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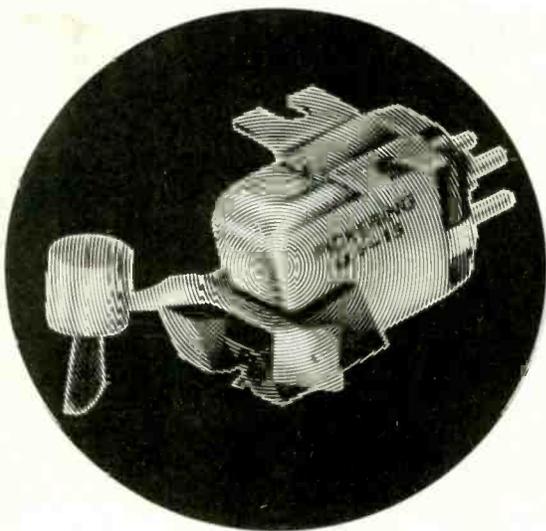


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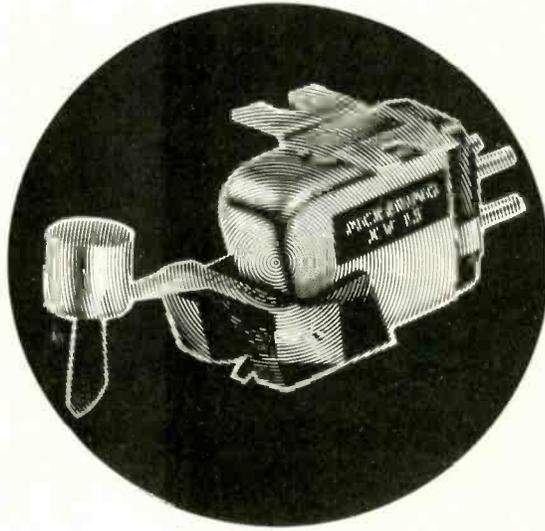
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CIRCLE 35 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

August 1974

VOL. 24, NO. 8

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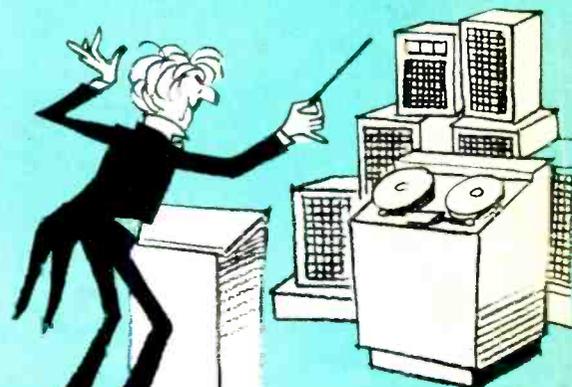
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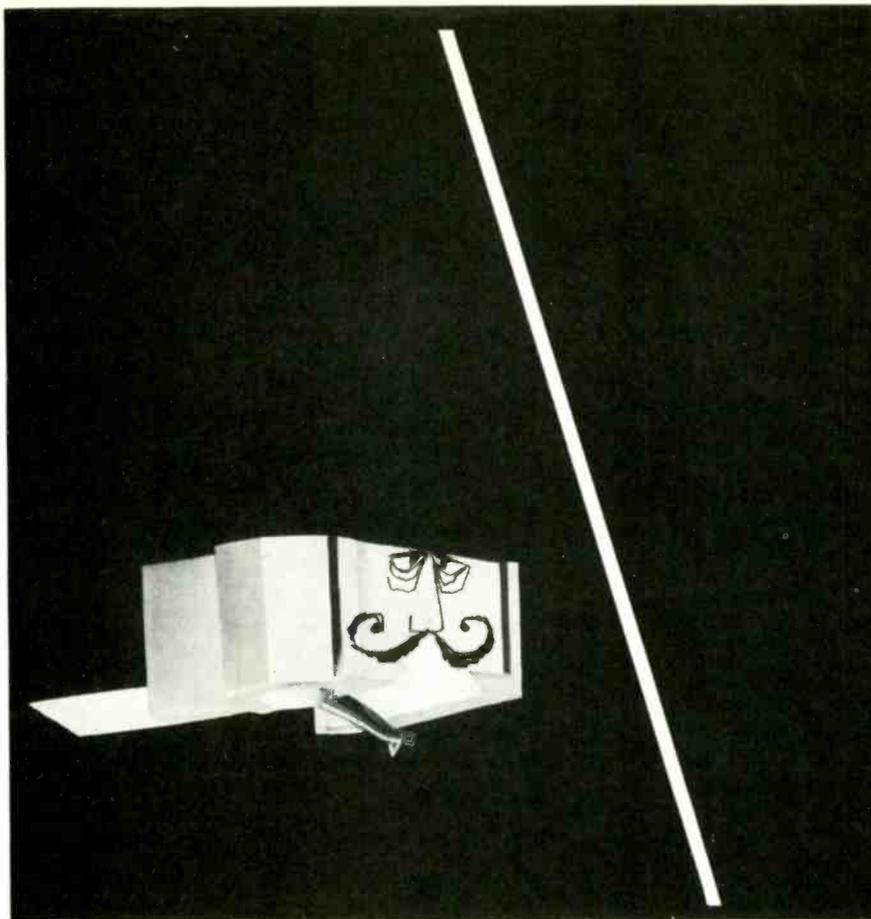


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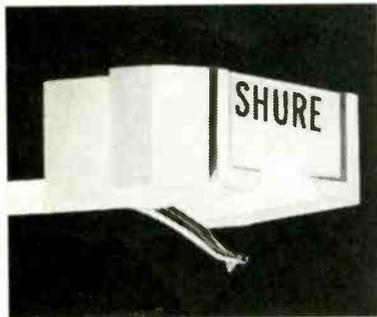
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If anybody knows what Ella Fitzgerald sounds like, it's her old friend Count Basie.

So we set up a test. First, we put Ella in a soundproof booth and recorded her singing on Memorex with **MRX<sub>2</sub> Oxide**. Then we invited the Count into the studio.

He listened, but didn't look, as we alternated between Ella singing live and Ella recorded on Memorex with **MRX<sub>2</sub> Oxide**.

After switching back and forth a number of times, we asked the Count which was Ella live and which was Ella on Memorex.

His answer: "You gotta be kidding, I can't tell."

Now it just stands to reason that if an expert like Count Basie can't tell the difference between "live" and Memorex, you probably can't either.

But, why not buy a Memorex **MRX<sub>2</sub> Oxide** Cassette and listen for yourself?



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CIRCLE 32 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

**Why nearly every  
a car that doesn't**



# record player is like steer straight.

If you've ever driven a car with badly aligned front wheels or a defective steering mechanism, you know what we're talking about.

It's a queasy feeling when you can't make the car point in the same direction as the road is pointing.

There happens to be a distinctly comparable problem with record players, except that it's a nearly universal deficiency, not just a malfunction.

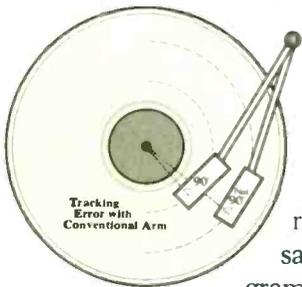
Of course, in this case there's no human life at stake, only the fidelity of the reproduced sound. And sometimes the life of the record.

Like a car, the phono cartridge (or pickup head) should point where it's going. Right down the middle of the groove. Not at an angle to it.

A more scientific way of saying the same thing is that the head should remain perpendicular to the line drawn through the stylus tip and the turntable spindle.

Any deviation from this ideal is known as tracking error. It's measured in degrees and it causes distortion. Inevitably.

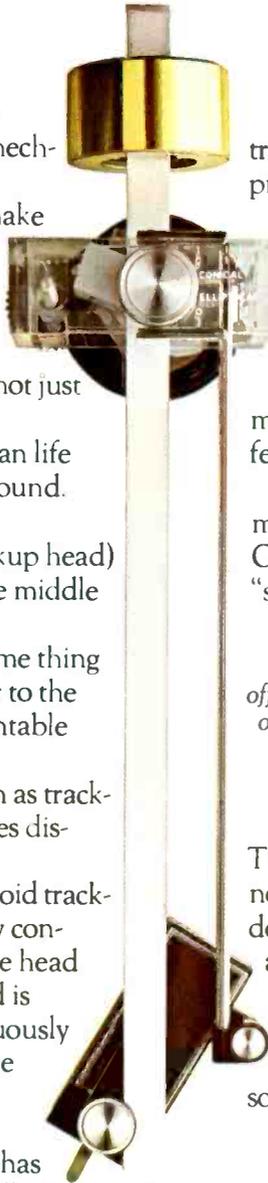
The trouble is that there's no way to avoid tracking error and the resulting distortion with any conventional pivoted tonearm. Why? Because the head swings in an arc and is therefore at a continuously changing angle to the groove as it travels across the record.



The problem has remained fundamentally the same since the Emile Berliner gramophone of 1887. It has been minimized, thanks to improvements in tonearm geometry, but it hasn't been eliminated.

With one important exception.

In the current line of Garrard automatic turntables, the top three models are equipped with Garrard's unique Zero Tracking Error Tonearm.



This remarkable invention ends tracking error once and for all. The head is always properly lined up with the groove because it's hinged instead of fixed and keeps adjusting its angle during play. A simple idea, yes, but the engineering details took the world's leading manufacturer of turntables seven years to perfect.

The Zero Tracking Error Tonearm is a major technological coup, not just a glamour feature. You can hear the difference.

The "Acoustics" column of *Rolling Stone* magazine, for example, reported that the original Garrard turntable equipped with the new arm "sounded markedly 'crisper' than the other turn-

tables" under otherwise identical test conditions. It's true. Just like a car that doesn't steer straight, tracking error can make a nasty sound.

It can even cause unnecessary record wear. The information engraved in the grooves of the new CD-4 discrete four channel records is so finely detailed that it can be partially wiped out by a stylus that doesn't sit absolutely square and true.

Ask your nearest Garrard dealer about the Zero Tracking Error Tonearm.

It's absurd to tolerate a problem that somebody has already solved.

Top of the line: Garrard Zero 100c, \$209.95. Other Garrard automatic turntables from \$49.95 up.



## Garrard

Division of Plessey Consumer Products, 100 Commercial Street, Plainview, New York 11803

CIRCLE 37 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



## If Bach were alive today, he'd be recording on "Scotch" brand recording tape.

It's been said it would take a present-day copyist seventy years just to *copy* all the music Bach composed.

The quantity of his work is staggering. But so is the quality.

After all, nearly 80% of all master recording studios use "Scotch" brand.

So, next time you record something take a hint from the master.

Use "Scotch" brand—the Master Tape.

And *that's* what made Bach the pro he was.

And that's why, if he were recording today, he'd be recording on "Scotch" brand recording tape. Just like the pros in today's music business.

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## The Master Tape.

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COMPANY

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# letters

## Record Reissues

Much as I appreciated Peter G. Davis' "Record Reissues: The Classics" [April 1974], the subject needs at least a complete book to do it justice. Even so, his lists of reissues from the '30s and '40s do contain some glaring omissions, perhaps because of space limitations.

Among conductors, Willem Mengelberg seems to have been most shortchanged: His *Eroica*, Mahler Fourth, and Tchaikovsky Fourth are all listed in Schwann-2, as are several lesser works. Mengelberg is of special interest, for his performances combined the interpretive eloquence of a Furtwängler with the orchestral precision of a Toscanini, and his Amsterdam recordings are of astonishingly fine sonic quality for their age—no doubt due to the superb acoustics of the Great Hall of the Concertgebouw. The Mahler Fourth Symphony (Turnabout TV 4425) was re-created from acetate discs cut from a radio broadcast of a live performance in 1939, yet it sounds beautifully natural, with every note ringing clear from triangle to double bass. Unfortunately, some LP reissues appear to have been made carelessly, from well-worn 78s, and do poor justice to the originals.

If one is willing to explore mail-order labels, imports, "private" labels, and overseas sources, one can find most of Mengelberg's major recordings on LP: all nine Beethoven symphonies, for example, plus the four of Brahms and the last three of Tchaikovsky. Dr. Robert H. Hardie has compiled an extraordinary discography of all Mengelberg recordings, which is available by writing to him at Dyer Observatory, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tenn. 37235.

James H. North  
Yorktown Heights, N.Y.

I enjoyed Mr. Davis' article, but I'm sure most serious collectors have long since bought many of the reissues he mentioned. I would like to see the effort directed toward getting records reissued that either were never put onto LP or lasted only a short time.

Probably the greatest *basso* who ever recorded for RCA Victor was Marcel Journet: what is RCA doing with its large Journet catalogue? One of the first great artists whose records I collected was violist William Primrose. Can't his *Harold in Italy* with Koussevitzky be reissued? How about his duets with Heifetz or trio recordings with Heifetz and Feuermann? I'd even settle for his Handel-Casadesus viola concerto and some of his solo recordings, such as the Paganini Caprice No. 24.

I have always felt that if a record company no longer wants to market certain recordings, it should at least make them available to smaller independent companies who would be only too glad to add first-rate artists to their catalogues. Everest and Vox are two companies that have had success with Cetra, Decca/London, and EMI issues.

David O. Brown  
Brentwood, N.Y.

The survey of record reissues had several curious omissions, most notably Sir Thomas Beecham, who is certainly as well represented



Willem Mengelberg (in 1936)  
*Shortchanged on reissues?*

by reissues as his contemporaries Furtwängler and Toscanini. And with Stokowski represented only by the RCA set of lollipops, mention should have been made of Parnassus 5, which contains Stokowski/Philadelphia recordings of Beethoven's Seventh Symphony (which, when reissued some years ago in a grossly inferior Camden transfer, HIGH FIDELITY critic C. G. Burke pronounced "a manly and compelling performance, decidedly the best that the present writer has ever heard") and Schubert's *Unfinished*.

On the subject of Stokowski, I would like to appeal to your readers for information for the complete, detailed discography I am compiling. I need information on his recordings for CBS (unpublished only), Capitol, Everest, United Artists, American Decca, Vanguard, Decca/London, and MK. What I need is: recording-session dates (and exact composition or portion or movement of composition recorded at each session); recording locale (city and hall); number of players of each instrument taking part in each session; full details of unpublished recordings including alternate takes.

Jim Cartwright  
P. O. Box 8316  
Austin, Tex. 78712

With all the enthusiasm generated for the wealth of famous 78-rpm recordings recently transferred to LP, no one has seen fit to reissue some of the discs made by the greatest trailblazer of them all, conductor Piero Coppola.

No other conductor in history is responsible for as many phonographic "firsts." Coppola gave the gramophone its first representations of nearly all the major works of Claude Debussy (including *Pelléas et Mélisande*) and Maurice Ravel, as well as principal works by Chausson, Balakirev, Aubert, D'Indy, Dukas, Roussel, Falla, Grétry, Halffter, Golestan, Prokofiev, Honegger, Laio, Reyser, Pierné, Schmitt, and Ducasse; a nearly complete Berlioz *Damnation de Faust*; the first electrical recording of Bizet's *Carmen*; and a host of others.

From 1924 to 1935, Coppola was artistic di-

rector of La Voix de son Maître in Paris. In this capacity he not only recorded many works himself, but also was responsible for the introduction of many other famous artists to the gramophone. Pierre Monteux, Charles Panzéra, Georges Enesco, Eidé Norena, and Marjorie Lawrence (among many others) made their first recordings as a result of Coppola's efforts on their behalf.

Yet today Coppola remains in almost total oblivion. It gives me great pleasure, therefore, to announce that the Sir Thomas Beecham Society is paying him belated homage by publishing a biography and complete discography in the spring 1974 edition of the society's publication, *Le Grand Baton*. Written with the help of the conductor's wife, Mme. Rosine Coppola, the article presents a portrait of a fascinating artist, befriended by everyone of consequence in his day, including Chaliapin, Puccini, Serafin, Ravel, De Sabata, and Toscanini. Vocal collectors will be particularly interested in the discography, since it lists the accompaniments of many recordings by Panzéra, Journet, Vanni-Marcoux, Singher, Vézani, Berthon, Hedy, Lawrence, Anseau, Musy, etc.

*Le Grand Baton* is included in membership in the Beecham Society, which costs \$6 per year (\$7 in Europe).

William A. Holmes, Vice President  
Sir Thomas Beecham Society  
664 S. Irena Ave.  
Redondo Beach, Calif. 90277

Yesterday I came across a German DaCapo reissue of the Beethoven Third Symphony by Felix Weingartner and the Vienna Philharmonic (c. 1936). I am thirty and did not become aware of Weingartner and his recorded legacy until about ten years ago. By that time most of the Columbia and Harmony reissues of his Beethoven and Brahms had vanished here in the United States.

I have found several European LP reissues over the years, and I know that the quality of sound is excellent for its day when taken from the masters. Do you think that there is any hope of resurrection in the case of Weingartner?

Do you think that, if interest were created, Seraphim might reissue his recordings? Evidently it doesn't think younger listeners are aware. Many great and classic recordings are back again because interest was stimulated through your magazine.

Ira Shander  
Philadelphia, Pa.

*We're always eager to do what we can to encourage reissues of musically important recordings of the past. As Harris Goldsmith says in his review last month of an especially important Seraphim release, the '30s Heifetz Sibelius and Tchaikovsky concertos: "This disc is much more than a mere memento: it presents two living musical experiences that are virtually unduplicatable today."*

*What we can't do is assure the record com-*

### Caruso Kaput

A number of readers have asked where they can find the Murray Hill set "The Complete Recordings of Enrico Caruso," reviewed by Dale Harris last February. The answer now is nowhere. The set has been withdrawn for legal reasons.

panies that enough people will buy everything we'd like to see reissued. The answer once again is to support the worthwhile reissues we do get.

### Hotter Than Ever

What does your "Too Hot to Handle" editor do when he gets a letter that's too hot to handle? Your March issue included one from Ms. D. J. Smudey of South Bend on a subject that has been a source of some dismay to us at JBL in recent months. Ms. Smudey asked you to comment on Rectilinear's claim that foam grilles absorb, rather than transmit, sound transparently. HIGH FIDELITY's reply evaded the direct conflict by alleging that Rectilinear referred only to "some" manufacturers in its claim. Rectilinear was hardly so gallant as you in your

reply to Ms. Smudey. They said, "The foam material these new-fangled grilles are made of is the same as the appliance people use for muffling the mechanical noises of air-conditioners."

Hardly "some." Certainly inaccurate as you correctly pointed out, for it left no area for exceptions. Can you actually name any speaker manufacturer, reputable or otherwise, who uses foam grille material that absorbs sound?

JBL has significantly more than a semantic interest in this matter. The total burden of research into the application of reticulated urethane foam for speaker grilles and commitment to its marketing was the effort of a single company, JBL. Scott Foam, bless it, did not come to JBL praising the wondrous potentials of this material for speaker grilles—

it was dragged down the pathway of success like a reluctant virgin. We sweated the forming technique for its local distributor. The L-100 Century braved the traditional resistance of the marketplace and pioneered the grille material alone for a year or more before its virtues were taken up and emulated by others.

*J. R. Stern*

James B. Lansing Sound, Inc.  
Los Angeles, Calif.

*Sorry, we don't know any speaker manufacturer who uses sound-absorbing foam for its grilles. (For a discussion of sound-transparent foam, see "News and Views," page 30.) Perhaps some reader can help.*

### Singers

I must take exception to David Hamilton's otherwise admirable summing up of "The Recordings of Maria Callas" [March 1974]. Contrary to his statement that "very possibly, the Callas voice as such had less going for it than any other voice that has achieved international celebrity via the phonograph," one should think that there is evidence enough in the commercial recordings alone to justify the claim that Callas, from the early stages of her career, possessed a natural voice that unquestionably ranks amongst the greatest in this century.

The Callas voice was a prodigious column of sound, big-sized from bottom to high E flat, with the registers so blended and coordinated that it possessed all through its range both a buoyant flexibility and penetrating power. The high E flats as preserved for posterity in the *Puritani*, *Traviata*, and *Lucia* arias are equal in size and power to the best B flats from other dramatic sopranos, while at the other end of the scale the low notes remain always telling and eloquent. If the timbre of the voice seems quite removed from the conventional brightness of the usual soprano voice, that is not to deny that it possesses a beauty—a "phosphorescent beauty," as an Italian critic so aptly put it—all its own. (There even are not a few Callas fans who are intoxicated by what they regard as "the slow sensuous pulse"; but that is carrying the argument to its extreme.)

Thus it is with this awesome natural equipment, with its immediate eloquent beauty, that Callas was able to command such a universal following through the phonograph alone and, as Lauri-Volpi predicted, to "rouse the multitude" and "lead the lyric theater to a new golden age."

*Dieter Loock*

Lausanne, Switzerland

The unfavorable April review of Placido Domingo's new opera recital prompts me to join readers Thomas Wilson and Lawrence King ["Letters," December 1973 and April 1974] in requesting more recorded recitals by the greatest tenor today, Carlo Bergonzi. Corelli, Tucker, and even Domingo simply lack his exemplary vocal "style." David Hamilton perhaps best describes Bergonzi's often elusive quality when referring to the equally great Maria Callas [March 1974], stating that "all the resources available to a musician . . . are brought to bear, to give each phrase momentum, coherence, a sense of destination, a clear function within the whole."

It is my hope that Bergonzi will soon make new recordings of early Verdi and rare *verismo* tenor arias, a few discs of classical and nine-

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HIGH FIDELITY February, 1974

"...the Interface:A can deliver a level of undistorted bass far superior to that of any other speaker of its size that we have heard."

STEREO REVIEW March, 1974

"The Interface:A is, simply, a great speaker system."

STEREO & HI-FI TIMES Winter, 1974



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\$400/pair, suggested retail including equalizer.

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619 Cecil St., Buchanan, Mich. 49107 COMPANY

CIRCLE 16 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

# For those content to settle for mere greatness in an automatic.



In order to tell you about the merely great Miracord 760 automatic turntable, we must admit that we make a slightly greater model, the Miracord 50H Mark II. But to call the 760 "second best" is to call a Bentley "just another car."

But before we tell you about the differences, we'll tell you about the remarkable similarities.

Both turntables begin with ELAC's unique, no-shake push-button control system. This takes the jolt and jar out of operation and reduces the chance of record damage.

The 760 tracks with dead accuracy as low as  $\frac{1}{2}$  gram stylus pressure, and the anti-skating device is precise beyond belief.

Pitch control? Of course. Like our top-of-the-line Mark II, the 760 allows you to vary speed over a 6% range (equal to a semi-tone in pitch). And a built-in stroboscope allows for simple, unerring speed adjustment.

The 760's 12" one piece, die-cast turntable platter is dynamically balanced

for smooth performance and consistent speed.

So what's the difference between the Miracord 760 and the 50H Mark II (which costs \$35 more)? It's merely in the motor. The 760 has a specially designed spectacularly consistent asynchronous motor, and next to 50H Mark II its speed accuracy is virtually unsurpassed in the audio field.

If you're looking for the ultimate in fidelity, you'll want a handcrafted turntable by ELAC. And we invite you to write us for literature on the entire ELAC line.

Just a word of caution. Because you can't rush craftsmanship, you may not find the 760 or the 50H Mark II readily available. But we'd rather be great than easy to get. If you find yourself shopping around for our turntable, take comfort in this obvious fact: you don't find a Rolls Royce dealer on every corner. Because greatness can't be mass produced.

ELAC Products/Benjamin Electronic Sound Company, Farmingdale, N.Y. 11735.

**MIRACORD 760**

**ELAC**

## You can't rush craftsmanship.

teenth-century Italian songs, and duet recordings with Caballé and Cappuccilli.

Raymond E. Myers  
Bellflower, Calif.

## Mahler

Abram Chipman's review of recent Mahler recordings ["Mahler: A Psychomusical View," May 1974] reflects his customary sound musical judgments, most of which I found highly perceptive.

I am less happy with the "psychomusical view." His analysis of Mahler's reasons for deleting the first section of *Das klagende Lied* when publishing the work echoes Jack Diether's jacket notes for the Boulez recording. Both of them suggest that the only, or principal, reason for this deletion is Mahler's

subconscious hostility toward his brother—hence the murder scene is cut. My experience with the "complete" Boulez recording is that Mahler cut the first section because it is musically redundant; much of its material is used again in succeeding sections in very similar form. As a musician, he might have felt that the work was tighter and less repetitious with such a cut. From a "psychomusical" viewpoint, he should have suppressed the entire work, since the surviving sections still deal with fratricide.

I also find it unfortunate that Dr. Chipman devoted two lengthy paragraphs to analyzing the Eighth Symphony without regard for the chronology of Mahler's life. He drafted the Eighth in the summer of 1906, a year before the horrors of 1907. By the time that awful summer arrived, Mahler was completing the

scoring of the Eighth. Certainly he could not have been thinking, "I have not lost a daughter," etc., when he conceived the work a year before. This inaccuracy makes Dr. Chipman's conjectures extremely distasteful, as well as a slur on Mahler's intense love for his daughter. The fact that he spent the rest of his creative life after that fateful summer writing elegiac laments reflects the immediate and continuing grief he must have felt.

The meeting with Freud, referred to here and in virtually every other summary of Mahler's life, I have always felt was overemphasized. I am somewhat surprised that Dr. Chipman suggests that Mahler was "cured" of his Oedipus complex as a result of a single afternoon session with an analyst, even one so distinguished as Dr. Freud. Maybe so. But accounts of the final months of his life do not suggest that he was in any way cured, physically or emotionally.

D. J. Coombs  
San Francisco, Calif.

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I would like to congratulate Mr. Chipman on a very perceptive and highly interesting article on the four new Mahler releases, and the great insight and skillful analytical sensitivity he showed in appraising the four recordings. There are, though, a few points I wish to make, points that have been eating at me for some time.

First, why this tendency to ignore Leonard Bernstein's prominent contributions to the current reputation of Mahler? His performances of the Fifth, the Seventh, the Ninth, and—most particularly—the Eighth need absolutely no apologies; in fact, in spite of the latter's "hard and diffuse" qualities I find no recording to match it today.

Second, after reading all the many reviews of Solti's Mahler Eighth on London, why am I the only one who seems to notice the series of obvious tape splices evident in the end of Part I? Lucia Popp's magnificent voice starts as if her taking a breath was cut off with a knife, and there is clearly an impossible change in tempo in the orchestra seconds later. Are the reviewers paying attention to what they listen to, or are their pencils busy on the reviews? Such technological hanky-panky mars the effect of the Solti performance for me.

Third, Mahler's psyche is too often simplified in "Oedipus" rigmarole. I need hardly note that I didn't know him intimately, but I am certain that the inappropriateness of such a mold is gargantuan.

Robert E. Blenheim  
Levittown, Pa.

## Critics

Renata Tebaldi is probably laughing at recent reviews of her last recording with Franco Corelli as she makes her way to the bank! Like Libera!

Critics have destroyed many a great career. It is a shame they do this; we would have had the chance to hear many more years of the great Rosa Ponselle, but the lambasting she took on her Carmen had a lot to do with her retiring. I heard it many years ago and recently on tape, and she does a beautiful job.

Personally, I don't pay any attention to critics: who are they to tell me what I love in music? I could never stand to hear Kirsten Flagstad. Her voice was a cold instrument to me, and Lauritz Melchior sang with a voice that made me feel as if I wanted to pull a ball of

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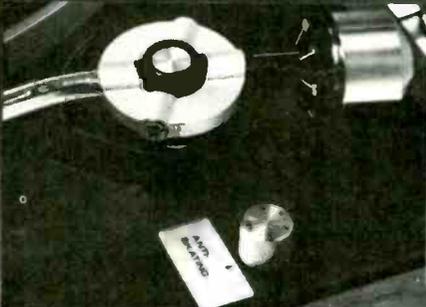
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cotton out of his throat—but both were great artists and were adored by public and critics.

I adored Grace Moore; she had a wonderful voice. Did the critics give her a break? No, not at all. But she remained on top and in prime voice till the day of her untimely death in 1947. The public loved her, and she was well received whenever she sang.

The critics praised Marilyn Horne for her Carmen. I found it lacking in the fiery voice I have heard from other Carmens—although she is magnificent in coloratura mezzo roles. Caballé was to me a complete disappointment as Norma but glorious in other roles.

So it goes. We all have likes and dislikes in the musical world, and no number of critics will change one's mind.

T. Ward  
Tacoma, Wash.

### A "Tape Deck" Fan

I believe special commendation is due R. D. Darrell for his consistently excellent coverage of recorded-tape releases in "The Tape Deck."

So many other sources of information about tape seem to have dried up within the last couple of years that his extremely well-written and judicious comments have become all the more worthwhile. Mr. Darrell somehow manages to pick out the more important, or the more advanced, or the more engaging releases in whatever mode—open reel, cartridge, or cassette—and select the salient features of each for comment. Add to this his concise observations on significant technical developments in the industry, helpful reference works and catalogues, and much other newsworthy information not easily found elsewhere, and the tape-oriented reader gets quite a full package.

Keep his comments coming; they are invaluable.

J. F. Walters  
Berkeley, Calif.

### The Extra Cymbal

I am delighted with Robert P. Morgan's June review of George Crumb's *Night of the Four Moons*. However, Mr. Morgan raises a very valid point, which perhaps, as the producer of the album, I am in a position to explain.

He notes that in this piece each performer strikes an antique cymbal as he leaves the stage, but he wonders why there are five notes struck when only four performers walk off the platform. Mr. Crumb feels that in the event that the piece is performed with a conductor, he should be the first to walk off the stage and, correspondingly, the first to strike the antique cymbal. At Mr. Crumb's request, we did not directly credit him on this album as the conductor. However, since he did direct these performances, he felt it appropriate as leader to add the additional cymbal stroke.

Mr. Crumb's desire for anonymity as conductor is probably based on his wish not to steal the spotlight from the performers. I feel this is worth mentioning so that listeners and future performers may better understand his unique music. I applaud Mr. Morgan's perceptiveness in noting this discrepancy.

Jay David Saks  
Columbia Records  
New York, N.Y.

### Bum Rap for Home Recordists?

May I protest the unscrutinized assumption that home tape recordists rip off classical disc artists by depriving them of royalties? Among

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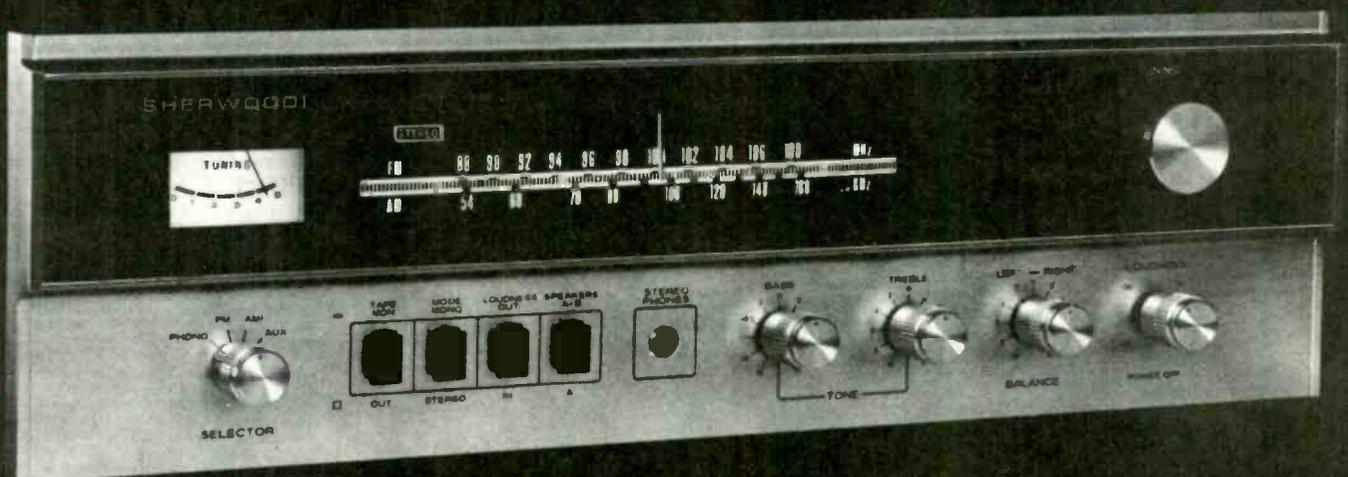
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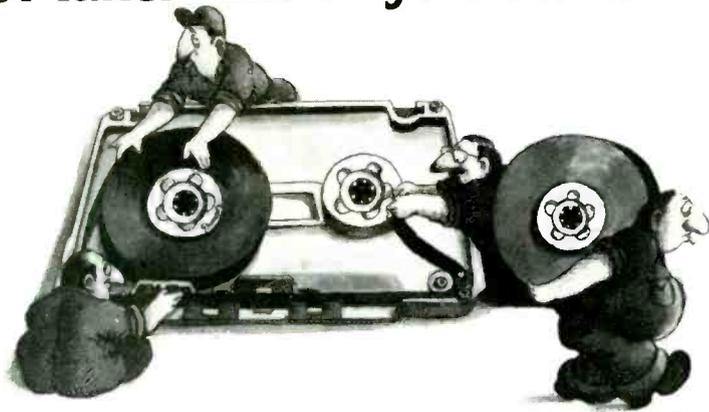
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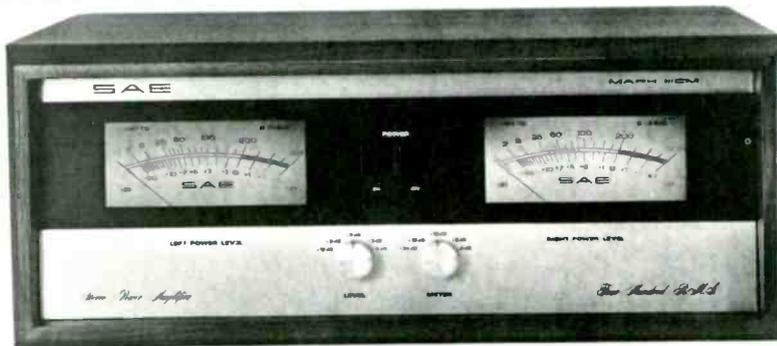
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all the classical collectors I know, tape is an additive factor. Tape collectors buy as many LPs as they can afford. They use tape primarily to acquire out-of-print 78s and LPs, opera broadcasts, and/or prohibitively expensive items. Removing raw tape from the market would hardly escalate disc purchases (unless one is taping budget LPs in stereo at 7½ ips: I know of no such animal!).

On the contrary, introducing and proliferating diversity of repertoire and performance whets one's appetite. Record sales are boosted by expanding the listener's horizons and desires. Record sales are not boosted by affixing esoteric snob appeal to classical records. Record sales are not boosted by adding a forty-fifth Beethoven Fifth to the sagging market.

In short, record companies should do some hard marketing and motivational research. This would be less paranoid than projecting blame onto owners of tape recorders who, in reality, pump more money into the lean classical coffers than most other categories of record buyers.

*Michael Berman, President  
Record Collectors' Guild of Boston  
Boston, Mass.*

### For Whom the Animals?

In the March 1974 issue, John Rockwell reviewed Nonesuch's "Animals of Africa." I sometimes ask myself the same questions he did about why a certain record exists, but I want to tell him and you that I bought this particular record for my eight-year-old as a Christmas present. He is a great animal lover, and I think it was one of his favorite presents. The other three kids in the family have enjoyed listening to it over and over again. My only disappointment is in its brevity.

So to answer the two questions in Mr. Rockwell's second paragraph: The record is for children (and maybe for naturalists), and it is for pleasure while showing them another world.

*David V. Pittenger  
Dallas, Tex.*

**High Fidelity**, August 1974, Vol. 24, No. 8. Published monthly by Billboard Publications, Inc. Chairman: R. H. STEGEMAN; President: W. D. LITTLEFORD; Vice Presidents: MAYNARD REUTER, Sales; JOEL NOVAK, Circulation; JULES PEREL, American Artist Group; WARREN B. SYER, Consumer Publications; DAVID LUPPERT, Controller; MORT NASATIR, International Operations; HAL B. COOK, Treasurer; LAWRENCE GATTO; Secretary: JOHN ROSS; President, Whitney Publications; CHARLES WHITNEY, President, Music Labo (joint venture); BEN OKANO, Publications; New York: *American Artist, Gift & Tableware Reporter, Industrial Design, Interiors, Merchandising Week, Modern Photography, Photo Weekly, VidNews, Watson-Guptill Publications, Whitney Library of Design*; Great Barrington, Ma.: *High Fidelity, Musical America, Stereo, Musical America Directory of the Performing Arts, Buyer's Guide to the World of Tape, Consumer's Guide to Four-Channel Sound, High Fidelity's Test Reports*; Los Angeles: *Billboard*; Nashville: *Amusement Business*; London: *Music Week, Record Radio Mirror, World Radio-TV Handbook, How to Listen to the World*; Tokyo: *Music Labo*.

**High Fidelity/Musical America**, Edition published monthly. Member Audit Bureau of Circulations.

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, Ohio 45214. Subscription rates: High Fidelity/Musical America: In the U.S.A. and its Possessions, 1 year \$14; elsewhere, 1 year \$15. National and other editions published monthly. In the U.S.A. and its Possessions, 1 year \$7.95. Subscription rates for all other countries available on request.

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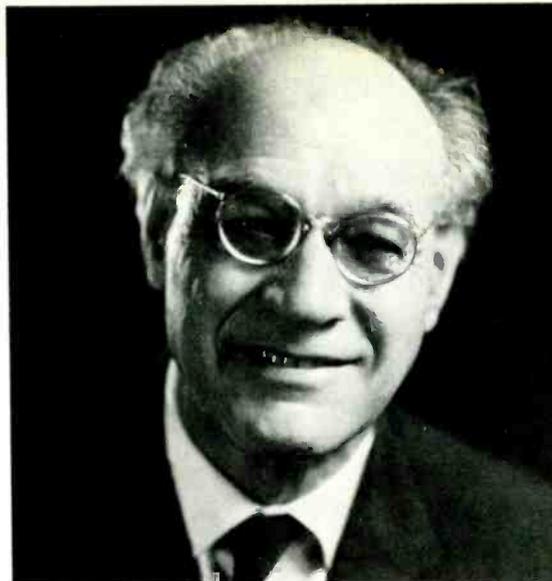
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by Maurice Abravanel



## The Utah Story: No Devilry, Just Good Sense

How recording put a fine American orchestra on the map, made it a better one, and enriched the repertory to boot.

SOME TIME AGO the Utah Symphony sold its millionth recording. With Vox's new release of the virtually complete symphonic Tchaikovsky (all six symphonies, *Manfred*, *Hamlet*, *Francesca da Rimini*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *1812*, and *Marche slave*), the orchestra has made its seventy-sixth disc. This spring, for Vanguard, it became the first American orchestra to record all nine Mahler symphonies.

For an orchestra that was usually bracketed with that of Duluth, Minnesota, this seems quite a fantastic achievement. Some see in it something miraculous, while others are convinced some devilry was at work.

It really all started with a weekly NBC program called "Orchestras of the Nation." Our one-hour live broadcast in 1947, which included Strauss's *Don Juan* and Ravel's *Daphnis et Chloé*, won the exuberant praise of the feared B. H. Haggin in the *Herald Tribune*.

At that time I was still recording a few albums for Columbia. Naturally the Utah Symphony players asked whether they could not record. I went to Goddard Lieberman, then Columbia a&r director, and I had a rude awakening. Lieberman, with whom I had worked recording Weill's *Street Scene*, explained that even if we did not need a single retake the cost

of recording would be greater than with the New York Philharmonic or the Philadelphia Orchestra because there was (and still is) a uniform recording scale.

Each member of the Utah Symphony would have to receive exactly the same pay as each member of the New York Philharmonic, and Columbia would have to add its engineers' travel expenses and the cost of shipping equipment 2,200 miles to record in a strange locale. Lieberman added that, while he had been told by his engineers that our broadcast record was excellent, Columbia had of course spent huge amounts over the years promoting Philadelphia and New York and that nobody even in his wildest dreams could expect a comparable sale.

Pointing to a box on his desk, he said: "This is the Beethoven Ninth recorded in Munich complete with chorus and four soloists. Total cost: \$1,250. If we recorded it without stop in Salt Lake City, the minimum payroll for your musicians alone would be about three times as much."

From his office I went straight to the office of the American Federation of Musicians. I had just heard that about seventy per cent of classical-music recordings sold in America were made in Europe. What was the AFM going to do about it? Could we expect Congress to pass a high import tax? The response was, "Are you kidding?" I said no but wasn't it obvious we were swamped with recordings by mostly fine European orchestras, whereas better American orchestras were simply not allowed to compete?

In my first season in Utah, the enter-

## speaking of records

prising Concert Hall label approached me and offered a practically unlimited number of recording sessions if I would go to Europe. I answered that I would rather do those recordings with the Utah Symphony. A few years later, in 1952, David Josefowitz, the head of Concert Hall, started the Handel Society and asked whether I could record a series of Handel oratorios with the Utah Symphony and Utah choruses.

At that time, to my knowledge, only *Messiah* had been recorded complete. I chose *Judas Maccabaeus*, picked young soloists, and coached the choruses myself. Josefowitz came to Salt Lake City with an Ampex under his arm and a couple of microphones in his suitcase, and so we recorded *Judas*. Lo and behold, it had excellent reviews, but the sales were quite disappointing. That was the end of that project until Westminster approached me.

(In that *Judas*, by the way, as in our records since, neither our recording companies nor the Utah Symphony could afford expensive, well-established singers, so I almost always had to find some less expensive ones. Time and again recording companies lamented the fact that we almost always had totally unknown singers. Some of their names, however, have become quite familiar—for example Grace Bumbry, Martina Arroyo, and later Beverly Sills.)

Around that time I was told by a very excited member that the AFM convention had decided each local could set its own rate for recordings. As it turned out, this applied only to jingles, not to commercial recordings. Believing the latter was the case, I accepted a contract with Westminster that was word for word and figure for figure the same as Westminster's contract with one of our major orchestras. By checking, I found it also was the same as Mercury's with one of the Big Five.

The principle of it was that the symphony society was responsible for the musicians' payroll, while the recording company paid for everything else and gave the orchestra a higher royalty. The arrangement agreed on by the Utah Symphony board and members specified that our musicians would be paid at the time of the session the equivalent of one service plus twenty per cent. As royalties came in, they would be paid the difference owed to them up to the national scale—of course only to the extent that the royalties would cover the difference. The local union was notified and informed the federation: the federation agreed, on condition that each musician

---

*Mr. Abravanel is musical director of the Utah Symphony Orchestra. Since he wrote this piece, there have been signs of a resurgence in the recording of American orchestras, notably the Baltimore Symphony's announcement of a contract with Vox, to include all the Mendelssohn symphonies.*

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file his own petition requesting permission to record under that formula.

