, Jonel Perlea, cond. RCA Victrola VIC 6119, \$8.94 (three discs, mono only) [from RCA Victor LM 6122, 1955].

With the proliferation of interesting mono-only budget versions of standard repertory operas, most vocal collectors will doubtlessly be tempted to supplement their first choices with one or two of these worthy reissues. A number of critics, in fact, hold the Milanov/Bjoerling *Aida* as the finest to appear on disc, and while I personally prefer the recently reissued version on London with Leontyne Price, there is certainly a great deal in favor of Victrola's 1955 recording. Best of all is Bjoerling's Radames: what Verdi tenor today delivers such bright, ringing tone together with such supple, aristocratic phrasing? Milanov's stately, slightly old-fashioned approach works well with *Aida*. She may have been a shade past her best in 1955, but the awkward moments are quickly passed and more than balanced by her typically exquisite, floating, soft-grained vocalism—"O patria mia" is only one such ravishing highlight.

Fedora Barbieri's Amneris is a bit raw on occasion, but at least her singing is always lively and interesting. Less impressive is Warren's woolly Amonasro and Christoff's exaggerated Ramfis. Perlea leads a reliable, smoothly paced performance and the orchestra plays decently, although don't expect anything remarkable in this department. The recording favors the singers—just as well,



perhaps—and in this respect the 1955 reproduction could hardly be improved upon.

ELISABETH SCHWARZKOPF: "Portrait of the Artist." Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, soprano; various accompanists, orchestras, and cond. Angel SCB 3754, \$11.96 (three discs) [from various Angel originals 1958–68].

BIRGIT NILSSON: "Portrait of the Artist." Birgit Nilsson, soprano; various orchestras and cond. Angel SCB 3745, \$11.96 (three discs) [from various Angel originals, 1954–66].

FRANCO CORELLI: "Portrait of the Artist." Franco Corelli, tenor; various orchestras and cond. Angel SCB 3744, \$11.96 (three discs) [from various Angel originals, 1959–68].

The most satisfying of these three grab bag samplers is Schwarzkopf's: Angel could hardly have gone wrong with such a rich variety of recorded material at its disposal. Thanks to the soprano's versatility, it was possible to devote each side to a different facet of her talents: concert (excerpts from the *St. Matthew Passion*, *Messiah*, *A German Requiem*, and Mahler's Fourth Symphony); Mozart opera (*Figaro*, *Così*, and *Don Giovanni*); German and Italian Opera (*Freischütz*, *Otello*, *La Bohème*, *Gianni Schicchi*); operetta (Heuberger, Zeller, Millöcker, Lehár); and lieder (Schubert, Strauss, Mahler, Wolf). In addition, one full side offers the concluding half hour of Schwarzkopf's most famous role, the Marschallin in *Der Rosenkavalier*. A very full portrait indeed.

The Nilsson selections are entirely operatic and since she has recorded infrequently for EMI of late, a good deal of it is not representative of this artist's current work (almost half the music here dates from the mid-Fifties and has been rechanneled). Still, there's much enjoyment to be had from this stupendous voice, especially the Wagner (*Tannhäuser*, *Lohengrin*, *Dutchman*, *Tristan*), Weber (*Freischütz*, *Oberon*), and Puccini (Turandot's "*In questa reggia*" and riddle scene). The selections by Verdi (*Aida*, *Ballo*, and *Forza*), Mozart (*Don Giovanni*), and Beethoven (*Fidelio* and *Ah, perfido!*) face keen competition from other quarters.

Corelli's package is even more variable—a group of predictable Italian arias, many of them wrenched rather awkwardly from complete sets. The voice is, of course, a magnificent one, but his robust tenorizing is best sampled in small doses. One full record is dominated by lighter Neapolitan songs which would have benefited from a more stylish delivery.

PETER G. DAVIS

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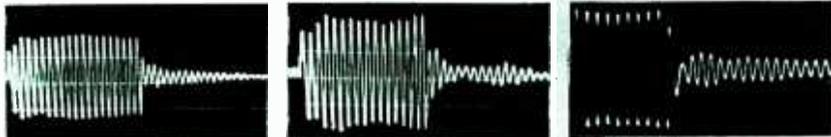
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✓ **LAURA NYRO: New York Tendaberry.** Laura Nyro, vocals and piano; Jimmie Haskell, arr. and cond. (Gibson Street; Save the Country; Sweet Lovin' Baby; eight more.) Columbia KCS 9737, \$5.98. Tape: ●● HC 1122, 3¾ ips, \$6.98; ● 1810 0692, \$6.98.

Singer/pianist/composer Laura Nyro is not a product of rock, though she exists within it. She is a product of nothing except her own incredible intensity and one of the deepest talents you'll ever hear. Once the music is studied, it's difficult to believe she's in her early twenties. She has what is called "an old soul."