I was quite startled by Westminster's choice of repertory for us: In addition to Handel and Saint-Saëns's *Organ* Symphony, it wanted the complete Gershwin. How could we possibly compete with the excellent and celebrated recordings of Bernstein, Ormandy, Fiedler, and Oscar Levant with those prestigious orchestras? But Westminster knew what it wanted. There had been no recent Gershwin recordings, and the company brought out those works with all the gimmicks of "hi-fi." The recordings were highly successful, and so we were on our way.

Thanks to our formula, we were able over the years to perform works that were not necessarily commercial but that we considered important to record. This has especially been the case with Vanguard, where Seymour Solomon wanted to make a contribution to the recorded literature, and with Vox, where George Mendelssohn somehow manages to be highly successful recording exclusively "serious" music. Works that the major companies refused to record because of the large expense or the small probability of returns were possible because of the moderate costs. In addition, an exceedingly disciplined and cooperative orchestra was able to record in a very

minimum of time, and the recordings were decidedly highly successful with most critics in the U.S.—and even more so abroad.

To my knowledge, our *Judas Macabaeus* and *Samson* were the first recordings ever of those works and *Israel in Egypt* was the first American recording. Music that had not found its way into the regular orchestral repertory by then appeared and enriched the repertory. This happened, for example, when we made the first stereo recordings of many and the first recording ever of some Vaughan Williams works. John Owen Ward, then with Oxford University Press, told me there was definitely a renaissance of Vaughan Williams' music due to those recordings, and the composer's widow reported to me that for his one-hundredth birthday the BBC played virtually all of our recordings.

We also made the first studio recordings of the Mahler Seventh and Eighth Symphonies. Leonard Bernstein, no less, was kind enough to acknowledge that only after we had successfully recorded those works did Columbia agree to let him do them.

We were, I believe, the first to record a work for larger orchestra by Varèse (*Amérique*). We made the first recording of Darius Milhaud's monumental *Pacem in terris*. William Schuman's Sev-

enth Symphony, and Ned Rorem's Third Symphony, the complete orchestral Satie, and many, many others, including music by such composers as Henri Laza-rof, who credits our recordings for the large number of performances he now receives, especially in Europe.

Recording forced us to play better. Critical and public acceptance gave our orchestra a feeling of confidence. Because of the enterprising repertoire, our recordings were played and sold throughout the world; therefore we were booked in Europe and Latin America at higher fees than all but the very top orchestras of the nation. The attendance at those concerts, even without a soloist, was reported to us as much greater than that at concerts by otherwise better-known and established orchestras.

Two years ago the federation forbade the Utah Symphony to continue to record under this plan. By this time we were well enough established so that we were able to continue our program at full speed, but of course it is much more difficult now to champion hitherto unrecorded works.

Conclusion: no devilry, no miracle, just pure common sense. I only hope that more of our excellent American orchestras can appear on records and compete in the minds of American buyers with their European counterparts. ●

## Bang & Olufsen has developed an extraordinary new CD-4 cartridge.



An integrated system, the MMC 6000 leaves the factory as a sealed unit, a non-replaceable stylus assembly integrated with the coils, magnet, and output terminals. This significant departure from traditional "two piece" cartridge design represents an absolute, no compromise approach to optimum CD-4 reproduction. The integrated approach allowed Bang & Olufsen engineers to greatly reduce the effective tip mass, the size and mass of the cantilever, and the transducing elements of the MMC 6000.

The effective tip mass is .22mg. Extensive testing has shown that the effective tip mass (ETM) of a cartridge is the factor most directly related to stylus and record groove wear. It has also been demonstrated that record wear due to high ETM is most severe in the high frequencies;

obviously, then, high ETM can be a substantial problem for CD-4 reproduction. The integrated manufacturing method used to produce the MMC 6000 contributes to the extremely low ETM of .22mg, and a tip resonance point of over 50,000Hz.

It tracks at 1 gram. The MMC 6000's low vertical tracking force (VTF), extremely small ETM, and compliance of  $30 \times 10^{-11}$ , create an exact relationship between those factors of a cartridge which have the greatest effect on performance. Establishing their ideal interrelationship is the most

## Before you listen to it there are a few things we think you should know.

critical task within cartridge design. The MMC 6000's low VTF can be considered as just one result of a superior engineering approach.

It features a Pramanik stylus. The MMC 6000 utilizes a new multi-radial diamond developed by S.K. Pramanik of Bang & Olufsen. The shape of the diamond was created to obtain minimum contact along the horizontal axis for extremely accurate tracing of high frequency modulations, and maximum contact along the vertical axis to reduce stylus and record groove wear. As opposed to normal diamond styli, only the very tip of the Pramanik diamond is mounted on the cantilever. This procedure and the new beryllium cantilever (stiffer and lighter than commonly used aluminum) further reduces the ETM of the MMC 6000.

# Bang & Olufsen

Bang & Olufsen of America  
2271 Devon Avenue, Elk Grove Village, Illinois 60007



# Automatically it's Revox.

The economics of successful station operation demand completely reliable automated program sources. And where reliability counts, more and more manufacturers of automated programming equipment have come to rely on Revox. Such prestigious names as the Schafer Electronics Corp., CCA, Gates Division of Harris-Intertype Corp., Sparta Electronics Corp., International Good Music (IGM) and S.M.C. Systems Marketing Inc. (Sonomag), all employ Revox tape recorders as an integral part of their installations.

If your application depends on ultra-reliable, high performance tape equipment, shouldn't you be using Revox too?

**More proof that Revox delivers what all the rest only promise.**

Revox Corporation In USA: 155 Michael Drive, Syosset, NY 11791 and 3637 Cahuenga Boulevard West, Hollywood, California 90068.  
 England: C.E. Hammond & Co., Ltd., Lamb House, Chiswick, London W4 2PB. Also available In Canada.  
 For other countries: Revox International, Regensdorf 8105 ZH Althardstrasse 146, Switzerland.

# The "Air Suspension" Speaker

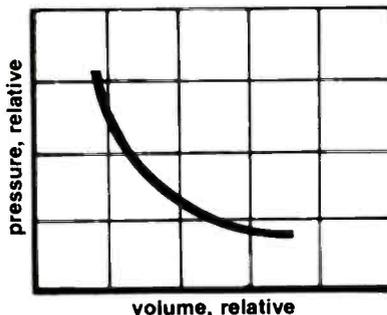
## FACT or FICTION

Repeat a statement often enough, and, over a period of time, it becomes accepted as fact—whether or not it is true.

It is through this process that the so-called "air-suspension" speaker has been popularized. The popular theory is that the air in the small enclosure, like a spring, has a straight line relation between applied force (pressure) and extension (volume). Therefore, so they say, the air-suspension system is linear and has less distortion than systems depending on mechanical restoration.

The facts are otherwise, as a quick reference to any basic physics text will reveal. Air does not act like a spring; rather, it responds to Boyle's law which says that, at a given temperature, the product of pressure and volume is constant. Increase pressure, and volume is reduced; reduce pressure, and volume increases. Mathematically put, the formula is  $PV = \text{Constant}$ , which is linear. However, as applied to an air-suspension system, it becomes  $PV^{1.4} = \text{Constant}$ , which is not linear.

Graphically it looks something like this:



The facts put to rest the myth of linearity associated with the "air-suspension" system.

The truth is that the larger the cone area and the larger the enclosure, the closer one approaches linearity and perfect bass reproduction.

All of which explains why Bozak, true to its quarter-century reputation for seeking the utmost honesty in sound reproduction, shuns the use of the "air-suspension" enclosure in favor of the more genuinely linear "infinite baffle" enclosure.

If you'd like other honest facts to consider in selecting loudspeakers, ask for our booklet "How to Evaluate a Loudspeaker System". Write Department 8, Bozak, Inc., Darien, Connecticut 06820.



## too hot to handle

I realize that prices are going up, but I didn't realize that the Thorens TD-160C now costs \$250, as listed in your May issue listing of manual turntables.—James Whitman Jr., San Fernando, Calif.

All Thorens turntables have antiskating devices. You listed the 160C as having none. If you can't print statistics accurately, don't print them.—John McKnee, Lowell, Ind.

The price listing is a typographic error: It should have read \$215. The antiskating provision was omitted on the data supplied by Elpa (and hence by us as well), though the arm on the 160 uses the same magnetic antiskating as on the other two Thorens models listed in the May issue. Our apologies.

Your report on the Rectilinear X1a [March 1974] gives response as 42 Hz to 10 kHz, but then it says, "At the low end clean response holds up, at normal listening levels, to about 45 Hz; from here to 20 Hz the response, at any audible level, is mostly doubling." I take it this means that though the measurements are good, the bass is bad.—T.F. Benz, Rochester, N.Y.

On the contrary, the bass is very good. It goes without saying that a cone speaker normally produces some doubling in the deep bass. That a frequency as low as 45 Hz in a system costing under \$90 was reproduced without doubling is a matter for jubilation, not complaint.

Very little has been written about sound equipment for the auto. Admittedly, conditions aren't ideal for concert hall realism, but I'm sure there are differences in sound quality. What are the advantages and disadvantages of cassettes vs. cartridges for autos?—S. Neiditch, Highland, Calif.

Though the cassette certainly has more advantages for home use, we can't say that it is necessarily better for automobile use—assuming equal-quality equipment for comparison purposes, of course. The clear advantages of the cartridge are: ease of one-hand insertion into the player; availability of quad, if you want it; and broader popular repertory in prerecorded tapes. On the other hand, some users might prefer the cassette. First, there is the sound buff willing to spend the extra money for a good Dolby unit (a real rarity in auto equipment so far). Second, there's the musical spe-

cialist who can find the recorded repertoire he specializes in (opera particularly) more easily on cassettes than on cartridges. And finally, there's the avid home cassette recordist who wants to listen to what he has recorded in the car without copying it onto another format.

Please recommend a readily available and usable means to calibrate tone controls for speaker adjustment in a listening room. I would prefer a means that would permit measurable, rather than subjective, evaluation. I have a Pioneer SA-9100 amp and EPI 100 speakers.—Jeffrey Noah Asher, Montreal, Canada.

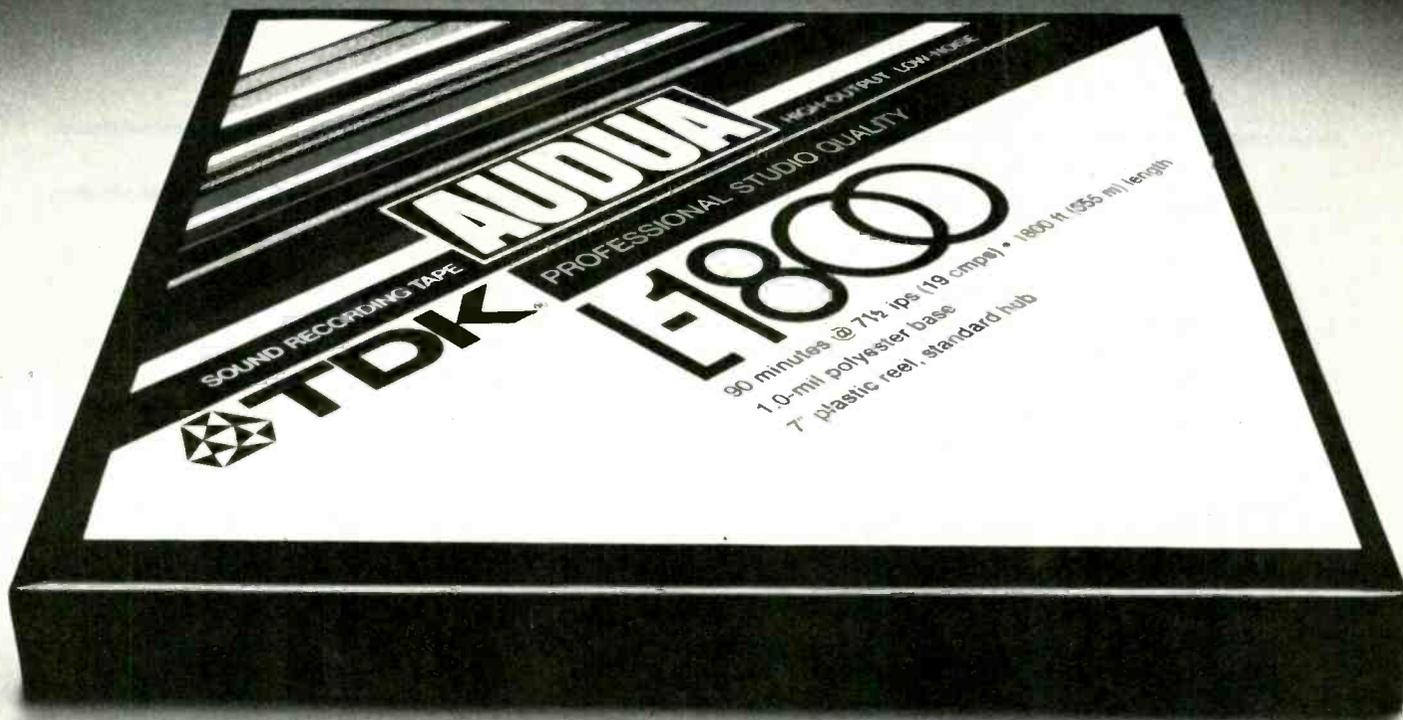
If you had not specified the Pioneer amp, we might have wondered just what you were up to. (The SA-9100 has separate tone controls—that is, in addition to the conventional type—for altering only the extremes of the audio range, where speakers can most benefit from some equalization.) The only true measurement systems we know of involve expensive gear that prevents their being "readily available and usable" in normal terms. Of course test records with frequency sweeps can be used (subjectively) to assess best control settings. Among the most carefully produced and most readily available are CBS Labs' STR-100 and Shure Brothers' TTR-102.

Several years ago I bought a Cipher IV four-track stereo tape recorder from Columbia House. I am in need of parts—especially the little idler wheels in the drive system. Columbia House sent me an address, but the company no longer handles the recorder or parts. What do I do now?—Reynoldo Garcia Jr., Corpus Christi, Tex. The Cipher line has been off the market a good many years, and this one has us stumped. Any parts-supply house that can help Mr. Garcia—or any reader who knows of one—can write to him in care of the magazine.

Panasonic, Akai, and Sony ads say ferrite heads are far better than conventional ones. Yet some of the better recorder manufacturers (like Tandberg) never talk about ferrite heads, and I understand that Teac tried ferrite and then switched back.

Continued on page 28

How to make the sound system you bought  
sound like the sound system you bought.



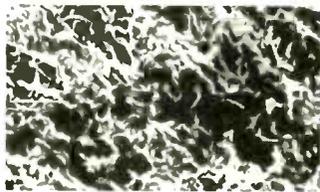
# INTRODUCING NEW TDK AUDUA OPEN-REEL TAPE.

No matter how much time, effort, or money you put into your sound system, chances are it's not giving you peak performance—the level it was designed for.

Much of that gap in performance can be attributed to the inconsistencies you find in most low-noise, high-output tapes. The shape of the magnetic particles, the density and uniformity of the coating, all contribute to that total performance. And the more inconsistencies, the fewer overtones and transient phenomena you hear.



Audua coating: tight, fine, dense.



Other premium tape coatings:  
random, sparse.

Audua's different from anything you've ever heard before. In fact, you'll probably find that it's capable of delivering the finest sound of any open-reel tape you can buy, anywhere. Even better than our own highly rated SD. That's why SD's been discontinued.

Audua was designed to provide higher output and

lower noise levels. That's because TDK designed a unique process of uniformly applying Audua's ultra-fine particles. Particles that are only 0.4 microns long and with a length-to-width ratio of 10:1. In addition, that process gives Audua a significantly better high-end frequency response.

Here's why: take a good look at the two micro-photos. Audua is denser and more uniform. It can capture more delicate harmonic overtones and transient phenomena than that other premium tape.

So try Audua. It could make your sound system perform like the sound system you paid for. Or maybe even better.



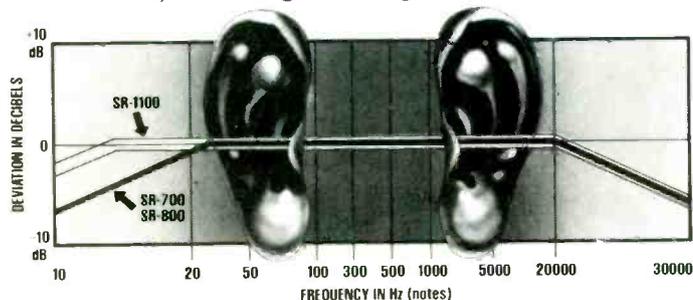
TDK ELECTRONICS CORP.  
755 Eastgate Boulevard, Garden City, New York 11530

# THE HITACHI REPORT

No. 26 • Subject: Frequency Response • 2-Channel Receivers

After you read the truth about frequency response, you'll know how we operate. One of the most important specifications stereo shoppers compare is Frequency Response (FR). It's also one of the most misunderstood. So before we tell you how good the FR is on our 2-channel AM/FM receivers, we thought you'd like a simple definition.

Frequency Response refers to a sound system's (or individual component's) ability to EQUALLY reproduce all frequencies (bass, mid-range and treble notes) within a given range.



The average human ear can hear frequencies as low as 20 cycles per second and as high as 20,000 cps. Any quality system can reproduce notes in this range, but the important difference is how far each system deviates from EQUAL reproduction, as measured in decibels. One decibel being approximately the smallest change in loudness detectable by the ear. **Any more than minus 2 decibels of deviation creates significant loss of response in that particular frequency.**

Now that you know what you're looking for, look over the Frequency Response charts on our SR-700, SR-800 and SR-1100 AM/FM stereo receivers. **NOTE: The ideal FR chart would be a straight horizontal line, indicating "0" deviation, or EQUAL reproduction of all notes.**

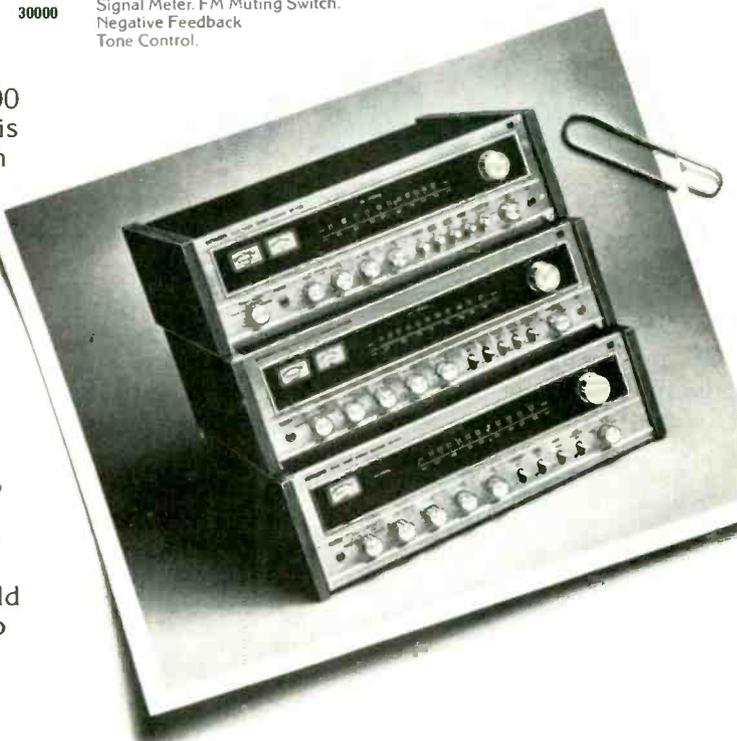
As you can see, all three Hitachi receivers are within the tolerable deviation range. From there, just make sure each and every component you add is as accurate, since the FR of a total system is no better than the weakest component.

What it all comes down to is this. Hitachi thinks you should have the complete story before you compare. It may take a little extra effort, but that's how we operate. Check out the rest of our specs. If you have any questions, quiz your nearby Hitachi dealer. He operates the same way. Honestly. And that's getting to be a small wonder in itself.

**SR-1100**  
AM/FM Stereo Receiver. 140 W Music Power Output. 55 W per Channel RMS (less than 0.5% THD at 8 ohms, PBW 20Hz-35kHz IHF). Distortion less than 0.1% at 28 W output RMS. FM Sensitivity 1.6 $\mu$ V. All Silicon Transistors and 6 ICs. 3 FETs are Employed in FM Tuner. 2 Crystal Filters are Employed in IF Stage. FM Mono-Stereo Automatic Switching. Large Signal Strength Meter and Center Tuning Meter. FM Muting Switch. Negative Feedback Tone Control. Tool-Less Speaker Terminal. Mike Jack.

**SR-800**  
AM/FM Stereo Receiver 90 W Music Power Output. 40 W per Channel RMS (less than 0.5% THD at 8 ohms. PBW 20Hz-25kHz IHF). Distortion less than 0.1% at 20 W output RMS. All Silicon Transistors and 5 ICs. FET FM Tuner. FM Mono-Stereo Automatic Switching. Large Signal Meter and Center Tuning Meter. FM Muting Switch. Negative Feedback Tone Control. Tool-Less Speaker Terminal. Mike Jack.

**SR-700**  
AM/FM Stereo Receiver 80 W Music Power Output. 35 W per Channel RMS (less than 0.5% THD at 8 ohms, PBW 20Hz-25kHz IHF). Distortion less than 0.1% at 18 W output RMS. All Silicon Transistors and 5 ICs. FET FM Tuner. FM Mono-Stereo Automatic Switching. Large Signal Meter. FM Muting Switch. Negative Feedback Tone Control.



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CIRCLE 22 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

**HIGH FIDELITY** and

August 1974

# musical america

The public  
views the arts

Debacle in Dallas

Musician of the month:  
Walter Piston



## Letters

### Literacy test

SIR:

I was disturbed to see an editorial change in my article "Film Projections—Operatic Aid or Liability?" [June]. The word "directorial" appeared throughout as "directional," and that isn't right. The former refers to the work of the director, the latter has all sorts of meanings. My theater friends will think I'm some kind of illiterate.

Conrad L. Osborne  
New York, N.Y.

*The Editor replies: Mr. Osborne is no kind of illiterate, but the Editor needs lessons in proofreading; the change occurred inadvertently in typesetting and was not caught afterwards.*

### Marketable commodity

SIR:

Regarding Mr. Rockwell's column in the June issue: the problem of the serious composer immediately reaching a large enough audience to "legitimize" his efforts has been with us for years. We're all quite aware that the more avant-garde efforts of today's serious composer lack that comfy popular appeal which makes them successful marketable commodities. Needless to say, Charles Ives would have read Mr. Rockwell's column with a knowing nod—so What *Else Is New*?

To take Ives—currently a hot number on subscription programming—as a case in point proves that there is a place for the isolated genius who does not appeal to "the most acute sensibilities of [his] time." If we do not have a place for that kind of composer today, then we must make one, for there is a desperate need.

Mr. Rockwell has spent a good deal of space discussing a complaint which us "serious" types are tired of hearing. I venture to say that serious composers are quite aware of "what it is

that makes popular music popular" which is the precise reason they steer away from it. The artistic challenge involved is minimal and borders on depressing. If this is the reason contemporary serious music "can't even touch the most acute sensibilities of its time" perhaps those acute sensibilities are not so acute or sensible. By the way, what are they?

Patricia Johnston  
New York, N.Y.

### Un-American activities?

SIR:

We find it unfortunate that you continue to show such a dislike for Americans—American musicians, composers, performers. Articles about Kitchen music are for a kitchen—garbage.

Do you hate Americans?

Are you prejudiced?

Is your magazine for Americans or for Europeans? Why don't you change the name to *Musical Europe*?

We and our friends will be forced to cancel our subscription unless you change your policies.

C. William  
New York, N.Y.

SIR:

I have just read the May issue of *MUSICAL AMERICA*, and see that I will probably have to discontinue my subscription if you continue to publish such boring and uninteresting articles.

Your readers are tired of reading about the Metropolitan Opera, bored with strikes and your insistence on featuring them. We had hoped to subscribe to a magazine that talked about music, musicians, their concerts and their repertoire.

How can you call your magazine *MUSICAL AMERICA* when it is so limited in its scope that it does not include all of the music life in America? Surely there must be other outstanding musicians in this country besides singers. Surely there must be other composers than those who give performances at the disreputable Kitchen.

J. Miller  
New York, N.Y.

*The Editor replies: If C. William and J. Miller (whose typewriters are uncannily similar) will reveal their addresses, we'll be happy to write them at length about our policies.*

### "Rip" underrated?

SIR:

OK for Thomas Willis' assessment of *Rip Van Winkle* (at the University of Illinois in Urbana) as a "historically important curio" [May]. It isn't the greatest opera ever written, and the performance had problems. The orchestra was a fright and "young Edward" was flabby and nearly bald.

The thing is, Willis completely failed to notice that, in spite of all, it was absolutely hilarious; I can remember few other events I have so completely enjoyed. He must have been the only one there who could hold back the laughter at the melodramatic clichés so perfectly rendered by Phyllis Hurt (an excellent singer). The whole opera is so campy that even the mistakes seemed right, including the loud "clunk" of the curtain at the end.

It's too bad Willis' concentration on the musical influences on the composer prevented him from enjoying the performance, and worse that he conveyed his minority-of-one negative impression to the readers of *HF/MA*. The American Music Group should instead be heartily thanked for giving us such a thoroughly entertaining evening.

Barbara B. Katsurada  
Decatur, Ill.

### New Orleans was first

SIR:

Page MA-13 of your June 1974 edition reports that in March 1974 "the Milwaukee Symphony became the first American orchestra to perform in the Dominican Republic."

Not so. The New Orleans Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra performed in the capital city of the Dominican Republic in April 1956. In that one month tour, the Orchestra played in fifteen or sixteen other South and Central American countries. Most of these twenty-six concerts were the first ever given by an American orchestra.

In May 1972, the New Orleans Orchestra returned to Mexico for six concerts in four cities.

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New Orleans Philharmonic  
Symphony Orchestra  
New Orleans, La.

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Dorle J. Soria, *personalities*

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Budapest/Glenn Loney

Cover photo: Matthew Beach

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## HIGH FIDELITY

# musical america

## highlights of august

THURSDAY 1 Santa Fe Opera presents the first American performance of Cavalli's *L'Egisto*, with George Shirley in the title role. Raymond Leppard conducts.

THURSDAY 8 Lake George Opera gives the premiere of an opera, *La Nina* (The Child), by Cuban-born composer José Raul Bernardo.

The Wolf Trap Festival presents the premiere of *A Cycle of Cities*, a work for chorus, dancers, and orchestra by Elie Siegmeister.

FRIDAY 9 Twelve-year-old violinist Dylana Jenson plays the Tchaikovsky Concerto at the Spokane Fair Opera House, with the Spokane Symphony under Donald Thulean's direction.

SUNDAY 25 Hans Werner Henze's Violin Concerto is given its first U.S. performance at the Cabrillo Festival; Romuald Tecco is soloist.

Tanglewood closes with a gala benefit performance of Schoenberg's *Gurrelieder*, under the direction of Seiji Ozawa.

# WALTER PISTON

## musician of the month

**F**OR WALTER PISTON, eighty years is not “time to be old/To take in sail” as Emerson described the narrowing compass of activity in old age.

The composer, whose craftsmanship Aaron Copland once called “a challenge to every other American composer,” whose books on harmony and counterpoint became the standard texts for several generations of music students, and who rates as one of this century’s few “old masters,” continues to lead a full creative life, writing at least one new work a year, accepting commissions, and following closely the contemporary music scene.

He, his wife, and their effusive poodle seem pleased to see visitors on a recent afternoon and the interview—prefaced by a plea not to be asked the clinical details such as “What I had for breakfast this morning,” proceeds with lively observations and opinions. No mention of infirmities *comme* the octogenarian Stravinsky. [A few weeks after this interview took place, Walter Piston fell and broke a hip. He is now at home and recuperating satisfactorily.]

The only apparent concessions to his years are a fragileness of build, a certain tremulousness, and a fondness for old stories. But the stories are good ones, pointed and witty, often poking fun at contemporaries like Copland, Roy Harris, and Paul Hindemith.

In the studio of the rustic Belmont, Massachusetts house which his artist wife designed in 1936, Piston had been working on a new piece—a Concerto for String Quartet and Orchestra (the large ensemble minus its string section) for the Portland, Maine Symphony Orchestra’s fiftieth anniversary. “They’re always celebrating me up there because I come from Maine,” he remarked. “I was told I could write anything I wanted to do and this piece will be something new for me.” The commission is the most recent for a composer who has written nearly all of his music to order. That it comes from Maine disproves emphatically and finally the old New England notion that one cannot make a living as a musician—a notion which for a time prevented the young Piston from seriously considering a musical career.

“No one ever thought of being a composer in Rockland, Maine,” he recalled. “It was a little town. It was always assumed that one earned one’s own living. Being a musician was the last thing one thought about.” So unlike Copland, Sessions, or other colleagues, Piston retained only an extracurricular interest in music until his twenties. As a youngster, he recalls “an old squint-eyed sea captain uncle who used to sing sea chanties. Afterwards, I would go and poke out the tunes on the piano,” he said.

At eleven, he was given a violin which he learned how to play, and always he remembers feeling an attraction for anyone who could play instruments.

However, even after he had graduated from college (the Massachusetts School of Art because it was free), he was “still not a musician” even though he was making music playing various instruments in restaurants around Boston. Feeling the need to study some counterpoint, Piston enrolled as an extension student in a class at Harvard taught by Archibald Davison. Davison encouraged him to enroll fulltime, and Piston did so, becoming Davison’s assistant and graduating *summa cum laude*.

At this time he committed himself to becoming a composer and, like most composers of his generation, went to France for advanced study. However, he went there less because of the magnetism of French culture during the inter-war years than “because I had a fellowship to go abroad,” he said.

He went to Nadia Boulanger only as a last resort. She was not then a French national resource and “I wasn’t going over there to study with some woman,” Piston admitted. “So I looked the field over and went to see the prominent teachers there. Very soon, however, it became evident that I must go to Boulanger. I only worked with her two years, but people tend to think she is the only one I studied with. She was unique in that she taught contemporary music, although she was also interested in the past.”

Returning to Boston, he began a long teaching career at Harvard and wrote music which he, like most composers of the time, had trouble getting performed. “There were just not many places to have pieces played until Serge Koussevitzky came,” he said. “I’ve told this story many times and it’s a bit hackneyed. But I find I rather like it as time goes on:

“Koussevitzky came to Boston and the first thing he asked was ‘Where are your American composers?’ Someone told him there was this composer at Harvard and Koussevitzky asked to see me. He said to me, ‘Why do you not write for the orchestra?’ I told him I wrote chamber music because one had a better chance of hearing it played. He said, ‘You write and I will play.’ So I wrote. Each year, he would say to me, ‘Now what are you writing?’ I buckled down and wrote.”

Later when Charles Munch took over the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Piston had another piece of luck. “I think Munch played my music because I spoke French,” he explained. “He played a new work of mine every year for thirteen years. Imagine what that means to a composer.

“Actually, though, I thought it was a little overdone.”

As a composer, Piston says that he was “always a little out of step” with his colleagues. He resisted the trendiness of the Americana and populist movements in the Thirties and never adopted completely the various systems or futurist ideas. As Elliott Carter wrote in 1946, “Piston brings materials from many different sources and purifies them of freakiness . . . he usually stays on a certain level of sobriety, of modesty, and of elegance. A standard of decorum is always maintained.”

“The Americana side considered me a ‘classical’ composer,” Piston said. “I don’t know what I am. I felt I had to express myself in music and I’ve spent my life finding out how to do it. Copland and I had a friendly war about

American music. Aaron and I were very thick. We practically grew up together. He had hopes of producing an American music that was just as recognizable as French and German music.

"I told him that America had so many different nationalities that it would be nearly impossible. I felt the only definition of American music was that written by an American. He had to agree, but he felt there ought to be a vernacular.

"I couldn't imagine writing about dust bowls and cowboys when I had lived all my life in New England."

Sitting in his very New England cottage with its stone walls, unassuming antique country furniture, and fading oriental and Indian rugs, Piston recalled a New York concert of American music conducted by Koussevitzky in the Thirties. Besides Piston, there were works by Roy Harris, Arthur Foote, and Randall Thompson.

"Roy Harris," he remarked slyly, "made a business of being an American composer. He was born on the twelfth of February and settled in a covered wagon in the mid-west. We were sharing a box during the concert and I said to him, 'Now Roy, I'll bow for your piece and you bow for mine and we'll have a little fun.' He said, 'Not on your life.' He didn't want to be mistaken for me. I said, 'You don't go for this bowing, do you? And he replied, 'I just live for these moments.'"

Piston himself prefers not to be considered a specifically American composer but "one of all composers." He says he never really thinks much about how he is categorized nor even about the forms he uses in composing. It was observed that most of his works are contained in traditional packages such as suites, variations, passacaglias, sonatas, and he reminisced about a composers' seminar in which he was called to task for being old-fashioned, for not writing "modern music."

"I always try to write things that are new to me," he answered. "Every time I begin a piece, I say 'This is going to be something new to me.' But when I finish and look at what I've done, it's just the same old Piston. I didn't realize it, but Leon Kirchner has been telling that story for years; he thinks there is all kinds of morality involved there."

It is worth noting that Piston has seldom composed for voice, chorus, or theater. "Yes," he admits. "I'm part Italian and people will say to me, 'Why you no write for the voice?' I just seem to be interested in other things. I've accepted too many commissions in my life, out of a sense of New England economy, I guess. But with a commission I'm guaranteed a performance. It's not that I don't like the voice."

The eighty-year-old composer bristles just slightly when the subject of his widely regarded craftsmanship is introduced. It has become a journalistic cliché to refer to his music as a "finely crafted work" or "beautifully made object" and he gets just a bit irritated with that. "Virgil Thomson once said a piece of mine was 'nicely tailored,' he contributed.

Yet Piston feels that craft and sure technique are still important equipment for the contemporary composer. Of some local composers who have professed not to be interested in making beautiful objects, he thinks "It is rather too bad to lose control. There is no fun in it for an artist. One should feel like a craftsman." He is hesitant, however, to tell anyone what to do and "doesn't want to deny com-



Matthew Beach

*The "old master" in his study, with Gina*

posers the right to do anything they want as long as they really want to do it."

Of the new music he has heard lately, Piston found particularly "fascinating" a Takemitsu percussion piece performed by the Boston Symphony Orchestra and the Elliott Carter Piano Concerto. He has reservations, however, about Michael Tippett's Symphony No. 3, which received lavish critical praise in Boston this past season, and which was recently recorded by Philips.

"I'm afraid that it leans too much on talk, on the program notes. There were some things that put me off," he said. "That quotation from the Ninth Symphony as much as to say, 'Beethoven and I would do it this way.'" As for the blues elements in Part II, "I wonder if Tippett knows what the blues are." The segment "was not very blue" although it probably would have been "very helpful if it had been."

The composer admits that he cannot go to as many concerts and musical events as he once did and one event he passed up this year was the controversial lecture series at Harvard given by his former pupil Leonard Bernstein, the Charles Eliot Norton Professor of Poetry. "I couldn't bear it," he explained apologetically. "I know he'll never forgive me. Bernstein was overwhelmed by the appointment to that chair."

Piston does go to some BSO concerts—the orchestra has occasionally sent a car for him—and he "finds it difficult getting out of going to hear" performances of his own music.

"One can't give the excuse that every composer wants to give," he said. "You can say you have to take your sister to the doctor and everyone understands that. But you can never say you want to stay home and write music. People think you can do that anytime."

ELLEN PFEIFER

# artist life

DORLE J. SORIA

**O**UR QUOTATION of the month comes from Wanda Toscanini Horowitz. Talking of the early years of her marriage—she and the pianist were married over forty years ago—she recalled one of her husband's concerts in a city ("I think it was Shreveport") where Stravinsky's *Petrouchka* was on the program. "Volodya had almost come to the end when something happened. He forgot the notes but somehow managed to improvise to a brilliant finish. And not a person, not the public, not the critics, noticed the mistakes." Back in New York, Wanda told her father. Maestro Toscanini said: "Nobody has gone to prison for a crime in music."

## We meet a Princess

We went to the opening of the Royal Ballet at the Metropolitan Opera House and met the company's president, Princess Margaret. We saw her arrive, very much the fairy prin-

cess, if a little plump for the part, in white chiffon with floating cape, pear-shaped diamond earrings, a neat diamond tiara on her hair which reminded us of the "small but costly crown" made famous in the *The Young Visitors*. Before the curtain rose we saw her in the decorated central box, standing erect and solemn, holding a bouquet of white flowers, while the orchestra played the national anthems. During *God Save the Queen* a staunch patriot behind us sang the words of *My Country 'Tis of Thee*.

The gala premiere was a benefit for the English-Speaking Union. During the first intermission there was a reception in the Belmont Room for the American Friends of Covent Garden. It was there that Alton Peters, board member of both hands-across-the-seas organizations and of the Metropolitan and Opera Guild boards, presented us to the Princess. She seemed most relaxed and friendly (protocol says that royalty is given the burden of speaking first) and told us that the only other time she had seen the opera house was when it was not yet completed. My husband informed the Princess that in Rome he had had a horse named Mefistofele and suggested it might be nice if she would name some horses in her stable after opera characters. The Princess said: "I have no horses. It is my sister who has horses. I will tell her." Then, reflecting, "I think she had a horse

named Carmen." That was the end of the conversation. We shall watch for news from the Queen's stables.

## We did not meet Nureyev

But we saw Rudolf Nureyev that night. He was a few rows in front of us. When he left his seat he was like a Pied Piper. People followed him up the aisle into the foyer, down the steps to the crowded press room where critics turned from the bar to stare. He was wearing what can only be described as a costume: cobra snakeskin jacket, green-gray crushed velvet breeches tucked into Cossack-type snakeskin boots. His light brown hair fell over his romantic Slav face. He was leading Lee Radziwill by the hand, sheathed in chiffon of colors shading from purple and pink to white. Recently Nureyev had told the *Times* that "everywhere I go I am an intruder. I am an intruder in the West, an intruder in every company." That night everybody seemed to want to intrude on him.

## This is what they said

We were talking to Maria Callas about her wardrobe. We mentioned the marvelous dress she had worn at her first Carnegie Hall concert—sea green heavy silk with floating panels and winglike sleeves. She said: "It's not the clothes. It's how I wear them.



Gerald Fitzgerald

The Princess and Nureyev at Royal Ballet's gala benefit

It's the way I move in them. That's why I burned my costumes. Nobody else could have worn them."

During a slide-illustrated concert of Arthur Gold and Robert Fizdale in the Grace Rainey Auditorium of the Metropolitan Art Museum we heard a familiar high-pitched voice floating down to us from the row in back, the voice of Virgil Thomson. "Instead of mangoes which I couldn't get I used lemons, the peel from fresh lemons, and raisins and fresh ginger—really, made an excellent chutney." It was not *that* odd to hear this piece of gourmet advice at this particular concert, since Gold and Fizdale are not only a famous two-piano team but joint practitioners of the noble art of cooking. They have been writing a mouth-watering series of articles for *Vogue* called *How Famous People Cook*. From it we cull Virgil's recipe for Curried Cashews, to serve with drinks. "Two tablespoons vegetable oil, three of curry powder, one cup cashew nuts, salt. Heat oil in heavy skillet, stir in curry powder, add nuts stirring until well-coated. Watch, as they burn easily. Remove with slotted spoon, dry on paper towels, sprinkle with salt."

In the story we wrote about composer Gyorgy Ligeti we said we had not ventured to ask this "intimidating" composer what he did for recreation but that a friend later volunteered the information that "he is a famous waltzer." From Hamburg we received a letter from Ligeti. It pleased us very much. He had seen the article and wrote that it was "very beautiful." But he added a correcting P.S. "I like to dance in 2/4 and 4/4 but never in 3/4—so I'm a very bad waltzer."

As the great ladies of the sea are being retired from Atlantic service some of the great men of music may retire from touring this country. Nathan Milstein is one artist, for instance, who will not fly. "I used to. Maybe I will have to try again. It is not because I am afraid. If I see someone throwing a bomb on the street I rush out to see what's happening. It is anxiety, not fear, I feel on a plane." He traveled by train throughout America this past season and describes its horrors—the roadbeds and service, the impossible time tables and the delays. We asked if there were cities which he especially liked. "No. One city is like another to me. I just

know the hotel and concert hall. I am not comfortable except when I play. When I put on my tails and I walk out on the stage, then I am very comfortable." Books are his train refuge. "I read Solzhenitsyn. I like his point of view but I am not crazy about his literary style. Silly to compare him with Tolstoy or even Pasternak."

We first met designer Peter Hall after we had seen his costumes for the Old Vic production of *Romeo and Juliet* directed by Zeffirelli and asked permission to use his sketches to illustrate a Soria Series recording of the Berlioz *Romeo and Juliet*. Since then this elegant Britisher has found a seasonal home in Texas where he is chief designer for the Dallas Civic Opera. At the Metropolitan he did the costumes for the Zeffirelli production of *Otello*. He is also designing the costumes for the new *Boris Godounov* due at the Met next December. We saw some of the sketches recently in the wardrobe department of the opera house where, in the midst of seeming confusion, Peter Hall moves quietly, his blue eyes aware of every detail. Yards of dyed lamé were on the floor, swatches of material were pinned to drawings of boyars and peasants, nurse and innkeeper, Czarevich and Czar. The colors of the drawings were dark and brooding, lighted with glitter like that of old ikons or Byzantine mosaics—the blues for the costumes of the Polish castle scenes were Western and "civilized" in contrast. "It will not be the traditional *Boris* with the sumptuous stiff brocades and all that red and gold," said Peter Hall. "That is not the way Everding, the director, sees it." He told us something we did not know. We were wearing a green scarf and he said: "Green, especially olive green or muddy green, is the color of evil in the theater." We have not worn the scarf since.

We were in the same box at the Metropolitan one Saturday matinée with conductors André Kostelanetz and Efrem Kurtz, who told us they had known each other more than sixty years. They had sat on the same bench together in school in St. Petersburg. Efrem turned to André: "When you leave a message on the telephone with your name, how do you spell it?" Kostelanetz looked bewildered. We tried to help. "Do you start by saying K for kitchen or K for kettle or king and then O for onion or oscar?" Efrem Kurtz interrupted. "You know

what I do? I say the name is Kurtz. K for Kostelanetz. . . ." He smiled a big smile, pleased with this demonstration of friendship and long-lived affection.

Last year, coming from a Mini-Met performance of Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* we heard one lady say to another. "I just don't like opera in English." Her companion said, "It's an English opera."

Harold Lawrence, when he was manager of the London Symphony (he is now manager of the New York Philharmonic), had a luncheon appointment with Ravi Shankar to discuss a work the Indian musician was writing for sitar and orchestra. Shankar called apologetically. Could the meeting be transferred to his room at the Savoy Hotel? "Every time I come to London I get sick eating Indian food."

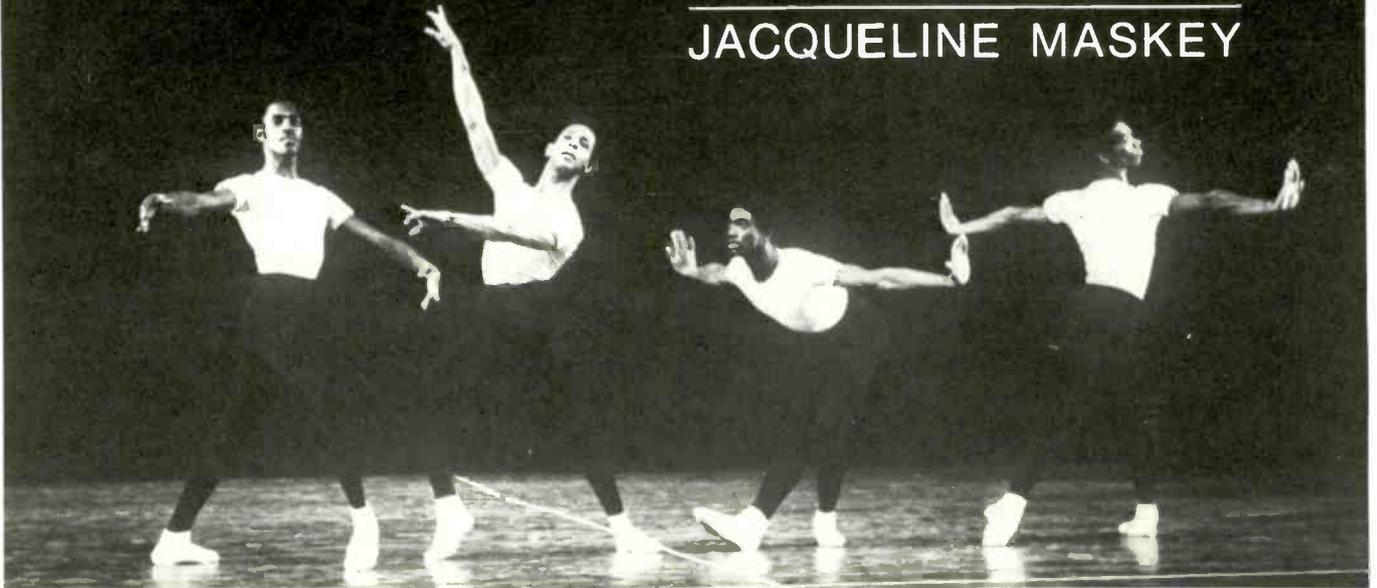
Anna Moffo, in Japan, restudied one of her special roles, Butterfly. Wearing the white makeup and elaborate hairdress of a geisha and in an appropriate kimono and obi she astonished passersby in Tokyo's Chinzanso Garden. *Time* magazine reported: "After which Anna, who a couple of years ago was advocating opera in the buff, recorded her first impression of covered-up Japan. 'I have discovered that it's the back of the neck that really counts.'"

Danny Kaye, at a Metropolitan "Look-In," told the audience of children: "The big trick to hearing is to listen."

The food editor of the *New York Times* wrote last year about the disappearance of the good red-ripe tomato. In rebuttal he received home-grown samples from Connecticut and New Jersey, plus a contribution from music critic Harold Schonberg, straight from his garden in Long Island. Food and art critic John L. Hess announced: "They were served in three identical bowls, with vinaigrette, Italian sweet onions and basil. Unanimous conclusion of four tasters: the Connecticut tomatoes were made of cotton, the Jersey ones were pretty good, and the Schonberg's were the real old-fashioned McCoy." We were pleased Harold got a good review. But next time we would like to submit our Connecticut tomatoes, from our West Cornwell vegetable garden—if they have not already been submitted to a jury of rabbits and woodchucks. △

# the dance

JACQUELINE MASKEY



*The Dance Theatre of Harlem's Agon*

**A**PRIL was a ridiculously over-stuffed month for dancing in New York: the Martha Graham company at the Mark Hellinger (April 15–May 4); Dance Theatre of Harlem at the ANTA (April 16–28); the Harkness Ballet at the new Harkness Theatre (April 9–21); the National Ballet of Canada at the Metropolitan Opera House (April 23–May 5). Regrettably, there was time to give downtown dance activity only the most cursory attention (a glance at a press release, a sigh, an aspirin).

## Graham: opening the repertoire

The Graham season, under the musical direction of Robert Irving, bore special watching, for in a major shift in casting policy the choreographer opened up her repertoire to her dancers, double- and triple-casting twelve out of the fourteen dance pieces presented during the season, making a total of fifty-five New York debuts. "The time has come," said Graham, now eighty, "for the emphasis to change from the works to the performers."

The decision was an astute one. In my experience as a reviewer—a time-span which has encompassed some rather magnificent occasions—I have

never seen a company take over *en masse* with such staggering assurance, such performing brilliance. Bent upon seizing the offered opportunity, almost everyone overdanced. Not, I hasten to add, to the point of stylistic exaggeration, but with unsuspected resources of boldness and daring. The sheer dance power of the company, so heroically discharged, left one gasping.

Unfairly, I cannot record all of the many exceptional performances given in both major and minor parts, but a few herewith: Takako Asakawa's royal assumption of the title role in the full-length *Clytemnestra* and Elisa Monte's firebrand Electra in the same ballet; Phyllis Gutelius's passionate first Sister in the ever-astonishing *Deaths and Entrances*; Yuriko Kimura's tremulous and spirited Bride in *Appalachian Spring*; Peggy Lyman's stoic Leader of the Chorus in *Night Journey* and Janet Eilber's one-woman Chorus in *Cave of the Heart*; Lucinda Mitchell's neurotically intense Warrior in *Seraphic Dialogue*; David Hatch Walker, a dancer newly revealed, as St. Michael in *Dialogue* and the Revivalist in *Appalachian Spring*; Mario Delamo's robust St. Michael and sinuous Snake in *Circe*. Not every contribution to the season

happened before the eye of the audience: The excellent condition of the repertoire was due to Robert Powell, newly appointed associate artistic director and regisseur, and former company members Ethel Winter, Patricia Birch, Linda Hodes, and Carol Fried.

The grandeur and excitement of the performances relieved somewhat the need for a superlative success among the new works. Actually, of the two offered only one—*Holy Jungle*—was new; the other, *Chronique*, was a reworking of last season's *Mendicants of Evening*, with the onstage Witness subtracted and a percussion and guitar score by Carlos Surinach added. *Holy Jungle*, with music by Robert Starer, was, after a postponement, finally premiered on April 27. It was presented as "A fantasy of man's sufferings, temptations, strange visions that attack and surround him on his pilgrimage to the almost forgotten Eden of his dreams." At its premiere *Holy Jungle* looked as though its main streams of action had been set, but not its details. As a result, the piece was the only one in the repertoire which seemed disordered and unfocused. It also labored under the accident-proneness of Dani Karavan's tricky and over-elaborate setting in which several dancers performed

some necessary but unscheduled acts of retrieval much appreciated by the audience. *Holy Jungle*, before it can become useful needs to have some clearings whacked out of it in the way of rethinking, restaging, redressing.

The Graham company, although playing to critical acclaim, seventy-six percent capacity, and a box office of \$106,042, ended up its season \$81,000 in the red. But it faced that problem with its customary class in a succinct statement by its board president, Francis Mason, who managed to sum up in a sentence the equivocal position in the United States not only of the Graham company but dance in general. "Our situation," said Mr. Mason memorably, "is no more serious than any other company of style, dignity, and beauty."

### Dance Theatre of Harlem

Since the Dance Theatre of Harlem's debut at the Spoleto Festival in 1971, New York has had but a glimpse or two of the company—chiefly in harness with the New York City Ballet in a *pièce d'occasion* at the State Theatre and as a participant in last year's massive Dance Marathon at the ANTA. Finally in its first independent run in New York it proved what it was formed to prove—that a ballet company can be professional, classical, and black; all at the same time.

It is a delightful company in looks and style. The boys are neat technicians, assured partners and possess an enviable sense of classical deportment which is both manly and gentlemanly. The girls, always individual and attractive, have advanced considerably in their *pointe* work, and although there is further strengthening to be done in this area, it is no longer the noticeable weakness that it was two years ago. A number of the dancers—Laura Brown, Virginia Johnson, Susan Lovelle, Paul Russell, and Homer Bryant—have developed into performers of real distinction.

Where the company has problems is in repertoire. Luckily, it has staged and retained a core of Balanchine ballets of the caliber of *Concerto Barocco* and *Agon* against which to test itself while commissioning new ballets, restaging old ones, and developing its own choreographers (company director Arthur Mitchell, dancer Walter Raines). Mitchell's own ballets are ei-

ther pleasant classical diversions in the Balanchine style (*Fête Noire*) which he absorbed during his years as a performer with the master's New York City Ballet, or amalgams of ethnic, modern, and classical styles (*Rhythmtron*) which, while entertaining, do not add much artistically.

Mitchell makes mistakes of confidence, two of which were on view this season: Milko Sparembek's fake-ritual setting of George Crumb's *Ancient Voices of Children* score and a remounting of Louis Johnson's long, dull, and pedestrian *Wings*. I can understand the encouragement given Johnson, who is responsible for the felicities in *Forces of Rhythm*, the company's signature piece, but Sparembek?—even the woefully passive audience at the Metropolitan has roused itself sufficiently to boo his inept dance intrusions into perfectly good operas.

Mitchell has achieved much: he now has a company, a school, enormous goodwill, and an unlimited future. We wish him good luck and—good ballets.

### National Ballet of Canada

The National Ballet of Canada, under the musical direction of George Crum, returned to the Metropolitan for its second visit, occupying once again a supporting position to Rudolf Nureyev, who danced every performance save two. In addition to its massive production of *The Sleeping Beauty*, the company also brought along *Giselle* and some one-act ballets.

It was this last group which attracted attention, principally because of *Le Loup* (1953), an early Roland Petit ballet seldom seen here, and John Neumeier's *Don Juan*.

*Le Loup* has a macabre fairytale libretto by Jean Anouilh: a young bride (Victoria Tennant), through the charlatanism of an animal trainer, believes her new husband to be transformed into a wolf (Tomas Schramek). The two live together fondly even though the bride comes to realize that her husband is indeed a wolf; and when the villagers arrive to kill the creature, she dies willingly with him. Petit is not much thought of here, being identified with his more frivolous successes in Parisian cabaret and revue. But *Le Loup* is an entertaining ballet, economical but well-developed in action, and with roles

which suit the Canadian dancers very well. Tennant's sympathetic portrayal of the bride was sensitively done (this and her excellent *Giselle* firmly reestablished her shaky reputation as the company's ballerina), while Schramek made a virile and convincing wolf.

John Neumeier is a young American who has worked principally and with great success in Germany, where he choreographed *Don Juan* for the Frankfurt-am-Main company in 1972 in a handsome production designed by Filippo Sanjust. The idea of this *Don Juan* is a good one: a libertine (Sergiu Stefanschi) who, despite outrageous amorous adventures, is revealed to be in love with death, here symbolized by a Lady in White (Mary Jago). Some of Neumeier's ideas are inspired—the use of Gluck's music in combination with a Requiem Mass by Tomas Luis de Victoria; the presentation of the Don's amours in a series of divertissements, enacted as entertainment for his party guests; the vision of death as a cool and remote woman. Unfortunately, Neumeier's choreography knows not where or when to stop; it has little clarity and even less economy. Were this *Don Juan* a drama, it would be talked to death; being a ballet, it is simply danced to death.

### The Harkness

Last—and least—the Harkness Ballet, which inaugurated the opening of the Harkness Theatre on Broadway, hard by Lincoln Center.

The theater, refurbished with boudoirlike appointments in Harkness blue, its proscenium defaced by as vulgar a mural as one is ever likely to see outside a World's Fair pavilion, will in future have its uses for small to medium-size dance companies. The Harkness company itself, with Samuel Krachmalnick as musical director, is a group of plucky youngsters trying to make agreeable a worthless repertoire, concocted chiefly by Vicente Nebraska, Norman Walker, and Brian Macdonald. I exclude from this censure Margo Sappington's erotic *Rodin—Mise en Vie* (music by Michael Kamen), a sprawling, undisciplined and often fascinating exploration of the beauty the sculptor found in the human body and the brutality he recognized in the human soul. △

# what's new?

JOHN ROCKWELL

**J**UST TO LIST all the names that La Monte Young has appended to his music, and then to explain them, is a first step towards describing that music. Between April 28 and May 5 at the Kitchen in New York, Young presented a "Dream House" performed by the Theater of Eternal Music, subtitled "a time installation measured by a continuous frequency environment in sound and light with

new sections of "Map of 49's Dream of The Two Systems of Eleven Sets of Galactic Intervals Ornamental Lightyears Tracery," which in turn is part of a longer work called "The Tortoise, His Dreams and Journeys."

## Theater of Eternal Music

The Theater of Eternal Music is whatever group Young and his wife, Marian Zazeela, have at the moment to play his music; this spring it consisted of the two of them plus Alex Dea singing, Jon Hassell on horn, David Rosenboom on viola, and De Fracia Evans handling slide projections. Young calls his installations Dream Houses because the entire ambience is controlled—dark, hypnotic, deliberately exotic—in order to evoke the suprarational state of dreaming. The first part of the subtitle indicates that there is a continuous sonic environment provided by sine-wave oscillators, emitting a 60-cycle drone that sounds somewhere between F and F sharp, plus a visual environment by Miss Zazeela consisting of vaguely Persian, ritualistic, dais-like columns with concealed lights in the tops casting a dull glow upwards and spiral-shaped mobiles suspended from the ceiling. Periodically the dim lighting is lowered to darkness and the Theater of Eternal Music gives an actual, hours-long performance in the space, accompanied by slide projections, overlapping and shifting in and out of focus, of symmetrical, highly detailed calligraphy by Miss Zazeela, again Persian in its feeling: the Ornamental Lightyears Tracery.

49's Dream might seem to be Young's own dream, but he says it was derived from seven times the number 7: 7 is both full of mystical significance and a key number in the overtone series—as if the number had been endowed with life through the power of music. The Two Systems of Eleven Sets of Galactic Intervals refers to his decade-long preoccupation with the structure of sound. The phrase "time installation" suggests Young's absorption in the whole notion of time, and the "Eternal" and "Galactic" indicate the mystical nature of that absorption. "New sections" means that all the music Young makes now is subsumed into the work as a whole. The over-all title may also be an autobiographical allusion, but more importantly the im-

age of the tortoise evokes Young's fascination with slowed-down processes, and the idea of a slow, purposeful, and determined beast like the tortoise clearly means a lot to him (he and Miss Zazeela had a pet turtle once that they called 49). Young is a mystic, and a steadfastly private one at that. Perhaps the rarity of his public performances is due mostly to his difficulties in securing patronage, and perhaps he would eagerly fill up football stadiums with people to hear his music if he only had the chance. But more likely his reclusiveness answers a need for privacy and meditative self-improvement.

## Young's historic place

One can look at all of this both historically and experientially. From an historical standpoint, this spring's environment represented yet another affirmation of Young's crucial yet underpublicized place in recent American music. Born in Idaho in 1935, he lived there and in Los Angeles and Utah before his family finally settled in Southern California during his teens. He attended three different Los Angeles colleges, receiving his B.A. in music from UCLA in 1958, followed by graduate work at Berkeley and a summer at Darmstadt with Stockhausen in 1959. Since 1960 he has lived in New York in a state of some austerity, with periodic trips for performances, mostly to Europe. In 1963 he married Miss Zazeela, and since 1970 both of them have studied Indian singing intensively with Pandit Pran Nath.

Young's early training in composition was in a Schönbergian serial method, with Leonard Stein, among others. But from his childhood he had been fascinated with sound as such—the hum of telephone wires, for instance—and quite soon he abandoned serialism for other forms of avant-gardism. There were wild, energetic saxophone improvisations, and sparse verbal scores that some people had trouble identifying as music at all.

Since 1964 Young's work has been with his Theater and falls under the general title of "The Tortoise, His Dreams and Journeys." The sources of that work are two and interrelated, and both have had an enormous impact on younger composers looking for new formal ideas in music after



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*Young's Dream House: "a time installation measured by a continuous frequency environment . . ."*

the salutary, throat-clearing anarchism of John Cage. On the one hand, Young is fascinated with the overtone structure of sound and the performance of music in just intonation: his intriguing theoretical speculations (the *Selected Writings*, obtainable through him at P.O. Box 190, Canal Street Station, New York, N.Y. 10013, are worth anybody's time) are full of mystical notions of the relation of time to both sound and color vibrations—Miss Zazeela's environment is as concerned with the relations of pure colors as Young's music is with pure sound.

Young can adduce an impressive list of acoustical theoreticians to lend resonance to his own investigations, but the principal school of such studies for him is South Indian, and of course it is Indian music in general that is the other major source for his music. Pran Nath is a North Indian artist, actually, of the Kirana school. But the meditative quiescence and exoticism that pervade most Indian music inform Young's work as well. Both Young's acoustical mysticism and his Orientalism have been echoed by an enormous number of younger composers, in New York and elsewhere. Naturally Young is hardly the only influence on such people.

But it would probably be safe to say that, although he is still under forty, his place as a father figure for today's avant garde is still second only to Cage's.

### The reaction

All that said, there remains the experiential reaction and the question of the outsider as to what the music actually sounds like. It is a question that can't easily be answered through records, since none of Young's music has ever made its way onto a major label. There was a limited edition record—a few copies of which may still be available through Young—of an early piece for amplified bowed gong and an early performance by the Theater of Eternal Music. And Shandar, the obscure French jazz label, is about to put out another, more recent example of the Theater's work (obtainable through *The Open Mind*, 66 Greene Street, New York, N.Y. 10012).

Underlying everything in the music is the drone, which is reinforced, either at the fundamental or shifting glacially through the overtones, by the voices, horn, and viola (in the Theater's current configuration). Above all this Young sings, in a voice

that has much improved in strength and versatility over the past couple of years of study with Pran Nath. What he does is mostly wordless vocalizing on the various overtones, but ornamented with flourishes directly characteristic of Indian vocal techniques. Some of us find these exotic little mordents and microtonal shakes foreign to the hypnotic austerity of the rest of the music, but Young likes them and is apparently determined to retain them.

Given the darkness of the space, the white-robed performers, seated in a circle on the floor amidst their electronic equipment, the glowingly hieratic aura of Miss Zazeela's slides, and the room-filling amplitude of the sound, the effect is strong and pervasive. Whether it is "successful" is, of course, something that depends far more on the listener than on Young. People who are still accustomed to linear development and climaxes of traditional Western music will find it hopelessly uneventful, a protracted exercise in mindlessness. But those at all susceptible to mystical experiences will feel the drone seep into their very bones, and the celestially shifting sound colors will light up their imaginations in a way that no other music can. △



Preparatory Division, Manhattan School of Music

*These fortunate youngsters attend a major music school; others aren't so lucky*

## on education

CHARLES B. FOWLER

### Teachers are outraged over performance survey

**C**ONSIDERABLE controversy has arisen over the results, released in March, of the first national survey of music performance in the United States. The survey, based on a two-year study of a random sampling of 90,000 persons representative of the entire population, revealed that, "When it comes to over-all ability to perform musically, Americans score low."

On the surface, at least, the report of the survey couldn't have been more bleak. Some of the findings: "Fewer than 15 percent of any age group could sight-read even the simplest line of music. . . . Only one American in ten was able to repeat acceptably a simple melodic phrase. . . ."

In one part of the test participants were asked to sing a selection of their own choice. Again the results were low. "Only 20 percent of the nine-year-olds, 30 percent of the thirteen-year-olds, 25 percent of the seventeen-year-olds and 45 percent of young adults made acceptable vocal performances."

One music critic, reacting to the report, was prompted to write: "Obviously, the country is suffering from a galloping case of musical illiteracy. One is forced to conclude that there must be something radically wrong with a system of music education that produces such a disastrous result."

Instrumental performance seemingly fares no better. The report states that 25 percent of the nine-year-olds, 35 percent of the thirteen-year-olds, 25 percent of the seventeen-year-olds and 15 percent of the young adults "claimed" to play an instrument. The investigators asked this sizable group to come back with their instruments and play any selection of their own choosing. Only half were willing to demonstrate, and, of those, only half "performed an easy piece acceptably."

#### A dean debunks

Since considerable time and effort has been expended in the public schools on teaching performance skills, the report fell hard on the mu-

sic education profession. But not without reaction. Music educators questioned the criteria used to distinguish the expectations of our population musically. In a letter to the National Assessment of Educational Progress, the group which conducted the survey, Allen P. Britton, dean of the School of Music at the University of Michigan, asked why a negative rather than positive approach was employed in stating the results. "Where in the world," he asked, "could you find a population in which anything like fifteen percent could sight-read even the simplest line of music? Where in the world could twenty-five percent of the nine-year-olds even think of claiming to play a musical instrument? Where in the world could even half of this number actually play a musical instrument? Where in the world could even half of that number perform an easy piece acceptably on a musical instrument?"

If Americans "scored low," Britton asked, "low in relation to what?" Music educators, at least the ones I talked

to, were clearly outraged. They pointed to the present generation as the most musical in our nation's history. "Someone must be doing something right."

But if they were hurt—and they were—they also surfaced questions that probed the validity of the results. Sight reading even a simple line of music has never been acknowledged as a national goal of music education, a skill essential to every American. Only now is the National Commission on Instruction within the Music Educators National Conference reading a set of national standards for music education.

Ultimately the survey focus, with its implicit goals, refired a basic issue that has plagued music education from the beginning: How much musical skill should we logically expect of every American citizen? The spin-offs from this question are many: If, say, appreciation of music is the fundamental goal of music education, how much technical knowledge or skill is a necessary prerequisite? And if the skill to read music is accepted as a legitimate educational goal, are the taxpayers, school administrators, and

other teachers, let alone the students, willing to give this goal the priority, resources, time, devotion, and energy that would be required to achieve it?

The debate will certainly wage on in the coming months, especially as the educators await the NAEP's forthcoming survey report on musical notation and terminology, instrumental and vocal media, music history and literature, and attitudes toward music.

### Controversial viewpoint

The NAEP is a project of the Education Commission of the States, a Denver-based education organization formed in 1966 "to promote cooperative action among governors, legislators and educators in improving education at all levels, preschool through post-secondary." The results of this first round of music tests is all the more provocative, since the assessment tests were devised in consultation with a group of music educators who evidently have taken a definite, though controversial, point of view in regard to the standards and goals of music education.

The NAEP, functioning under a grant from the U.S. Office of Education, has so far released assessments of science, citizenship, writing, reading, literature, and social studies. These assessments, they say, are designed "to provide education policy-makers with information on how successfully young Americans have mastered subjects traditionally emphasized in school programs, and what approaches in research and curriculum reform are likely to provide the public with full value for its education dollar." The tests, in essence, are a tool for measuring a teacher's accountability. As such, they could have a vast influence over the future course of music education. All the more reason why, if these tests are misfocused, music teachers will tend to be sharp critics of them.

To obtain a copy of the "First National Assessment of Musical Performance," along with a sixty-minute cassette explaining scoring procedures and presenting the actual music used in making the assessment (the cost of the cassette is \$2.00), write the Education Commission of the States, 1860 Lincoln St., Denver 80203. △



Preparatory Division, Manhattan School of Music

*Are his brothers-at-the-keyboard under par?*

The **Cleveland Orchestra** toured Japan for the second time in May, stopping en route for a concert at the Spokane World's Fair. . . . The **New York Philharmonic** makes a five-week tour of New Zealand, Australia, and Japan, in August with Leonard Bernstein and Pierre Boulez conducting. . . . June 1 marked the debut of the **Arizona Orchestra** in Tucson. Twenty-three-year-old Mark Narins conducts the ensemble. . . . The **Little Orchestra Society** will give their final concerts at Avery Fisher Hall in the fall. The Society will perform highlights of programs presented during its twenty-seven year-history. Economic factors have largely determined its dissolution.

The **Sixth International Americas Boychoir Festival** will take place in Saltillo, Mexico from December 28 to January 1. For information, write the Federation, 125 South Fourth Street, Connellsville, Pa. . . . H. Wiley Hitchcock and Vivian Perlis will co-direct the **Charles Ives-Centennial Festival Conference** on the 100th birthday weekend of the composer, October 17-21. The conference, co-sponsored by Brooklyn College and Yale University, will take place in New York City for the first two days and New Haven for the last two. . . . The Centennial Celebration of **Arnold Schoenberg's** birth will be held September 13-15 at the University of Southern Cal.

The **National Symphony** has commissioned eleven composers to write works in honor of the nation's bicentennial. . . . **Mrs. DeWitt Wallace**, co-founder of the *Reader's Digest*, has donated \$650,000 towards the financing of two new productions at the Metropolitan Opera next season: Janáček's *Jenufa* and Musorgsky's *Boris Godounov*. . . . The **Walter E. Heller Foundation** has granted the Chicago Symphony \$500,000 for their annual sustaining fund. . . . The **Josephine E. Gordon Foundation** will endow the

# here & there

Principal Cello Chair of the Detroit Symphony with a gift of \$250,000. . . . The **Harrison Keller String Quartet** has been founded as a faculty quartet of the New England Conservatory. The ensemble is named in honor of the school's former president.

**Leonie Rysanek-Gausmann** will sing the title role in the San Francisco Opera's production of Richard Strauss's *Salome* which opens September 22. Joining her will be mezzo Astrid Varnay, tenor Hans Hopf, baritone Siegmund Nimsgern, and tenor William Neill. Czechoslovakian mezzo **Eva Randova** makes her American debut with the San Francisco on September 14 when she sings Kundry in *Parsifal*. . . . Metropolitan Opera soprano **Cristina Deutekom** made her debut with the Paris Opera in April, replacing the indisposed Martina Arroyo in the role of Elena in *I vespri siciliani*. Two weeks later she was called back to Paris to replace Renata Scotto, scheduled to sing the same.

## Appointments

**Sister Alberta Huber** has been named president of the St. Paul Opera Association. Sister Huber also serves as president of the College of St. Catherine in St. Paul. . . . Miami Symphony music director **Alain Lombard** is the new artistic director of the Opera Du Rhin. **Nathaniel Merrill** of the Strasbourg and Metropolitan opera houses has been appointed principal producer. . . . American Symphony associate conductor **Ainslee Cox** is

the new music director of the Oklahoma City Symphony. . . . **Thomas Lewis** replaces Skitch Henderson as music director of the Tulsa Philharmonic. Mr. Lewis was formerly music director of the Rochester Civic Music program. . . . Detroit Symphony principal conductor **Aldo Ceccato** has been made music director of the orchestra. . . . **José Serebrier** has signed a three-year contract as music director of the Worcester Music Festival next year.

American Ballet Theatre conductor **Akira Endo** has been named associate conductor of the Houston Symphony. . . . Choreographer **Antony Tudor** is the new associate director of the American Ballet Theatre. . . . Music director of the University of Wisconsin (Milwaukee) Symphony **Mark Starr** will replace Sandor Salgo as director of orchestras and opera at Stanford University in September. . . . **Gustav Meier** has been appointed professor of conducting and ensembles at the Eastman School of music. Mr. Meier is the former conductor of the Yale Philharmonic. . . . Composer/conductor **Hugo Weisgall** has been appointed W. Alton Jones Distinguished Visiting Professor of Composition at the Peabody Conservatory for 1974-75. . . . **Arthur Cohn** is the new director of serious music for Carl Fischer, Inc. He was formerly in the same position at MCA Music.

## Awards

The Academy-Institute of Arts and Letters has awarded

\$3,000 each to composers **Richard Felciano**, **Raoul Pleskow**, **Phillip Rhodes**, and **Olly Wilson**. Three young composers have received Charles E. Ives scholarships of \$3,500: Paul Levi, Allen Shearer, and Ira Taxin. . . . Chicago Symphony music director **Sir Georg Solti** received an honorary doctorate from DePaul University. . . . Cellist Beth Morrow and pianist Kurt von Schakel are first-place winners in the Indianapolis Symphony's young artist competition. . . . Nonesuch Record director **Teresa Sterne** received the American Composers Alliance Laurel Leaf Award for distinguished service to contemporary music. . . . This year's Concerts Artist Guild Award winners are **Nadine Asin**, flute; **Anne Leek**, oboe; **Gary McGee**, clarinet; **David Wakefield**, French horn; **Daniel Worley**, bassoon.

## Competitions

September 10 is the deadline for application to the twenty-fifth **International Competition of Music** in Vercelli, Italy. The competition is open to pianists, singers, guitarists, and composers of all nationalities; age limit is thirty-two, except in composition. For information write Società del Quartetto, Segreteria del Concorso, Casella Post. 127, 13100 Vercelli, Italy. . . . The Ninth Annual **North American Young Artists Competition** for Violin and Cello is open to North Americans who have not reached their twenty-ninth year. For information, write Mrs. Robert E. Jobin, 4193 Everett Drive, Wheat Ridge, Colorado 80033. . . . Inquiries regarding the **American Bandmasters Association-CCM Ostwald Band Competition Contest** should be addressed to Lieutenant Colonel Eugene W. Allen, The U.S. Army Band, Fort Myer, Virginia 22211.

## Obituary

Writer/dancer Trudy Goth died on May 12. She was sixty years old.

# Arts Surveys:

## To See Ourselves . . .

### DID YOU KNOW THAT

- 89% of the public over the age of sixteen believes that the arts are important to the quality of life in the United States?
- 56% have a "great deal of respect" for musicians, but only 25% for critics?
- 71% have attended some cultural or arts performance or facility during the past twelve months, 27% attended some music performance, and 8% at least one dance production?
- 64% show a strong preference for live music over records, radio, or TV?
- Two to three times as many arts patrons have been exposed to the arts in childhood as had not been?
- More than four out of five young people (aged sixteen to twenty) recall being exposed to the arts in school, and a substantial portion of the total population believes that the arts should be taught, for credit, as a regular part of the curriculum?

These are among the findings of two important studies of public attitudes toward the arts and culture conducted in New York State in 1972 and throughout the United States in 1973. Using up-to-date techniques of interviewing and sophisticated data processing, they are the first comprehensive data on important questions affecting all the arts. (For further information about how these studies were made and where their findings may be obtained, see the box on next page.) Though some arts organizations have tried to test the attitudes of their patrons, these have been relatively unsophisticated efforts and, because they center on individuals already involved, they tend to be self-serving. The momentous developments in the arts during the past decade have increasingly demonstrated the need for independent and penetrating study, not merely of the existing arts audience but also of its wider potential. These two reports are therefore a first step in mapping a *terra incognita* of basic importance to present activities and to the future of the arts in America.

In this brief summary, it is possible only to cite some of the highlights in two very comprehensive reports that deserve close study by artists, managers, boards of directors, donors, and government officials. Covering as they do the broadest possible spectrum of art and culture, they contain a great deal of data of specific interest on music and

dance, and those involved in these areas will, in reading them, gain important information and significant perspective as to their own role in the cultural scene. Moreover, they will find here provocative data and disturbing questions that should lead both to a reassessment of their own thinking and the desire to make more specialized studies in their own fields.

Each of these studies was designed to cover the widest possible ground, both in sampling the population and in the conceptual scope of what the public believes art and culture to consist of. In such areas of general attitudes, there seems to be a much broader public idea of arts and culture than most of our arts organizations seem to realize: in music, it encompasses rock and church choirs as well as opera and symphony, and the same is true of such other fields as museums and theater. This all-embracing concept undoubtedly accounts for the fact that 89% of the adult population (or 130 million people) feel that the arts are important to the quality of life, and explains a response of 71% saying that they have attended at least one arts performance or visited at least one museum or historical site in the twelve months preceding the survey. With 65% *disagreeing* with the statement that "I can get all the culture and entertainment I need at home," 49% said they had visited art shows, museums, historical sites, or antique, craft, and furniture shows, and 48% had attended some type of arts performance, with the combined total of these percentages indicating considerable overlap. These percentages exceed that for similar interest (47%) in spectator sport.

Within the narrower range of music performance—popular as well as classical—37% of the respondents answered affirmatively. Attendance was further clarified by determining that 10% were frequent patrons, 20% moderately frequent, 40% as infrequent, and 29% not at all; these frequency criteria were correlated extensively with other data.

One indicator of public attitudes toward the arts is the degree of respect or disrespect entertained toward various professions and occupations. Though the full national figures have not been published yet, there is reason to believe that they correspond generally with the degree of respect revealed in the New York State study. There, of all artists,

musicians ranked highest (with a 56% response of "a great deal of respect"), behind scientists (80%), doctors (79%), and lawyers (64%), but above bankers (48%), businessmen (43%), and other artists. Dancers ranked relatively low (36%), but above critics who received only 25% of a "great deal" and 21% of "not much" respect.

In general, the national survey found that ethnic background was less of an influence in attitudes toward the arts than were income level and degree of education. Those with lower incomes and elementary or high school education showed less interest in the arts than those with higher incomes and college education. However, since the former constitute a larger part of the population, their numerical force was much greater; in this respect the potential arts audience is by no means confined to the well-off and highly educated. The income/education factors also account for such regional differences as a lower interest in the South and rural areas generally.

Going beyond expression of general sympathy for arts and culture, the national survey found that 71% of the population had attended at least one arts performance or facility in the previous twelve months. Again, this is based

on a broad concept of arts and culture, as is that of music (27%), which includes popular music as well as classical. The same is true of dance (8%), embracing tap dancing as well as ballet. Within this over-all group of arts attenders, further refinement, as previously noted, was made in terms of frequency of attendance, which will be detailed as to specific art forms in the final report in book form.

**T**hough most of the other art forms show a relatively even geographical distribution, interest in modern dance seems concentrated in the Middle Atlantic states. More interest was shown nationally in modern dance than in ballet, with a stronger preference for the former on the part of young people and ballet preferred more by the middle-aged and elderly.

Live music still commands a strong loyalty: 64% of the public showed a decided preference for it over recordings, radio, or TV, and that figure was, interestingly, even higher (73%) in the sixteen to twenty age group. Preferences as to type of music were tabulated in two ways: "types of music you like to listen to"; and the *one* type the respondent liked best:

## The Surveys

The national survey, commissioned by the Associated Councils of the Arts and funded by the National Endowment for the Arts and Philip Morris Incorporated, was based on 3,005 interviews conducted in January 1973. Highlights of this survey, *Americans and the Arts*, may be obtained, for \$2.00 including postage, from ACA Publications, P.O. Box 4764, Tulsa, Oklahoma, 74104. The entire report is to be published in book form shortly.

The New York State survey, commissioned by the American Council for the Arts in Education and funded by the New York State Council on the Arts, was conducted in 1972 with 1,531 interviews. The full report, *Arts and the People*, may be obtained, for \$5.00, from Cranford Wood, Inc., 310 East 75th Street, New York, NY 10021.

Both surveys, made by the National Research Center for the Arts, an affiliate of Louis Harris and Associates, were based on interviews of Americans or New Yorkers sixteen or older. The samples used can be projected at a 95% confidence level and a sampling error of  $\pm 3\%$ ; thus total populations covered are 145.5 million nationally and 13 million in New York State, and most percentages cited here can be applied to those totals.

	One Type	Types
Popular Songs	65%	21%
Country and Western	53	19
Folk	49	*
Religious	47	14
Broadway Musicals	41	*
Symphony, chamber music, recitals	40	11
Rock	37	13
Jazz	33	*
Opera	19	*

(\*Folk Music, Broadway Musicals, Jazz, and Opera amounted to a total of 22% of this preference, but were not subdivided in the preliminary national report.)

The survey made a number of correlations between musical preference and such factors as ethnic background, age, education, and region which should be of interest to readers of the full report.

Actual participation in arts or cultural activities, as opposed to interest in them or attendance, was interestingly high and pervasive, and the desire of nonparticipants to become involved was especially interesting in music and dance:

	Actually Participated	Wished to Participate
Play a musical instrument	20%	25%
Sing in a choir or chorus	10	11
Play in an orchestra or band	3	7
Perform in dance or ballet	3	6

Moreover, over 80% of those actively involved felt that this experience stimulated their interest in seeing and hearing others perform.

Childhood exposure to the arts was an important factor in stimulating later involvement as audience or participant, and had a strong influence on frequency of attendance. The most important childhood influence was either in the family or from friends close to it, but school exposure is becoming increasingly important, both from attendance in or out of the schools and from the actual inclusion of the arts in the curriculum. Both nationally and in New York State there was a strong desire that the arts be as much a part of school curricula, for credit, as are English, science, or math. These data on early exposure merit close study by educators and by arts organizations involved in youth programs.

The availability of the arts seems to be a very important public concern, in terms both of the quality of arts facilities and of their accessibility and cost of attendance. Again, the national survey, when completely published, will offer comprehensive data correlating the availability of the arts with various other factors, but one important desire that appears in the preliminary report is for more activity on a smaller community level.

Much is made of a public lack of awareness of the true financial status of arts organizations: More than half the public believes that they break even or make money, and

only 18% appreciate the fact that such institutions as museums, symphony orchestras, or opera companies lose money. There is a strong sentiment that corporations and private donors should bear a major burden of supporting the arts for their community value, but only 57% of the public is aware that such contributions are tax deductible. (Distressing as these revelations are, it must be remembered that in other areas—not covered by these surveys—a comparable ignorance of public issues also prevails, for instance in such basic matters as knowing the name of one's Representative in the Congress.) There is also strong sentiment for government support of the arts: 64% of the respondents indicated a willingness to pay additional tax of \$5 a year for arts support, a total of over 94 million people.

The admittedly broad and loose definitions of art and culture that underly much of these studies are both a limitation of their immediate practicality to artists and arts groups and, at the same time, a major challenge to them. At first glance the opera impresario or symphony manager may incline to question the findings of studies that lump their efforts into a conglomeration running the gamut from chamber music to barber shop quartets. But up to now, such information as they have had in the past has told them very little—and much of that self-serving—about their present audiences and far less, if anything, about the vast non-audience, which undoubtedly includes a substantial number of potential new patrons. If our arts organizations have learned anything in the past decade of crisis it is that one can no longer merely present performances, promote them in traditional ways, open the doors, and expect to build substantially new audiences. The data in these surveys must, therefore, be regarded as points of departure for further study of more specialized public attitudes of interest to such narrower efforts.

The challenge inherent in the broader concept of art and culture revealed in these reports lies in their indication that the public at large has a considerably more varied notion of what art is than most of our arts organizations have realized. Before they reject such "populism," arts groups should ask themselves how they can diversify and expand their services to meet the desire for greater accessibility, and how they can modify their programs in accordance with broader concept without destroying their artistic integrity.

"To see ourselves as others see us" is perhaps the greatest contribution of these reports. Artists and laymen directly involved in and deeply committed to the cause of the various arts always run the danger of letting their dedication blind them to their own faults and limitations. Their own reasons for supporting and working in their chosen fields may well be quite different from those that motivate others less dedicated to attend or support the arts, and the attitudes of these others must be appealed to if the arts are to survive and grow for the next generation.

These studies, it must be emphasized, are but a first step. From here on, arts groups in theater, museums, orchestra, opera, and dance must build on these reports, using them as guides for further specialized surveys to develop "marketing" tools of modern sophistication to reach a broader public which we now know exists as a major potential. △

# debuts & reappearances

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## ANN ARBOR

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### U. of Michigan: "Eugene Onegin"

Although opera has been produced at the University of Michigan School of Music since 1943, it was not until the arrival of conductor Josef Blatt from the Metropolitan Opera in 1952 that *dramma per musica* became staple fare on the Ann Arbor campus. The subsequent addition of Metropolitan baritone Ralph Herbert to the U-M faculty provided Blatt with a stage directing partner for the school's three annual operatic presentations. The Blatt-Herbert team has collaborated on extremely challenging repertoire, including an ingeniously staged and meticulously prepared *Wozzeck* in 1965, as well as a 1972 *Falstaff* notable for its compact integral set, ensemble cohesion, and outstanding title-role performance by singing actor Mark Gruett.

This spring the School of Music introduced Ann Arbor audiences to *Eugene Onegin* (in Blatt's English translation) on four successive evenings with alternate casts. Whatever the personnel onstage, though, the musical conception remained the same. Blatt secured transparency of texture from his student orchestra, pacing the music with an unerring grasp of tempo relationships. His sure beat maintained rhythmic continuity, but never at the expense of flexibility or vocal spaciousness. Pointed accentuation kept lines moving as Tchaikovsky's running instrumental commentary melded with the voices in a reading of chamber music intimacy.

As for the voices, two merited special attention. Jerrold Vander Schaaf (Lenski) possessed a pure, honeyed, lyric tenor of penetrating power which he plied with crystalline diction, seemingly effortless production, superb breath control, and exemplary taste in phrasing. Also an intense, believable actor, Vander Schaaf appears to be on the threshold of a major career. And bass Z. Edmund Toliver infused the role of Prince Gremin with rare authority, elegantly shaping his Third Act aria, which ended on a thrillingly sonorous low G Flat.

Only a few other cast members could approach this duo's level of acting skill, with much of the stage action misdirected in the midst of sumptuous costuming and skeletal sets. With a chorus of peasants exaggeratedly flailing their arms in the air, a Tatyana of incessant Ultra-Brite smiles and a dueling attendant who hopped about like a demented rabbit, the opera patron could also lament the cramped facilities of Mendelssohn Theater, whose lack of an adequate pit left the stage obscured by a network of violin bows.

JOHN HARVITH

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## BOSTON

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### Composers Qtet.: Swift premiere

"For Andrew Frank and William Valente . . . 'meinem Brudern in Apoll'" goes the dedication on Californian Richard Swift's Fourth String Quartet, given its premiere by the Composers String Quartet, March 29, in the New England Con-

servatory's Jordan Hall. Composed last fall, the piece is the winner of the ensemble's second annual string quartet competition and was selected by a jury consisting of composers Elliott Carter, Donald Harris, and Henry Weinberg, and by the Quartet's cellist Michael Rudiakov and second violinist Anahid Ajemian [see opposite page].

The inscription, suggesting the ancient Apollonian/Dionysian dichotomy, is an apt one, and reflects the Apollonian nature of the work, its cool, intellectual, austere, and brainy demeanor.

Short and in four movements framed by an introduction and coda, Swift's piece is a complex one, extremely difficult to sort out on one hearing and very difficult to follow in the score. It is one of those new works which should have been given a second playing during the concert.

However, the initial impressions: The piece introduces a twelve-tone row at the outset, although it does not call attention to itself as such; the rhythms are complex (the introduction features fives against threes against twos), which results in dense contrapuntal textures; the fiercely independent instrumental lines are made to seem even more self-sufficient and fragmented by very short phrase groups, extensive use of pizzicato, tremolo, harmonics; a snarling figure in thirty-seconds or sixteenths recurs in all movements.