Technique is the least of Miss Nyro's pertinence, yet it's quite sound in an unlikely way. Most people don't realize how powerfully she plays piano, but she can hold a large audience breathless all by herself on stage. Her wide, clean, true voice never wavers on its journey.

Miss Nyro's new album is more faithful to her message than the previous two albums—stunning as they were. Orchestrations have been pared back out of the way, often providing little more than a closing chord. No one could have done it better than did Jimmie Haskell.

This is not an album you'll get into quickly, but study time becomes its own end. Miss Nyro is a sequential writer. Her phrases change color quickly, completely, hitting home here, making no sense there. The glue is in her ferocious conviction and the gripping sound of her voice. The songs are sad, even the happy ones. New York sad, Midnight Cowboy sad: "Mister, I got drawn-blinds blues" (*You Don't Love Me When I Cry*); "Once I lived under the city in my sweet July" (*Mercy on Broadway*). Or love: "When I touch the man, Lord, I rise to rooftops in his eyes . . . cause he's *The Man Who Sends Me Home*." Or sorrow: "So Jesus was an angel and mankind broke his wing" (*Time and Love*). Miss Nyro's wild, random images become another kind of song form.

Laura Nyro is what is meant by new-generation phrases such as "into something" and "heavy." If you respond to her, you'll understand much more about what's happening in music today than you did before. But the true measure of her meaning is that her highly personal talent is not dependent upon the often desperate culture from which it is flung. M.A.



LONNIE MACK: Whatever's Right. Lonnie Mack, vocals and guitar; instrumental accompaniment. (Untouched by Human Love; I Found a Love; Things

Have Gone to Pieces; Teardrops on Your Letter; five more.) Elektra EKS 74050, \$4.98.

✓ **LONNIE MACK: Glad I'm in the Band.** Lonnie Mack, vocals and guitar; instrumental accompaniment. (Why; Save Your Money; Old House; Too Much Trouble; Let Them Talk; Roberta; five more.) Elektra EKS 74040, \$4.98.

I didn't review *Glad I'm in the Band* when it was first released. Although I played the album constantly, I couldn't decide whether my reaction was just a quirk—it might have touched some personal chord—or whether the record deserved all the praise I heaped on it when friends asked, "Heard anything good lately?" I knew Mack to be an excellent guitarist, but I was afraid that I might be responding too strongly to the dramatic qualities of his singing and not paying sufficient attention to his vocalizing as music. Finally, I procrastinated past deadline and the whole question became academic.

A few weeks later when Mack appeared second on a bill at Fillmore East (with Crosby, Stills, Nash, and Young), I became convinced that my original estimation was correct: Lonnie Mack is an extraordinary performer of pop music, both as a guitarist and as a vocalist. His guitar playing is clean, inventive, and fiery in attack. His singing is aggressive but controlled; his range is wide and he can convey any message that his material demands. Essentially he is a country musician who has absorbed a great deal of black music. It's a much abused term, but he really has soul.

The first album has been joined by a second, *Whatever's Right*, my excuse for alerting you to both records. Both albums contain first-rate material, both originals and pop standards. *I'm Glad I'm in the Band* includes the instrumental version of *Memphis, Tennessee*, a hit single in 1964. Each has an excellent song written by Mack: *She Don't Come Here Anymore* on the first LP, *Gotta Be an Answer* on the second. The back-up group is everything we've come to expect from records made in Memphis; keyboardist David Byrd is especially good—he deserves an album of his own.

I regret I didn't tell you about Lonnie Mack sooner. It means you've missed a couple of months of great listening. Sorry. J.G.

BUZZ CLIFFORD: See Your Way Clear. Buzz Clifford, lead vocals; Bob Klimes, Dave Roberts, others, arr. (Angeline; Hawg Frog; Echo Park; eight more.) Dot DLP 25965, \$4.98.

Something interesting (and unpromoted) is going on at Dot. It has to do with producer Richard Delvy and a lot of fine rock musicians and singers. This is the second Delvy-produced album

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from Dot in recent months. The first was by a group called Colours, and this one features singer/writer Buzz Clifford (though it's actually a group effort). Both are excellently orchestrated and performed. Several of the same people appear to have been involved in both. Tempos and dynamics lie the same way.

This kind of a knowing and musical project is evidence of the sophistication reached in certain compartments of rock. Hard-line hippies complain that sophistication is ruining rock. Not for me, and if so, this is a ship it's a pleasure to go down with.

Buzz Clifford reflects several of the better rock groups, and adds a gritty touch of individuality on songs such as *Proctor & Gunther* and *I Am the River* (the latter beautifully arranged by Bob Klimes). There may not be a hit in this album, but it's worth buying. I hope some disc jockey discovers and pushes it.

Thanks to Richard Delvy and his friends. M.A.