The Quartet is not a bit easy to listen to: it has a strange and piquant taste, and although one's first reaction is to make a face, still there is something too interesting, too serious

Continued on page MA-28



*Composers String Quartet tries out a new score; Harris and Carter look on*

## The Composers String Quartet Conducts a Competition

THE BIG living room, sparsely furnished and allowing plenty of space for the four chairs and music stands which stood in front of the window, was a mess. Not poor housekeeping but simply the exigencies of the occasion: the Composers String Quartet had borrowed the New York apartment for the day to try out some forty of the 121 scores that had been sub-

mitted for its second biennial string quartet competition, sponsored by the New England Conservatory of Music. Around the sofa at one end of the room lay music in heaps—string parts large and small, plain and fancy, neat and cumbersome. The discards, sifted through the day before by three of the five judges, composer Henry Weinberg, CSQ second

violinist Anahid Ajemian, and cellist Michael Rudiakov, made up the bulk of the collection; the music still to be considered lay about on chairs, tables, window sills. Gathered about these imposing piles were seven cheerful and businesslike people: Miss Ajemian, Weinberg, and Rudiakov; CSQ first violinist Matthew Raimondi and violist Harry Zaratzian; and the two remaining judges, composers Elliott Carter and Donald Harris—the latter vice president of the New England Conservatory. They got down to business quickly, examining the scores and deciding which of them merited a tryout. Periods of discussion alternated with periods of play-through. To an observer it seemed immediately that some of the competition entrants (all of whom used pseudonyms) had almost ensured their own elimination. One work required the use of tape and four loudspeakers on stage (“Can you imagine traveling with this?”); it was eliminated. Another contained twenty-six symbols printed at the top of the score, each followed by a paragraph of explanation (“It looks like a big bore, this one, no?”). Another re-

Continued on page MA-39



*Composers Henry Weinberg, Donald Harris, Elliott Carter ponder competition entry*

## WOMEN IN MUSIC—THEIR FAIR SHARE?

**I**S THERE discrimination against women in the profession of music? If so, what forms does it take, and how does it affect women's musical careers, artistically and economically? And what can be done about it, if, indeed, it does exist?

These questions, seemingly simple but difficult to answer, formed the basis for a colloquium on the status of women in the profession of music that was held at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York on May 4. Organized by Adrienne Fried Block, head of the College Music Society's newly formed Committee on the Status of Women, the colloquium was designed to highlight the proclamation by the United Nations of International Women's Year in 1975 and to begin the objective exploration of how women are faring in the field of music. Members of the panel included, in addition to Adrienne Block, Henrietta Yurchenko, an ethnomusicologist; Katherine Linville, a singer; Eleanor Cory, a composer; Judith Tick, a musicologist, as moderator; and the present writer. Susan Kedgley, a member of the staff of the United Nations' Department for the Promotion of the Equality of Men and Women, was the guest speaker.

### In orchestras and business

The panel attacked the problem of sex discrimination head on, and produced convincing figures to show that such discrimination exists. For example, none of the major, metropolitan, or urban orchestras listed in the 1974 directory issue of *MUSICAL AMERICA* had a women musical director, while only about one third had women managers. Most of these managers, however, worked for urban orchestras, where budgets are slimmer and seasons shorter than

*Jean Bowen is Assistant Chief of the Music Division of the New York Public Library.*

they are in the large organizations; in the major category, where more money is spent, only one manager out of thirty-three was a woman. The picture proved to be no brighter in other music-related fields. Less than one third of the newspapers that listed the names of their music critics in the Directory had women in these positions, while women accounted for only about 15% of the magazine editors and 13% of the heads of publishing firms. A solitary bright spot was the concert management field, in which approximately one third of the managements were owned or run by women.

The performing field was more difficult to analyze. Most of the panelists felt that exceptional musical talent is recognized regardless of sex, but Katherine Linville pointed out that a young performer with a husband and children often found the going rough because of family responsibilities still thought to be exclusively female. And there was general agreement that in the jazz and pop field there seem to be very few women performers other than singers or pianists but that no figures exist to back up this hunch. In the classical field, though, it proved to be possible, by running an eye over the personnel lists of the major orchestras for the past few seasons, to see startling inequalities in the employment of men and women. Indeed, only about one in every seven players in these orchestras was a woman, even though more hiring of women has taken place in recent years than would ever have been thought of in the past. And, true to form, it seemed to be the orchestras with lower minimum wages and shorter playing seasons that used the most women players.

### And in the colleges

Next the panel turned its attention to the status of women in college mu-

sic teaching. A succinct study called "A Sampling of Women in Music at Five Universities," by Nancy Barnes and Carol Neuls-Bates, both of the City University of New York, provided statistical information on college teaching jobs and showed that women have a long way to go before they achieve full equality with men in the field. For example, in 1971 only 29.1% of the music faculty of City University were women, and of this smallish percentage, only 18.3% were of the professorial ranks. Things were even worse in 1969-70 at the University of Oregon, where women made up only 8% of the professorial ranks. As for the University of California at Berkeley, in the years 1966-69 it ran a department in which 58% of its music majors, 28% of its music graduate students, and no percentage at all of its tenured faculty were women. Small wonder that the authors of the report concluded, rather mildly under the circumstances, that "in the very recent past all but a few women in the field [of music] at these large institutions were deprived of the opportunity to develop their professional capabilities in the fullest sense."

At the close of this report, the panel moved on to a general discussion of what could be done to correct some of the conditions that its speakers had brought to light. Susan Kedgley mentioned the United Nations' efforts to stimulate legislative action and public awareness at the international level, but it was soon apparent that here at home the work would have to be done and paid for by those concerned with the problem. And, as if to emphasize this point, at the end of the colloquium many members of the audience signed up for specific projects ranging from political action to concert-giving. General opinion seemed to be that at long last a very small but very decisive step had been taken up the ladder to equality.  $\Delta$

Continued after High Fidelity page 96

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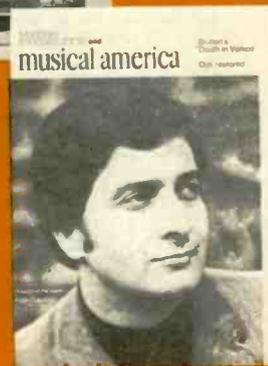
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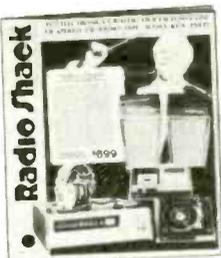
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CIRCLE 39 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

**What's the story?—Richard Gardena, Camden, N.J.**

Ferrite's most important advantage seems to be its hardness; it does not wear as fast as conventional metal heads. But several manufacturers have resisted using it because, they say, it will overload relatively easily and head saturation can occur before tape saturation. This is specifically why Teac has returned to conventional heads. The newer metal heads are designed for greater life expectancy than the older ones but won't match ferrite in this respect.

For months I have been trying to adjust the right-side CD-4 separation control on my Pioneer QX-747 receiver. The results looked right but didn't sound right. Your April Equipment Reports section explained what was wrong: Pioneer encloses the 4DE-202 alignment disc with its receivers, and the disc is defective in the right channels. I contacted Pioneer about the new alignment disc, 4DE-205. It admits the 4DE-202 is defective and suggests that right-channel adjustments be made to match those for the left channels. It still doesn't sound quite right to me, and Pioneer is unable to tell me where I can get the new alignment disc. What can I do?—David B. Welner, Far Rockaway, N.Y.

Wait. The 4DE-205 recutting still is in short supply at this writing, though we're told it should be generally available by the time you read this. But at least Pioneer is aware of the recutting. When we originally contacted a number of companies offering CD-4 equipment, at the time the April issue was prepared, most of them seemed not to have been informed of the right-channel problem in the original alignment disc.

I am planning to purchase a new tuner and have really looked hard at the Heathkit AJ-1510, which appears to represent a state-of-the-art advance. But wasn't there a similar card-programmed tuner on the market about five years ago? What happened to it?—Mike Feraci, Lanham, Md.

You're probably thinking of the Scott 433. At this writing it still is available, though it has not been in production for some time—a casualty, presumably, of Scott's reorganization. By the time you read this, however, Scott should be releasing a revised version, still with card tuning, as the T-335. Exception might be taken, incidentally, to your statement about the AJ-1510 advancing the state of the art. While some measurements in our tests of the unit (January 1973) were very fine indeed, the most striking "advance" that it represented was not in performance as such but in the tuning method. To put it another way, the model advanced tuner design without necessarily advancing listening pleasure.

At the last New York hi-fi show a Dahlquist speaker seems to have impressed many people, including a friend of mine. He says that Saul Marantz was also involved. Do you know when the speaker is coming out, if ever, and at what price?—Gus Mutter, New Providence, N.J.

It's out. See "Equipment in the News" in this issue.



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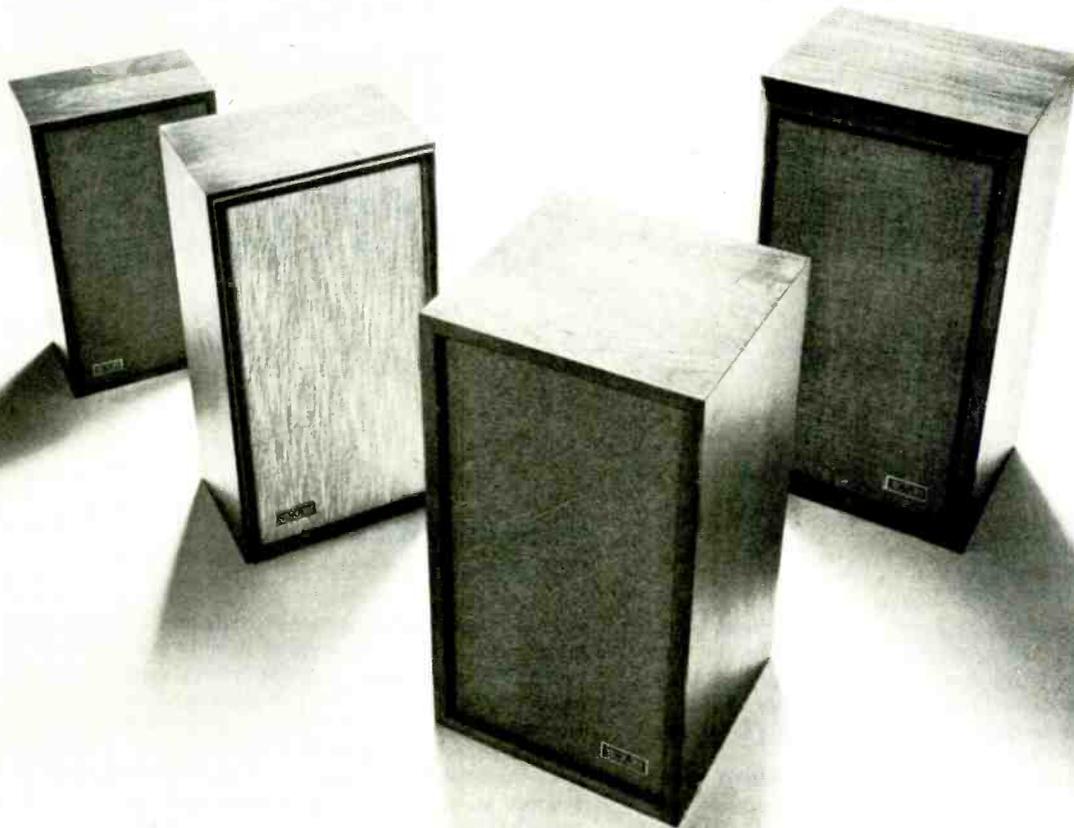
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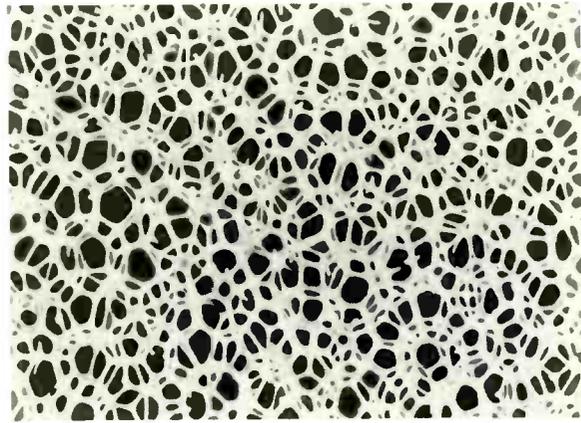
CIRCLE 23 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

## There's (Almost) Nothing to It.

A new arena of argument has opened during the past two years as more speaker manufacturers adopt foam grilles. Are these new grilles acoustically transparent, or do they attenuate high frequencies?

The Foam Division of the Scott Paper Co. has released the electron photomicrograph shown here of the "polyacoustic" speaker foam, which it manufactures. Skeletal structure, Scott says, displays the 97:1 void-to-volume ratio of the reticulated polyurethane foam. That is, the structure occupies only 3 per cent of the foam's total volume.

The key is in the post-reticulation process, where all the cell faces on the dodecahedral (twelve-faced) structure of the natural foam are chemically removed, resulting in an open-pore foam that's virtually acoustically transparent. (Closed-pore foam is the type used for sound insulation.)



---

### Made in America— From German Parts

Braun (pronounced like the English word "brown" in its native Germany, though most Americans call it "brawn") makes some really fine equipment. Unlike most compatriot companies, it seems unimpressed by both the DIN standards and what might be called Rhine-land-Moderne styling.

The DIN standards set minimum performance limits below which a product cannot (in Germany) be advertised as "hi-fi." Unfortunately these minima have encouraged designers (or marketers?) to believe that once the rather lax standards have been met no greater improvement is in order. And the graceless faceplates, at once fussy and severe, of typical German equipment have seemed no more attractive to American audiophiles than the electronics' lowest-common-denominator performance.

Braun, a company that has consistently won styling awards here and abroad and has won high marks for the performance of its products as well, has been easing into the American market for some time. The stereo components are not sold through the channels offering Braun appliances here. They are being assembled here from drivers and crossovers made in Germany.

Assembly will be by Analog + Digital Systems, Inc., of Cambridge. (What, another speaker manufacturer in Cambridge?) The three U.S.-constructed models are two-way systems, ranging in price from \$89.50 to \$300. Braun's fanciest—the \$750 LV-1020, which includes triamplification and electronic crossover—will continue to be constructed in Germany and sold here by ADS.

CIRCLE 160 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

### Made in Mexico— For American Users

Romex Vega was a new name to us when we attended a New York press conference in April to learn about the products it will make available in this country. It is a Mexican company that heretofore has concentrated on the Mexican market. Now it is offering six loudspeaker models here, and we're told that by year's end it may have completed development of electronics specifically tailored to our tastes and including some surprising wrinkles.

The electronics units we saw are on sale in Mexico. They are bold in styling and iconoclastic in concept—most notably in their reliance on tubed amplifiers. (Romex Vega is not alone in believing that the capacity of tubes for dealing with overloads makes them inherently preferable to transistors for this purpose; Audio Research Corp. of Minneapolis has an all-tubed line.) Preamp front ends, however, will be field-effect transistors, whose exceptional dynamic range makes them as attractive for this application as they are for FM front ends.

But we were cautioned to draw no firm conclusions about the American-market models on the basis of the Mexican units we saw.

The six speakers basically consist of three bass-reflex system designs, each available in two stylings. The least expensive are two-way mini-bookshelf size and sell for \$219.50 a pair. Next come three-way systems of approximately 2 cubic feet in volume, at \$199.50 each. The top models are three-way floor-standing units at \$299.50 apiece.

CIRCLE 161 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

# The Sansui SR-212.

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Put your favorite record on the large 12" aluminum platter of the new Sansui SR-212 automatic return turntable and you will be pleased with the results. You'll be pleased with the ease of operation. A cueing control that lets you place the arm at any point on the disc and go "automatic" from there. You'll be pleased with the reliability and rugged construction of the SR-212's belt-driven full size platter powered by a 4-pole synchronous motor.

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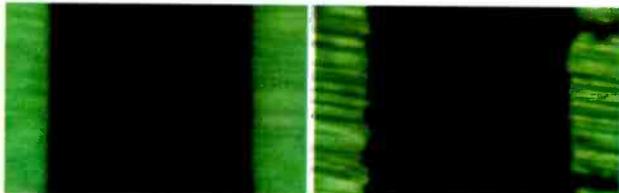
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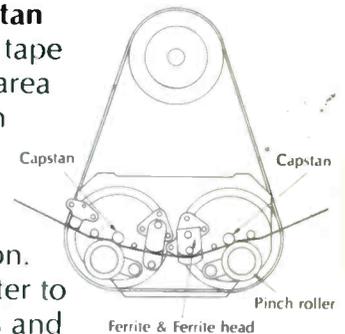
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MIC

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RIGHT B

LINE

MIC

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REC MODE

METER

MONITOR

LEFT

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HIGH

TAPE

OFF

OFF

NORMAL

SOURCE

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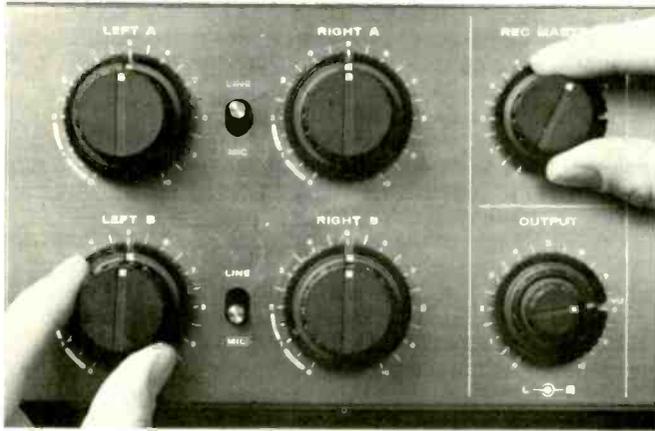
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CIRCLE 52 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

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## Concern over PVC Products

Are vinyl products, such as phonograph records, dangerous to use? Concern over this question was sparked by recent disclosures that several workers in polyvinyl chloride plants have died, apparently as a result of working with PVC. And the Federal Trade Commission has cited as dangerous eleven aerosol products (mostly hair sprays) that use vinyl chloride as a propellant.

PVC is one of those "miracle" products that resulted from research during World War II. It found its first applications in audio in 1946 and 1947, when record manufacturers began experimenting with it. In the 1950s it began showing up in high fidelity components, and in the late Fifties it was employed for the first time in tape manufacturing.

But the recent reports suggest that vinyl chloride may be a mixed blessing. PVC pellets are produced by a handful of giant chemical plants like the B. F. Goodrich facility at Louisville, Ky. Last year a Goodrich worker died from a rare tumor of the liver. Plant physician John L. Creech checked plant records and discovered that another worker had died from the same disease in 1971.

Both had been involved in the manufacture of PVC. Further investigation uncovered six more deaths due to the rare tumor; all the victims were vinyl workers.

From 1 to 3 per cent of vinyl chloride typically escapes the polymerizing process and remains in its original form on the finished plastic surface, according to two New York doctors who have studied the matter. But it's questionable whether people who use vinyl products may develop tumors similar to those of the vinyl workers. Drs. E. Cuyler Hammon and Irving Selikoff say they cannot reach a conclusion, because it takes more than twenty years from exposure to the appearance of a tumor. Other researchers tend to doubt that users of PVC products need be alarmed in any way; some believe the solvents used in vinyl chloride manufacture are more likely to be the culprits—assuming a causal relationship exists—than the vinyl chloride itself.

One side effect of these studies does seem certain: new safety regulations for vinyl workers. Production costs may likely increase accordingly (see also "The Vinyl Shortage: Does It Mean Poorer and Fewer Records?", HF July 1974) and, in the end, the cost of vinyl products to the public.

## equipment in the news



### The Dahlquist approach to speakers

The DQ-10 Phased Array by Dahlquist (a Freeport, N.Y., company founded by Jon Dahlquist and Saul B. Marantz) seeks to avoid the phase distortion that they say is caused by normal baffle mounting. All drivers in this model, except the 10-inch high-compliance woofer, are free-space mounted, away from reflecting and diffracting surfaces. The system also includes a mid-woofer (400 to 1,000 Hz), midrange driver (1 to 6 kHz), tweeter (6 to 12 kHz), and piezoelectric super-tweeter (12 to 27 kHz). Treble contour is continuously variable. Fifty watts are recommended to drive the unit, which is 31½ inches high and 9 inches deep and costs \$395.

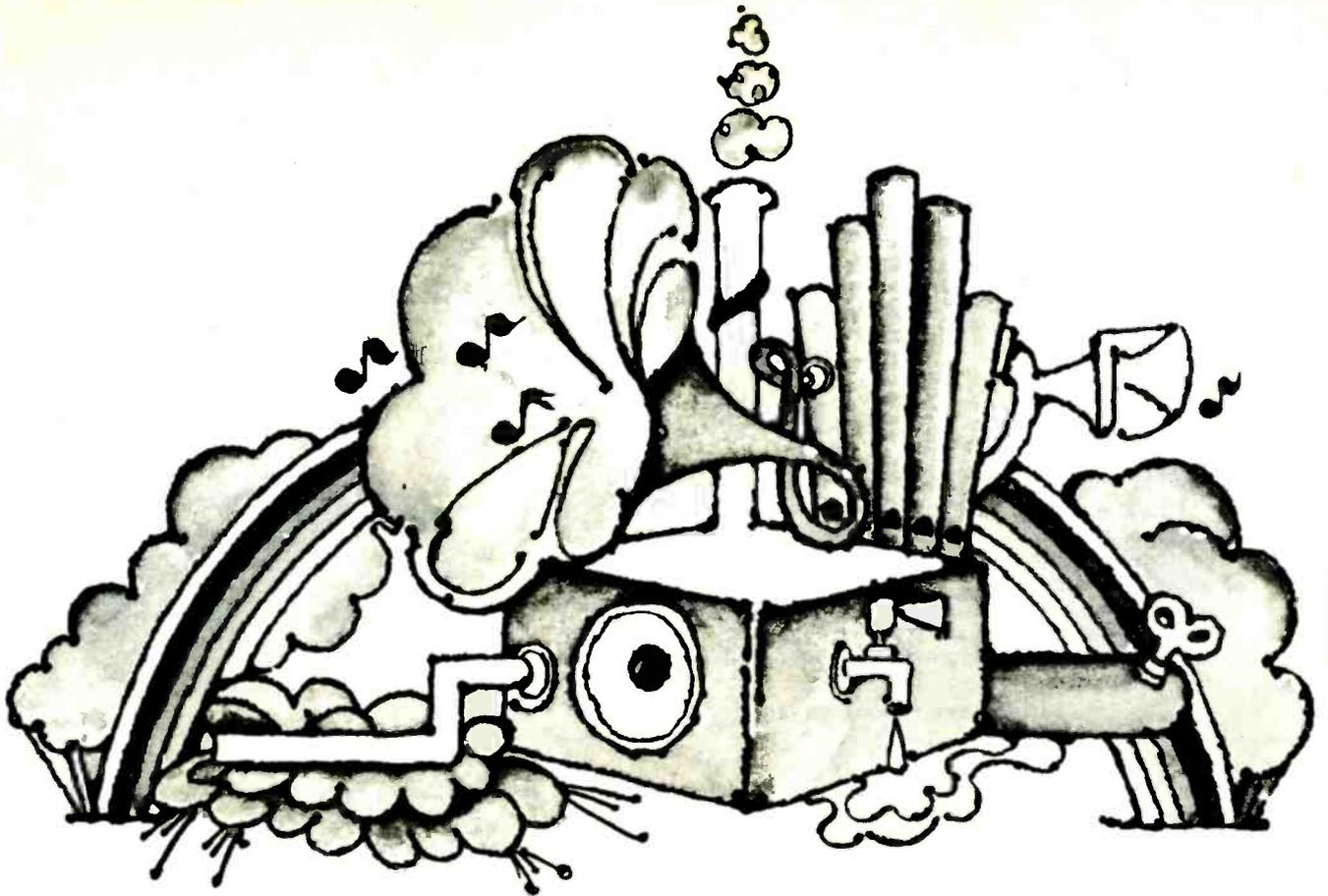
CIRCLE 147 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

### Sony adds sophisticated open-reel deck

The newest addition to Sony's extensive open-reel tape recorder line is the three-motor TC-756, which has a servo-controlled capstan motor; closed-loop, dual-capstan drive; and "logic" transport controls. It accepts 10½-inch reels and operates at 7½ or 15 ips. Features include recording bias and equalization selectors, input mixing, adjustable tape-height guides, and a two-position mike attenuator. A center detent position allows for presetting the playback level for monitoring and external Dolby calibration. A mechanical memory (along with an optional timer) will engage the tape drive mechanism at a preset time. The deck costs \$799.95 with either quarter-track or half-track heads.

CIRCLE 148 ON READER-SERVICE CARD





# HG HUM

## Another major breakthrough

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Occupation \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_



## Lab reference phono preamp offered

All-Test Devices Corp., a nine-man company in Long Beach, N.Y., is offering the ATD-25, a "laboratory reference" phono preamp designed to amplify magnetic phono cartridge signals sufficiently to drive the high-level input of stereo preamps, integrated amps, or receivers. Distortion is said to be 0.01 per cent, S/N 80 dB below a 10-millivolt input (20 to 20,000 Hz), and frequency response 20 to 20,000 Hz within  $\pm 0.5$  dB of RIAA standards. Maximum output is given as 8 volts (continuous) into 47,000 ohms or higher. The unit comes with a 10-year warranty and costs \$150.

CIRCLE 149 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

## Technics' uniquely styled cassette deck

New entries in the expanding Technics line include the RS-676US Dolby cassette deck. Its front-loading transport compartment, feather-touch solenoid controls, and all other operating features are on the front panel. The unit thus can be placed on a bookshelf of only minimum clearance without inhibiting operation. Features include switchable peak/average metering, mike/line mixing, Dolby FM, memory rewind, a tape selector plus automatic chrome switching for coded cassettes, and photoelectric end-of-tape stop. Cost is \$459.95. A remote control unit is optional.

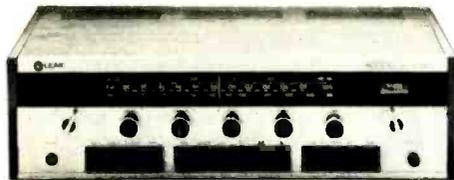
CIRCLE 150 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



## Leak's top-performance receiver

Leak, one of Britain's well-known audio manufacturers, has introduced here (via Ercona) the Model 2000 receiver. Its amplifier and tuner sections are said to offer improved performance over previous models. The amp, rated at 30-plus watts per channel (continuous), is said to hold IM and harmonic distortion to 0.1 per cent. Tuner sensitivity is rated at 1.6 microvolts, with S/N better than 65 dB. The unit, which costs \$595, includes a "speaker matrix" circuit for simulating quad. It also features a preamp/amp disconnect switch for insertion of external four-channel decoders, speaker equalizers, etc.

CIRCLE 151 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



## Speaker for "thrifty music lovers"

The Zodiac '74 speaker from Hartley Products Corp. is designed, the company says, for thrifty music lovers. The system includes a 10-inch woofer and 1-inch domed midrange tweeter. Frequency response is stated as 30 to 25,000 Hz. Ten watts of power is recommended to drive the speaker, which is rated to handle up to 50 watts. When sold in stereo pairs, the two Zodiacs are symmetrically matched. In a hand-rubbed oiled walnut cabinet, a single speaker system costs \$128.

CIRCLE 152 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



## Outboard demodulator from Harman-Kardon

The 44 + CD-4 demodulator from Harman-Kardon incorporates the circuitry found in the demodulator sections of the company's 700 +, 800 +, and 900 + four-channel receivers. Its three-position selector switch chooses among "CD-4/auto" (which activates the CD-4 circuitry when the carrier frequency from Quadradiscs is present), "stereo" (which defeats the CD-4 circuitry), and "bypass" (which channels the input signals directly to the amplifier or receiver). The demodulator costs \$119.95.

CIRCLE 153 ON READER-SERVICE CARD





\$329.95

\$379.95

\$499.95

\$599.95

# How to go quad without going broke.

The trick is to find a high-quality quad receiver at a low price.

We think we have that receiver. In fact, we think we have four of them, each one an outstanding buy within its price category. They're all listed below with their prices and most important specs. All you have to do is decide which one is best for you.

**\$329.95\*** 4 x 7.5 watts continuous (RMS) power into 8 ohms from 30Hz to 20kHz at less than 1% total harmonic distortion. 2 x 15 watts continuous (RMS) power in special stereo bridge mode. IM distortion at rated continuous output is less than 1%. Frequency response is 20Hz-20kHz at tape input  $\pm 1.5$  db. An exceptional FM sensitivity of 2.3  $\mu$ v. Plus many features. Model RQ 3745.

**\$379.95\*** 4 x 15 watts continuous (RMS) power into 8 ohms from 20 Hz to 20kHz at less than 1% total harmonic distortion. 2 x 30 watts continuous (RMS) power in special stereo bridge mode. IM distortion at rated continuous output is less than 1%. Frequency response is 20Hz-20kHz at tape input  $\pm 1.5$ db. FM sensitivity of 2.3  $\mu$ v. Plus many features. Model RQ 3746.

**\$499.95\*** 4 x 25 watts continuous (RMS) power into 8 ohms from 20Hz to 20kHz at less than 0.5% total harmonic distortion. 2 x 60 watts continuous (RMS) power in special stereo bridge mode. IM distortion at rated continuous output is less than 0.5%. Frequency response is 20Hz to 30kHz at tape input  $\pm 1.5$ db. FM sensitivity is an exceptional 1.9  $\mu$ v. Full function jack panel. Walnut veneer cabinet. Plus many other features. Model RQ 3747.

**\$599.95\*** 4 x 50 watts continuous (RMS) power into 8 ohms from 20Hz to 20kHz at less than 0.5% total harmonic distortion. 2 x 125 watts continuous (RMS) power in special stereo bridge mode. IM distortion at rated continuous output is less than 0.5%. Frequency response is 20Hz to 30kHz at tape input  $\pm 1.5$ db. Outstanding FM sensitivity of 1.9  $\mu$ v. Full function jack panel. Walnut veneer cabinet. Plus many other features. Model RQ 3748.

If you like what you see and what you read, go to your Sylvania dealer. When you're there, you'll like what you hear.

\*Manufacturer's suggested retail price.

## GTE SYLVANIA

by Jordan Ramin



# How to Launch a Hit Song

*Luck doesn't hurt, but there are some definite steps you can take to get your song published and promoted.*

LUCK, TALENT, PERSEVERANCE, hard work, faith, a few dollars, and more luck. At one time or another almost everyone has tried to write a song, and at one time or another most amateurs or unknowns have spent money on "song sharks" or blamed their failure to get a hit on not having the right connections or the breaks. It's true there is an element of luck involved, but an unknown songwriter can help to make his own luck.

That big money can be earned from a hit is a fact. Paul Simon's "Bridge over Troubled Water" is estimated to have brought in a few million dollars. Would you believe seven million—just for singing his own song? If you are a team like John Lennon and Paul McCartney, you might earn eighteen million dollars. However, if you write songs like I do, a check for \$1.29 for royalties isn't bad.

Since one hit can bring an annuity for the rest of your life, it's small wonder that so many people are writing songs. The sources of income never seem to end: sales of records, tapes, sheet music, song folios, and choral, band, and orchestral arrangements. "Performance monies" are earned every time a song is played on television and radio, whether it's on a major network or small local station. Then there are the international markets.

Let me give you an example of how a song became a hit. My brother is arranger/composer Sid Ramin. He won an Oscar for orchestrating *West*

*Mr Ramin, formerly a music publishing company executive, has composed music for several documentary films and television specials.*

*Side Story* and has arranged and conducted for albums by Barbra Streisand and Robert Goulet, among others. Good credentials, right? During the last few years Sid has been writing music for television commercials. Whenever I'd ask why he didn't write pop songs, he would answer, "I haven't got the time. Besides, who knows what's going to hit? You see a publisher and play him your song. He smiles politely and says, 'It's nice, but it's not what I want, and I know what I want when I hear it.'" (That phrase is heard so often that someone should use it as a song title.)

A few years ago brother Sid wrote a melody for a TV commercial for Diet Pepsi. After the ad had been aired for several months, a New York City disc jockey who liked the tune called the ad agency and asked for a "dub" of the song without the commercial message. He got the record, without Sid's knowledge.

The disc jockey began playing the dub on his radio show and asked his listeners what they thought of it. It happened that Bob Crewe, record producer/artist/arranger, was listening, and he decided to record the song. Since the commercial showed beautiful girls strolling by people drinking Diet Pepsi, the tune was named "Music to Watch Girls By."

Without even trying, Sid became the delighted writer of a hit, which is still going strong. The song has sold millions of records made by over two hundred artists.

This was an unusual occurrence, though, and

people who write songs for a living cannot depend on luck. Much effort is required.

The odds of writing that smash hit are about equal to those of winning a fifty-thousand-dollar lottery. But no one, including the hard-nosed professional, can really predict what is going to be popular. There are numerous stories of publishers, record companies, and singers turning down a song that found a home elsewhere and became a hit. Basically all the publisher can do is follow the trends and hope that he'll get lucky.

Not knowing what the public will like makes songwriting the fascinating business that it is. And it makes the amateur's chances for success almost as good as the professional's.

There are more doors open to the unknown writer today than ever before. But they are not the old doors of the music publishers we've known about for so many years. One reason why established publishers are in trouble today is that many pop artists, like Carole King and Gilbert O'Sullivan, are also songwriters and have set up their own publishing firms. Now some old-line publishers refuse to listen to a new song unless the writer is also a performer.

Today everyone is a publisher—the record companies, recording artists, record producers, and even managers and booking agents. These independents are threatening to eliminate the older companies from the pop field.

What does this mean to the unknown song-

writer? Instead of fifty or so publishers that he could go to (and perhaps be snubbed by) there are hundreds who are willing to listen to a new song. But you cannot open the doors unless you use the right keys.

**Rule 1.** The first key is the song itself. Years ago most pop songs fell into two categories: love, both happy and unhappy; and novelty, such as "Davy Crockett," "Purple People Eater," and "Come on-a my House." Now there isn't a single topic you can't write about, so don't put these restrictions on yourself. Thanks to the Beatles, Jim Webb, and Carole King, to name a few, a writer is hampered only by his imagination. Audiences are into Johnny Cash, Blood, Sweat, & Tears, Melanie, Carly Simon, Judy Collins, Chicago, Tom Jones, and Isaac Hayes without categorizing them.

**Rule 2.** A poem does not make a pop song, though there's room for Rod McKuen. Writing a lyric is completely different from writing a poem. The lyrics must fit the music perfectly. If you can't write a decent lyric, you're wasting your time on a song. A wonderful example of pop lyric writing is the brilliant English performer Gilbert O'Sullivan.

**Rule 3.** You must—and I cannot stress this too much—have a demonstration record. You can't just put your song down on a piece of paper and expect someone to look at it. It'll either come back unopened or be thrown into a wastebasket.

A demo is a necessity because many publishers do not read music. (Even some successful performers—Erroll Garner, for one—do not read music.) Selling a song to a publisher depends on how he hears it, what the lyric says, what the melody sounds like, and what artist he thinks is best suited to record it.

Making a demo is where you have to invest a few dollars. If you believe in your song, you must be prepared to back it up. All you need is a piano player (or guitarist), a good singer, and a small recording studio. You can fill these requirements in almost any city in the country. There are loads of small studios (and radio stations) that can supply a competent singer and accompanist if you aren't proficient yourself and don't know someone else who is. You don't need thirty musicians and a glorious arrangement. A large orchestra will not impress the publisher nor will it cover up an essentially bad song.

The maximum cost varies from city to city, between \$50 and \$100. Outside of New York it usually is about \$75—\$25 for use of a studio, \$20 each for a singer and accompanist, and \$10 for the records.

**Rule 4.** You must send a "lead sheet" with your demo. That is a simplified version of the song that can be put down on one page of music manuscript paper—the melody, lyrics, and chord symbols. Don't let anyone tell you that you need expensive,



The author's brother, Sid Ramin, scored an unexpected hit when he wrote a theme for a Diet Pepsi commercial.



When submitting your potential hit song to a publisher, you must send a demonstration record with a lead sheet. This lead sheet can be as unelaborate as the one above and should contain a simplified version of the song on one page of music manuscript paper. Include the melody, lyrics, and chord symbols on the sheet.

professionally printed music. Any musician or music teacher in your town can make up a lead sheet for \$15 or less. Then you can make whatever copies you need.

Incidentally, if you don't want to bother copyrighting the song for \$6.00 in the Library of Congress, send yourself the lead sheet by registered mail and put it away unopened. Your demo also can serve as a temporary copyright, if it contains the date the recording was made. Tales of tunes being stolen are mostly myths.

**Rule 5.** Don't send out more than one song at a time. It's better to concentrate on doing your best with one. If you submit several songs, all of them may be rejected or may not even be looked at.

**Rule 6.** Avoid like the proverbial plague those firms that charge a fee for publishing a song: song sharks. If a legitimate publisher wants your song, he will not ask you for a penny and probably will even give you an advance against royalties. It's his responsibility to bear all expenses—that's his business.

**Rule 7.** Always enclose return postage, because otherwise you may not get your demo back. And you may not get it back if you send it unsolicited or if you have written a letter beforehand about submitting it. You've paid for your demo, and you'll want to send it elsewhere if one company turns it down.

**Rule 8.** You can submit your demo to several publishers, except when a personal contact can have it heard by someone in the business. In that case, knowing that you will get a definite answer within a definite period, you give your contact a first-refusal right.

If you are an unsolicited, unknown writer without contacts, your record should get out to as many companies as possible. In the magazine business, you offer an article exclusively to one magazine and get a formal rejection before submitting it to

another. But in music publishing, first come, first served is the rule—whatever publisher offers you a legitimate contract first. And the happy publisher is the one who has his "property" recorded by many artists and companies. *Your* main concern is getting your song published and recorded, and it doesn't matter by whom.

**Rule 9.** If you're going to invest \$50 to \$100 to make a demo, you should spend another \$10 or so on the current edition of *The Business of Music*, published by Billboard Publications, Inc., 1 Astor Plaza, New York, New York 10036. It contains everything you wanted to know about the music biz and didn't know where to find.

There are so many people you can contact that the law of averages, if not luck, should be on your side if your song has some merit.

There's not enough room to list the hundreds of concerns that you could write to. The easiest and most economical way to get an accurate list of performers, managers, record companies, and publishers is, again, by writing to Billboard for the *International Buyer's Guide*, which comes out once a year.

**Rule 10.** Don't get discouraged if your song is rejected. I'm still trying, and I've been at it for fifteen years. I still believe it will happen. (In fact, it may have already happened. I just received a contract on a song from Dawnbreaker Music Company, which publishes the songs of Seals & Crofts, among others. I submitted it under a pseudonym, and they think I'm a young girl instead of an aging man—but I don't care who they think I am, just so long as they push my song.)

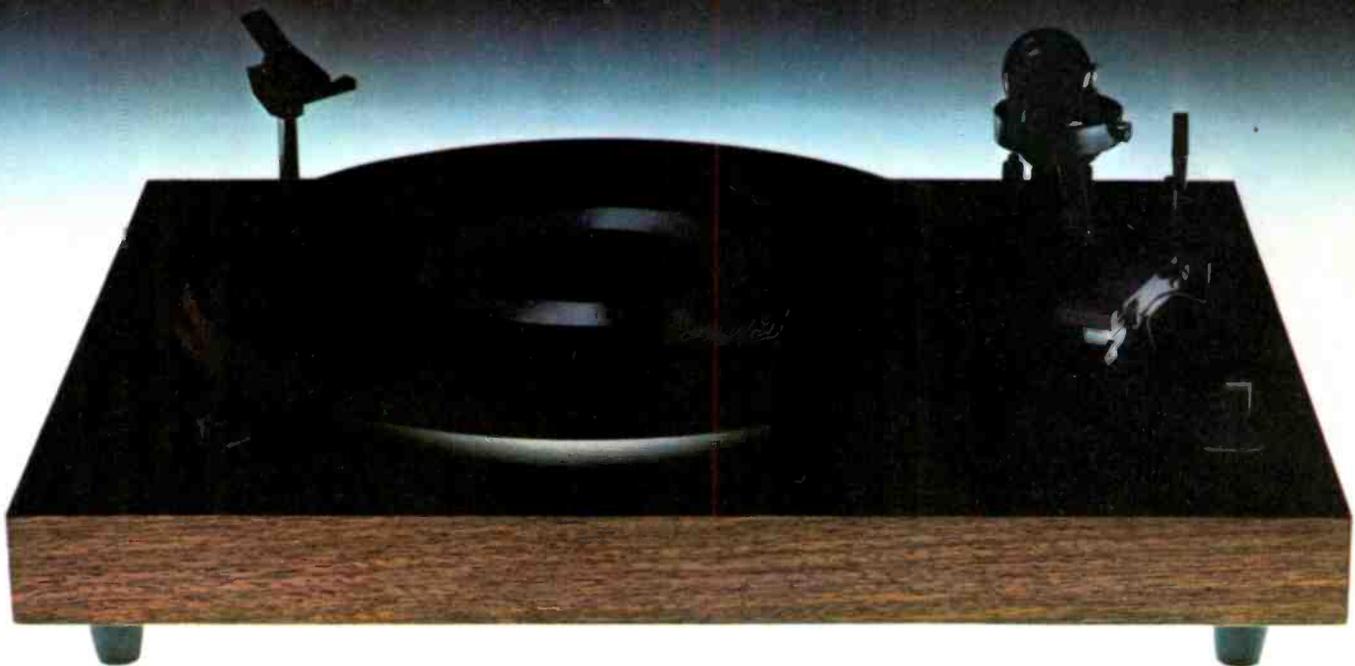
Some of our greatest hits had rough going at the beginning. Louis Armstrong's version of "Hello, Dolly" launched that song after it had been turned down by a dozen top singers.

So you may be lucky and come up with that hit of tomorrow. And believe me, luck doesn't hurt. ●

You are about to be introduced  
to a fundamentally new concept  
in record playing equipment —  
the new family of B·I·C™ turntables.

You will discover in them  
all the superiorities of manual turntables.  
They are also the first belt-drive units  
that can be programmed to play  
a series of discs. A new generation  
of turntables has arrived.

**B·I·C**™





So, we have taken an unusual step.

We have created a warranty policy meant to be as solid as our turntables.

Your B-I-C 980 or 960 is fully warranted against defects in parts, materials, or workmanship for 2 full years. In addition, if it is found defective within 10 days after you buy it, your dealer is authorized to exchange it for a new one on the spot.

This warranty is the best testament to our faith in the fundamental excellence of these machines.

They are beautifully engineered and built.

They represent a departure from other designs, but a departure based on simplicity and rock-solid engineering and manufacture.

They eliminate the major objections which have been voiced by purists against automatic equipment.