JANIS JOPLIN: I Got Dem Ol' Kozmic Blues Again Mama. Janis Joplin, vocals; instrumental accompaniment. (Try; Maybe; One Good Man; Work Me Lord; As Good As You've Been to the World; three others.) Columbia KCS 9913, \$5.98. Tape: HC 1211, 3 3/4 ips, \$6.98; 14 10 0748, \$5.98; 16 10 0748, \$6.98.

When I began college, it was hip to be Jewish. By the time I left in 1964, Jewishness was on the way out and being Negro was coming in. As a kind of substitute for understanding what it really means to suffer life in America's ghettos, essentially sympathetic middle-class kids began to slap palms and say, "Dig it!" so they wouldn't have to comprehend what it means to be black—let alone to deal with the privileges they themselves receive from racism. The students' and women's movements offer some hope that white Americans have begun to question some of the limitations of our own lives, which ought to lessen the need to add our sense of guilt to all the other burdens we heap on blacks in this country.

It's always seemed to me that one of our most egregious appropriations was of black culture, especially music. At best, white blues imitators were merely insulting, shallow, and stupid copyists who usually made this life-and-death music sound silly. At worst, of course, we literally stole the livelihood away from black musicians, all the jive about "rediscoveries" to the contrary. From the Original Dixieland Jazz Band to the Young Rascals, whatever their intentions, white musicians have stolen from black. I'm not saying that whites can't learn from blacks: they can and should. Countless have: Jimmie Rodgers and Bill Monroe, Bob Dylan and Elvis Presley, Jack Teagarden and Roswell Rudd come immediately to mind. But you have to have respect for someone you accept as a teacher. And there is an obligation to treat what is learned with respect. Most white artists

who have incorporated some echoes of black sound into their work have gone through a period of straight imitating. Thus when Janis Joplin first came along it seemed that she was in that stage and one was inclined to tolerate her occasionally outrageous pantomime of a black mama. Last year when Joplin left her back-up group, Big Brother and the Holding Company, to form her own band, the move was applauded as a step toward her own thing. It has turned out to be just the opposite. Her new release, her first with the new group, is so mannered that it loses even the effect of intense commitment that marked her first Columbia record (there was an earlier album on Mainstream). Joplin pays no attention at all to the meaning of lyrics, inserting her moans and screeches indiscriminately on every cut, often at totally inappropriate moments. It all gets very tedious.

The other thing Joplin had going for her was her apparent strength; here was a woman who could take care of herself, who wasn't at the mercy of every man who might choose to whistle, hoot, or cop a feel. She's not, but no woman in the society is. And by making aggressive sexuality her stock in trade, she is forced into a servile role both in her pandering stage act and on songs like her own *One Good Man* here. To be sexy one must fulfill the sexual ideal, and for American men that ideal does not include strong, equal women. If she ever resisted her role, and in the beginning she seemed to, she has stopped.

Kozmic Blues ought to help reassure any uneasy members of the power structure that everyone still knows his place. J.G.



JERRY REED: Explores Guitar Country. Jerry Reed, guitar; unidentified rhythm section players and organist. (Georgia on My Mind; Sittin' on Top of the World; Worried Man; nine more.) RCA Victor LSP 4204, \$4.98.

It has been widely known in the jazz world for years that most of the best guitarists come from the South, or at least the edge of the South. Tal Farlow, Jimmy Raney, Johnny Smith, for example, are southerners, and Wes Montgomery was from Indianapolis. The reason is simple: there has long been a strong tradition of guitar playing in the South. And a lot of the best players got started in what used to be called hillbilly music; having explored its simple potentials to the limits, they became interested in more complex things and moved on into jazz.

Today this phenomenon, once limited to individual musicians, seems to be developing more or less across the board in the country-and-western field. The results knock me out: the vigor of c & w still is there, but now there is something for the mind as well.

This influence was obvious in the opening track (*Rovin' Gambler*) of Jerry Reed's last album, *Better Things in Life* (RCA Victor LSP 4147). It is even more apparent in the opening track of this one,

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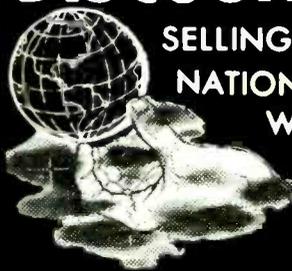
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Georgia on My Mind. The rhythm section plays jazz, ballad time, and Reed plays what has to be called jazz guitar, though with touches of c & w time feeling. *In the Pines* is done, for much of its length, in a medium-up jazz tempo. A bongo player adds the same kind of rhythmic emphases that Jack Constanza used to give to the Nat Cole Trio.

As the title indicates, the album puts greater stress on Reed's guitar playing. Though he sings on most tracks, he takes many solos, and they're good solos. You can hear the changes that have come to c & w in the chord substitutions he uses. *Wayfarin' Stranger* finds him playing a running eighth-note accompaniment that contains a really pretty falling inner line. It's about as far as you can get from the old Burl Ives conception of the song. (One of the most irksome things about RCA Victor's Nashville product is the lack of information in the liner notes. Who is in the rhythm section of the album? Who is the second guitarist on some tracks—or has Reed been overdubbed?)

I don't mean to suggest that this is a jazz album. A lot of tracks are done in strict c & w two-beat. It's just that the best c & w people have learned and are learning a lot from jazz.

As for Reed's singing—deep-voiced and virile—it swings hard. There is a wonderful exuberance about it. I can only say that he is my favorite country-and-western singer. He kills me.

If you have never paid c & w much mind, give this album a listen, just to hear what's happening to it. Fascinating.

G.L.

EYDIE GORME: *Otra Vez*. Eydie Gormé, vocals; Don Costa, arr.; Nick Perito, cond. (Contigo si; Yo sin ti; Separados; seven more.) RCA Victor LSP 4237, \$4.98.

Singer Eydie Gormé has been dipping into several pop modes in an attempt to give her calmed-down career the surge it needs. But it is still the Spanish language and Spanish music that brings out the best in Miss Gormé, softening her sharp edges, feminizing her strong sense of showmanship.

Aided by some lovely songs (mostly by Arturo Castro) and sympathetic arrangements by Don Costa, Miss Gormé turns in another warm Spanish album—except when she crosses cultures and comes on superstrong. I can live without the "la-la-la's" on the end of *Si vuelves tu*, or the high-pitched screaming on the close of *Que hare* (isn't it about time for Miss Gormé to key her material down a tone or two so that her very real emotionality moves us without cutting our ears to ribbons?).

Like Barbra Streisand in French, Miss Gormé's rapport with Spanish is convincing and involved. Thanks for a pretty album. M.A.

JOHN DENVER: *Rhymes & Reasons*. John Denver; vocals, instrumental accompaniment. (Catch Another Butterfly;

Circus; When I'm Sixty-Four; Yellow Cat; Daydream; My Old Man; six more). RCA Victor LSP 4207, \$4.98.

TOMMY FLANDERS: The Moonstone. Tommy Flanders, vocals; rhythm accompaniment. (Angel of Mercy; Boston Girls; Sleepin'; She's My Love; Blue Water Blue; six more). Verve FTS 3075, \$4.98.

The first time I saw Tommy Flanders he had his head pressed against the side of a blaring speaker. It was at a party in Cambridge, Mass. in 1964. Flanders, then calling himself Tom Jones, was trying to master the vocal inflection of blues great John Lee Hooker.

A year or two later, Flanders was appearing nightly at the Cafe Au Go Go in Greenwich Village as vocalist with the Blues Project. And the Project's first album said, in a note, "Watch for Tommy Flanders' solo album coming soon." Finally, years later, here it is.

John Denver made his mark as the replacement for Chad Mitchell when he left his Trio. This is his first outing as a solo performer. The release of both albums underlines a point that by now is a truism (but I think I'll make it again anyhow)—namely that rock is here to stay. The days are long gone, of course, when rock could be thought of as a fad, but I think it is still fairly common to dismiss rock careers as brief and fleeting things. The truth is that talent will out. Elvis is still with us and, since his last album and his Vegas appearance, he may be bigger than ever. Other rock stars of the Fifties and early Sixties—those with talent like Fats Domino, Chuck Berry, Ricky Nelson, and on and on—are still working. Seminal figures responsible for the rock revival in the States—Tim Hardin, Tim Rose, Fred Neil, John Sebastian—maintain small devoted followings and enjoy wide influence. Sebastian, who led the Lovin' Spoonful, is preparing an album; John Stewart, a former member of the Kingston Trio, has just released a fine country-rock LP; Phil Spector, one of the most influential producers of the early Sixties, has just made his first record in several years; the music industry is peppered from top to bottom with people who came into the business through rock.

The point of all this is that as the rock industry matures and the inevitable economic retrenchment of what is a badly overextended business sets in, a kind of establishment will begin to emerge. Fewer chances will be granted to raw kids following fads, and more and more opportunities will open to those who have worked hard and long at developing themselves or have proved themselves in other contexts—those who, like Denver and Flanders, have paid their dues. Taste and professionalism will both become more important than they have been, though I doubt that rock will ever be considered "conservative" music.

Both Flanders and Denver have produced careful, professional albums. The fact that Flanders' disc isn't very good is really beside the point; it's importance

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resides in how and why it's there at all. Specifically, Flanders falls down as a songwriter; none of these tunes can support his essentially pessimistic vocal style (he sings a lot like Tim Hardin, but Hardin's mellow tunes work better with his insecure-sounding voice than do Flanders' blander materials). The production of the album is excellent, but it's not enough to save the LP.