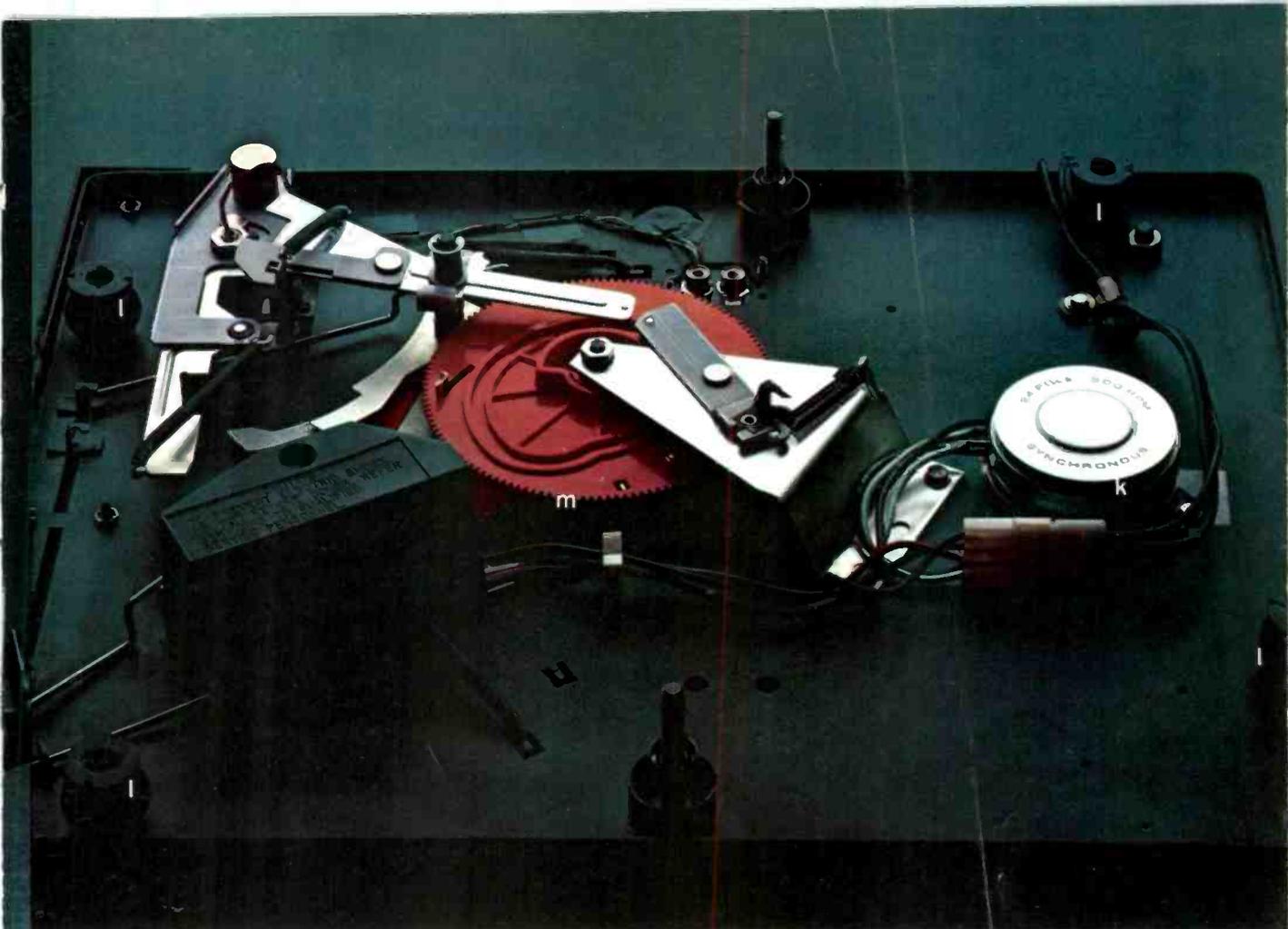
## They will be sold by leading audio specialists from coast to coast.

Your B-I-C authorized dealer will have a full-color, 26-page booklet which discusses these remarkable instruments in greater depth than we can here. If he has run out of these booklets, we will gladly mail one to you if you'll write to us at the address below.

The 980 and 960 are being delivered to your dealer now. We invite you to inspect them soon.



*The 980 and 960 are identical except for the 980's electronic speed and pitch control circuitry and its lighted strobe. Accessories available include solid oiled-walnut wood base — matte black molded base — and hinged dust cover.*



To play one record automatically (which we recommend for the sake of your cartridge and your records) move the program lever to "1", tap the cycle button (j) and the play-shut off cycle proceeds. Perhaps the most unique feature of the program system is that it allows you to pre-program as many as 6 plays of a single record and then shuts the machine off automatically after the program is completed.

The cycle button is worth noting in that it requires only a feather touch (90 grams pressure) and travels only .0625". It controls all functions with so light a touch that it precludes jarring of the unit plate, and accidental damage to records or stylus. Even when the tone arm is tracking, the unit can be put into "reject" smoothly, without jarring the tone arm, as frequently happens in most automatics.

For automatic play you can program 1 to 6 records. For example: to play 6 records in sequence, place them on the spindle and steady them with the clip at the outboard edge of the platter. Slide the program lever to "6", press the cycle button, and go about your business. The 2-point record support has no sensing mechanism in the spindle. It is thus superior to other 2-point systems and completely does away with the instability and hang-ups typical of umbrella spindles. Even records with worn center holes drop smoothly.

The B-I-C program system is simple to operate. And it has simplified the turntable's underside to the point that the 980 and 960 are actually less complex than some manuals with automatic features which can play only a single side.

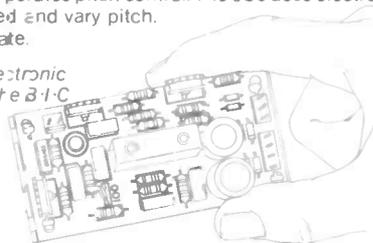
**Underneath the turntable: The utter lack of confusion on the underside of the B-I-C turntables speaks for itself. Look under any changer or automatic turntable and you'll be amazed at the number of visible parts B-I-C engineering has eliminated.**

There are other items under here which deserve your attention.

The motor (k) is a 24-pole synchronous unit which operates at 300 RPM. Its advantage is that at 300 RPM its fundamental vibration frequencies are well below audible levels. The 1800 RPM motors used in other automatics have audible vibration frequencies. A 24-pole motor delivers a smoother flow of power than a 4-pole unit. The superiority of the B-I-C power unit is one of the reasons that initial lab reports on these turntables look so good.

The unit shown above is the B-I-C 960. If it were the 980 you would see, in addition, the solid-state circuit board which electronically governs speed and incorporates pitch control. The 980 uses electronic circuitry to lock in speed and vary pitch. It is permanently accurate.

*The solid-state electronic speed control of the B-I-C 980 allows pitch variations of  $\pm 3\%$ .*



The mechanical "tapered pulley" pitch controls used on other machines, which inevitably go sour with age, have been eliminated.

Notice the four shock mounts (l) which form the interfaces between the unit plate and base. Four small rubber Isomer shock mounts, designed specifically for these turntables. They protect the unit from external shock and acoustic feedback. More than that, they are further evidence of the care and attention which has been lavished on every detail in these machines. Compare them with the metal springs used on automatic turntables and you'll quickly see the difference.

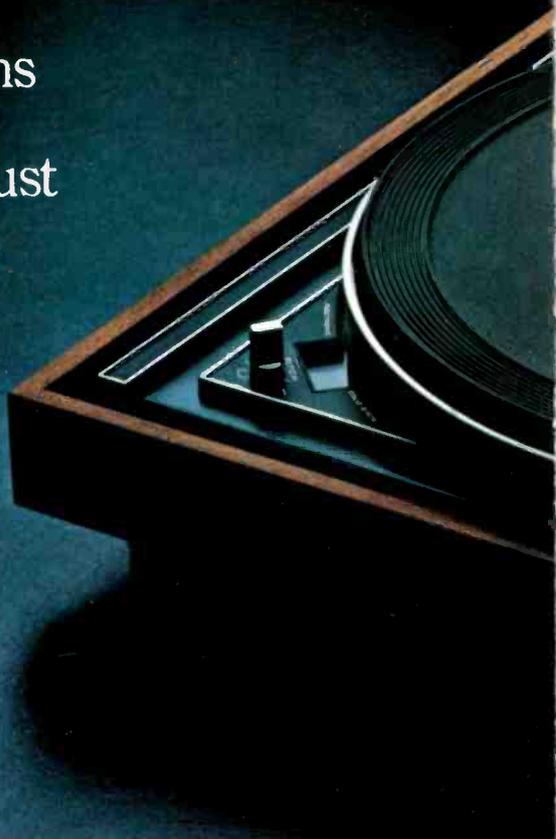
The red cam (m) in the middle of things is made of material which is not subject to the wearing effects which metal cams suffer. The material has its own internal permanent lubricity.

The platter (n) shown in the exploded view at right represents another technical advance. Old style heavyweight platters which were used for their flywheel effect are no longer needed because of innovations in electronics and system design. The B-I-C turntables carry this die-cast non-ferrous, 12" platter, which has been mated by computer analysis to the rest of the drive mechanism.

**A few words about our warranty: B-I-C is the name on our turntables. Your dealer knows the name British Industries Co., very well.**

If you have any questions about the special relationship we've had with record playing components for the past 37 years, why not ask him about us. But, reputation or no reputation, you may still ponder the wisdom of jumping into equipment that has not been proved in home trial, no matter how good it looks on paper.

The new B·I·C Programmed Turntables are engineered to do things no other turntables can do. In the face of more demanding cartridge designs and critical new 4-channel discs, the B·I·C 980 and 960 appear at just the right moment.



#### The Status Quo:

The mechanism that turns your records and carries your cartridge has become an increasingly critical part of your audio system.

More than ever before, today's turntable buyer is faced with a classic dilemma.

"Should I buy a single-play manual turntable for its playback superiority?"

Or... "should I buy an automatic for its superior record-handling capabilities?"

Until now, the dilemma has remained unsolved.

#### Enter B·I·C

British Industries Co., creator and builder of the new B·I·C turntables has been the major innovator in this field since 1936.

No company has better credentials or greater experience with record playback equipment in the components field. The best proof of that is the instruments which B·I·C now introduces.

The 980 and 960 are unique.

They have been engineered to solve once and for all the "manual vs. automatic" dilemma.

They are belt-drive as opposed to all automatic changers which drive the platter via an intermediate idler wheel.

They are powered by a 24-pole, low speed (300 RPM) motor while most automatics use 4-pole, high RPM motors.

In all three areas of function—platter drive, tone arm system, and multiple play capabilities, the B·I·C turntables offer refinements and advances which set them apart from everything else in the market. As a matter of fact, several B·I·C turntable features are not to be had on any other instrument at any price.

#### A Brief Introduction

The B·I·C 980 is shown above. It is identical to its companion, the 960, except for the 980's electronic drive, pitch control, and lighted strobe which are discussed later in this announcement.

You have probably already noticed its low profile. This is not an optical illusion or a styling trick. The 980 and 960 are indeed as low and trim as they appear.

This lack of bulk is your first clue that the B·I·C turntables are not merely manuals with automatic features added...that they are in fact "originals", designed from the start to be simple, as only sophisticated engineering can make them.

Moving parts found in conventional



automatics have been eliminated right and left. In the process, potential sources of malfunction have disappeared. Potential sources of noise and vibration have also been eliminated.

Operating controls are grouped in a single program panel on the right side of the unit. To say that this panel brings new logic to the turntable and new refinement and simplicity to its operation, barely does it justice.

The tone arm incorporates several dramatic improvements which set it apart from all others.

And of course you have noticed at the bottom of the page a cutaway drawing of the B-I-C platter which reveals the belt-

drive mechanism. No other turntable which can play more than a single record offers belt-drive and all its advantages.

The drive system alone sets B-I-C turntables apart. But there's more.

These turntables are built entirely in the United States of American-made parts. They are built in B-I-C's own plant where all aspects of manufacturing are in B-I-C's hands. They are the first fine turntables of their type built in this country, and they meet and exceed the high standards you have come to expect only from imported equipment. Beyond what that means in technical terms, they do not come to you burdened with import duties or fluctuating exchange rates.

They are rugged. They are built of the best materials that can be had.

The 980 will sell for about \$200.

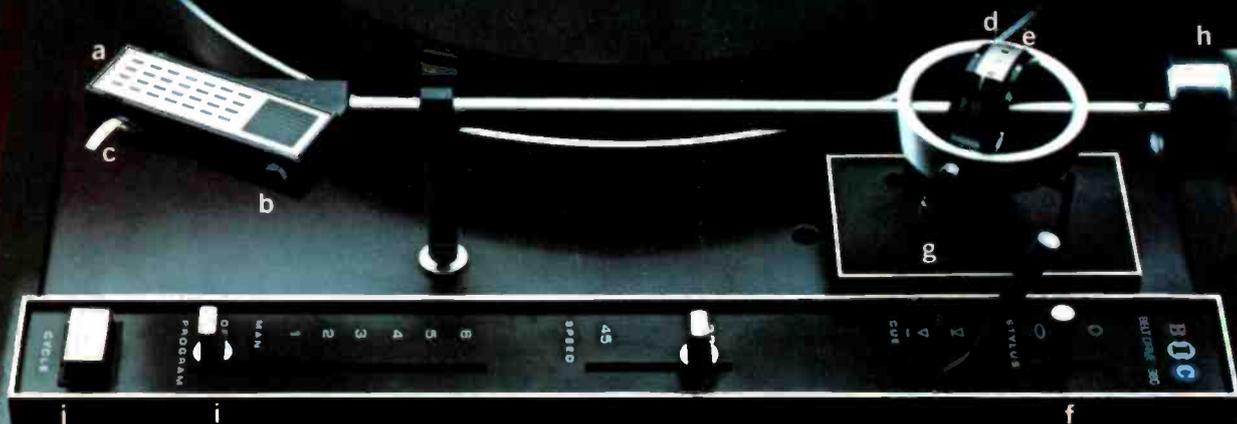
The 960 for about \$150.

While they are not inexpensive, they will stand stringent comparison with machines costing \$100 to \$200 more. Anything less, they outperform by a wide margin.



*Belt drive eliminates the wow, flutter and rumble-causing problems of idler drives used almost universally in automatic turntables and record changers.*

# A closer look at the B·I·C 980 and 960:



**The tone arm system:** The B·I·C tone arm incorporates both simple refinements and radical departures from current designs. The result is a system which is, in our view, better than anything else now offered. Let's review its features from left to right as you see them pictured above.

The cartridge shell (a) has two precision adjustments to combat playback distortion. In mounting the cartridge, overhang can be adjusted with the aid of a gauge which is supplied. And, for the first time, stylus angle is also adjustable, using the gauge and set-screw (b) in the side of the shell. Regardless of cartridge depth or other variables, the stylus can be set to track at precisely 15° — the forward vertical angle that generates lowest playback distortion.

The cartridge shell is securely mated to the tone arm by a fail-safe, 4-prong, side-mounted connector, and is locked in place by a threaded knob. This eliminates the potential problem of intermittent signal inherent in slide-in cartridge carriers which are used in automatics.

Even the *finger lift* (c) is a pleasure to use. It is a wide stainless steel arc like those on studio turntables. It is one more indication that these B·I·C turntables have been designed for the serious hobbyist.

The geometry of the *tone arm* brings lateral tracking error down to .3° of arc per inch, which is insignificant in terms of playback distortion. The pivoting of the tone arm produces another important result. When 6 records are played in series there is virtually no variation in tracking force from first record to last. This variation in tracking force, found in other machines, has been a major criticism of automatics.

The arm is mounted in a minimal friction gimbal and is designed to track flawlessly at forces below the lowest limits of any cartridges now available or conceivable at this time.

*Anti-skating* and *stylus force* adjustments (d, e) are mounted in tandem over the gimbal where they flank a single linear scale, calibrated in .25 gram increments. Gone are the usual separate scales for conical and elliptical stylus. Selection of stylus mode is made by a separate lever (f) on the program panel at the right of the tone arm.

*Cueing* is viscous-damped in both directions and, for the first time, its rate can be adjusted. A small knob at the base of the tone arm (g) allows you to vary climb and descent for from 1 to 3 seconds. This adjustment is found only on B·I·C turntables. It enables the owner to

accommodate his personal preference and also provides a means to compensate for variations in cueing time caused by changes in ambient temperature.

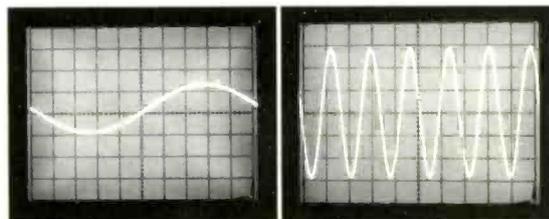
The massive *counter balance* (h) is completely isolated from the arm and incorporates a knurled band which makes balancing the arm fast and accurate. The entire tone arm system is protected by a safety bar which makes it virtually impossible to drop the arm on a record or on the platter.

**The program system:** The B·I·C turntables have been designed to play as many as 6 records in series. At the same time, the design eliminates some important criticisms which have been levelled at automatic changers in the past.

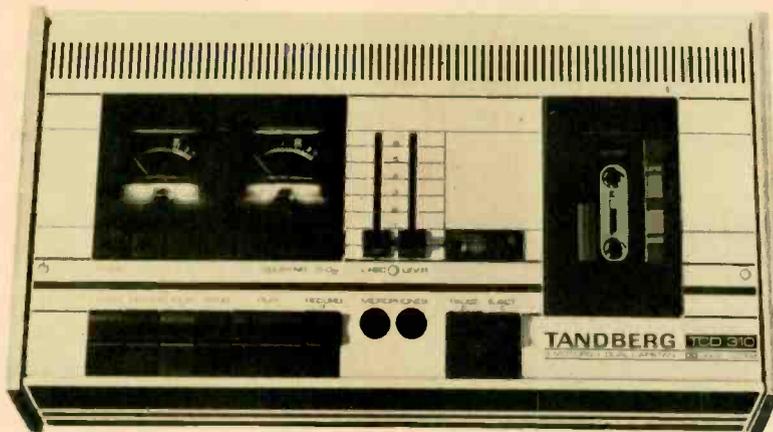
Automatic changers use a complex series of gears, cams, and levers to sense the number of records stacked on the spindle, and to activate the machine. The B·I·C design eliminates this sensing mechanism. Instead, all cycling information is set on the program panel by the operator. Many parts, a good deal of weight, noise, and vibration, are eliminated. Reliability is greatly improved.

To play one side this is all you do.

If you are hooked on manual play, insert the single play spindle which rotates with the platter. Move the program lever (i) to "MAN" and place the arm on the disc. After play the arm will return to rest and the machine will shut off.



B·I·C's 24-pole motor (left) has sub-sonic fundamental rotation frequency of 5 Hz with harmonics all below audible range. 4-pole units (right) have fundamental frequency of 30 Hz and harmonics all fully audible.



## Tandberg's Unique Cassette Deck

**The Equipment:** Tandberg TCD-310, a Dolby cassette deck in metal case with wood ends. Dimensions: 16 7/8 by 4 1/8 by 9 1/16 inches. Price: \$450. Warranty: two years parts and labor. Manufacturer: Tandberg Radiofabrikk, Norway; U.S. importer: Tandberg of America, Inc., Labriola Ct., Armonk, N.Y. 10504.

**Comment:** It always is something of an adventure to report on Tandberg equipment, because the company consistently finds ways of viewing design problems through eyes unblinded by past solutions. The TCD-310, like its immediate and very similar predecessor, the TCD-300, is no exception.

The top panel (or front panel; the unit can be stood vertically) is unconventional in having the cassette well, which runs across the unit rather than lengthwise, at the right and the controls at the left. The well orientation prevents the cassette from ejecting onto the floor when the deck is used vertically. Far more important, the three-motor transport below the well is controlled—via a comprehensive "logic" system for gentle tape handling and prevention of unintentional misuse—by a solenoid rather than the common mechanical linkage, and it features an unusually heavy (and therefore rigid) head block and dual-capstan drive.

The metering of the TCD-310, like that on other recent Tandberg decks, reads peak recording values. For a full discussion of the important advantages of this type of metering, see our report on the Tandberg 9000X, October 1973. Suffice it to say that while we find peak-reading meters important for good recordings in consumer equipment, the relatively restricted headroom of cassette tapes makes peak metering even more important in this format.

In front of the meters are what appear to be seven

pushbuttons: four dummies and three that function. (Could it be that Tandberg is allowing for future developments?) At the left is a mono button that will add together the inputs from both channels and record them equally on both tracks of the stereo pair. A mono recording can be made on both tracks (for best possible signal-to-noise ratio) even when the signal is present only at one of the input jacks. And this button can be used to mix a mike signal in one channel with a line signal in the other (the separate faders for each channel controlling the inputs separately) for a mono recording. At the right are switches for Dolby (on/off) and tape (ferric/chrome).

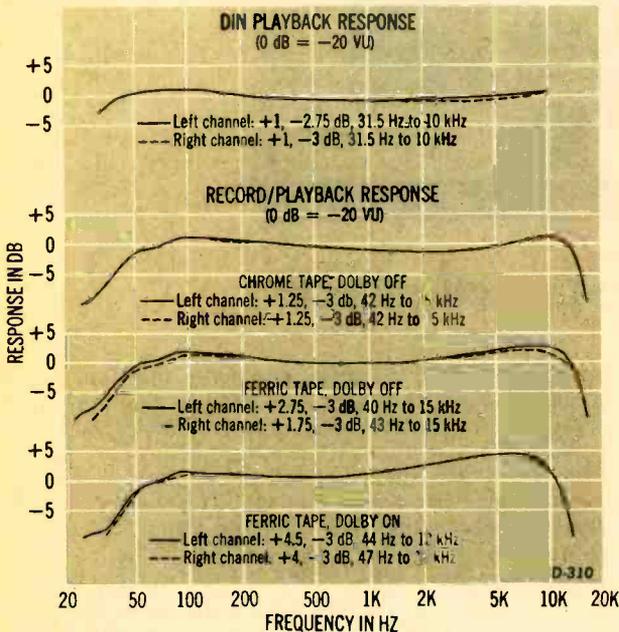
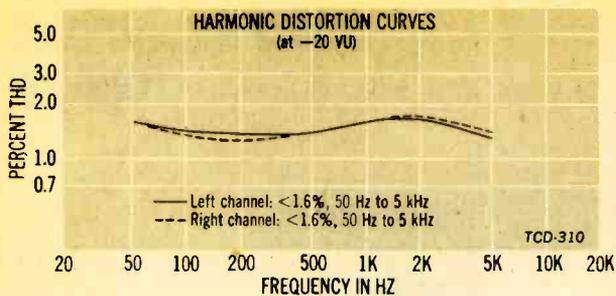
The transport controls at the extreme front are similar to conventional "piano-key" controls in appearance but somewhat different in operation. First comes a power on/off switch. Then there are controls for rewind, stop, and wind. The next control is an oversize lever for play; next to it is a recording lever. To the right, beyond the microphone jack, are similar levers for pause and eject.

There is no conventional play/record interlock; you need press only the recording lever to switch the deck into that mode, but there *is* an interlock to prevent you from doing so unless the deck is in pause. This feature doubtless will trigger a certain amount of dispute, as it did when Ferrograph omitted the conventional interlock on its open-reel Series 7. But—again, as with the Series 7—we never found ourselves recording accidentally in actual use. In working with the deck for some time we have concluded that you need harbor no fears on this score and that the pause interlock actually is more efficient in operation than the play interlock on many other models.

We do have one minor complaint about the switching, however: Only the recording lever triggers a warning

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light. The mono, Dolby, and chrome buttons, being black against a black background, require that you either remember or specifically check their positions. A casual glance at the unit is not enough to tell you how you are set up.

This point, which might be passed over almost without comment in another product, stands out in the one design element about which Tandberg seems to have thought in purely cosmetic terms. Its otherwise incisive approach is evident, for example, in the mike preamp circuitry, which—like that in the 9000X—will handle mikes rated at anywhere from 150 to 700 ohms and has unusual dynamic range. Both mike and line inputs benefit from a circuit like that in the 9000X, which uses a feedback gain system to achieve an astonishing combination of high sensitivity and low noise.

Similarly, the hub motors are controlled by each other (the braking motor develops a back voltage that is used to determine the drive voltage, and therefore the speed, of the driven motor); the automatic stop (which operates in all transport modes) is triggered by a motor-noise-sensing circuit that is unique in our experience; and the head-plate solenoid triggers a moment *after* the motors have been turned on so slack is removed from the tape before transport begins. (The start action is almost instantaneous nonetheless, while that of the pause control *is* instantaneous when the motor already

## Tandberg TCD-310 Additional Data

Speed accuracy	0.33% fast at 105, 120, and 127 VAC	
Wow and flutter	playback: 0.08% record/play: 0.10%	
Rewind time (C-60 cassette)	33 sec.	
Fast-forward time (same cassette)	33 sec.	
S/N ratio (re DIN 0 VU; Dolby off)		
playback	L ch: 56 dB	R ch: 56 dB
record/play	L ch: 53 dB	R ch: 53 dB
Erase (333 Hz at normal level)	65 dB	
Crosstalk (at 333 Hz)		
record left, play right	33 dB	
record right, play left	34.5 dB	
Sensitivity (re DIN 0 VU)		
line	L ch: 25.8 mV	R ch: 25.8 mV
mike	L ch: 0.2 mV	R ch: 0.2 mV
Meter action (re DIN 0 VU)		
	L ch: 1/4 dB low	R ch: 1 dB low
IM distortion (record/play, -10 VU)		
	L ch: 5.5%	R ch: 5.5%
Maximum output (line, 0 VU)		
	L ch: 0.777 V	R ch: 0.775 V

is running.) All this adds up to sophisticated and creative engineering.

American owners may think otherwise after studying the owner's manual, which makes repeated reference to your "radio" (not receiver or amplifier) connections. This—and the manual's emphasis on the DIN input/output socket at the back, rather than the (to us) conventional pin-jack pairs on the same panel—must be accepted simply as reflecting European habits.

Though Tandberg's published data on the TCD-310 apparently are based on the use of its own LH ferric cassette tapes, Maxell UD was supplied with the test samples and was used for most of our testing. While we can't fault performance with UD on aural grounds, measured record/play response with it does show some tendency (further exaggerated to some extent by Dolby tracking) toward a peak at the high end and therefore does not fall within Tandberg  $\pm 2$ -dB specs for the LH. A slightly less "hot" tape than UD should show less tendency toward this peak, though by the same token it may not deliver quite the high-frequency response. Chrome tapes are, of course, very similar to each other; ours produced fine results on the Tandberg both in the lab and in the listening room.

Though the remaining data also are excellent, they don't suggest the extra-special quality of the deck, which can be sensed in using it or understood by considering its engineering. If we had to single out a specific element in the design that typifies this quality, it would have to be the metering system. Both because it is of the peak-reading type and because it measures signal values *after* recording pre-emphasis has been applied, it offers the user exceptional precision in "placing" his recordings within the tape's capabilities and therefore in making the most of the recorder's performance indicated by CBS Labs' data.

CIRCLE 142 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

# The Avid 100: A Best in Its Class

**The Equipment:** Avid 100, a compact speaker system in walnut veneered enclosure. Dimensions: 20 $\frac{3}{4}$  by 12 $\frac{3}{4}$  by 8 $\frac{1}{2}$  inches. Warranty: three years, materials and workmanship; shipping paid one way. Price: \$79.50. Manufacturer: Avid Corp., 10 Trippe Lane, E. Providence, R.I. 02914.

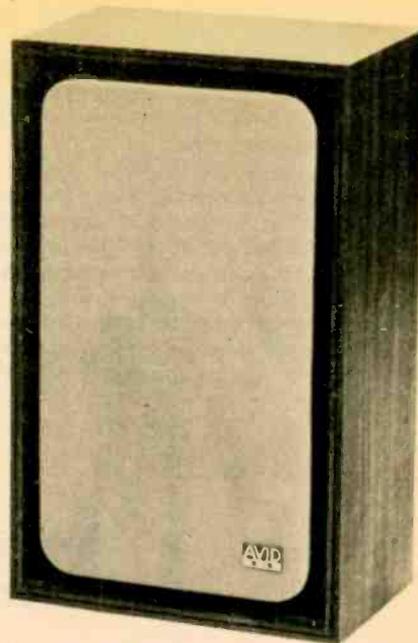
**Comment:** To make the point right off, the Avid 100 strikes us as one of the best speaker systems in its size and price class we have heard to date. It has an over-all clarity of sound, a fullness of frequency response, and a realistic dynamic range that make it a star performer rivaling systems costing significantly more. This verdict suggests itself as a first impression; subsequent listening, even with "looking for trouble," does not diminish this impression, but rather reinforces it.

It becomes apparent after listening to the Avid 100 that the technical team at this new company, headed by longtime audio expert Victor Brociner, has indeed succeeded in producing what it set out to: a compact, low-cost speaker that may "really shake the status quo."

Essentially, the Avid 100 is a two-way air-suspension type, with woofer and tweeter mounted on the front baffle of a completely sealed enclosure. The woofer, an 8-inch high-compliance type, is crossed over at 2,500 Hz via an internal network to the small wide-angle tweeter. Also on the front baffle is a tweeter level control, a three-position switch. All this is covered by a removable decorative grille, available in different colors. Connections are made to press-to-connect terminals at the rear. Nominal impedance is 8 ohms. The speaker may be positioned vertically or horizontally; the name-plate on the grille is self-adhering and may be repositioned.

Tests at CBS Labs produced very commendable results that were verified in extensive listening sessions. The unit's impedance, following the usual bass rise, was found to be 7 ohms; the value rises gradually over the audio band, reaching about 16 ohms above 2,000 Hz. Connecting two Avids to the same amplifier output in parallel should pose no problems at all.

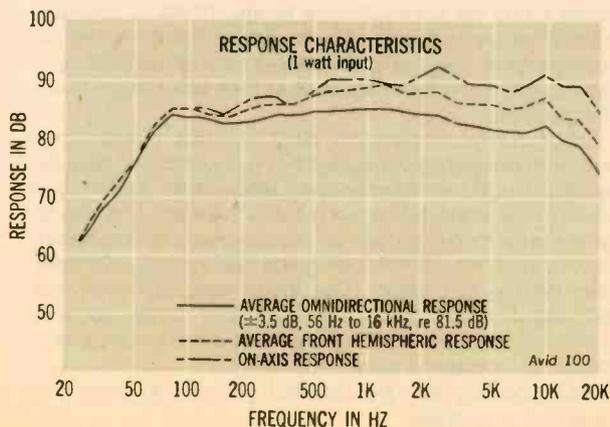
Fairly efficient (for an air-suspension type), the speaker requires 3.2 watts of amplifier drive to produce the standard test output signal of 94 dB at 1 meter on axis. It handles steady state power of 20 watts before buzzing, producing 100 dB of output. On pulse power



tests it produced an output of 110.5 dB for an input of 114.3 average watts (228.6 peak watts). These figures indicate fairly robust construction and verify the manufacturer's statement of 75 watts of power-handling capacity. They also indicate ample dynamic range: Operating at a reference level of 94 dB output, the speaker can sound "twice as loud" (104 dB) for some 28.5 watts input without distorting. Pulse-test oscilloscope photos show very close conformation between input and output wave forms with virtually no ringing.

Frequency response is unusually smooth and linear over the greatest portion of the musical spectrum, and at appreciable output levels too. From 60 Hz to 11,000 Hz response varies by no more than  $\pm 2$  dB, with 82.5 dB as the reference level. Allowing a little more dB variation, we measure  $\pm 3.5$  dB from 55 Hz to 16,500 Hz for a reference output of 81.5 dB. The manufacturer specifies a variation of  $\pm 5$  dB; this brings the response from 50 Hz to 20,000 Hz, with 80 dB as the reference level. However you clock it, then, the Avid 100 has a response characteristic that is wider and smoother than most units of its price and size.

The tweeter control has relatively little effect on the upper end, but it can help in suiting the speaker to your taste and its placement. The change from the middle to the high position (on the switch) made a slightly more audible difference than the change from low to middle



## Avid 100 Speaker System Harmonic Distortion\*

Output Level (dB)	Frequency			
	80 Hz		300 Hz	
	% 2nd	% 3rd	% 2nd	% 3rd
70	0.17	0.20	0.12	0.15
75	0.17	0.20	0.10	0.18
80	0.30	0.20	0.10	0.21
85	0.65	0.40	0.12	0.22
90			0.22	0.26
95			0.38	0.33
100			0.78	0.34

\*Distortion data are taken on all tested speakers until distortion exceeds the 10 per cent level or the speaker produces the spurious output known as buzzing, whichever occurs first.

positions. Our tests were run with the switch in the middle position, a matter purely of personal preference; there is no "normal" position, as the instruction manual so correctly points out.

On test tones, the speaker system performs with exemplary smoothness and very wide dispersion to beyond audibility. The low end holds up clearly and without doubling to about 45 Hz. Response continued below this frequency, with fundamental bass—and some increase in doubling—evident to just below 30 Hz.

After studying these test results we were not too surprised, but still greatly pleased, at how good a stereo pair of Avids sounds playing music. Highs and mid-

range are clear, uncolored, and nicely spread through the room, and they have ample bite on transients. In view of the speaker's size, the low end is astonishingly authoritative. In general the stereo panorama offered a "wall of sound" effect while also preserving strong directional clues in the program material.

We would characterize the Avid 100 as an honest speaker that performs far better than its under-\$80 price tag would suggest. We note, by the way, that Avid has two more speakers in its new line, both priced somewhat higher; judging from the sound of the Model 100, they should prove interesting.

CIRCLE 144 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

## How a Trip to the Doctor May Double Your Stereo System's Efficiency

**The Equipment:** As prescribed by your doctor. (See below.) Price: \$20, subject to considerable local variation.

**Comment:** Staff members who have had their ears cleaned of wax—a process that, we hasten to point out, should be discussed *first* with your doctor if you plan to do likewise—have from time to time commented on the sense of improved hearing that results. If you can hear more, you can get more enjoyment from your stereo system, right? So maybe ear maintenance is as important as equipment maintenance. But how much hearing enhancement might one expect?

None of our staff had previously undergone detailed hearing tests both before and after ear cleaning. Furthermore, as we later discovered, commonly administered medical hearing tests emphasize what we in high fidelity would consider the midrange frequencies and ignore altogether the extremes of the range—the very portions of the range to which much of one's attention is directed in savoring the technical quality of equipment and recordings alike. So we decided to run our own tests.

All of the subjects are male staff members in their forties or early fifties. Two had never had their ears cleaned. Each appeared to have good hearing for his age group—a fact that our findings later confirmed. Using an audio oscillator, a good stereo amp with accurately calibrated, stepped attenuation, and a high-quality stereo headset, we asked each subject to adjust the oscillator for the lowest and highest frequencies he could hear at twelve different input levels covering a range of more than 100 dB. The tests were repeated in their entirety following the medical maintenance.

Our doctors (two were involved) used a large syringe and warm water to irrigate the ear canal and remove any accumulation of wax. One subject had so little that cleaning was unnecessary; one had minimal wax; one was in need of the maintenance. Again we must emphasize that our doctors' methods may not be the same as your doctor's and that special medical considerations might govern the method he chooses. There are, for example, proprietary solutions that have been used instead of warm water by other doctors on other staff members.

Subject A had no wax removed and had only a politzer-insufflation to open up the Eustacian tubes between the middle ear and nasal passage. (A politzer is a type of syringe used to inflate the middle ear by blowing air up the subject's nose.) His data show some changes (for both the better and the worse) at low frequencies where—because of the difficulty of distinguishing between fundamental and distortion—we consider our data least reliable. He does show a modest (up to about 5 dB) improvement in the upper midrange and low treble and some gain in high-frequency sensitivity at very high audio levels.

Subject B, with only minimal wax removal, showed an apparent improvement of better than 5 dB in the midrange. We say "apparent," because at these extremely low levels the data could easily be influenced by a change in ambient noise levels in the testing room between tests, and raised ambient noise might be expected to put such a "floor" under the perceived-threshold curve.

Subject C, the only one with a chronic wax problem, also was the only one to find a subjectively perceptible difference as a result of his trip to the doctor. He commented particularly on the sudden clarity of high-frequency sounds—the rustle of papers and clothing, the sibilants in speech, and so on—and the measurements confirm a sensitivity increase of 10 dB or more from about 9 kHz up. (In subjective terms, 10 dB is approximately "twice as loud.") The measurements also show considerable increase in deep-bass sensitivity, but (again) our data seem somewhat less reliable at these frequencies.

So of our three subjects, only one has significantly and documentably increased his enjoyment of high fidelity through this maintenance procedure. And on the basis of his experience we'd think it unlikely he could have made so significant an improvement in any other way for similar cost—though costs can vary a good deal from doctor to doctor. (Our local specialist charged \$20; big-city rates probably run higher, while general practitioners, if they are willing to undertake the process, might charge a good deal less.)

Ask your doctor. He can tell you quickly whether cleaning is in order.

## A Dolby 2/4-Channel Receiver from Marantz



**The Equipment:** Marantz Model 4240, an AM/FM receiver with four-channel amplification (switchable for higher power in stereo), built-in stereo Dolby circuitry, and variable matrix decoding, in vinyl-clad (simulated wood) metal case. Dimensions: 17 $\frac{1}{2}$  by 5 $\frac{1}{2}$  inches (front panel); 14 $\frac{1}{2}$  inches deep plus front-panel controls and back-panel connections and AM antenna. Price: \$599.95; optional WC-22 wood case, \$29.95; optional Model SQA-1 plug-in SQ decoder, \$49.95; optional Model RC-4 remote-control unit, \$39.95. Warranty: three years parts and labor, shipping paid one way. Manufacturer: Marantz Co., Inc., P.O. Box 99, Sun Valley, Calif. 91352.

**Comment:** Though this is a quadraphonic receiver, its most striking single feature is its built-in Dolby circuitry—by a wide margin the most versatile we have yet examined in a receiver of any description (with the exceptions of Marantz's own companion models, the 4300, 4270, and 4230). In other ways, as well, the 4240 is both individual and provocative. It gives ample evidence that somebody chez Marantz has given a lot of thought to the direction that high fidelity is taking and has drawn a number of arresting and perhaps even controversial conclusions.

To explain what we mean, we must first describe the unit. The tuning dial has a series of lighting indicators (stereo, AM, FM, phono, 4-channel, CD-4, tape 1, tape 2, Dolby) over it and is flanked by the usual two meters (signal strength for AM and FM, channel center for FM) and Marantz's horizontal tuning "flywheel." Below the meters is a series of buttons and knobs controlling Dolby functions. (We'll come back to them.) Below the flywheel is a similar series for high filter, loudness, FM muting, main speakers, remote speakers, and AC power. Between these two sets of buttons are three balance sliders: front left-to-right, front-to-back, and back left-to-right.

Below the dial portion of the front panel is a series of controls that begins (on the left) with buttons for tape/source and tape monitor 1/2. Next comes the Dolby control knob: Dolby FM, play, off, record mode 1, record mode 2. The selector has positions for AM, FM, phono, CD-4/aux, tape 1, and tape 2. The mode knob can be switched to mono, stereo, discrete, "vari-matrix," and SQ. The SQ decoder circuit board is not supplied with the receiver. The present optional model, the SQA-1 at \$49.95, slips into the bottom of the receiver; without the decoder board the receiver produces no output in the SQ setting.

The vari-matrix can be used to produce a quadraphonic effect from any stereo or matrixed-quad program source. A "dimension" knob to the right of the mode switch varies the back-channel outputs. (The LF output reproduces the L signal, and the RF output the R signal, no matter what.) The dimension knob's center position duplicates the regular stereo mode position in that the two input signals are fed equally to front and

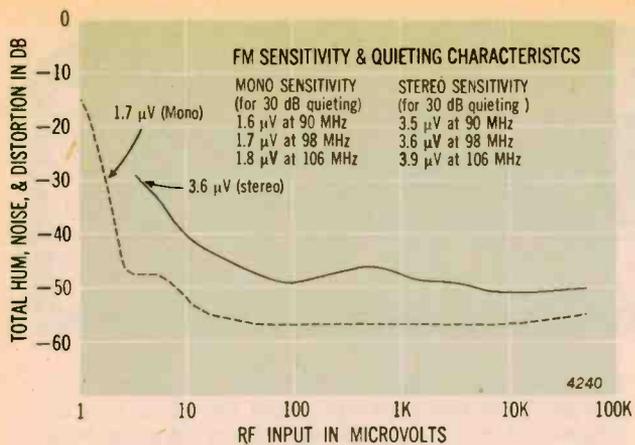
back speakers on each side. Clockwise rotation progressively introduces, out of phase, the signal from the opposite side; at maximum rotation the LB speaker reproduces L-minus-R and the RB speaker reproduces R-minus-L (an out-of-phase differential hookup). This increases apparent back separation but emphasizes any high-frequency noise. Counterclockwise rotation progressively adds the opposite channel until both LB and RB reproduce L-plus-R. This produces a mellower sound at the back but reduces left-right separation there to nil.

The remaining three knobs are for bass and treble (each with friction-ganged front and back knob elements) and volume. At the extreme right are a pair (front and back) of stereo headphone jacks, which are live for all speaker selector settings.

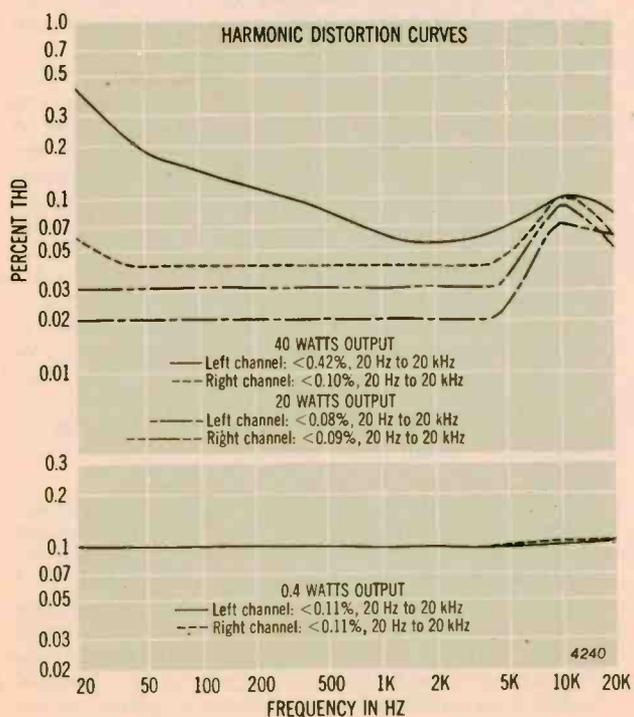
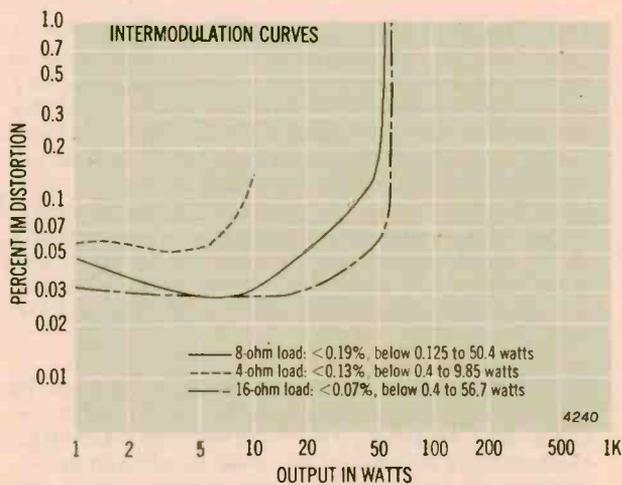
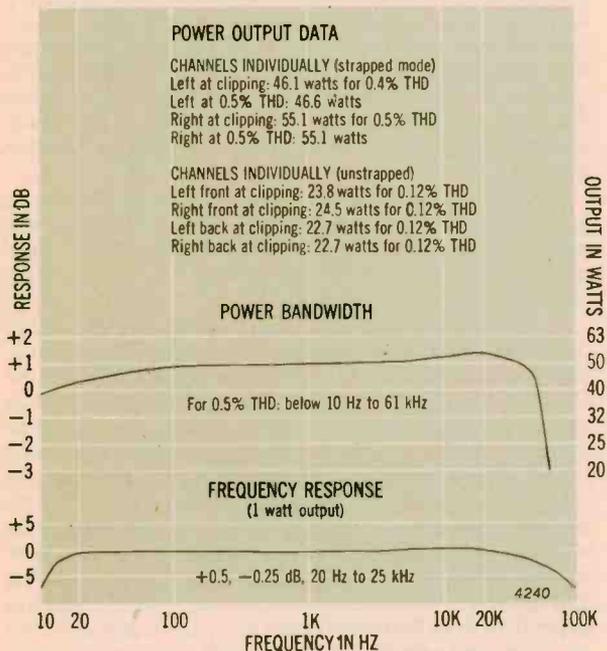
The back-panel pin-jack inputs and outputs all are quadraphonic sets except for the stereo phono input. There is provision for one aux input, which doubles for CD-4 (requiring an outboard demodulator) and whose selector setting lights the CD-4 indicator. In addition there are sets for input and output for both tape 1 and tape 2. There also is a single pin jack for the (unequalized) output from the FM detector, to be used for an adapter should a discrete-quadraphonic broadcast method be approved. The power output connections, for two quadraphonic sets of speakers, are color-coded spring clips that accept bared wires. Knurled binding posts that work best with small spade lugs are used for antenna connections: 300- or 75-ohm FM lead-in plus long-wire AM as a supplement to the familiar ferrite rod attached to the back panel.