Rhymes & Reasons is another story entirely. Although he is a better-than-average songwriter himself, John Denver has chosen to include interesting material from other pens as well. The excellent charts were worked up by producer Milt Okun and the execution is flawless. Denver is a surprisingly vibrant singer in a folkish mode and he even manages to pull off songs like *I Wonder How It Feels to Be Free*, which up to now has been exclusively a hard-rock and r & b staple. The highlights, however, are his pop renditions of what are basically modern folksongs, especially *Yellow Cat* and his own well-known *Leaving on a Jet Plane*. Pop is moving away again, and has been for some time, from amateur theatrics and fadish tailism to the assurance of professional musicians groping for communication in the best way they know how. That the way must inevitably include rock—and all that implies in honesty and directness, as well as in compelling musical idiom—is to everybody's advantage. J.G.



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jazz



DJANGO REINHARDT: And the American Jazz Giants. Benny Carter, trumpet and alto saxophone; Coleman Hawkins, tenor saxophone; Django Reinhardt, guitar; Stephane Grappelly, piano; Bill Coleman, trumpet; Garnet Clarke, piano; others. (Honeysuckle Rose; I'm Coming Virginia; Star Dust; eleven more.) Prestige 7633, \$4.98.

To listen to this record, you might think that the fountainhead of jazz in the Thirties was Paris. Of course, wherever Coleman Hawkins or Benny Carter were playing had to be a focal point of sorts. But these performances, recorded between 1935 and 1938 by four groups—comprised, with one exception, of primarily French musicians—are so consistently good, that the jazz of the Thirties could hardly ask for better representation. And when the pieces are not just good, they are tremendous.

Take *Crazy Rhythm*, for example—a superb performance by an eight-piece group that has an ensemble drive which, combined with solo splendor, is simply magnificent. Two French saxophonists, André Ekyan on alto and Alix Combelle on tenor, are put on display with Carter and Hawkins and, even though Hawkins produces one of his greatest solos, the Frenchmen hold their end up quite well. Combelle, in fact, plays so well that his entrance could convince you that you're listening to Hawkins himself. Benny Carter's suave, compact writing for saxophones shines through all four pieces by this group and three by another similar combo without Hawkins.

Along with Carter and Hawkins, Django Reinhardt takes off on his own distinctive guitar flights. They are sometimes only a single note (ending *Crazy Rhythm*), but usually they are those marvelously gripping mixtures of singing melody and sudden flurries that flowed so effortlessly from his guitar. There are also three absorbing pieces by a quintet led by Garnet Clarke, an American pianist who died at twenty-one. Clarke was eighteen when he made these sides. It was his only record session but it is enough to keep his name and memory alive in jazz. His style came out of Hines and Waller, but even at eighteen he already had a strongly individualistic streak which blossoms out on a romping *Rosetta* when he rips through the initial Hines influence to make a statement that is filled with his own personal excitement.

This record is one of a series of re-issues on Prestige that draw on European catalogues. Others that are extremely well worth having are *Jazz Pioneers* (Prestige 7647), which includes ten selections by Coleman Hawkins (seven solos, three with Red Allen, J. C. Higginbotham, and

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company) and six Mary Lou Williams piano solos; *Big Band/1933* (Prestige 7645), with four Duke Ellington pieces and ten by the Fletcher Henderson (or Horace Henderson) band; and *Benny Goodman and the Giants of Swing* (Prestige 7644), which brings together Goodman/Teagarden classics such as *Texas Tea Party* and *Ain'tcha Glad*, the Gene Krupa session of 1935 that produced *Blues of Israel* (with bassist Israel Crosby) and *Three Little Words*, and a combo led by Joe Venuti with Bud Freeman, Joe Sullivan, and Goodman.

J.S.W.

KING OLIVER: Papa Joe. King Oliver, Bob Shoffner, Tick Gray, and Ed Anderson, cornets; Kid Ory, Jimmy Archery, and J. C. Higginbotham, trombones; Albert Nicholas, Billy Paige, Barney Bigard, Omer Simeon, Paul Barnes, Ernest Elliott, and Arville Harris, reeds; Luis Russell and Clarence Williams, pianos; Bud Scott, Johnny St. Cyr, Leroy Harris, and Will Johnson, banjos; Bert Cobb, Lawson Buford, Cyrus St. Clair, and Bass Moore, tubas; Paul Barbarin, drums. (Deep Henderson; Sugar Foot Stomp; West End Blues; thirteen more.) Decca 79246, \$5.98.

King Oliver, in the minds of many jazz followers, has been diminished to a launching pad for Louis Armstrong. While Oliver's records in 1923 and 1924, when Armstrong was with him, are still

held in esteem, his later recordings are apt to be dismissed. This collection, made up of sides cut between 1926 and 1928 in Chicago and New York, should help to put Oliver back where he belongs as one of the continuing jazz figures of importance all through the Twenties. The bands Oliver led (essentially the same band with Luis Russell as pianist but with so much turnover after Oliver's move to New York that it has to be considered several bands) had several brilliant jazzmen who did some of their most notable playing on these Oliver sides. Kid Ory, for example, easily surpasses anything he did with Louis Armstrong on Oliver's magnificent *Black Snake Blues*, in the opening of *Willie the Weeper*, and on *Snag It*. Omer Simeone's soprano saxophone or clarinet are high spots of every selection on which he appears. And Oliver was still playing a pungently dry and driving cornet.

After Oliver moved to New York late in 1927, his fortunes went quickly downhill, but even in these latter stages the band, held together by Russell, continued to play splendidly. They were helped by the addition of young J. C. Higginbotham who took over Ory's trombone role. There are two selections in this New York period by a band that is completely different from Oliver's usual group, apparently put together for a recording date by Clarence Williams. Both pieces are far below the level of Oliver's regular band but they provide a clue to the superiority of Oliver's band over its contemporaries.

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CIRCLE 6 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

TOM SCOTT QUARTET: Hair to Jazz. Tom Scott, reeds; Roger Kellaway, keyboards; Chuck Domanico, Fender bass; John Guerin, drums. (Be In; Aquarius; Flesh Failures; three more.) Flying Dutchman FDS 106, \$4.98.

We've all heard about the significance of *Hair*, how it gave the children of the Aquarian Age a voice, how it turned upside down the world of musical comedy (though, like *I Do, I Do* and the rest, *Hair* was aimed straight at the Wednesday matinee housewife from East Orange, New Jersey, and she bought it), how it made a terrible lot of money. Big box office lends itself to hallowed theorizing. Nevertheless, *Hair* was indeed significant. The only insignificant thing about it was its music, its unpromising melodies. Much is said of the show's composers, but little or nothing is mentioned about their value in strictly musical terms. I suspect they have none. So musicians are stuck with these songs, as they've been stuck before. The better the musician, the more art he brings to his subject, however shallow.

The arresting thing about this album is the playing. Saxophonist Tom Scott is a pleasant, quiet, young (twenty-one) musician. He doesn't scare you till he starts to play. Scott seems to have begun with the skill most players spend years developing, and gone on from there. Talent, they call it. Also taste, intelligence, and fire. When all this is applied to a piece of music, whether

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CIRCLE 22 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

it's *Happy Birthday to You*, *Hava Nagila*, or *Hair*, get out of the way. It's going to be beautiful.

Scott used several reed instruments for the occasion, including tenor sax, flute, mezzo-soprano, and saxcello. Tempos vary widely, as do time feelings, from lyricism (*Easy to be Hard*) to good-time jazz (*Hair*) to rock (*Aquarius*).

It's worth noting that very little rehearsing went into this album; much of it was practically sight read. That's because the Tom Scott Quartet is not Scott and three other guys. At times the group works as The Roger Kellaway Quartet, a somewhat different animal dominated by the pianist's compelling personality. The group has spent years working together, probably because each is up to the other and enjoys the fact. Kellaway, as deep as he is wide on harpsichord or clavonette as well as piano, sets the tone as fully as Scott, reinforced by the superb bass and drums of Domanico and Guerin.

This is a love album, and possibly no one knew how well it would work till after the fact. It bears a respect for the skills of jazz playing and a pull toward the rule-breaking force of rock. No jazz attempt at *Hair* was ever truer, nor more of a pleasure to hear. M.A.



ILLINOIS JACQUET: The Soul Explosion. Joe Newman, Ernie Royal, and Russell Jacquet, trumpets; Matthew Gee, trombone; Illinois Jacquet, Frank Foster, and Cecil Payne, saxophones; Milt Buckner, piano and organ; Wally Richardson, guitar; Al Lucas, bass; Al Foster, drums. (The Soul Explosion; After Hours; St. Louis Blues; I'm a Fool to Want You; The Eighteenth Hole.) Prestige 7629, \$4.98.

Two of the more vital movers and shakers of jazz, Illinois Jacquet and Milt Buckner, have not been prominent in recent years, but both show that their vital juices are still flowing in this set. Buckner, in particular, is a joy to hear. He was one of the earliest of the electric organists and he knows considerably more about its resources—or, at least, he is more apt to use them—than most of

those who have followed in his wake. When a solid ensemble sound is needed, Buckner gives it body and movement. He can sparkle on his own with a joyful, jumping solo but he is at his best on this disc when his vein is subdued and delicate. His easy, trickling tickling on Avery Parrish's *After Hours* is brilliant, and, on the ballad, *I'm a Fool to Want You*, he lets Jacquet stretch out in a highly expressive, beautifully shaped solo, and then eases in with a lovely, probing solo of his own that quietly cuts the saxophonist.