In addition to two AC convenience outlets, one of which is controlled by the front-panel AC switch, there are a number of other features on the back panel. A binding post near the phono connections grounds ancillary equipment. A multipin jack accepts an accessory remote-control unit (volume, balance, and loudness); a nearby switch selects either remote or local (the corresponding front-panel controls) operation. Another switch chooses either quad amplification ("17W x 4") or stereo ("40W x 2"). Still another changes FM de-emphasis from the (U.S.) standard of 75 microseconds to the 25-microsecond equalization that has been proposed for use with Dolby-encoded broadcasts. (See "News & Views," HF, February 1973.) Next to this switch are a pair of screwdriver controls adjusted at the factory for correct Dolby tracking of encoded broadcasts.

And that brings us back to the subject of Marantz's unique Dolby controls. Below the front-panel meters are what appear to be six buttons. When the main Dolby selector below them is switched to any position but "off," the signal-strength meter is converted to read audio levels and can be used for Dolby calibration. (In listening to or recording from FM the channel-center meter continues to function as a check on correct tuning.) The left-hand button switches the signal meter to read either the



Square-wave response



## Marantz 4240 Receiver Additional Data

Tuner Section			
Capture ratio	1.3 dB		
Alternate-channel selectivity	60 dB		
S/N ratio	65 dB		
THD	Mono	L ch	R ch
80 Hz	0.13%	0.41%	0.45%
1 kHz	0.16%	0.36%	0.38%
10 kHz	0.46%	0.85%	0.75%
IM distortion	0.20%		
19-kHz pilot	-59 dB		
38-kHz subcarrier	-68 dB		
Frequency response	mono +2, -1.5 dB, 20 Hz to 15 kHz		
	L ch +3, -0 dB, 20 Hz to 15 kHz		
	R ch +2.75, -0.25 dB, 20 Hz to 15 kHz		
Channel separation	>40 dB, 85 Hz to 1.2 kHz		
	>30 dB, 37 Hz to 12.5 kHz		
Amplifier Section			
Damping factor	36		
Input characteristics (for 40 watts output)	Sensitivity S/N ratio		
phono	1.65 mV	70 dB	
aux (CD-4)	110 mV	81 dB	
tape 1 & 2	110 mV	81.5 dB	
RIAA equalization accuracy	+0.25, -0.5 dB, 20 Hz to 20 kHz		

left channel or the right; the right-hand button switches a 400-Hz reference-tone oscillator in and out. The remaining four "buttons" in the group actually are small knobs for left- and right-channel calibration in recording and playback.

It should be fairly obvious from the description so far that the Dolby circuitry is *stereo*: It affects the front channels only in discrete-quadriphonic operation. Of course it can be used for undecoded matrixed quad as well; and it remains to be seen how, if at all, Dolby noise reduction will work with whatever quadriphonic FM broadcasting system may be adopted.

The functions that can be performed with this combination of Dolby controls are so varied we can only give them a brief once-over. You can listen to Dolby-encoded broadcasts with correct Dolby "equalization" whether or not you're also recording them, whether or not you are retaining the Dolby encoding on the tapes, and whether or not you are monitoring the playback from a monitor-head recorder. If your tape equipment doesn't already have Dolby circuitry, you can make or play encoded tapes via the receiver. You can copy Dolby-encoded tapes, with or without the encoding, and monitor the results through the decoder.

With the 4240 alone you can set up any recorder to give you Dolby noise reduction, but not necessarily keyed to standard Dolby levels and therefore not necessarily interchangeable with other Dolby recorders. For such purposes—which would include the playing of commercial Dolby-encoded tapes—you need a Dolby calibration tape. (Marantz offers them in any of the three tape formats at \$4.95.) And of course if you want to make Dolby cassettes from Dolby open reels you may find it necessary to use a nonstandard Dolby level (or use another Dolby unit for the more common decode/re-encode copying technique) to prevent overload of the cassette, whose headroom above standard Dolby reference level is far less than that on open-reel tapes.

The accompanying graphs and data show the 4240 to be fairly representative of a good receiver these days. In both the four-channel and the stereo mode, the amplifier meets its published specs handily. Distortion is low in the operating range and unusually low as output approaches rated power, though the curves do rise (presumably due to noise, rather than pure distortion) at extremely low outputs. These figures were measured in the two-channel ("strapped") mode, where distortion is somewhat higher than in four-channel operation in most designs. Strapping also can inhibit performance into 4-ohm speakers, and some manufacturers recommend that this combination be avoided; a glance at the IM curves will suggest that it should be avoided here.

In receiving mono signals, the receiver's quieting curve descends beyond the 50-dB mark for all inputs above 7.5 microvolts—which represents very fine performance. Stereo quieting comes close to the 50-dB mark from about 50 microvolts up, though it does not actually pass it until input signals are up in the millivolt range. While we might wish for better, relatively few receivers actually deliver it. And minimum (30-dB) stereo performance is unusually good at 3.6 microvolts.

What is most fascinating about the 4240—and the similarly designed models in the Marantz line—is the design concept itself. Marantz appears to have conceived its models as hedges against rapidly changing audio technology. Dolby B noise reduction has established itself in tape recording and has been adopted by a number of FM stations, raising a question about whether broadcast technology should be changed to optimize for Dolby. Hence Marantz gives you built-in Dolby that can be used with either the present or the proposed FM technology and that can be used with tape as well. Though quadriphonics appears to be the wave of the future, high fidelity today *is* stereo; and doubt remains about the most acceptable routes to quadriphonics. Marantz gives you a stereo receiver that also is a basic quadriphonic receiver and is pre-engineered to be adapted for any of the accepted quadriphonic routes you would like it to follow.

It doesn't actually *give* you SQ or CD-4, but it can quickly be converted for the first and is set up to accept the second. You say you would have to give up the only aux input if you add a CD-4 demodulator? Some demodulators have their own aux inputs that can be selected from the outboard unit. Marantz apparently expects that, if you need aux as well as CD-4, you will choose this sort of demodulator or use one of the tape inputs as an aux. (The separate selector—as opposed to monitor—switching is a help in this respect.)

The priorities that the design seems to assume are 1) good stereo performance including the latest (Dolby) in FM reception, 2) unusual flexibility for the recordist, and 3) quadriphonic reproduction (real or simulated from stereo sources) that can be adapted as time brings new refinements. The plug-in SQ decoder, for example, could be replaced by one of the ultra-logic designs now in the prototype stage if and when Marantz believes that both the design and the demand are sufficiently well established.

You may not altogether agree with the priorities that the 4240 seems to presuppose, but we think you must agree that Marantz has done an ingenious job of designing for them.

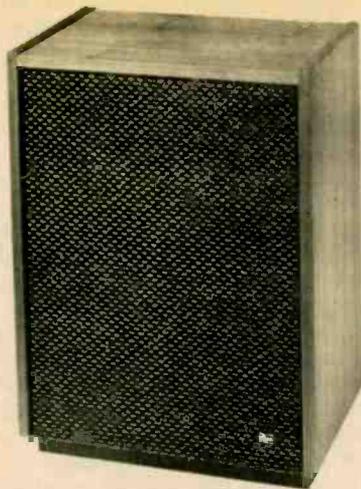
CIRCLE 141 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

## Superior Sound from a "Small" Bozak

**The Equipment:** Bozak B-401, speaker system in enclosure on pedestal. Dimensions: 25¾ by 18 by 13¼ inches. Also available as B-402 without pedestal for shelf-mounting, 23¾ by 18 by 13¼ inches. Warranty: speaker system components, 5 years; cabinetry, 2 years. Price: \$240. Manufacturer: Bozak, Inc., 587 Connecticut Ave., S. Norwalk, Connecticut 06854.

**Comment:** The name of Bozak has been associated mainly with large ("full-size") floor-standing speaker

systems of straightforward design using the "infinite baffle" principle of high-quality drivers in a sealed enclosure. The present model is actually the smallest Bozak speaker system HF has yet tested, but "small" is a relative term of course. Actually, the B-401 is somewhat larger than the traditional two-cubic-foot bookshelf type of system and of course is noticeably larger than many others. The B-401 cabinet rests on an integral pedestal and is clearly intended for placement on the floor. Its sister model, the B-402, uses identical components and



weighs the same 65 pounds, but it may be placed on a sturdy shelf. And where the B-401 is used vertically or upright, the B-402 may be positioned on its long side, horizontally.

Four drivers are used: a high-compliance 12-inch woofer (Bozak's model B-199A); a 6-inch midrange cone (Bozak's model B-209B); and a dual tweeter array (Bozak's model 200-Y). An internal crossover network provides frequency divisions at 800 Hz (from woofer to midrange), and at 2,500 Hz (from midrange to the pair of tweeters).

Connections are made to polarity-marked binding posts at the rear; these accept stripped leads or spade lugs. A three-position switch (that must be used with a screwdriver; no knob is attached) adjusts the mids and highs in relative degrees of intensity labeled here as "mellow," "normal," and "bright." Nominal input impedance is 8 ohms, and the system is rated for handling average power levels of up to 60 watts. The cabinet itself, like all Bozak cabinets we've seen, is both handsome and extremely well constructed of full 3/4-inch wood-flake core covered with genuine walnut veneer. The dark-tinted grille assembly may be snapped out if desired.

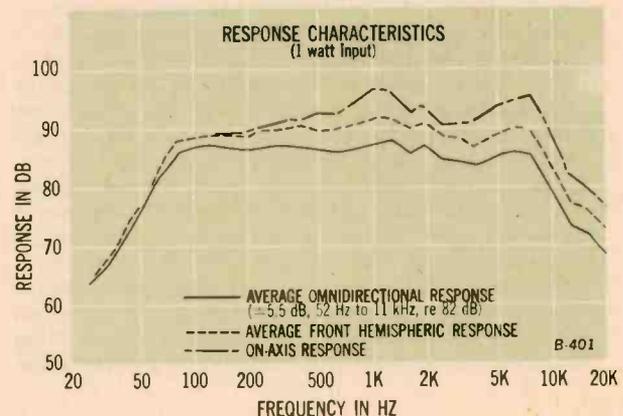
CBS Labs measured a very favorable impedance curve on the B-401, one that showed a more constant value than most we have seen. The curve touched 7 ohms just past the well-controlled bass rise and 8 ohms in midrange or treble. Power input tests indicate that the B-401 is more efficient than previous Bozak systems; it took only 1.4 watts to produce the standard output level of 94 dB at 1 meter on axis. The B-401 could handle steady-state power inputs of up to 100 watts without distorting significantly, and it accepted pulse power inputs of 257 watts average power (514 watts peak), without distorting, to produce an output level of 117.5 dB. These figures show excellent power-handling capability, very robust design and construction, and excellent dynamic range. Pulse photos showed scarcely any ringing, attesting to the speaker's very good "recovery," and indicating superior transient response.

In terms of audible frequency response, the B-401 covers the range from below 40 Hz to beyond audibility with ease and remarkable smoothness. Some doubling begins at 40 Hz and increases gradually as frequency is lowered, although fundamental bass is evident to about 32 Hz. The system actually will respond to a 20-Hz signal although the output here is largely doubling. The mid-bass is free of any boom; the midrange has exemplary linearity; the highs show very little beaming and

are indeed amply dispersed into the listening area. Tones well beyond 10 kHz are clearly audible well off axis, and tones as high as 16 kHz can be heard on axis. White noise response is fairly smooth and well distributed over a wide angle. The rear "acoustical contour" switch boosts the response from 1 kHz and upward by about a dB or so when switching from "mellow" to "normal," and by about 2 dB more than that around the mid-band when switching from "normal" to "bright."

We found the "normal" position to be the most agreeable, but doubtless other listeners will prefer alternate settings. Listening to the B-401s reproducing music played through a high-quality system, it doesn't take long to discern that they are definitely superior reproducers. We used them to enjoy a wide variety of recent recordings, from hard rock through chamber ensembles, climaxing our program with the Ormandy recording of Strauss' *Also Sprach Zarathustra*. Whatever the music, and whatever the "acoustical size" of the ensemble, our stereo pair of B-401s obligingly presented a most convincing sonic image, with excellent "internal spacing" of musical and instrumental elements. Throughout, the sound was well balanced, clean, open, and very wide-range. The low end was clear and ample; the middles and highs, extremely smooth with no trace of coloration. The sound perspective was "big" or "small" or "in-between"—not because the speaker was designed to have a certain tonal characteristic, but rather because it is an eminently honest reproducer that presents no more or less than the program material being played. As such, it could serve as a professional monitor where studio space is limited, and of course as the speaker system of a fine home-music system.

CIRCLE 143 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



#### Bozak B-401 Harmonic Distortion\*

Output Level (dB)	Frequency			
	80 Hz		300 Hz	
	% 2nd	% 3rd	% 2nd	% 3rd
70	0.20	0.20	0.11	0.11
75	0.15	0.35	0.10	0.11
80	0.10	0.50	0.10	0.10
85	0.10	0.28	0.11	0.12
90	0.14	0.38	0.10	0.23
95	0.15	0.75	0.12	0.36
100			0.25	0.45
105			0.42	0.49
110.5			0.85	0.55

\*Distortion data are taken on all tested speakers until distortion exceeds the 10 per cent level or the speaker produces the spurious output known as buzzing, whichever occurs first.

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that you could actually record the delicate sound of a  
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Imagine XHE . . . the consummate cassette. Unequaled performance for  
the truly discriminating audiophile to whom fine sound recording is an art.

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tape formulation provides  
superior signal-to-noise ratio and full  
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faithfully reproduce the true-to-life  
essence, motion, and feeling of sound.

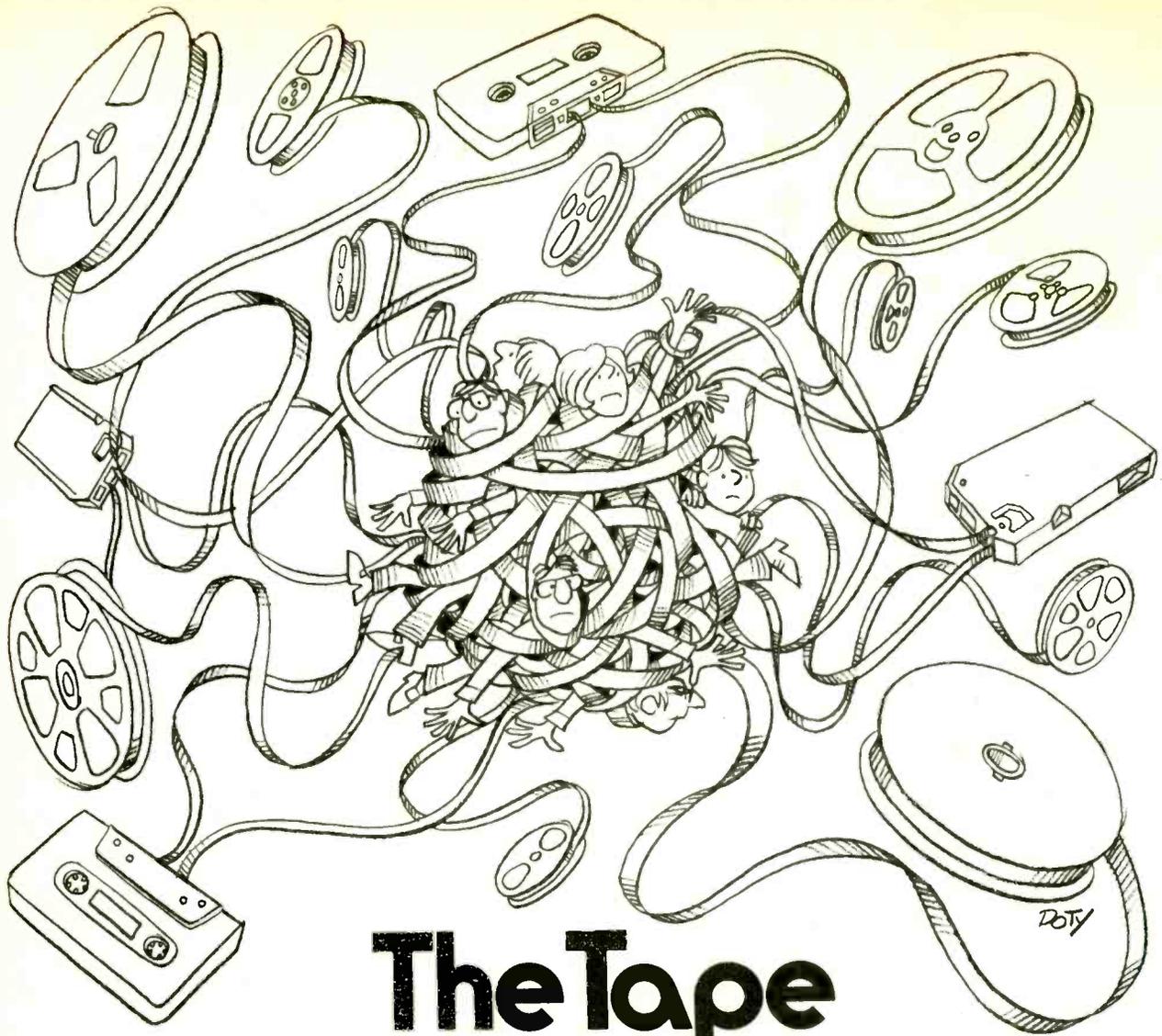
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of compact cassettes.

**You can even hear a pin drop.**



# The Tape Around Us

It has transfigured our sonic ecology and our sense of reality.

by Tony Schwartz and John Carey

Tony Schwartz, who achieved his first fame by recording and producing the documentary "New York 19" (referring to the postal zone now known as ZIP 10019) for Folkways Records, has been an audio columnist and is the author of *The Responsive Chord*, published in 1973 by Doubleday. It has been both hailed as a philosophical milestone in communications theory and criticized as re-worked McLuhanism. Readers can assess for themselves his views on tape's role in the communications complex, expressed in the accompanying article. His co-author, John Carey, is at work on his doctorate in communications and is associated with Schwartz in Environmental Media Consultants Corp., a New York production and advisory group dealing with broadcast advertising and public-relations techniques.

IF YOU ASK people what they'll need next year in order to survive, very few will mention air. The most crucial elements in our lives often slip by unnoticed because they are *environmental*—they totally surround and penetrate our thoughts and perceptions. These environmental elements may become visible when they change or when people's relation to them changes.

In communications, we tend to notice the characteristics of a medium only after it has been replaced by a new one. Mechanized type dominated our communications world for eight hundred years. It encouraged the growth of a literate middle class, created the first mass audiences, and expanded the means by which men could exchange thoughts. But

it was not until the development of electromechanical communications in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries that we noticed how print had dominated Western civilization since the time of Gutenberg. As we became involved with the telephone, telegraph, and wireless, we developed the hindsight with which we could *see* print for the first time. And today, as our involvement shifts from film to video tape, from records to audio tape, from old network radio to new local radio, we can begin to see the characteristics of the older forms.

This is evident if one observes most of the books available on "modern" communications or surveys the titles of college courses on mass communication. Studies of film and early radio fill the marketplace. [See, among many other things, HF, July 1972, special issue on movie music, and April 1974 issue on the Thirties—Ed.] Understandably, little has been said about the effects of audio tape because we are still immersed in those effects. Our problem here, then, is to make visible the environmental characteristics of tape that affect all of us.

### Time and Space

A principal characteristic of audio tape is that it allows time and space to be manipulated. We can take elements recorded at different points in time and/or space and construct on tape a temporal-spatial unity that never existed in the real world. Earlier, with records and wax cylinders, editing was very difficult and recording instruments very cumbersome. So, typically, speech or musical performance was captured by the recording instrument and played back later with no editing. The recording recreated the time and space relationships that were the fabric of the real event.

With tape, a single song may be—and often is—edited and mixed from elements recorded at different times, in different places. No attempt is made to preserve the time/space integrity of these elements; they become a musical fabric only when they are woven together. The final product is thus a form of creative activity itself, rather than re-creation of it. Similar temporal-spatial constructions may be found in news programming, documentaries, and many interview shows. For example, a single interview may be constructed from several interviews recorded at various times in several locations.

This ability to manipulate time and space frees the artist from time and space boundaries in real life. He can work creatively with elements that are rigidly fixed in everyday experience. Equally important, this has radically affected the expectations of audiences, as we shall see.

When radio and records were largely a copy or re-creation of live performance, we felt that the actual event was clearly more "real" than the record. With audio tape's constructed reality, there frequently is no real-life event of which the tape is a copy. The

Beatles' "A Day in the Life" never was performed—it was constructed. The edited tape *is* the original.

Indeed, the song could not be performed in real time. Many other songs can be performed, but not with the precision and creative care of the constructed tape. As a result, a fascinating reversal has taken place where concerts now are weak copies of tapes and records. The live performance cannot match the fidelity or control of the tape. More and more, the tape is preferred to real-life performance. And the tape becomes the *actuality* against which live performance is measured.

Our growing preference for constructed reality has carried over to many areas of life. It's like the story of the woman in the park with her child who is complimented by a passerby: "Oh, what a beautiful baby." "Yes," replies the woman, "but you should see his pictures."

Our involvement with tape and electronic media generally is so overpowering that a face-to-face encounter may seem unreal in relation to our electronic communication reality. When people meet a disc jockey or singer, they measure him against his radio or tape voice, not vice versa. Similarly, many people now prefer the tape reality over ear-to-mouth meetings, for one reason or another, when given the choice.

The "reality" of tape is so compelling that it often carries more weight than a firsthand witness. Why were the Patty Hearst tapes so disturbing when we first heard them? They could have been accurate or faked, but we felt compelled by them. Print no longer can have this effect. What would our feelings have been had they been letters instead of tapes?

And why were the Watergate tapes held as the essence of truth? All along President Nixon knew that the tapes represented a powerful reality—more powerful than any transcripts of or testimony about what was said. On the face of it, his past argument that an out-of-context hearing of the tapes would not get at the truth of ambiguous statements on the tapes was meaningful, but it was a hopeless argument against the more powerful reality, emotion, and effect of the heard word.

That very reality is the crux of the complaint that, in submitting written transcripts last spring, the President did not comply with the subpoena calling for the tapes themselves. Words *are* subject to interpretive ambiguities whether they are spoken or written. Yet—though the transcript was prepared by (or at least for) the man who spoke many of those words and therefore knows best what they mean—the tape is taken as the reality and the transcript as the shadow of reality. At best the written word is conceived of as the representation of the tape; at worst as the misrepresentation of it.

The power of tape rests further in its ability to capture and preserve a moment for all time, and to do this at a fraction of the cost of film or early audio recording systems.



Wax cylinders, then discs and wire recordings, have taught us that a recording will outlive the performance and often reach a wider audience than the real event. Also, a tape permits multiple listenings. This lends greater value to that preserved moment and may induce the performer to take special care. Further, if there is a choice between directing a performance to a live audience or to a tape of that event, more and more artists are choosing the tape.

In one sense, it is understandable that a person should gear his performance for the tape since it will reach a much larger audience, have to withstand multiple listenings, and exist for years to come. But what are the implications of this for the everyday reality we live? The moment-to-moment reality is not as important as the constructed reality that will come to exist on a tape. And so we adjust the everyday world to the needs of tape reality. The effects of this new value are widespread.

### News and Public Affairs

With tape as the central reality of communications, there now are newfound opportunities to *make* news, in two ways. First, people who have an interest in getting news coverage design their activities to meet the needs of newscasters and do it in such a way as to sound best on tape. It doesn't matter how many people are at a rally or what they do; it only matters what they sound like on the news and what the news commentator says about them. Second, with portable recorders available everywhere, people can literally make their own news and supply it to broadcasters, cut to a timing the stations find useful.

The Hearst kidnaping was a prime example of a group using tape to control news coverage of their activity. Similarly, many politicians prepare tapes for radio stations to use on newscasts.

In addition, the *instant* quality of tape permits groups to react immediately to an event that has made the news. If a political opponent has raised an issue that affects your campaign or a congressional study has criticized your corporation, you can prepare a response and be on the air before the change has left the public's mind.

This ability to communicate instantly with tape is having a dramatic impact on political and corporate public-affairs advertising. The conventional advertising campaign, in which the major issues are anticipated for the next three to nine months and ads evolved to influence public opinion in an as-yet-unknown context, is giving way to instant, task-oriented advertising that can monitor, respond to, and affect problems and issues day by day.

### Radio

Today people are less likely to refer to tape or radio as a source of information. They will say, "I heard a new Dylan song," not "I heard a new Dylan song on radio." They do not perceive radio or tape as a *mediating* element in experiencing events or performance. Radio, tapes, and records are natural, firsthand experiences in our homes, not an intermediate channel for bringing other environments (for example, the concert hall) into our homes.

As a consequence, *programs* have been disappearing on radio. The principal unit of radio is the station, not the program. That is, radio has moved from a variety of programs on each station to single, task-oriented formats and programming. We now find all-rock stations, all-news stations, all-talk stations, and so on. Similarly, the general radio networks that supplied a variety of programs to stations over interconnecting lines have died, while special-interest networks that supply tapes to meet the custom needs of a station and its audience have grown.

Also, since radio and tape form an environmental surround to living, we usually do not use them for information, but to create or change a mood and to keep us company. People sit in sound; they do not listen to it. They choose a station because it is in tune with their feelings, rather than listen to any specific content.

Some stations may broadcast for many hours at a time from tape, without human intervention. Music programming often is stored on 14-inch reels, with shorter programming elements—like station-break announcements and commercials—on endless-loop cartridges. Automatic equipment switches from source to source on preprogrammed cue. Most background-music services for waiting rooms, restaurants, and elevators are broadcast (via an FM SCA carrier) by this means.

The *aware* listener can easily feel stifled in this musical atmosphere, of course, particularly when he finds himself a captive audience. Does not the omnipresence of music in factories and lobbies, living rooms and cars, dull musical sensibilities just as smoking dulls the taste buds? But however carefully the musical gourmet may eschew background music, he cannot escape the aural environment that

tape has created. Nor, presumably, would he want to. The same tape that has made automated background music possible also has made possible the incredible increase in his choice of recorded musical fare over the last thirty years. The Schwann Catalog attests to that; the ever-lengthening lists of "underground" recordings do so even more clearly.

## Music

Since the constructed piece of music on a tape is now the reality against which we measure live performance, we can expect to hear fewer concerts in the future. People will go to concerts to see what the artist looks like and for the social experience it can provide. But the concert as an ideal listening experience will die.

Also, the function (and notoriety) of sound designers—those who edit and produce records and tapes—will grow enormously. Principles of sound design will emerge in criticism of records; design styles will come into existence; and the audience will learn to appreciate creative mixes as well as creative performance with an instrument. And the day may come where we will go to a "concert" simply to hear a tape and speak to the sound designer or producer afterwards.

Much of this already has begun, of course. Glenn Gould has forsaken the concert platform altogether in favor of the recording studio. The infant field of quadriphonics is producing striking new approaches to sound for reproduction in the home without reference to the concert hall or any other "natural" environment. Producers' names have occasionally appeared on record jackets for years, but they now are included on a regular basis together with those of studio and mixing engineers.

And tape has become an important instrument of and for musical composition in our time. Not only does it "play" the music composed for it, it has been used to supplant musical notation as the medium of composition itself.

Even U.S. copyright provisions (and government is notoriously slow at catching up with the cultural status quo) recognize to some extent the new importance that tape has given to sound as a permanent, storable medium. Since February 15, 1972, it has been possible to copyright recordings; formerly, copyright protection had extended only to the visible (i.e., printable) forms of music and speech. Though unique sounds can be created on tape (the present medium) without reference to the written word or musical notation, it still is necessary to reduce them to graphic representation (the old medium) in order to protect the content from unauthorized imitation. The recording's copyright extends only to the specific "performance" embodied in it.

## Education

Typically, the education community has been weakest in its use of the new tape environment. Most tape and cassette programs designed for use in schools are not a constructed reality, but a copy of another environment (most often, a copy of the classroom environment). They make little use of temporal and spatial manipulations. Thus most education tape and cassette programs contain material that is fully scripted and simply read aloud. They are really using the new medium of tape as a container for the older medium—print. Yet tape offers the potential for editing actual recordings of political, social, cultural, and scientific events into efficient units that reveal patterns of influence and growth.

Further, most educators approach tape from a *program* base, not as instant response to problems. They try to anticipate well in advance the needs of classroom situations and design software that, hopefully, will meet those needs. Yet these tapes and cassettes are directed primarily towards young people who are sharply in tune with the high-speed flow of information fostered by electronic media and who change their behavior and thinking instantly in response to changes in their media world. Here again, educators have erred by using tape almost exclusively as a finished package for passive listening. But tape also can function as a resource through which students can deal actively with learning problems that arise from moment to moment.

## Privacy

It was inevitable that tape would threaten individual privacy and create a "secrecy business." Before electronic communications, only a tiny fraction of the lives of a small number of people could become public because communication channels had very limited capabilities for storing and distributing information. Today, with the use of tape, vast amounts of information about everyone can be stored and distributed. Further, the value placed on tape reality encourages the publication—or "making public"—of what was previously considered private.

In response to this, a vast secrecy industry has emerged to protect those who can afford such services. But the average person simply finds his privacy eroding away. The fascinating aspect of this troublesome problem is that it is fundamentally a side effect of the communication network (tape) we have wound around ourselves, not a result of planning by anyone. And it is within social side effects like this and the few others outlined here that the real power of tape lies. ●

Their features can greatly enhance the pleasure and efficiency of recording

# What Makes Some

BACK IN THE late 1940s, about all anybody asked of a tape recorder was that it pull tape past the heads at a reasonably constant speed and that what came out should be as close as possible to what went in. Audiophiles considered the magic of being able to make recordings and play them back instantly with reasonable fidelity enough of a good thing, without worrying about such refinements as bias adjustment, multitrack recording, or memory rewind—let alone noise reduction systems.

But a lot of tape has gone by the playback heads since then. Both machines and tape users have become more sophisticated—and more specialized. In fact today's tape units are tailored to fit the specialized needs of their users in much the way life insurance companies create policies to meet the needs of individual customers. There's a policy tailored for the young executive on the way up, for the family man, for the owner of a small business, and so on. By the same token, there are tape recorders designed for the man who wants only to listen to recorded music, for the folksong field researcher, for the camera buff who wants sound for his slides.

The result has been a proliferation of "special-feature" machines to the point where there's no longer a simple answer to the question, "What's the best recorder?" There is a "best" only once you've defined your recording needs and decided how you're going to use your recorder. The purpose of this article is to identify some of the special features you'll find on some recorders, relate them to your needs, and point out some of the machines that have them.

When you remove virtually any other component from its carton—a receiver, a turntable, even a phono cartridge—it doesn't take you very long to orient yourself to the controls, the features, the connections, even without the aid of an owner's manual. But tape recorders and decks have become so highly specialized that a review of the owner's manual is a virtual necessity before connecting the equipment to the rest of your system or trying to operate it. One manufacturer's controls don't do the same thing as another's. One advises you to change speeds on his open-reel deck only when the

motor is running; another cautions that this may damage his recorder.

Very few people set out to buy a playback-only open-reel or cassette recorder—despite studies showing that a large percentage of audiophiles who buy tape equipment almost never use it to record once they get it home. So why pay for the record feature? Because, the salesman will tell you patiently, it costs very little to add the recording capability to a cassette deck or open-reel recorder, and very few purchasers want to shut themselves off from the possibility of making recordings if they should want to do so. (In cartridge decks, of course, the record feature does add significantly to the price, presumably because the cartridge medium is used *primarily* for playback, and play-only units can take significant advantage of large-quantity production.)

## A Question of Heads

Actually, there's a good reason for buying a playback-only deck—particularly if you're interested in cassette equipment. The optimum playback head has a very small core and the narrowest possible gap between the pole pieces in order to overcome eddy-current losses generated by the magnetized tape. Since the recording head induces magnetism in the tape rather than generates current from it, the loss of current is much less important; besides, too narrow a gap in the head can result in a loss of recording efficiency.

Better open-reel recorders solve the problem by utilizing separate record and playback heads. But the design of the cassette doesn't lend itself as easily to this arrangement. Since there's only one pressure pad in the cassette, there's only one point at which the tape comes into perfect contact with any head. The cassette's inventors saw no reason not to use a single record/playback head for their system, resulting in the inevitable compromise between narrow and wider gaps, large and small core. Alone among cassette deck manufacturers, Advent has produced a play-only deck (the Model 202) that

if you know what they do.

by Robert Angus

# Recorders So Special?

utilizes a head specifically designed for playing back recorded tapes.

There are a handful of three-head cassette decks around: the Teac 850, the Nakamichi 700 and 1000, and Technics RS-279US. In the Technics version the third head is for monitoring (as opposed to playback) only; the model still utilizes a combination record/playback head for other cassette functions. According to Technics, the third head does permit direct comparison of the recorded signal with the input; but because there is no pressure pad to hold the tape against the head, signal quality is significantly poorer than through the main playback head. Teac and Nakamichi use a small hole next to that for the pressure pad for a record-only head. The playback-only head fits directly against the pressure pad.

Theoretically, the many playback-only cartridge decks should offer the same advantage over record/playback units as in cassette equipment. It has been only in recent months that cartridge-deck manufacturers have considered the advantages of quality heads—and they're using them in the combination units. Hence a Wollensak or Akai cartridge-recorder head, for instance, may actually have a narrower gap than another manufacturer's playback-only model. The cartridge format poses even greater problems than the cassette to the use of separate heads.

## Building with Sound

In open-reel machines three heads have made possible such selective recording features as sound-on-sound. A few four-channel recorders like the Teac 3340, Dokorder 7140, and Sony TC-854-4S have carried the technique a step further with multidub facilities that enable you to lay down a vocal track next to an already-made instrumental recording and to play other professional-style tricks. In essence, this feature permits you to use the recording head as a playback head, eliminating the time lag normally occurring between recording and playback head gaps. It's possible to monitor Track 1

from the recording head while recording on Track 2. Rock musicians use a comparable arrangement (Ampex Sel-sync, for example) on professional equipment to record separate tracks when all members of the group can't get together in person—or to allow a single performer to play several instruments in succession.

There are similar features that do not require the recording head to be used for playback and that have long appeared on home decks: sound-with-sound and sound-on-sound. The former is like multidub in that it lays in a second track in perfect synchronization with one already recorded in one channel of the stereo pair, but it depends on the use of a combination record/play head. Since the same head is used for both functions there is no lag, but there's also no monitor feature.

In monitor-head recorders the alternative is sound-on-sound, a process in which sounds recorded on one track are played back and *mixed with* the added sounds, the mix being recorded on the second track. It no longer is in sync with the first recording because of the space between recording and playback heads. Nonetheless, some manufacturers talk about sound-*with*-sound recording on monitor-head decks. You'll find that it will work (more or less) with speech, but the lag generally will be disastrous for musical purposes.

While sound-with-sound really is no big deal in an open-reel home recorder, it has been unheard-of in home cassette and cartridge decks. It has been used for special language-lab cassette equipment, however, allowing the student to record on one track while listening to the teacher on another. Indications are that by fall there may be a home cassette model that will offer this feature.

## Tape and Totability

Once virtually every recorder on the market had a strap on top or a carrying case with a handle. It might weigh fifty pounds or more, but because of the handle or strap the manufacturer advertised it as a portable. Nowadays, there are plenty of gen-

uine portables abound—cassette recorders little larger than an overstuffed wallet, cartridge units that snap in and out of your car and operate on batteries, and even some open-reel gear. But how many battery portables are capable of really good field recording? If you're an anthropologist with an interest in native folksongs, a broadcaster with a need to record interviews on location, a sound freak who wants a high fidelity tape of Niagara Falls, or a would-be tape pirate interested in rolling your own version of Beverly Sills's latest triumph at Lincoln Center, you'll need a recorder that is lightweight, compact, low in wow and flutter, able to operate on batteries, and capable of really wide frequency response.

There are a handful of open-reel models from Stellavox, Nagra, and Uher that fit the definition, weighing in at no more than twelve pounds. The first two are available in a variety of configurations and are virtually handmade to the user's specifications. They're priced accordingly; the Stellavox's four-channel model sells for close to \$6,000, for example, while the Nagras *begin* at over \$1,000. Uher's 4000 (mono) and 4400 (stereo) models are more reasonably priced mass-production items, starting at about \$400—if you can find them.

With all its advantages of portability, why isn't there a cassette model that can be used to make really high fidelity field recordings? The answer is that several of the better cassette portables—particularly those with low wow and flutter characteristics—have been capable of broadcast-quality field recording for some time. All you have to do with most of them to obtain excellent pirate-quality live recordings is to junk the microphones supplied by the manufacturer and use decent dynamic or condenser models instead.

If you're a real perfectionist, you'll want something like the Sony TC-152SD, a \$300 Dolby AC/DC stereo recorder that offers such refinements as a tape selector switch, adjustable limiting, and a versatile monitoring system. And other high-spec cassette portables appear to be in the planning stage.

### Matching the Tape

Speaking of tape-selector switches, they're fairly common on AC cassette equipment and becoming more so on open-reel decks. Last January, Wollensak introduced the first cartridge recorders with adjustable equalization: Models 8075 and 8080.

The proliferation and complexity of tape-selector switches, in fact, reflects the proliferation of blank-tape formulations. Some of these switches alter equalization, some bias, and some both. Occasionally, as in the Teac 450 cassette deck and the new Pioneer open-reel units, separate switches allow independent control of the two factors. Some cassette-deck switches offer positions only for chro-

mium dioxide and "standard" ferric oxide, others include an intermediate position for high-density, low-noise ferric tapes. In most cases, even a careful reading of the manufacturer's literature won't tell you exactly what happens when you flip one of these switches in terms of the actual bias current or the equalization curve. There are, for example, some machines with three-position switches on which there's no audible difference between "normal" and "low noise."

Accordingly, the best bet for the purchaser who wants the most from his recorder is to experiment using a number of different tapes and all the possible combinations of bias and equalization. Listen for high-frequency distortion, tape hiss, and noise. The combination that results in the cleanest sound with the quietest background is the one that's right for you, regardless of whether you have the equalization switched to "normal" rather than "low noise" with a particular low-noise tape, for instance.

Switching for chromium dioxide was considered very special when it first appeared. That on Wollensak cartridge decks also is for a new formulation (Scotch "Classic"). And a switch recently introduced by Sony is for its new Ferrichrome, a tape with a thin layer of chromium dioxide on top of a thicker layer of ferric oxide. According to the manufacturer, the result has all of the advantages and



If you are not interested in recording with cassettes, then you should consider a playback-only deck such as the Advent 202 (above), whose special head allows maximum playback efficiency. Multidub capabilities on open-reel decks like the Dokorder 7140 allow the user to record separately up to four tracks, all in sync with each other.

none of the disadvantages of each type of coating. The problem is that it requires yet another bias current—not as high as that required for pure chromium dioxide, but somewhat higher than that for high-density low-noise tapes.

The assumption lurking behind all of these bias and equalization controls is that the tape hobbyist either wants maximum flexibility in choosing a kind of tape (so that he can experiment with every tape on the market, switching back and forth among them at will), or wants to be able to get the most from the single tape that he settles on for all his recording needs. The problem is that many tape users simply forget to check the bias switch before they begin recording—particularly when the recorder has been out of use for a while. Result: an amazing number of misbiased tapes being made by audiophiles on very good equipment.

Some equipment manufacturers would like to do something about that. Last year, BASF introduced in Canada three cassette portables that adjust bias automatically. Now Technics, Kenwood, and Akai are offering the same feature in AC decks. The machine senses whether it's being fed chromium dioxide or ordinary ferric oxide by "feeling" the back edge of the cassette. Next to the two removable flaps that prevent accidental cassette erasure are two new holes, at least on BASF and a few other brands of chromium dioxide cassettes. If a finger

inside the recorder detects a hole there, the deck automatically increases its bias and—depending on the design—may alter equalization. The unit should offer a manual override as well. This allows for the fact that not all chromium dioxide cassettes currently on the market have the chromium dioxide coding hole.

### Necessity, Nicety, or Nonsense?

Who needs speed "tuning" in a tape recorder? Teac, Harman-Kardon, Nakamichi, Yamaha, Revox, and Sony obviously think somebody does. And it could be you, if part of your activities involve correcting old or homemade recordings that are not cut at exact speed or if you have some tapes made on a recorder—perhaps an inexpensive portable—that ran fast or slow. The feature also is important if you want to play an "untunable" instrument (i.e., a piano or organ) along with previously recorded material. Calibration of these vernier controls usually is sketchy or nonexistent. A "normal" position usually is shown; departures from normal must be tuned by ear.

Teac's new 7300 open-reel deck has a vernier; Revox does the same thing with an accessory for the A-77 deck (obtainable as an option at the time of purchase, or—at somewhat higher cost—as an add-on later), and a speed control is expected for the A-700. Sony's 854-4S open-reel deck also includes speed adjustment. Harman-Kardon, Nakamichi, and Yamaha are among the cassette-deck manufacturers offering an external speed-adjustment screw or knob. The growing number of cassette decks using servo drive systems and DC motors could make this feature much more common next year.

When the dual-castan drive was introduced, it was on professional and instrumentation equipment to maintain precise tape-to-head contact without the use of pressure pads and as a means of isolating tape from the heads in fast forward and fast reverse. Later it found a niche in automatic-reverse recorders, where the direction of tape travel changes at the end of a reel or cassette. Today it's to be found on non-reversing models like the open-reel Sony 854-4S and Teac, Nakamichi, Kenwood, Sony, and Tandberg cassette models.

For most users, bidirectional operation—which is available in many open-reel brands and a limited number of cassette units—is more of a convenience than a "special" feature. If you tape full-length operas off the air, however, bidirectional recording can be important. And for the ultimate in convenience there are changers for cartridges (Telex) and cassettes (Panasonic).

No self-respecting home recorder today would be without some sort of VU meter, though other types of recording level indicator have appeared



(and disappeared) over the years and some have technically been more proficient than the meter. For the exacting recordist, a large, well calibrated meter is almost a must. Not only will it help him analyze the properties of incoming signals, it also can be a useful maintenance and troubleshooting tool for the system—including the associated electronics as well as the recorder itself.

But meter action is a complex subject; and even a true professional VU meter whose action conforms precisely to the characteristics that the phrase implies—something that few of the “VU” meters on inexpensive home equipment do—requires a good deal of understanding and practice for correct interpretation. Peak-indicating meters, on the other hand, speak much more directly to the less-informed recordist and afford him much more precise control over recorded quality.

Of those companies offering peak metering, Tandberg and Advent have drawn particular attention to it both because they are generally credited with having introduced peak metering (in, respectively, open-reel and cassette formats) in home equipment and because their meters “read” the signal values *after* the recording equalization has been applied, further refining the meters’ ability to tell you just how signal values relate to the overload capabilities of the tape. Technics (in the new RS-676US cassette deck) has a switch that gives you the option of either peak or average values; some manufacturers—notably Teac—give you averaged metering plus an illuminating (LED) peak indicator that triggers at a preset level.

If you do some live recording—and particularly if you like to add a live vocalist over commercially recorded stereo instrumental backgrounds—you may want to look for a model with a center-channel mike input in addition to the regular left and right. Nakamichi, Concord, and Sansui all offer cassette models with this feature, which allows left, center, and right mike channels to be mixed at will and allows any or all to be mixed with signals from the stereo line input.

Of course there are many cassette and open-reel models that allow mixing of conventional (left and right) mike inputs with the line feed, but it does make the deck somewhat more expensive and therefore is easier to find in the better models than in the budget ones. On decks with separate monitor/playback heads—up to and including semipro and pro models like the Crowns—this mixing makes tape echo and sound-on-sound possible when these features are not already included. You can run cables from the output jacks back to the line inputs and thus mix the playback signals with those coming from the mikes.

If you’re seriously into tape as a hobby, chances are that sooner or later somebody’s going to ask for a copy of one of your prized possessions—or you’ll want to make a tape copy of somebody else’s gem.



Of course you can borrow a second tape deck, hook it up to your system, and make your copy. But if you find yourself copying all the time, you may be interested in one of the various hybrid units offered by Akai for converting open-reel tapes to cartridges or cassettes (or vice versa), or the X-2000SD, a behemoth that can produce cartridges or open-reel tapes at the flick of a switch from either of the other two formats. And Dokorder has even offered a model for dubbing from one open reel to another.

A feature growing in favor among cassette deck manufacturers is memory rewind. According to the makers like Panasonic, Teac, Harman-Kardon, Hitachi, Pioneer, Realistic, and Sanyo, your recorder will repeat or return to a preselected passage on the tape. On most machines, the tape simply rewinds until the counter reads 000. On a few the transport then goes back into the play mode unless you also have pushed the pause control. I’m not an avid booster of this feature myself, though some users like it for editing and mastering and one singer of my acquaintance finds it useful in learning unfamiliar arias and songs. Akai, somewhat similarly, uses the footage counter on some of its open-reel recorders to activate the auto-reverse mechanism.

A related feature, in terms of ease of finding and playing given selections on tape, is called “search,” “tape-lifter defeat,” or some other name, depending on the brand and the specific mechanism. The

The Wollensak 8075 (top left) was the first cartridge recorder to offer a tape-selector switch to let the user match tapes to his machine; the Uher 4400 (below left) is one of the few truly portable open-reel recorders still available; and the Nakamichi 1000 is a feature-laden cassette deck that has three heads, external speed adjustment, dual-capstan drive, and center-channel mike input.



most common type either presses the tape against the heads to bypass tape-lifter action (Tandberg, for example) or allows the tape lifters to be withdrawn (Sony uses a solenoid-control switch in the 854-4S). Either way the result is that you can hear at least some output from the tape in the fast-wind modes as an aid in locating a specific selection.

Dokorder and Akai are among the companies that have introduced comparable features on cassette decks, and many dictation recorders have a similar "review" feature that runs slow enough to retain some intelligibility. Sharp has a model that will stop automatically at the blank passages in between selections as a "search" aid. In open-reel equipment a "search" mode may be linked to—or provide as a by-product—the ability to cue the tape for physical splicing in editing its content. But if you want to edit, choose your model carefully. The ability to "rock" the tape forward and back past the head with the transport stopped is important in finding a precise editing point. Unless you can hear the output from the playback head while you do so, you probably will find tight editing awkward or impossible.

Then there's the matter of slide synchronization. There are many devices that will put a syncing signal on one track of a stereo recorder while you use the other for (mono) audio. Uher, a German manufacturer (whose recorders are distributed in Canada and on an extremely limited basis in the U.S.),

offers a Diapilot head on its Model 9500 deck, on its Model 10,000 recorder, and on a battery-operated portable. Diapilot makes it possible to record syncing impulses on open-reel tape, right along with stereo music, narration, and/or sound effects. The syncing system is similar to the others and, like them, generally can be adapted to any slide projector with a remote control. But the Diapilot records on the bottom edge of the tape, making it usable in one direction only while preserving the stereo tracks for sound.

Until recently, if you wanted your cassette deck on a shelf or in a professional rack mount, generally speaking it couldn't be done. Not only were the cassette deck's controls on the top, but the cassette well was located there as well. Nakamichi was the first manufacturer to mount both the controls and the cassette well on the front of a high-quality AC unit. Now Technics, Akai, and Teac are following suit with units that can be built into custom installations, mounted on low-clearance shelves, or stacked with other components.

Conversely, until now most cartridge decks have been front-loaders. But Akai has introduced at least one model that will load from the top. That, presumably, is for users who want to set it at table-top level, where access from above is easy.

No discussion of special-purpose tape recording features would be complete without a mention of Dolby. Virtually any cassette deck priced over \$200 these days has some form of noise reduction built in. In most cases, the circuit is Dolby B. Alternative noise reduction systems like Norelco's DNL and JVC's ANRS really haven't caught on—either with other manufacturers or with the public. But Dolby *is* catching on in cartridge recorders, where it was introduced by Wollensak and is now featured by Superscope and others; and there are Dolby versions of such open-reel machines as the Ferrograph Super Seven, Tandberg 3600X, and Revox A-77.

In addition to the conventional Dolby B circuit, a handful of cassette-deck makers—like Teac and Wollensak—are incorporating a Dolby copying facility. It's suitable for recording a Dolby FM broadcast without "restretching" but can also be used to copy Dolby B cassettes from another machine.

There are other special features that may well affect your decision to buy one recorder and shy away from another—notably the number and choice of speeds on an open-reel recorder and the flexibility of the controls on a cassette or cartridge unit. Again, it all goes to prove that there is no single "best" when it comes to recorders. There are models that will do what you want and others that won't, recorders that perform the important functions and others that do the job less well. The first order of business for the recordist is to decide just which job or jobs need doing. Only in the light of that decision can each of these features be assessed rationally. ■

by Robert Long

# TV's Golden Moments Can Be Captured by Your Tape Recorder

IT'S WORSE THAN malaria: Once a lust for recording audio tracks from TV gets into your blood there is no quinine to ease the fevers that spasmodically recur. The mere announcement of a "Tonight" show guest list can trigger an attack. Perhaps this will be one of those times when a magical, once-in-a-lifetime moment occurs—maybe an impromptu concert by President Nixon or an opera star in offbeat repertoire on one of the talk shows. Remember the many fine Eileen Farrell TV performances that never made it to commercial discs?

If only the evanescent beauty or charm or wit—or horror—can be trapped on tape! Almost without thinking the sufferer finds himself threading the recorder and checking levels. I know; that virus has been with me for a decade, though the night-blooming cactus flowers that propagate it like pollen are rare in the video desert.

You can wear your recording head to a nubbin in the search. And all too often the most luxurious blooms—say, some of Peter Ustinov's brilliant improvisations or that classic Carol Burnett show "Three Little Girls from School Are We" with Joan Sutherland, Dinah Shore, and La Burnett—escape documentation, because you're on the wrong channel or you didn't have the recorder running or a neighbor dropped by at the wrong time.

## Hookup for a Hangup

Some television receivers are wired for good sound. Heath kits traditionally have been designed so that the audio can be fed to a component system, and recorded, with perfect equanimity. Andrea at one time was considered the component line of TV receivers and offered a similar audio-output jack; a few (*very* few, including at least one from Motorola) wired units from other manufacturers have done likewise in the more recent past.

And there are some devices for receiving the sound portion only in the TV band. The ones I've looked into recently haven't been designed to component standards, though, and are intended primarily to let you keep track of the soap operas or the ball games when you're away from conven-

tional TV receivers—say, at the beach. They're usually battery portables (Sanyo and GE, for example) that also will tune the FM band; or they're dinky AC units (the Video Voice from Concept Plus probably was best known; it and an RCA unit both appear to have been withdrawn) that act as extensions to carry TV sound into another room. (You can raid the refrigerator without losing track of who's coming up to bat.) If you're really serious about your recordings, you'll probably want something better engineered for the purpose and attached to a permanent antenna or cable system for best signal.

There are accessory audio takeoff devices for feeding sound from an existing receiver to your stereo system. Prices generally run around \$50, and effectiveness varies with the design of both the accessory and the TV receiver itself. They don't stay on the market very long, suggesting that there aren't many people interested in such devices—at least not at these prices.

The only such unit I've worked with disappeared about five years ago. The manufacturer of another didn't even bother to answer my letter of inquiry. Yet another model that was to have been on the market by now was scrapped at the last moment when its designer discovered that with certain receivers it could lead to electrocution of the user.

The solution I've used consistently since I began recording TV sound is to get an existing receiver wired for a takeoff jack by a competent service technician. I say "competent," because this is a rather specialized job and even a crackerjack video man may know nothing about audio components and their requirements. The first time around, the repair service I chose had done an excellent (and inexpensive) job with past video complaints but seemed a little vague on audio. I specified that the takeoff should be connected ahead of the set's volume control. Instead, the repairmen wired it after the volume control and then added a level control next to the takeoff jack at the back of the set. This, they said, would allow me to vary the volume of the sound feed independently of the original front volume control.

When I got the set home, however, I discovered that the front volume control varied both, while the

**Often dismal television sound notwithstanding, you can still preserve such memorable events as an impromptu presidential recital, a Ustinov improvisation, or Sutherland, Shore, and Burnett singing "Three Little Maids from School Are We."**

control at the back varied only the sound from the built-in speaker! In order to listen through my component system only, it was necessary to turn down the control at the back and adjust the feed to the component system with the front volume control—which could not be turned up very far without getting horrendous input levels. And the sound was pretty boomy.

A glance inside the set showed why: The technician had cut into the leads to the built-in speaker and had run the output first to the jack, then to the added level control, and from there back to the speaker. Apparently the set's audio amplifier included a bass boost in an attempt to "make up for" the typically tiny speaker, and my component feed was getting the unwanted benefit of that boost. But the job had cost only \$5.00, and my audio system's amplifier had provision for recording through the tone controls, so I could tame the bass pretty well.

The last time I had such a job done, a few months ago. I picked the technician on the basis of knowledgeable recommendations and quizzed him a bit before leaving the set. It turned out that he sells recording equipment (mostly cassette) in addition to TV receivers, and unprompted he volunteered that I probably would want peak levels of about 1 volt and an output impedance appropriate to work into around 100,000 ohms. Reassured, I left the set. He charged \$20 for a neat job (including a schematic diagram of what he had done), but the output levels still are a little on the hefty side. Fortunately the preamp I'm feeding them to (a Dyna PAT-4) will take them without audible overload.

So I can record all the audio quality that the TV receiver itself will deliver. Its audio system is not the best I've encountered, but it's not bad when you consider the audio quality of typical TV broadcasts. Now there's the rub; and if you've never heard TV sound through good equipment, you're in for a shock.

### **Learning to Live with Bad Sound**

Much that's bad about TV audio goes unnoticed in regular viewing. You've got the picture to concen-

trate on; it often has been demonstrated that confronted simultaneously with visual and auditory stimuli, the brain tends to focus on the image and relegate the sound to a secondary role. As long as the speech synchronizes with the speaker's lips (which it doesn't always) most viewers are utterly unaware that the sound is not emanating from the face on the tube for example. This explains why manufacturers of TV receivers can get away with building such sleazy sound systems into their sets. And *that*, in turn, explains why broadcasters and producers of commercials can be so slapdash in the audio department.

If you don't believe they are, try turning down the brightness on your set and *listening* to television for an hour or two. Even through the dinky, honky speaker on the set you'll fast discover how bad the sound is. News broadcasts—particularly the local variety—generally are the worst offenders. Live filmings of on-the-spot news events can be especially bad. Inconstant equipment speeds make pitches wow and waver; overloads of mikes, preamps, or tape systems introduce massive distortion; careless choice or handling of microphones admit horrendous levels of ambient noise; and so on.

When the anchorman in the studio returns, some sanity returns to the sound. But on some sets the video limiter can introduce a loud buzz—which, although often unnoticed when the picture is turned on, can be downright painful to listen to without visual distraction—whenever picture contrasts are high, for example when lettering is superimposed on the picture. And who among us has never seen a news broadcast in which the audio man turned up the wrong pot, investing the announcer's voice with a distant, echoic quality because the live mike was in the wrong part of the studio?

And the commercials! Some, apparently made on 16-mm optical-track film, have such muddy sound that you wonder how anybody is supposed to understand the advertiser's brand name, let alone his message. (Again, the effect is much worse on good equipment because the inherent muddiness of TV-receiver sound systems tends to mask the muddiness in the program material.) Despite "all the money that they spend on those commercials," the audio in many of them is astonishingly and embarrassingly amateurish. It would, in fact, be unacceptable to most self-respecting amateurs.

Fortunately for the collector, the sound generally is best in the kind of thing he will want to record. Live or taped programs, even when subjected to transcontinental network hookups, usually yield cleaner sound than film. The "big" broadcasts—specials, talk shows with high-powered guests, the variety series—are made on studio tape equipment that produces far better results than the portable gear used for news coverage.

One thing you will notice quickly once you start

approaching TV sound analytically is the massive limiting that is used on all sorts of programs, even including most classical music. On a typical ad-lib talk show, when unlimited levels would be all over the place due to the extemporaneous nature of the show, everything is so pushed up under the "ceiling" presented by the limiter that a VU meter may register the signal as between 0 and -5 continuously for several minutes at a time—something that would never happen "in nature." Such limiting makes things super-easy for the home recordist (and is almost a necessity in a transmission medium as prone to extraneous buzzes, hums, hissings, and burblings as TV sound is), but it doesn't keep music sounding very fresh and airy. When a pianissimo comes along it makes itself felt more by its quality than by its level; loud passages, conversely, aren't that much louder, just heavier (and muddier).

So once you're hooked on TV taping, you'll find yourself going for *content*—not great sound. But you don't need to be as fussy about your recordings as you would, for example, in taping a symphony from FM. With a good open-reel recorder, you can set your levels conservatively to begin with and you have a good 10 dB of leeway for either increases or decreases in audio level due to changing propagation conditions, station vagaries, or equipment drift. You can go walk the dog with utter confidence that a usable tape will be waiting for you when you get back.

### Roses Among the Thorns

There's some eminently recordable material that can be had on TV and nowhere else. Of course the tube doesn't afford the live musical fare it once did. The likes of the "Bell Telephone Hour" have just about disappeared, and electronic rock has encouraged pops performers to "lip-sync" their commercial recordings when they repeat them for the tube. It saves the elaborate, and probably futile, job of trying to reproduce in the TV studio the techniques that were available at the recording session. But it means that the "live" performance differs from the record you can buy at your neighborhood emporium only in terms of sound quality—a comparison in which the disc probably will be markedly better, even ignoring stereo.

Still, there *is* unique musical fare to be had if you're on your toes. Musical satirists generally are better game than standard pops performers. At one time I made a point of recording every appearance of Tom Lehrer on the "Tonight" show. When I finally got the commercial versions, I found the quality (predictably) higher but some of the performances a little less fresh and immediate sounding. And there were occasional wholesale changes in the lyrics. In "Pollution," particularly, Lehrer



It may come as a surprise, but there are some audio moments on television worth preserving, such as Leontyne Price and John Reardon as Pamina and Papageno in an NBC Opera Theater production of *The Magic*

apparently varies the words to suit the locale.

One goody that I allowed to get away was Marvin Hamlisch's first (I assume it won't be the last) appearance on "Tonight," shortly after his Oscar-night triple triumph. His mixture of ad-lib quips, impressions, Scott Joplin (the theme from *The Sting*, what else?), and comments on his craft put the spot well above run-of-the-video-mill. Ad-libbing is, of course, what keeps this kind of thing fresh and special.

A glorious bit that I also let get away showed up on a news broadcast early in March: Pearl Bailey at a White House reception cajoling the President into acting as her accompanist. It was half over before I realized what was happening. It was so amusing I thought it would be all over the tube for the next day or so, but I never saw it again.

Some comedians can be both entertaining and moving when they're turned loose on a reminiscent ramble, though your willingness to record the rambles probably will depend on whether or not you're a fan. I can see someone collecting the ad-libbings of Flip Wilson, Orson Bean, or Bill Cosby, but my favorite is Buddy Hackett. His anecdotes, which are wildly improbable but still have the ring of truth, often have a story line that's as devious and unexpected in its twists as O. Henry at his best. They're much more than amusing; through them you can feel the fiber of the man as you seldom can in prepared material.

There is, culturally speaking, much bigger game to be had, of course. My tape collection is sprinkled with bits and pieces from the likes of Price, Tebaldi, Sills, and Horne—some taken from talk shows or Ed Sullivan, some from the last months of the "Telephone Hour," and some from special programs. For instance the educational channels at one time were playing a special featuring Joan Sutherland, Richard Bonyngge, Marilyn Horne, John Alexander, and Terry McEwen, who interviewed Sutherland and Bonyngge between num-



Flute, President Nixon accompanying Pearl Bailey in "Home on the Range" last March, and Marlene Dietrich belting out "Go See What the Boys in the Back Room Will Have" in one of the reruns of *Destry Rides Again*.

bers, discussing performance styles, great singers of the past, the present stars' personal histories, and so on. This is the sort of thing you'll never find on records and probably never see again on the tube.

All sorts of specials are particularly interesting for this reason. Columbia has released commercial versions (in stereo, of course) of specials by such stars as Barbra Streisand and Liza Minnelli, and generally speaking I'd rather have the commercial versions for their better sound quality. But at the time the special is broadcast you can't tell whether it ever will be purchasable.

Some years back Columbia did *Once upon a Mattress* with the original Phoenix Theater cast: Carol Burnett, Jack Gilford, Joe Bova, and Jane White. I had loved the original and was delighted to relive it, but I didn't record it. The recent remake included all of the same principals except Bova, who had been perfect as the prince, and was noticeably hokier than the first TV version. So another good one had gotten away.

There are many, many others. I wish I had the ninety-minute special that Noel Coward and Mary Martin did years ago, for instance. It had a (superstar) quality all its own. And there are many gems I wish I had from such regular shows as "That Was the Week That Was," the Smothers Brothers, the old Garry Moore show, and Jackie Gleason in his variety-format heyday. Of the ones I do have, I'm particularly fond of one Carol Channing special, some of the more freewheeling numbers from "The Entertainers," and an Andy-Hardy-revisited bit that Judy Garland did with Mickey Rooney on one of her last shows.

Judy got me into TV recording in a way, in fact. One of my first efforts centered around the Munchkins. I wanted to study those voices to see just how they were produced. As all fans of *The Wizard of Oz* know by now (I didn't at the time), Douglas Shearer of MGM played back the vocal tracks at higher than recording speed to create the squeaky

Munchkin voices, backed by a normal sounding orchestra. I'm still in awe of the finesse involved.

Like any sentimentalist I recorded most of the other music at the same time. The continuity was pretty bad, so the next time the film showed up in the TV listings I did a more comprehensive job. Now I've got the entire soundtrack and have learned by heart where broadcasters put all the commercial breaks.

Film soundtracks are a whole other subject, perhaps, but the alert recordist will find a good deal of attractive material in the movie listings. He'll also find some poor sound: Optical track generally is noisier, more distorted, and more restricted in frequency response than tape and suffers by comparison to regular TV shows. But films of such personalities as Marlene Dietrich, Mae West, W. C. Fields, Carmen Miranda, MacDonald/Eddy, and even (when you can find them) Chaliapin, Grace Moore, and Miliza Korjus have unique potential. You can take as much or as little dialogue as you want by way of surrounding matrix to set up the situation for the musical numbers or comedy turns for which these stars are famous. In fact I'm sometimes bitterly disappointed with commercial soundtrack issues in this respect and prefer my own "editions."

### Getting It All on Tape

For something as extended as a full movie soundtrack, there's no substitute for open-reel tape, of course. But most of what's eminently recordable on television today (oh for the good old days!) is just bits and pieces, and since nobody's accusing TV sound of ultimate fidelity, cassettes and cartridges are probably a more efficient storage medium. I find cartridge recording cumbersome, so I use cassettes.

But not right off the bat. Waiting around trying to pick up a good cue adds to the wear and tear on the recordist and increases the chances of missing something you would like to have on tape. These days I use one NAB reel of tape just for TV. When I'm expecting something of real interest, I generally run it at 7½ ips (for up to ninety-odd minutes per pass) with Dolby. Or I may let it run for three hours at 3¾ ips just in case a sleeper pops up during that time.

When—all too rarely—I catch a fine specimen in my open-reel net, I go back and copy out the interesting portion of the tape, usually onto cassette. Then the reel gets reused for more of the same. As I have said, levels and noise are no worry because, assuming normal operation, limiting of the TV audio keeps its dynamic range far more restricted than that of the tape medium itself.

This technique also allows graceful segues in the final cassette. If an interesting discussion is inter-

rupted by a commercial, judicious use of the cassette deck's pause control sometimes can patch it back together almost seamlessly. And if you goof it up on the first attempt, you can always do it over—an obvious impossibility if you're trying to do the same thing during the broadcast. Fades can be timed neatly and often are necessary. For example talk-show hosts frequently keep on gushing right into the instrumental intros to their guest-singers' numbers. If you've recorded the whole thing, you can fade in your dub during the host's intro, fade in on the instrumental to get rid of the host, or try it both ways and pick the more satisfactory effect.

Some little birds keep telling us that stereo TV sound is just around the corner. ABC is said to be pleased with its experiments to this end, using a stereo simulcast on FM to deliver the full sonic impact of "In Concert." CBS tried it about six years ago and appears to have canceled the experiment after a single New York Philharmonic young people's concert. The NET opera productions have dabbled with the subject (see "News and Views," August 1970), and I'm told that TV productions at Boston's WGBH presently employ *quadriphonic* audio in anticipation of multichannel-audio telecasting. If it ever happens, it won't offer any particular problems to the recordist as long as he is using a recorder with the requisite number of channels.

My recorders are all stereo. For best signal-to-noise, I make the cassette copies via a mono switch that puts the program from a single track of the quarter-track open-reel recorder onto both tracks of the cassette. (I've tried copying simultaneously from two recorders to put different programs on each track of the cassette for maximum storage density, but believe me it isn't worth the bother.) And, as an index of the memorability factor in current TV programming, I probably record about twenty hours on open reels before I have enough material to save on a single C-30 cassette.

### In the Throes

But still the itch persists. I think of the good ones that got away and vow I won't be caught napping next time. One more example will serve to show how the syndrome works. And if I compare it to the heartbreak of psoriasis, I'm only further demonstrating how TV can get to you.

On Sunday evening, April 14, in the middle of a thunderstorm, I was struggling with the perennial income-tax trauma when my wife announced that Maria Callas would be featured on the "Today" show the next morning. "It sounds as though they're going to devote the whole broadcast to her," she said.

The whole broadcast? The itch began. A gala

Callas retrospective, perhaps, with reminiscences of her past triumphs? The itch increased. Maybe she'd let drop hitherto unpublished details of her falling-out with Rudolf Bing; maybe she'd offer some real insight into how she prepares a role—what makes a Callas performance so different from any other.

I got up from the desk and went to look at the TV receiver, still tuned to NBC, as though it would somehow impart a vision of what was to come. Instead a bolt of lightning struck somewhere to the south, and the screen filled with snow. We're hooked into the local cable-TV system which, while it brings in stations we never could get otherwise, is sensitive to violent weather. I tried the other two NBC channels on the cable; they were suffering ill effects from the lightning stroke, though there was intelligible sound on all three. The best had fairly good audio most of the time, though the picture was poor. The audio was very noisy on the other two.

Wondering whether the problem was simply a limiter somewhere, knocked for a (temporary) loop by the surge from the lightning, I started to set up for recording. Even the best channel was fading in and out, sometimes losing both picture and sound for brief periods. With a slight air of reproach, my wife announced her intention of going to bed; by now engrossed in capturing La Callas I continued puttering—and waiting—until all three channels had signed off.

To be sure I would get up early enough to warm up the equipment before The Broadcast, I set the alarm for 6:30. Reception was still snowy, but I was getting pretty good sound with no fading on one channel, so I decided to record it. "Today" came on with nary a mention of Callas. A rundown of the first hour's guests turned my enthusiasm to disgust. I reset the alarm for 7:45 and went back to bed.

At 8:00 I began recording, just in case. Finally at 8:30 or so the interview (with Barbara Walters) came on, preceded by promises that Callas would touch upon the formerly taboo subject of her relationship with Aristotle Onassis. It better be good, I thought. If this is no better than Rona Barrett—even highbrow Rona Barrett—I should have spent the time asleep. It wasn't, and I should have. (No offense Miss Walters; I realize that the breadth of the "Today" audience does put limitations on the way you plumb a somewhat esoteric subject, but I had *hoped*.)

That's the kind of thing you're in for if you get hooked on TV recording. My son goes through the same thing with stamps. A new batch raises the hope that that elusive commemorative that he covets will be among them, but most of the time they turn out to be pretty much the same old things. And "the same old thing" on the telly can be pretty dreary. But every now and then—



by Peter G. Davis

## Schumann's *echt-Goethe Faust*

Benjamin Britten leads a rewarding raid into the neglected realm of Schumann's large-scale vocal works.

Goethe's *Faust* lured musicians throughout the nineteenth century, but in the end this monument of Romantic questing defeated every composer who tried to translate its unique combination of poetry and ethics into music.

Gounod, Spohr, Berlioz, and Boito each redirected the poem's emphases in adapting the work to their own dramatic devices, while Liszt, Wagner, Mahler, and numerous other composers, in writing purely symphonic or choral reflections, simply remade *Faust* in their own images. Schumann probably remained closer than the others to the spirit of Goethe in his setting of this universal Mephistophelean temptation, partly because he was one of the few to have the temerity to use the poet's own text, although he confined himself to only about 650 of the 12,000 verses.

The title, *Scenes from Goethe's "Faust,"* defines the piece accurately. These are only randomly chosen fragments, with an even more tenuous connective thread than Berlioz' *Damnation of Faust*, and Schumann doubted the wisdom of performing them all together. What he did choose to compose is very significant, however, for it is odd to hear a *Faust* that declines the obvious lyrical invitations of "*Meine Ruh' ist hin,*" the King of Thule ballad, the Song of the Flea, Mephisto's Serenade, etc.

Schumann instead was drawn to the heart of Goethe's thought, particularly in Parts II and III of his score, which are taken from the drama's allegorical and philosophical Part II. Here we see Faust at sunrise, surrounded by Ariel and his elves, interpreting the awakening of nature at dawn as a symbol to forge anew man's noblest endeavors. Next, Schumann sets the scene where Faust is blinded by Care and finds a more meaningful light within himself. Faust's death concludes Part II, his vision of man's ultimate progress to an ideal society (ironically inspired by the sound of Mephistopheles and his lemures, who are actually digging the sightless Faust's own grave). Part III consists of Faust's Transfiguration, the same text that Mahler used in his Eighth Symphony. For his Part I, Schumann gives us an overture and three views of Gretchen: in the garden with Faust, before the Mater Dolorosa imploring forgiveness, and praying in church tormented by an evil spirit.

The lack of a tight structure should not stand in the way of enjoying Schumann's very real and often imme-

diated response to the text—the complete Goethe drama, after all, is not exactly laid out with taut consistency either. What perhaps might be more disturbing are the jolting musical approaches, for the work was composed over a nine-year period and the stylistic differences among the three sections are very marked.

Part III was composed first, in 1844 (revised in 1847, but the first version is generally preferred), when Schumann was very much under the thrall of Mendelssohn. The suave mellifluousness of the choral writing is often attractive but likely to seem a bit bland now that Mahler's more potent realization is so firmly set in our ears. But Schumann's solution to the final "*ewigweibliche*" exhortation, with its interwoven rising and falling perfect fifths, creates its own ethereally suspended spiritual aura—certainly the inspiration of Clara was as significant for Schumann as Alma was later for Mahler when he came to set these words.

Parts I and II were written between 1849 and 1850 after Schumann had come into contact with Wagner in Dresden, and the latter's influence on Faust's extended speech-song arias is unmistakable. What might have become dry note-spinning is instead plastic and expressive—even ecstatic as Faust prods his vision to its moving climax, "*Verweile doch, du bist so schön!*" ("Remain, thou art so beautiful!"), and sinks back lifeless. The Garden Scene is in Schumann's most tender lyric vein with the surging cello lines suggesting Faust's importuning answered by Gretchen's hesitatingly broken, fluttering triplets. The overture, composed in 1853, is the least successful part of the score, a thick, turgid piece of writing that shows the composer's creative powers in a dangerous state of exhaustion.

Fortunately London's recording makes the most persuasive case possible for the work. Britten has done some discreet thinning out here and there, and he manages to keep the orchestral textures transparent but glowing with rich instrumental hues. There's not much he can do with the overture, but the gracious lilt of the love music, the intensity of Gretchen's agony, the delicate daubs of color in Ariel's music, the scampering scherzo of Faust's encounter with the four gray women, the pulsating nobility of Faust's soul-searching, the tightly controlled finale all bespeak a close identification with the idiom and a profound knowledge of how best to project it. Britten is such a superb conductor that one sometimes wishes he

would cultivate this aspect of his talent more, even at the expense of his own creative work.

Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau is a natural for Faust, even now that his voice betrays a rather steady quality on more than one occasion. His inflection of Goethe's words, however, is declamatory artistry of a high order and in itself ample compensation.

Elizabeth Harwood gives a very successful and often uncanny Schwarzkopf imitation—the same puffy tone and exaggerated sibilants, which some may find just right. Peter Pears is himself and still well in command of the notes as Ariel and Pater Ecstaticus, while John Shirley-Quirk handles the various evil spirits with a smooth suggestion of malevolence. My favorite performance here, though, is the late Jennifer Vyvyan's slyly insinuating Care, a deliciously drawn vignette.

The choral contributions are consistently fine, and the

sound, while a bit too soft-centered and resonant for maximum clarity, is quite seductive.

This is a fascinating and valuable release. Perhaps it will encourage further explorations of Schumann's large-scale and still totally neglected vocal works.

**SCHUMANN: Scenes from Goethe's "Faust."**

Faust; Doctor Marianus	Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (b)
Gretchen	Elizabeth Harwood (s)
Mephistopheles; Evil Spirit; Pater Seraphicus	John Shirley-Quirk (b)
Ariel; Pater Ecstaticus	Peter Pears (t)
Care; Angel	Jennifer Vyvyan (s)
Need; Magna Peccatrix	Felicity Palmer (s)
Martha; Want; Mulier Samaritana	Meriel Dickinson (ms)
Debt; Maria Aegyptiaca	Pauline Stevens (ms)
Pater Profundus	Robert Lloyd (bs)
Mater Gloriosa	Alfreda Hodgson (a)

Aldeburgh Festival Singers; Wandsworth School Choir; English Chamber Orchestra, Benjamin Britten, cond. [Christopher Raeburn and Michael Woolcock, prod.] LONDON OSA 12100, \$11.96 (two discs, automatic sequence).

## The Schubert Boom Continues

Walter Klien, Alfred Brendel, Clifford Curzon, and Carol Rosenberger offer recordings of the piano sonatas.

by Harris Goldsmith

ARTUR SCHNABEL'S INTELLECTUAL curiosity manifested itself early in his student days. His exploration of the then virtually unplayed Schubert piano sonatas elicited from his mentor Theodor Leschetizky the famous prediction, "You will never be a pianist; you are a musician!"

Yes, Schubert's sonatas were definitely nonstarters with the public and concert impresarios. Even so great and devoted a musician as Harold Bauer espoused the great posthumous B flat Sonata only with numerous cuts to curb the composer's "heavenly lengths." Schnabel's success (and the profusion of Schnabel students) changed the situation to a degree, but, even so, Vox's early-LP integral edition of the sonatas until relatively recently remained not only the first, but the *only* such enterprise.

In the last few years, the Schubert sonatas have decisively moved into the standard repertory. Wilhelm Kempff's Deutsche Grammophon set (2720 024) is one of the great efforts of his remarkable phonographic career. Philips, having nearly completed the cycle with Ingrid Haebler, seems bent on repeating it with Alfred Brendel. Such "big name" artists as Rudolf Serkin, Artur Schnabel, and Vladimir Ashkenazy have taken on a few of the mature works, and there is even competition in the bargain basement via Paul Badura-Skoda's four-album cycle on RCA Victorla (VICS 6128/31).

It is probably the latter that prompted Vox to have Walter Klien undertake a new cycle as an up-to-date replacement for its venerable, still sonically serviceable but artistically outclassed Friedrich Wührer cycle. Many specifics of the Wührer edition are perpetuated in the first installment of the new Vox series. The annotations, for one thing, are lifted verbatim.

This can be a little embarrassing when, for example, the unfinished C major Sonata, D. 840, is described in detail as a four-movement work, with the explanation that "the version edited in 1921 by the Viennese twelve-tone composer Ernst Křenek has come to be considered definitive." By whom? Badura-Skoda uses his own, far more resourceful completion. Kempff, Brendel (on both his deleted Vanguard and the new Philips), Rudolf Serkin (Columbia, deleted), and now Klien all opt for the torso form, presenting only the two movements Schubert himself completed. Richter (Monitor MCS 2057) carries purism to the limit by playing the fragmentary scherzo and rondo precisely to the point where the composer's pen ran dry. In fact, if you want to hear the "definitive" Křenek version (which is published in Erwin Ratz's Wiener Urtext edition), you had better grab the Wührer recording before it disappears!

Klien's playing has many parallels with Wührer's. Like his predecessor, he "Beethovenizes" the music. His style—unlike that of Badura-Skoda, who waxed and waned in inverse ratio to the varying demands and stature of the pieces (at his segmented, rambling worst in the three great posthumous sonatas)—is nothing if not consistent. This is not to say that Klien enjoys equal success with each piece, but rather that he comes forth predictably with tough, sinewy, no-nonsense readings.

He is not without a certain coloristic sense—(more, certainly, than Wührer's beady-eyed, tight-lipped, monolithic playing displayed. But his tone, like Wührer's, takes on an unpleasantly hard, tacky hue in fortissimo, and even some of the soft playing lacks the sensual, lyric quality captured so notably by Kempff, Brendel, and even Badura-Skoda in his better moments. And, as in the Wührer recordings, the recorded acoustic

sometimes becomes bass-heavy, overly ambient, and hollow.

Klien's success, then, often depends on how much brusqueness or dreaminess you feel a particular piece needs. For my taste, his way does wonders for the G major Sonata, D. 894, a work often—indeed *usually*—drowned in a sea of languishing introspection. He even keeps a firm grip on the opening bars, which are by their very construction halting and fragmentary.

He invests the long first movement with drama and makes it quite plain that, although the work is subtitled *Fantasy*, it is first and foremost a classical sonata allegro. He eschews the repeat, incidentally, as do all the recordings known to me save those of Ashkenazy (London CS 6820), Peter Serkin (RCA LSC 2874), and Badura-Skoda. The second movement is sensitively shaded but very straightforward. Even though there is some mild

tive. The finale is strongly phrased, a bit unpolished, and in the main appealing. Klien observes the first-section repeats in the first and third movements but not the second-half repeats (c.f. Richter on Angel S 36150).

The early sonatas in B (D. 575) and E flat (D. 568) are rather flinty-toned in Klien's strong but rather charmless and literal interpretations. I take particular exception to his extremely slow tempo to the last movement of D. 575 (where *everyone's* idea of Allegro giusto fails to jibe with my own view of this deliciously rowdy, rollicking piece).

For all my reservations, Klien is a decidedly serious, purposeful, and highly accomplished musician. If his cycle continues on this level, it will deserve careful consideration.

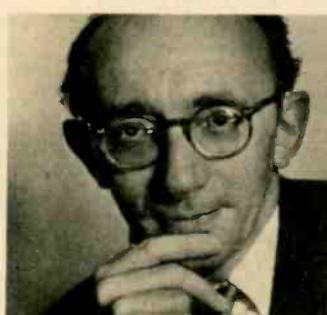
Brendel's Philips series has been, to my taste, decidedly uneven. The performances alternate passages of genuine high artistry with others grotesquely pulled



Walter Klien



Alfred Brendel



Clifford Curzon



Carol Rosenberger

tempo variation in both scherzo and finale, the playing is basically strict and economical. In fact, I find the entire performance very similar to that of Anton Kuerti on an inexpensive Monitor disc (MCS 2109), a reading I have always liked.

The toughness is carried too far in the first movement of the C Major Sonata, D. 840 (where Klien *does* observe the repeat), but he scores in that work's second movement, where his fast tempo—though by no means inflexible treatment—points up a sinister, sardonic *Ländler* element that makes the music a direct link to the third movement of Mahler's *Resurrection* Symphony. (Brendel, whose finely pointed new version I will discuss shortly, treats the cited movement more as a conventional Andante.)

Klien's account of the big A minor Sonata, D. 845, is perhaps its most objective rendering since Richter's (Monitor MC 2027). I find his first movement strong but stolid. The tempo is slow and steady, the phrasing rather choppy, the sound brittle. The ensuing variations are steadily played but without much shaping or sensitivity. The scherzo is without caprice—stern, hard-nosed, unsmiling. The accurately executed finale is slow and strait-laced. In sum, this is a poker-faced account of a not exactly charm-laden work.

Klien relaxes his ironclad grip long enough to provide a mobile, mellow reading of the "little" A major Sonata, D. 664. In the appealing first movement, he plays the opening theme in a manner that pushes ahead without sounding pressed. In the more heavily scored passages (e.g., the octaves in the development), the sound is a bit bearish—most likely due as much to the reverberant sonics as to Klien's muscularity. The Andante is moderately paced, mellow, and spacious, its coda especially sensi-

about and overly "characterized." For instance, his reading of the posthumous A major Sonata, D. 959, is mannered beyond my endurance.

However, the new disc coupling the G major and C major Sonatas, D. 894 and 840, is altogether admirable. Brendel's way with these superb pieces is less direct than Klien's. He is obviously striving for more subjective interpretations; that can be—and often is—a perilous route. Here he succeeds nobly.

His tempo for the first movement of the G major is similar to Klien's: moderately brisk and with a sense of inner core, quite different from, say, the more dreamy Ashkenazy and Peter Serkin performances. But from the outset, Brendel characterizes the rhythm (very sharp dotted notes, etc.) and varies the tempo subtly, drawing a good balance between introspection and militancy. The second movement is rather broad, but the textures are always crisp. This is imaginative, subtle, rather cool playing with a fine sense for style.

The finale is equally crystalline and fluently played. Brendel, true enough, mauls the scherzo with overdone sequential ritards, and the trio, done ever so much more slowly, is extremely tortured. Somehow, though, it works in the context of the complete performance.

Brendel's new D. 840 is more wayward than his older Vanguard, but once again the affectations are kept within reasonable limits. I was especially exhilarated by his treatment of the first-movement development, where the insistent triplet figurations are released with boundless enthusiasm and wonderful nervous energy. And I didn't mind his slowing for the second theme at all. As noted earlier, his tempo for the second movement is slower and more orthodox than Klien's, but he gets great tonal brightness and excellent clarity in the part writing.

In my opinion, this is a performance on the same rarified level as Kempff's—high praise indeed.

I find Brendel's reading of the A minor Sonata, D. 784, a bit on the mousy, ordinary side. The fortes in the opening movement are rather spiky and threadbare tonally, the rhythmic feeling decidedly square-cut and heavy. There is some extremely soft, atmospheric playing, but I find the total result droopy and precious, badly in need of some phraseological leavening. The *moto perpetuo* third movement comes off better than the other two. The tempo is slower than usual, there is precise détaché fingerwork there, and there are some effectively gauged effects (especially at those daring moments when the upward scales suddenly break off into nothingness). Even so, I cannot honestly call this more than a good routine performance. Certainly it cannot compare in scope or imaginative daring to the remarkable Kempff interpretation or the magnificent prewar 78s by Lili Kraus, who ought to be given a second chance with this work.

As I recall Brendel's Vox account of the *Moments musicaux*, the new recording is more supple, more subtle, and less stolid. There is some rather fancy tempo manipulation (e.g., the brisk starting pace for No. 1 eases greatly when the theme resumes in the left hand after the long rest), but the effects are so adroitly timed that the feeling is spontaneous rather than artfully contrived.

Perhaps the famous No. 3 in F minor seems a trifle rushed and liberally pedaled, but the flowing *con moto* tempos of the usually solemnized Nos. 2 and 6 are indicative of high artistry. I also like the juxtaposition of loud and soft in the Bach-prelude-like No. 4, the distinction made between legato and staccato, and the rhythmic playing of the ambiguous trio section with its deceptive misplaced stresses.

There are few disappointments here, although I might ideally long for more stark power in No. 5 (which Brendel plays with admirable control but excess caution) and for more effective subito pianos in the second half of No. 6's trio section (where Brendel, like so many other artists, smooths the intentionally jagged contrast away). On the whole, though, this version nearly rivals the marvelous Curzon edition issued last year (London CS 6727).