Jacquet varies between his blustering style, full of raw, shattered notes, and his rich, mellow manner. In both approaches, he exerts a swaggering authority that is very effectively channeled on *St. Louis Blues*, a strong, tightly knit arrangement for the eleven-piece band that Jacquet leads. Jacquet comes steaming out of the crisp ensemble that sets the piece going, rides gloriously around on his own, and is then lifted up by the group and carried on joyously through the rest of the piece. The band is used mostly for ensemble passages and backing with only Joe Newman, trumpet, and Wally Richardson, guitar, getting any solo opportunities. J.S.W.

theater & film

BERNARD HERRMANN: "Music From the Great Movie Thrillers." Music composed for motion pictures directed by Alfred Hitchcock. London Philharmonic Orchestra, Bernard Herrmann, cond. London Phase 4 SP 44126, \$5.98. Tape: ●● L 74126, 7½ ips, \$7.95; ●● M 14126, \$6.95; ●● X 84126, \$5.95.

The music on this release represents excerpts from what are to my mind some of the greatest film scores ever written in a quasi-classical idiom. So perfectly was Bernard Herrmann able to capture and enhance the mood and atmosphere essential to Hitchcock's style that "the master of suspense" used a Herrmann score for all of his films from *The*

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CIRCLE 72 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Trouble with Harry (1955) to *Marnie* (1964)—except for *The Birds* which has no musical soundtrack. For me this album is a kind of instant emotional replay of the ambience of the films involved, and any Hitchcock fan listening to it will no doubt have the same experience.

Much of the first side is taken up by a "Narrative for Orchestra" arranged from Herrmann's music for *Psycho*. Even after having seen the film three or four times, I find *Psycho* unbearably suspenseful, thanks in part to Herrmann's incredibly taut and tense score, played entirely by a string orchestra. If the rather slow tempo and almost total lack of reverberation seems a bit incongruous here, it is nonetheless an excellent synthesis of a perfect soundtrack. The almost surrealistic music for *Vertigo*, the only soundtrack on the disc previously recorded (on a now out-of-print Mercury release), is likewise a thoroughly integral part of the film. While the soundtrack of *North By Northwest* may not be such an essential ingredient of the film as in *Vertigo* or *Psycho*, it represents perhaps Herrmann's most sophisticated writing from a purely musical standpoint. In fact more of the *North By Northwest* music, which contains many other excellent moments besides the title sequence, would have been welcome rather than the overgenerous attention given to the much less interesting music for a rather mediocre film, *Marnie*. The concluding selection is a "Portrait of 'Hitch,'" taken from the soundtrack for *The Trouble with Harry*. With its understatement and its ghoulish orchestration, this excerpt stands up particularly well on its own merits divorced from the film.

As one might expect from a London Phase 4 disc, the sound is the stuff demonstration records are made of, almost to the point of unnecessarily calling attention to itself. I can't help wondering why the engineers could not have taken advantage of the "atmosphere" inherent in these scores and backed off the mikes a bit. I also find myself amazed that the playing of the London Philharmonic is not up to that of the studio orchestras that originally played these tracks. Furthermore, London's packaging of this disc should win some kind of award for vulgarity—not only does the cover art look like a three-year-old's interpretation of the films involved, but the entire

inner jacket, instead of including details of this extraordinary composer-director collaboration, is filled with London's oft-repeated, self-laudatory description of the Phase 4 technique.

But no matter. This is an invaluable release, and it features soundtracks that should have been recorded long ago. I have but one final plea. Although I had no trouble at all "hearing" Hitchcock in Herrmann's "Portrait of 'Hitch,'" would someone please tell me where, oh where, "Hitch" appears in *The Trouble with Harry*? R.S.B.

PROMENADE. RCA Victor LSO 1161, \$5.98.

Wish I were in New York to see this apparently delightful and outrageous off-Broadway show. Hilarious songs, wonderfully written and sung. Glorious cop-outs such as, "It's to age that we owe what we are . . . What are you? . . . We are all that we are . . ." Marvelous album. M.A.

PAINT YOUR WAGON. Paramount PMS 1001, \$6.98.

Package is gorgeous and costly, like the film. Good production, but nothing turns me on except Lee Marvin singing *I Was Born Under a Wandrin Star*. M.A.

THE LEARNING TREE. Music from the soundtrack of the film. Composed by Gordon Parks; orchestra and chorus, Tom McIntosh, arr. and cond. Warner Bros./7 Arts WS 1812, \$4.98.

A great deal has been said about how Gordon Parks took on too much responsibility with his first film, *The Learning Tree*, for which he wrote the screenplay (based on his own novel), produced, directed, and finally composed the music. I have not seen the film, but the soundtrack album brings a curious blend of reactions. The music has problems—open spaces, questionable voicings and progressions, dated styles—yet it evokes emotionalism. And isn't that what music's all about?

For the album's several vocal tracks, Mr. Parks combined nonprofessional and professional studio singers. Work went slowly as a result, and there are moments when the group never does get it together as in the last portion of *Bluebird*. Still,

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CIRCLE 21 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

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120
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Bluebird is a lovely if old-fashioned song.

The same applies to much of the album, in which orchestrator/conductor Tom McIntosh does a creditable job. One delightful track features master blues singer Jimmy Rushing along with Ray Brown's beautiful bass (*My Baby's Gone*).

Side 2 includes a portion of dialogue from the film, backed with music. Such narrations inevitably fade from interest to irritation after initial listening. Still, as such portions go, it's not at all bad. Neither is the album. In fact, it's quite warm and charming. More important, it holds up. M.A.

THE CHAIRMAN. Music from the motion picture soundtrack; Jerry Goldsmith, composer and cond. Tetragrammaton T 5007, \$4.98.

If you see Jerry Goldsmith's name on a movie soundtrack album, you're pretty safe in buying the record even if you haven't seen the film or heard the soundtrack. Goldsmith is not only one of our finest film score composers, but one of our most consistent. While the musical community is quite aware of Goldsmith's talent, he receives far less public credit than he deserves. I was disturbed to note that Goldsmith's beautiful score for the film *A Patch of Blue* was recently deleted from the Schwann catalogue.

The Chairman is a drama starring Gregory Peck and takes place in a tense Red China. Producer Don Shain's notes say: "His quest for an authentic oriental accompaniment to *The Chairman* took Jerry Goldsmith to the most obscure music libraries of Europe. The first musical phrase in the main title was translated from Chinese to English notation and dates back to 2,000 years before Christ. Throughout the score there are techniques utilized that have roots in the ancient history of the Orient. One simple example is the use of rice on the head of the bass drum."

Ordinarily, that kind of statement says more about studio promotion than it does about a score. It doesn't matter how many armadillo shells a composer uses, nor how much rice on his drum heads. A score rests on music and dynamics, and this one rests splendidly—particularly its love theme, *The World That Only Lovers See* (on which Goldsmith plays piano).

Goldsmith's music has accomplished the dual aim of all soundtrack albums: it makes you want to see the film, and it stands on its own as an emotionally satisfying musical experience. M.A.

in brief

BEATLES: *Abbey Road.* Apple SO 383, \$4.98; 8XT 383, \$6.98. Tape: 4XT 383, \$5.98.

What's to say? If you like the Beatles, you'll like the record. If you have your doubts, this will do nothing to allay them. Of course, as someone just said, they do have "something." J.G.

JO-ANN KELLY. Epic BN 26491, \$4.98. A disorienting package from a little girl who looks about fourteen and sings and plays country guitar with all the reality of a seventy-year-old sharecropper. She's authentic, good, weird. M.A.

LORRAINE ELLISON: *Stay With Me.* Warner Bros./7 Arts WS 1821, \$4.98. Lorraine Ellison is a post-Aretha Franklin singer who makes an excellent debut here under producer Jerry Ragovoy. It may be mostly old ground but Ellison proves it's still fertile. Dig it. J.G.

BILLY PRESTON. Apple ST 3359, \$4.98. Tape: 8XT 3359, \$6.98; 4XT 3359, \$5.98.

I hope Preston doesn't get buried as did an earlier and equally fine Apple artist named James Taylor. Preston is gospel- and blues-oriented, has played organ and sung with all the heavies. Ray Charles used to introduce him as "The young man that anytime I leave this business I want him to take over what I started." But Preston does his own thing. Solid album. M.A.

JOHNNY AND JONIE MOSBY: *Hold Me.* Capitol ST 286, \$4.98. Tape: 8XT 286, \$6.98.

The Mosbys are, deservedly, a very popular c & w team who contribute a well-done collection of favorites here. There are, however, only ten cuts on the record, a saving of time and money that is not passed on to the consumer. J.G.

MORT GARSON: *Electronic Hair Pieces.* A & M SP 4209, \$4.98.

Very nice, except we're already full up with *Hair* albums and Moog albums. There's a rather startling cover here of a young lady painted white, bald, with electric wires coming out of her head. Poor thing. M.A.

CLARENCE REID: *Dancin' with Nobody but You Babe.* Atco SD 33-307, \$4.98. It's too bad Clarence Reid got caught in the Atlantic r & b assembly line; it sounds like he may have a nice thing of his own hidden under the formula. The album is pleasant enough but thoroughly predictable. J.G.

TINY TIM: *For All My Little Friends.* Reprise 6351, \$4.98. Tape: 8 RM, 6351, \$6.95; x 6351, \$5.95.

What could be more appropriate than Tiny Tim doing a children's album? It's weird, lovely, charming. M.A.

DON ELLIS: *The New Don Ellis Band Goes Underground.* Columbia CS 9889, \$4.98.

Don Ellis tries to get into newpops, and the result sounds pretty much like an augmented version of the Buddy Rich band, but without the swing Buddy gives his group. The album is gimmicky, corny, and mannered. One of the most promising bands in years does indeed seem to have gone underground. G.L.

This month's Tape Deck is on page 50.

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