Curzon's long-awaited account of the posthumous B flat Sonata turns out to be, not too surprisingly, one of the finest available. It is a pure, thoroughbred reading he offers, perhaps at times a little too well bred! In the first movement, I cannot help feeling that he has been subtly intimidated by the impinging microphone and the prospect of immortality. Things are a trifle downbeat dominated. Surely it is not my imagination alone that makes me feel that Curzon's concert performance at Brooklyn Academy several years back had altogether more flow and lyric freedom. I also wish that he had taken the repeat in the first movement. This particular one is far more than a mere lengthener: The sudden, contrasted first ending with its fortissimo trill subtly changes the first movement from a gigantic dreamy nocturne to a nobly dramatic structure.

Still, Curzon gets pretty near to the heart of this elusive composition, and his playing loses its inhibition as it progresses. The second movement is paced exactly right—it sounds both mobile and poignantly sustained. The scherzo, a trifle leisurely perhaps, is admirably poised and tonally structured, the finale full of individualistic, almost Beethovenian stresses and accents.

The A flat Impromptu, so often sentimentalized, here

sounds wonderfully succinct. The clinging piano tone is a bit woolly and not particularly colorful but otherwise discreet and serviceable.

On the whole, Curzon's unaffected reading of the sonata is far preferable to the surprisingly prosaic Rubinstein (RCA); the ghostly, withdrawn (the performance, not the record!) Kempff (DG); and the prim Brendel (Philips). Actually his strongest competition comes from what would seem an unlikely source: Michèle Boegner's intelligently organized, beautifully executed performance for Musical Heritage Society (MHS 1042). Everything considered, Curzon surpasses even that playing by virtue of a slightly more intense, personalized view.

There is something immensely likable about Carol Rosenberger's forthright Schubert playing. It must be admitted, though, that she is traveling in some very fast company in these works.

I enjoyed very much her performance of the A minor Sonata, D. 845. Her playing, vehement and committed, abounds with drama and ardor. More than that, Miss Rosenberger manages to organize her version convincingly. The first movement, as she projects it, has requisite weight and yet manages to avoid the stolid heaviness that can—and often does—prove lethal. The theme and variations move with urgency and animated flow, and the last two movements are done with drive and engaging angularity.

What, then, are my reservations? Well, for one thing, Miss Rosenberger's pianism strikes me as just a bit heavy-handed and unpolished. Her tone tends to be hard and monochromatic. Voicing and color, two ingredients imperative to Schubert's sound world, do not receive anything like their due from her solid, "meat-and-potatoes" craftsmanship. The fact becomes even more apparent after one turns to the recordings of this sonata by Kempff, Lili Kraus (Vanguard Cardinal C 10074), Arthur Loesser (IPL 5003/4), Richter (Monitor MC 2027), and Karl Ulrich Schnabel (MHS 1245).

One can say much the same about Miss Rosenberger's playing of the D. 899 impromptu. She shows honorable intentions throughout, her basic architectural grasp (particularly in the first and second pieces) is good, and she is obviously working from a reliable urtext edition. For all that, the scalework in the E flat Impromptu (No. 2) is solid rather than sparkling, the harmonic outline of the same piece's central trio section emerges in an italicized, almost parodistic manner, and there is insufficient separation of filigree and melody in the beautiful G flat Impromptu (No. 3), which as a result drags somewhat.

When is Seraphim going to restore the incomparable Schnabel performances of these exquisite and popular pieces?



**SCHUBERT:** Sonatas for Piano, Vol. 1. Walter Klien, piano. Vox SVBX 5465, \$9.95 (three discs, manual sequence).

Sonatas: in E flat, D. 568; in B, D. 575; in A, D. 664; in C, D. 840; in A minor, D. 845; in G, D. 894.

**SCHUBERT:** Piano Works. Alfred Brendel, piano. PHILIPS 6500 416 and 6500 418, \$6.98 each.

6500 416: Sonatas: in C, D. 840; in G, D. 894. 6500 418: Sonata in A minor, D. 784; Moments musicaux, D. 780.

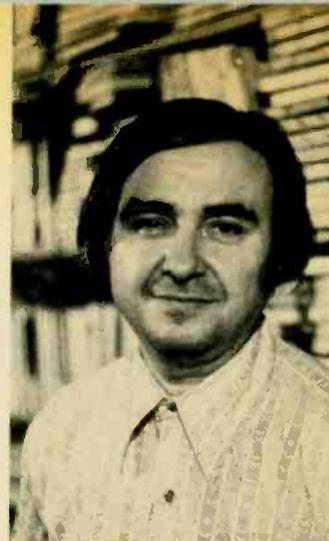
**SCHUBERT:** Sonata for Piano, in B flat, D. 960; Impromptu in A flat, D. 935, No. 2. Clifford Curzon, piano. LONDON CS 6801, \$5.98.

**SCHUBERT:** Sonata for Piano, in A minor D. 845; Impromptus (4), D. 899. Carol Rosenberger, piano. [Katya Andy and John Wright, prod.] DELOS DEL 15313, \$5.98.

by John S. Wilson

## Jerry Valburn's Jazz Archives

A new series of air checks and unreleased recordings fills in our record of the Thirties and Forties.



A CONTINUING ASTONISHMENT in the past few years for followers of pre-World War II jazz has been the unexpected expansion of the recorded repertory from that period. One would have thought that the repertory would be complete by now, that everything would have been issued and reissued.

But it gradually became evident that there was considerably more to be heard. Air checks of broadcasts from the Thirties and Forties began to turn up. Unsuspected recordings and transcriptions were made public. A whole industry—a cottage industry, to be sure—arose around the air checks stored in attics, cellars, and closets.

Initially, the mere existence of this additional material was an exciting discovery. But soon there was so much of it that critical evaluation came into play: Some "discoveries" were better technically than others; some filled important discographic gaps, while others simply repeated what was already available.

For many years jazz collectors were aware that Jerry Valburn, an audio engineer, had a remarkable collection of unissued work—16 million feet of tape. A couple of years ago Valburn started releasing his private material. Through these initial issues he came in contact with other people who had still more unissued recordings, and these were added to his resources. Some of the material he wanted to release had originally been recorded for established companies; he eventually managed to work out an arrangement with one of them, Columbia (which has a similar arrangement with Biograph Records), to use material originally recorded for it.

Now we have the result: the first fifteen Jazz Archives discs, the beginning of a varied catalogue of material from the Thirties and Forties that covers a wide musical territory and that, in some cases, provides exceptionally good recordings of bands that have been bypassed in the reissue programs of established companies.

In case, to take one example, you have been wondering why Claude Hopkins' orchestra is held in considerable esteem, JA 4 will explain. Hopkins led a big band in the Thirties that was never adequately represented on released recordings. "Released" is the key word, since the Hopkins band *did* make recordings that would have explained its reputation. But they had never been issued until Valburn's label brought together this collection of neglected sides. What one finds is a delightfully subtle band, recorded in 1932 and 1933 when subtlety was scarcely in style. It was a swinging band with a superb saxophone section that included Edmond Hall (several years before he became known to jazz aficionados) and stride piano solos by Hopkins, who also wrote arrange-

ments that are fascinatingly crisp and rhythmic.

The series offers several other relatively unrecognized big bands through air checks and recordings that show something the standard big-label reissues do not give us: Cab Calloway's fine orchestra in an essentially instrumental set featuring the saxophone of Chu Berry (JA 8); the sadly neglected Mills Blues Rhythm Band, which included Red Allen, J. C. Higginbotham, and Edgar Hayes (JA 10); and the big band that Roy Eldridge led at the Arcadia Ballroom in New York in 1939 (JA 14).

Among the small-group collections is a remarkable set of performances that brings Charlie Christian and Lester Young together with Benny Goodman (JA 6), taken from acetates that turned up in a Greenwich Village auction. And there is an assemblage of recordings involving one of the most brilliant trumpet stylists of the Thirties, Frankie Newton (JA 9), which also showcases the exhilarating talents of a strangely overlooked alto saxophonist, Tab Smith.

On some of the air checks, sound quality sometimes diminishes the inherent interest of the material. For confirmed Ellington enthusiasts, there are two fascinating collections of broadcasts by the Duke's band from the Cotton Club in 1938 (JA 12 and 13), including several splendid vocals by Ivie Anderson. But the sound ranges from satisfactory to relatively low-fi.

The Fats Waller set (JA 7) has a different sort of problem, mixing some typically effervescent Waller with a dreadful bit of vaudeville comedy (excused on the ground that Waller is at the piano) as well as a long, inane radio interview that shows, if anything, what a performer such as Waller had to put up with.

But the important thing about this series is not that it has its up and downs in audio or other terms. What is exciting is the wealth of material from the Thirties and Forties—most notably the Claude Hopkins sides, the Eldridge Arcadia Ballroom band, a Bunny Berigan big-band set, and the Young/Christian selections—that the record companies never brought us.

**H** **JAZZ ARCHIVES SERIES.** Various performers. JAZZ ARCHIVES JA 1/15, \$5.98 each disc (mono) [recorded in the 1930s and 1940s] (Jazz Archives, Box 194, Plainview, N.Y. 11803).

**CHICAGO STYLE:** Rhythm makers, Eddie Condon, Joe Sullivan, Fats Waller (JA 1). **EARL HINES:** 1933-34, 1937 (JA 2). **BUNNY AND RED:** Bunny Berigan, Red McKenzie, and the Mound City Blue Blowers (JA 3). **Claude Hopkins:** 1932-33, 1940 (JA 4). **DON REDMAN:** 1932-33 (JA 5). **CHARLIE CHRISTIAN/LESTER YOUNG:** Together 1940 (JA 6). **FATS WALLER:** Here 'Tis (JA 7). **CHU BERRY WITH CAB CALLOWAY:** Penguin Swing (JA 8). **FRANKIE NEWTON:** Swinging on 52nd St. (JA 9). **MILLS BLUES RHYTHM BAND:** Keep the Rhythm Going (JA 10). **BUNNY BERIGAN:** Down by the Old Mill Stream (JA 11). **DUKE ELLINGTON:** Cotton Club 1938, Vols. 1 and 2 (JA 12 and 13). **ROY ELDRIDGE:** At the Arcadia Ballroom (JA 14). **BEN WEBSTER:** Tribute to a Great Jazzman (JA 15).

d'orgue of Jacques Boyvin (1689 and 1700) and the one of Nicolas Gigault (1685).

The Boyvin and Gigault works are played on the superb and frequently recorded organ of four manuals and sixty-five stops in the Church of St.-Merry in Paris. The others are played on the organs of Notre Dame of St. Etienne and the church of Pithiviers.

The Nivers and De Grigny works were all released previously on a single Turnabout disc (34054).

Vol. 4 presents works by six composers active during the reign of Louis XIV—a narrower focus that lends a degree of unity missing from the previous two volumes. The third member of that trio of composers that epitomized and summarized the Versailles School—Louis Marchand (1669–1732)—is represented by a dozen major masterpieces selected from his five short *Livres d'orgue*. The two other best-known composers in this volume are Pierre du Mage and Louis Clérambault.

Du Mage, a student of Marchand, wrote only one *Livre d'orgue*, in 1708, and it is played complete here. Clérambault, the last important composer of the illustrious Golden Age, is represented by his complete 1710 *Livre d'orgue*, consisting of two suites. André Raison, Clérambault's teacher, is best known as the composer of the tune Bach used as the subject of his great C minor Passacaglia; excerpts from two of his organ Masses (1688) are included. The volume is filled out with two suites from a collection of six by François d'Agincourt and with two short dance pieces by Jean-Henri d'Anglebert, who is deservedly better known for his harpsichord works.

Most of the pieces are played on that marvelous Clicquot organ in Sarlat; the organ in the church of Pithiviers is heard in the Du Mage and Clérambault works. None of the performances in this volume seem to be available in single-disc format.

Vol. 5, "The Romantics," is devoted mainly to works from the second half of the nineteenth century. For half a century after the French Revolution (1789), interest in organs and organ music in France sank to its lowest possible level and practically nothing of value was produced. The tide began to turn in 1841, the year Aristide Cavaillé-Coll installed in the Basilica of St. Denis, near Paris, one of the first of his new "symphonic"-style organs that were to become so influential upon subsequent French composers for the instrument.

The way was thus prepared for César Franck, the greatest of this new generation of organ composers. Almost a whole disc is devoted to four of his works (the A minor Choral, *Pièce héroïque*, A major Fantasy, and the *Cantabile*). Especially the *Pièce héroïque* and the choral stand out as masterpieces in this recorded context with works by Franck's contemporaries Saint-Saëns (two preludes and fugues), Dubois (Toccata in G and Fantasy in E), Boellmann (*Suite gothique*), Guilmant, and Gigout. There's also a Liszt piece (*Evocation of the Sistine Chapel*) and two relatively unknown works from the barren early part of the century.

An *Offertoire* in D minor by Louis James Alfred Lefébure-Wély (1817–69) is a prime example of the silly, incredibly frivolous, utterly tasteless kind of music produced during those years. (It's really a very funny piece.) Pierre Francois Boëly (1785–1858), on the other hand,

was something of an anachronism. Surrounded by the likes of Lefébure-Wély, he preferred to live in the world of the past, playing the organ works of Bach and emulating Bach's and Scarlatti's style in his own compositions. His Suite of five versets on the Kyrie is a first-rate piece, high-minded and serious and effectively performed.

The two Saint-Saëns preludes and fugues and Franck's *Pièce héroïque* and *Cantabile* were previously released on a single Turnabout disc ("French Organ Music of the Late Romantic Period," 34238) coupled with some Widor pieces, which also turn up in Vol. 6 of this series.

Vol. 6, "The 20th-Century French Composer," presents a very good picture of contemporary activity—though one might question the inclusion here of works by Vierne, Tournemire, and Widor, written in the twentieth century but strictly in the nineteenth-century symphonic style. Significant music is being produced nowadays, and several outstanding examples are offered: especially the excerpts from Langlais's *Hommage à Jean-Philippe Rameau* and Grünwald's *Sonate pour orgue*—both written in 1964—and Jehan Alain's *Première Suite*, all first-rate pieces.

The Messiaen excerpts (*Transports de joie*, *Desseins éternels*, and *Dieu parmi nous*) and Duruflé's 1943 *Prélude et fugue sur le nom d'Alain* are already something like twentieth-century "classics" and need no further recommendations.

This volume draws more heavily than any of the others on previously released single records. Of the fourteen pieces here, eight (by Langlais, Tournemire, Vierne, Duruflé, Litaize, Grünwald, and Messiaen) can be found on Turnabout's "Modern French Organ Music" (34319). The two Widor pieces are from the Turnabout "French Organ Music of the Late Romantic Period" previously mentioned (though the Sixth Symphony excerpt seems to be a different performance). The three Messiaen excerpts are on a Candide disc (CE 31034), along with four other Messiaen pieces. Only two pieces, then, the Alain suite and Dupré's *Variations sur un Noël*, appear here for the first time.

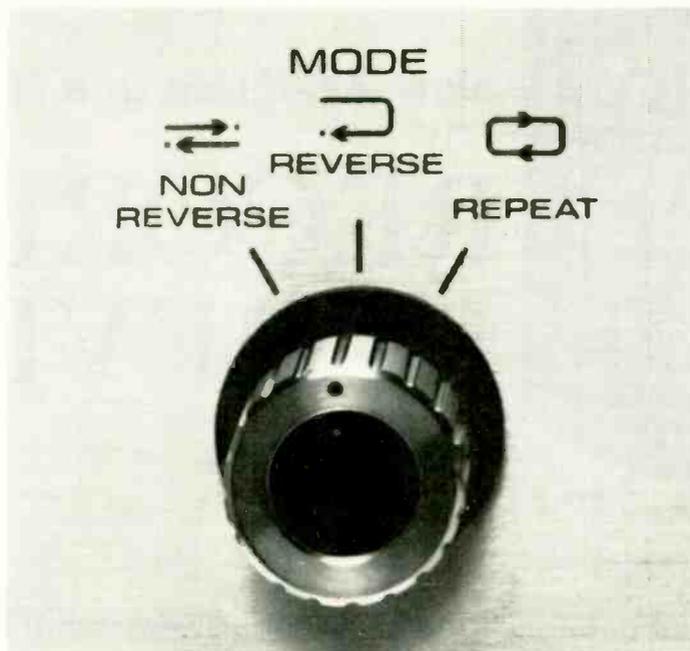
Most of the material in Vols. 5 and 6 is performed and beautifully recorded on a remarkably fine 1889 Cavaillé-Coll organ of fifty-one stops in the Basilica of St. Sernin, Toulouse. Four pieces, however, are performed on a new (1965) organ in the Dominican Church at Landshut (near Munich), an extremely unattractive, poorly voiced, poorly scaled, faultily winded instrument, whose builder, Gerhard Schmid, seems to have given no thought whatsoever to producing an attractive or even cohesive sound. It's badly out of tune to boot.

For the music student or record collector who has been trying to find the developmental thread that connects Titelouze and Messiaen, these six volumes provide an invaluable aid, available nowhere else. The more selective collector, who may not be interested in Vox's comprehensive historical approach, will find many first-rate works recorded for the first time among these volumes.



**SURVEY OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST ORGAN MUSIC: FRANCE**, Vols. 1–6. André Isoir, Xavier Darasse, Claude Terrasse, René Saorgin, Jean-Claude Raynaud, and Franz Lehnrdorfer, organ. Vox SVBX 5310/5, \$9.95 each three-disc set (manual sequence).

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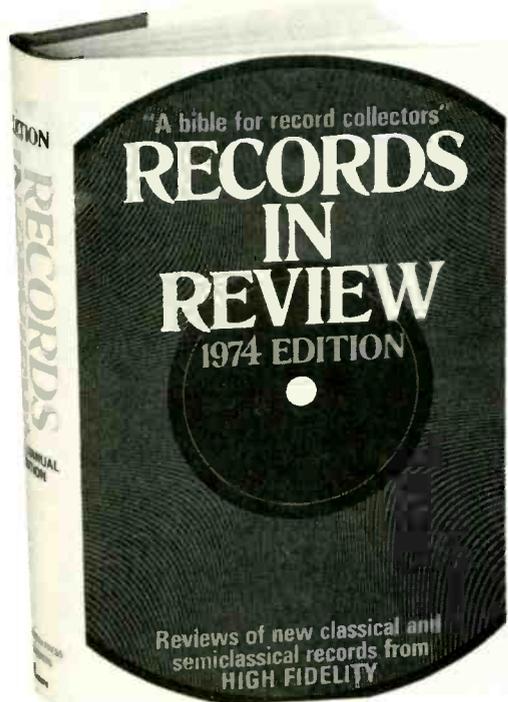
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Artur Schnabel  
*Bach with a style  
 of his own.*

**B** **D'ALBERT:** Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 2, in E, Op. 12. **REINECKE:** Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1, in F sharp minor, Op. 72. Michael Ponti, piano; Luxemburg Radio Orchestra, Pierre Cao, cond. CANDIDE CE 31078, \$3.98.

Comparison—Reinecke:  
 Robbins, Remoortel/Monte Carlo Gen. GS 1034

The Romantic Revival has reached the point where obscure unearthings have become so unobscure that they can be had in multiple versions. The vision of the Schwann catalogue of 1984, with its nineteen competing versions of the Reinecke First Piano Concerto, looms ever nearer.

Actually, the Reinecke First is a pleasant enough work. Composed in 1867, it epitomizes its composer's abhorrence of the new-fangled excesses of the Liszt-Wagner school. Yet even if one has the temerity to like Liszt and Wagner, there is no reason in this day and age to dislike Reinecke.

One is more apt to like him on the Genesis coupling of the First and Second Concertos than on Ponti's new recording of the First. Neither Genesis' Monte Carlo National Opera Orchestra nor Candide's Luxemburg ensemble is very good. But conductor Eduard van Remoortel and pianist Gerald Robbins shaped the music delicately and lyrically, as opposed to Ponti's typically manic, high-pressure style.

That style works rather better in the overside D'Albert concerto, however. D'Albert studied with Liszt and was a composer firmly in the progressive mold. Since he was a pianist of stature, it is curious that his principal compositions were operatic (nineteen were completed and produced). The Second Piano Concerto, published in 1893, consists of a single movement, full of virtuosic opportunities for the soloists and exuberant display. It's an attractive piece—the only D'Albert in the current domestic catalogue.

Even if you already own the Genesis Reinecke disc, the new Candide is probably worth

getting, given its budget price, for the D'Albert alone. J.R.

**H** **BACH:** Keyboard Works. Artur Schnabel, piano. ROCOCO 2060, \$6.95 (mono) [recorded in the '30s-'50s] (Rococo Records, Box 175, Station K, Toronto 12, Ont. Canada).

Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue, in D minor, S. 903. Concerto for Two Keyboards and Orchestra, No. 2, in C, S. 1061 (with Karl Ulrich Schnabel, piano; London Symphony Orchestra, Adrian Boult, cond). Italian Concerto, in F, S. 971. Toccatas: in C minor, S. 911; in D, S. 912. Well-Tempered Clavier, Book I: Prelude and Fugue No. 5, in D, S. 850.

**BACH:** Partitas for Keyboard: No. 1, in B flat, S. 825; No. 2, in C minor, S. 826. João Carlos Martins, piano. [E. Alan Silver, prod.] CONNOISSEUR SOCIETY CS 2057, \$5.98.

The reassertion of the harpsichord in our musical life over the past fifty years has never quite managed to quash all performances of Bach on the piano. This may be a source of regret to the musicological purists, but struck-and plucked-string keyboard performances of Bach should be able to coexist quite amicably.

The pianists often take the line that, since the composer himself wasn't all that fussy about what instrumental color was ascribed to what contrapuntal line, musicologists and their critical henchmen are all niggling scholastics. And perhaps sometimes they are. But Bach on the piano can be defended even more simply: It has its own tradition, stemming from the nineteenth century and preserved on the records of many Romantic virtuosos.

What the current discs document is something a little different. Artur Schnabel represented a kind of interwar classicism in his style—for Beethoven as well as for Bach. His Bach doesn't swamp the music with a wash of Busonian color. Instead he plays clearly and clearly. It may lack style measured against approved present-day notions of correct baroque performance practice. But style in the larger, more general sense of timeless communicable musicality it most definitely has.

João Carlos Martins is a Brazilian who first attracted attention a few years back with a well-received recording of the complete *Well-Tempered Clavier* for Connoisseur Society. This disc, however, the first installment of what one presumes will be a complete set of the keyboard partitas, is a disappointment. The playing is prosaic and plodding, the recorded sound echoey and distorted.

There is an ongoing pianistic tradition for Bach, one that is continually being stretched (cf. Glenn Gould). But on the basis of this record, Martins is hardly a very important part of that tradition. J.R.

**B** **BACH:** Motets, Vol. 1. Martin Neary, organ; Aeolian Singers, Sebastian Forbes, cond. LONDON STEREO TREASURY STS 15186, \$2.98.

Motets: No. 1, Singet dem Herrn ein neues Lied, S. 225; No. 2, Der Geist hilft unsrer Schwachheit auf, S. 226; No. 4, Fürchte dich nicht, ich bin bei dir, S. 228; Sei Lob und Preis mit Ehren, S. 231.

This record should have been a lot better than it is: The Aeolian Singers is a very small group of young, well-trained professional choral singers (about on a par with our own Gregg Smith Singers), and Sebastian Forbes leads them in stylish and tasteful as well as highly skilled performances. The blame for most of the shortcomings probably rests with the engineers.

## Explanation of symbols

Classical:

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

Recorded tape:

- Open Reel
- 8-Track Cartridge
- Cassette

Three of the four motets here are for two antiphonal four-part choirs. Forbes frequently assigns but one singer to a part and never more than two. I would guess (the jacket notes offer little information). The accompaniment consists only of organ continuo with cello part of the time, and much of *Singet dem Herrn* is completely unaccompanied.

Though I feel Bach probably would have used instruments doubling all the voices all the time, Forbes's arrangement is one that *should* guarantee maximum clarity of Bach's extremely complex contrapuntal textures, and his singers are skilled enough to handle the music on their own. What comes through the speakers, though, is a clear, clean soprano and bass line, comfortably close to the microphones, a rather weak tenor line, and an alto line that sounds—when it can be heard at all—as if it were being sung in the next room. The closely miked sopranos, furthermore, frequently cause so much distortion that all the lines are blurred beyond recognition.

This record, labeled Vol. 1, contains three of the canonical six motets plus an extra, short motetlike movement (*Sei lob und Preis*, S. 231) that can also be found in Cantata No. 28 in a slightly different version with a different text. Vol. 2 will contain the other three motets, plus another short motetlike piece, *O Jesu Christ, mein's Lebens Licht*, which has been included among the cantatas as No. 118. Let's hope the technical quality of Vol. 2 (if it is ever released here) will be up to the superb level of Forbes's performances. A group of such high caliber, rehearsed to such perfection, deserves to be heard more clearly. C.F.G.

**BACH:** Sonatas and Partitas for Solo Violin, S. 1001-6. Christiane Edinger, violin. ORION ORS 74151/2, \$13.96 (two discs).

Sonatas: No. 1, in G minor; No. 2, in A minor; No. 3, in C. Partitas: No. 1, in B minor; No. 2, in D minor; No. 3, in E.

**Comparisons:**

Szeryng DG 2709 028; Odys. 32 36 0013  
Grumiaux Phi. 835 198/200  
Wilkomirska (Son. No. 1; Part. No. 2) Conn. CS 2040

Christiane Edinger, a formidable young Berliner who began her studies at the Hochschule für Musik and rounded them off with work under Joseph Fuchs and Nathan Milstein, launches her recording career with a set of the Bach sonatas and partitas that can take their place beside the best in the catalogue. Her intonation is dead on center, her rhythm rock-solid, her tone big, pure, and commanding. In fact, commanding is the word for the entire performance: She knows absolutely what she is about and sets forth the music with a sense of authority that is unmistakable.

She does not go in particularly for beguilement, and at times a deliberately stately tempo (as in the Allemande of Partita No. 1 or the Adagio of Sonata No. 1) eschews certain lyric possibilities. But the stateliness never sags into sluggishness, and there is never any sense of strain in encompassing double stops. In fast movements she is brilliant and sure-fingered—the Allegro of Sonata No. 2, for example, is wonderfully invigorating and captures the hunting-horn character of the figuration that many miss. Throughout, she is unfailingly clear, secure, unfussy. The Chaconne is a noble affair, with the subject line running like a steel thread through the surrounding harmonies.

Among the violinists represented in the current catalogue by complete sets of these



Christiane Edinger  
*Commanding Bach*

works, Szeryng remains the most graceful, singing, and altogether urbane proponent; Grumiaux is less subtle, more rugged, more overt. From Wanda Wilkomirska we have so far only Sonata No. 1 and Partita No. 2; she is wirier in tone, less bold in approach than Edinger.

The recorded sound is close and full, and the only concession to economy, in limiting the set to two discs instead of three, is that all the repeats are ignored. Contrary to custom, the works are grouped with the sonatas running consecutively, then the partitas. S.F.

**BEESON:** The Sweet Bye and Bye.

Sister Rose Ora Easter  
Sister Rees  
Mother Rainey  
Sister Gladys  
Brother Smiley  
Billy Wilcox  
Mary Jane Ripley  
Second Bather  
Third Bather  
First Beauty Judge

Noelle Rogers (s)  
Judith Anthony (s)  
Carolynne James (ms)  
Paula Seibel (s)  
Walter Hook (bs)  
Robert Owen Jones (t)  
Elizabeth Green (s)  
Thomas Claffy (t)  
Dennis Howell (bs-b)  
William Latimer (b)

Kansas City Lyric Theater Chorus and Orchestra, Russell Patterson, cond. DESTO DC 7179/80, \$11.96 (two discs, automatic sequence).

*The Sweet Bye and Bye* dates back to 1956 and holds a worthy place in the annals of operas on American themes. Beeson, born in Muncie, Indiana, in 1921, has taught at Columbia University since 1945. He says he wanted to be a composer of operas since the age of twelve, and this work and his best-known score, *Lizzie Borden* (available on Desto 6455/7), place him in the same camp as such worthies as Douglas Moore, Aaron Copland, Lukas Foss, Carlisle Floyd, and Robert Ward, to name only a few.

Whatever one may think of their varying worth, none of these composers has equaled Virgil Thomson's achievement. The reason is mostly musical, of course—Thomson's freshly idiosyncratic use of triadic harmonies and his original notions of phrasing have yet to come into their own. But it also has to do with dramatic questions. Thomson's use of Gertrude Stein texts in *Four Saints in Three Acts* and *The Mother of Us All* sets him apart from

the plodding, naturalistic conventions that afflict so many American operas. A setting between the seacoasts somewhere and a few folk tunes stuck like cloves into the ham of conservative composition do not a modern musical-theatrical experience make.

Kenward Elmslie's libretto for *The Sweet Bye and Bye* is crippled beyond redemption—for me, at least, with my sinful city ways—by the hoary flatness of its central dramatic conflict. The story concerns itself with the tribulations of Sister Rose Ora Easter in the 1920s. She is torn between the repressive hypocrisy of the Fundamentalist sect of which she is spiritual leader and the love of a good man, who eventually gets shot for his pains by the sexually repressed den mother of the sect.

Quite apart from the fact that Bellini did it earlier and better in *Norma*, this libretto loses most of its interest in the psychological naiveté of its assumptions and the awkwardness of its writing. How much more interesting it would have been to make Rose Ora's conflict a real one; as it is, it's the good guys vs. the bad guys, and who really cares?

Beeson's music is certainly well crafted and full of intermittent charms. There are even some innovative twists, particularly for 1956: The climax of the first act, for instance, when Mother Rainey lures Rose Ora back to the flock, has the chorus singing from an on-stage radio. But mostly this is safe and square stuff, the kind that conventionally trained singers find grateful to sing (at least in comparison with the avant-garde) and that falls relatively lightly on the ears of American opera subscribers. It's just that it's not likely to survive its time.

The current performance, drawn from a recent production by the Kansas City Lyric Theater, sounds first-rate. Noel (or Noelle, as she has more recently chosen to bill herself) Rogers sings Rose Ora's part with a full, pleasant soprano, nice dramatic involvement, and sound musicianship. Robert Owen Jones is one of those tenors with a promising baritone bottom and a still-constricted, detached top; his performance of the man in Rose Ora's life remains a persuasive one, however. Carolynne James projects Mother Rainey's malevolence effectively enough, and the rest of the cast upholds the standards of the three principals.

Russell Patterson conducts enthusiastically, and the chorus and orchestra do their work well. J.R.

**H** **BEETHOVEN:** Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 4, in G, Op. 58. **CHOPIN:** Waltz in E flat, Op. 18. **BRAHMS:** Intermezzo in C, Op. 119, No. 3. **SCARLATTI:** Sonata in G, L. 387. Myra Hess, piano; BBC Symphony Orchestra, Adrian Boult, cond. (in the Beethoven). ROCOCO 2041, \$6.95 (mono) (Rococo Records, Box 175, Station K, Toronto 12, Ont., Canada).

**BEETHOVEN:** Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 4, in G, Op. 58; Bagatelles (6), Op. 126; Rondo a capriccio, in G, Op. 129. Jan Panenka, piano; Prague Symphony Orchestra, Václav Smetáček, cond. (in Op. 58). [Jan Vřána, prod.] SUPRAPHON 1 10 1224, \$6.98.

For all her regal poise and seriousness of purpose, Dame Myra's artistry was leavened by a real sense of humor and airy twinkle. There may have been more fiery players but few

whose art was so complete spiritually. And in its unpretentious, utterly direct way, most of her music-making reached sublime heights. There was power too: I recall strong, regal performances of the Beethoven *Emperor* and Brahms B flat Concertos, as well as remarkably firm, well-proportioned readings of Chopin's F minor Fantasy and B flat minor Sonata.

Like her great compatriot Clifford Curzon, Dame Myra was rarely at her best in the recording studio. Her relatively scant discography, excellent though it is, hardly captures her full art. The 1953 HMV/Victor coupling of the Beethoven Opp. 109 and 110 Sonatas is completely characteristic (Op. 109 is included in Seraphim IC 6045), but other items do her less than full justice.

Which makes the new Rococo disc (drawn from live concerts) all the more welcome. Dame Myra never recorded the Beethoven G major Concerto commercially, although it was one of her specialties. I suspect that this performance, from a BBC broadcast, dates from her later years, but she is in wonderful form, projecting all the familiar firmness of contour and radiance. This is round, warm, generous playing. Tempos are actually rather brisk but appear broad and ruminative as a result of the sonority and expansive phrasing. Sir Adrian is an ideal partner—rhythmically secure, muscular, and warmhearted, with just a touch of sobriety. The cadenzas are Beethoven's—in the first movement, the more usual one beginning with the repeated Gs.

The three short pieces are, I believe, from a recital c. 1949 at the University of Illinois. The Chopin *valse brillante* is an absolute delight—fleet, supple, and gracious, with a touch of expansive heft in certain climaxes. The Brahms is the famous "Hess" intermezzo. Her last

recording of it (for Angel) was strangely cautious and lackluster; however, this version—much faster—captures the inimitable performance in all its irresistible charm and swagger. The Scarlatti sonata (another specialty) is a bit *too* fast for comfort, but even so the trills are delicious.

The Rococo pressing is substandard, but it will have to do. The sound, while dull, is not that unpleasant.

The fillers for Jan Panenka's G major Concerto are rather substantial: in fact, they are the biggest reason for buying the record. The Op. 126 are bagatelles in name only: Unlike the eleven charming little works of Op. 119, which are miniatures, these six pieces are cut stylistically and aesthetically from the same fabric as the *Missa Solemnis* and the late quartets. They are by turns mystical, serene, turbulent, and exalted—full of sudden quirky changes of mood (as at the beginning and end of No. 6). No. 3, for example, is one of Beethoven's late-period variation movements in microcosm. One finds equal but less sublime evidence of the "late" period in the Op. 129 Rondo, the so-called *Rage over a lost penny*—abrupt modulations, fragmented, angry outbursts, and the like. (The date of this composition is 1823, not "probably 1795–1798" as claimed in the Supraphon annotations.)

Panenka plays these works with sensitivity, fine pianistic address, and scrupulous care for detail. Sometimes his interpretations are a shade genteel or ripely rhetorical for my taste, but the linear clarity and magnificent tonal solidity more than compensate. The glorious sounds of the instrument (probably a Bösendorfer or a German Steinway) are beautifully reproduced, and the disc is excellently processed.

Panenka and Smetáček give the concerto a

chamber performance, probably similar in proportions to those of Beethoven's time. Tempos are brisk; the piano is up front and allowed to dominate the smallish orchestra. The phrasing is neat, trim, and sensitive, but once again slightly low-tensioned. As in his recent version of the B flat Concerto [reviewed in March 1974], Panenka plays his own cadenzas—brief, tasteful, and to the point. H.G.

**BEETHOVEN:** Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 5, in E flat, Op. 73 (*Emperor*). Christoph Eschenbach, piano; Boston Symphony Orchestra, Seiji Ozawa, cond. [Thomas Mowrey, prod.] DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 437, \$7.98.

**BEETHOVEN:** Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 5, in E flat, Op. 73 (*Emperor*). Arturo Benedetti Michelangeli, piano; Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra, Sergiu Celibidache, cond. Rococo 2047, \$6.95 (mono; Rococo Records, Box 175, Station K, Toronto 12, Ont., Canada).

The best thing about DG's aristocratic but singularly unregal new *Emperor* is Ozawa's graceful, well-sprung, adroitly paced presentation of the orchestral part. It is classical in the best sense: judicious instrumental balances (it is surely the engineers' fault, not his, that the brass is so backward in the finale); taut, dancelike rhythmic stress; and clear, expressive sonority (which, admittedly, sometimes sounds more appropriate to *Daphnis et Chloé* than to Beethoven's rougher textures).

There is nothing drastically wrong with Eschenbach's work, but little about it could be called distinguished either. Articulation of ornaments is sometimes a little awkward, and some of the phrasing seems to me manicured and self-consciously sentimental. Nor is the (perfectly listenable) engineering particularly noteworthy: The perspective is distant, and, although much of the woodwind sound comes through clearly, the brass, timpani, and low strings lack incisiveness.

This *Emperor*, then, is by no means contemptible, but with so many superior versions available at a fraction of the price, I can only wonder: Why?

I can readily grasp the value of having such a spectacular example of pianism as Michelangeli's available for analysis. But his unique brand of morbid detachment combined with maudlin sentimentality is not something I'd care to hear more than once or twice.

Rococo gives no dates, but my guess is that this performance derives from a European radio tape roughly contemporaneous with Michelangeli's 1965 *Emperors* with William Steinberg and the New York Philharmonic. It is a tortured, calculated affair—full of brilliant pianistic effects and meticulously exaggerated details. Michelangeli commands a bold, brilliant piano tone, which he deploys with icy detachment and complete technical mastery. He tends to draw up to lurching fitards at big cadences; lyrical passages are more often than not sapped vampirelike of all vital juices.

In the quasi-cadenza coda to the first movement, soloist and conductor appear to be having a major tug-of-war: Michelangeli slows the reiteration of the second theme to half speed, projecting each note with the contrived inanity of a music box; Celibidache, however, will have none of it and brings in the horns at something approaching the normal tempo.



Myra Hess—music-making reaching sublime heights.

The eccentric interpretation is clothed in dullish but entirely listenable sound. The Swedish orchestra's smooth but not very massive playing neither adds nor detracts from what is basically Michelangeli's (freak) show. H.G.

**BEETHOVEN:** Piano Works. Julius Katchen, piano. LONDON CS 6599, \$5.98. Bagatelles (6), Op. 126; Polonaise in C, Op. 89; Sonata No. 32, in C minor, Op. 111.

This, regrettably, is not a new recording. Katchen died very tragically several years ago, and this disc has been available for some time abroad. The maxim "better late than never" certainly applies, and this memento turns out to be one of the best things Katchen has bequeathed posterity.

In his short life span, the American pianist recorded quite a fair amount of Beethoven: all five concertos, the *Choral Fantasia*, the *Diabelli Variations* (twice), and some of the better-known sonatas (including, if I am not mistaken, an earlier rendition of Op. 111). For all that, I never particularly regarded Katchen as a Beethoven stylist. More often than not, I found his performances small-scaled, a bit too nimble, and lacking in rhythmic concentration. A piece like the little B flat Rondo sparkled under his fast tempo and fleet, pearly fingers, but the C minor Concerto emerged in superficial, rounded-off fashion.

On this disc, however, Katchen displays a weightier sonority and a more personal sort of accentuation. The sublime Op. 126 Bagatelles are a bit more relaxed and temperate than I would ideally want, but they do have strength, contrast, and imaginative tonal shading, and they are scrupulously cognizant of all the little accents and dynamic markings that give these pieces their "late Beethoven" aura. The Polonaise, Op. 89, brings that dance form to the pinnacle of pre-Chopin development, and Katchen's bright, virtuosic, charming presentation is elegance personified.

The Op. 111 Sonata doesn't quite eradicate memories of Schnabel. Katchen's opening movement is suitably burly but rather stodgy and sectionalized. The variation movement, on the other hand, is memorably mystical and intense.

Was Katchen at the threshold of greatness when he taped these splendidly reproduced performances? Alas, we shall never know the full extent of our loss. Warmly recommended, and not just to Katchen devotees. H.G.

**BERIO:** Chamber Works. Cathy Berberian, soprano; Heinz Holliger, oboe; Juilliard Ensemble, Luciano Berio, cond. PHILIPS 6500 631, \$6.98.

*Differences*, for Five Instruments and Magnetic Tape; *Chamber Music*, for Female Voice, Clarinet, Cello, and Harp; *Two Pieces for Violin and Piano*; *Sequenza III*, for Female Voice; *Sequenza VII*, for Oboe.

*Comparison—Sequenza III:*

Berberian

Can. CE 31027

*Comparison—Differences:*

Berio/Domaine Musical

Main. 5004

Of the five Berio works included here, two are new to the catalogue: *Due Pezzi* (1951) and *Chamber Music* (1953), relatively early pieces written when Berio was still in his twenties.

The *Two Pieces* (a very curious title, since there are clearly three pieces arranged in a fast-slow-fast sequence!) already shows Berio

to be a remarkably fluent young composer. The elegant, virtuosic lines, couched in a mildly dissonant post-tonal style, give a clear indication of the composer's later inclinations.

*Chamber Music*, a remarkably evocative setting of three poems from James Joyce's collection of this name, is a bit more refined and more subtly worked out. Again the music is characterized by elaborate filigree lines, which taken together weave complex, yet surprisingly transparent, textures. Particularly striking is the contrasting middle song, which is almost completely confined to a single pitch.

*Differences*, written in 1958-59, was one of the earliest pieces to combine live and taped music. The sound source for the tape was provided by the same instrumental combination that performs the piece live (flute, clarinet, viola, cello, and harp), although it has been manipulated electronically to provide a kind of continuum of sound ranging from a virtually "natural" instrumental quality to an extremely distorted one. The tape is heard only in the middle of the piece, and the idea is to move gradually, almost imperceptibly, from the live to taped sound and then back again. It is a brilliant, effective work, although one that is not heard to best advantage on a recording, where the live sound is already "distanced," so that the border between taped and untaped music (i.e., at the "lower" end of the continuum) becomes extremely fuzzy.

*Sequenza III* and *Sequenza VII* have appeared previously in performances by these soloists, soprano Cathy Berberian and oboist Heinz Holliger.

Miss Berberian's version of *Sequenza III* is not the same as her earlier one on *Candide*. It is considerably faster (it lasts some seven minutes, as opposed to nine); and the words on which the piece is based have become more distorted. (Contrary to what Marcel Marnat's liner notes tell us, the poem by Markus Kutter is not itself "disjointed"—it makes perfectly good sense when read by itself; it is only Berio's textual manipulations, which completely rearrange the words and phrases, that



Luciano Berio  
*A mini retrospective.*

make it disjointed.) The extremely dramatic nature of *Sequenza III*, which contrasts sustained sung sounds with short, spoken (quasi-parlando) ones, suits Miss Berberian's talents perfectly, and I find the two versions equally effective.

The Holliger version of *Sequenza VII* is the same one recently released here on Philips' fine all-Holliger disc (6500 202, reviewed in May). The other performances are generally excellent, although I feel that *Sequenza III* suits Miss Berberian's voice much better than the warmer, fuller lyricism of *Chamber Music*.

The Juilliard Ensemble, consisting of recent graduates of that school (these recordings were made while Berio was still teaching composition there), is an excellent group, and its performance of *Differences* more than holds its own with the earlier version on Time (now available on Mainstream), which was also conducted by Berio. It is both more relaxed and more secure.

Unfortunately, texts for the vocal pieces are not included. This would be bad enough in any case, but it is really unforgivable in the case of a piece like *Sequenza III*. R.P.M.

**BELLINI:** Norma.

Norma  
Adalgisa  
Pollione  
Oroveso  
Flavio  
Clotilde

Beverly Sills (s)  
Shirley Verrett (ms)  
Enrico di Giuseppe (t)  
Paul Plishka (bs)  
Robert Tear (t)  
Deia Wallis (ms)

John Alldis Choir; New Philharmonia Orchestra, James Levine, cond. [David Mottley, prod.] ABC AUDIO TREASURY ATS 20017, \$20.94 (three discs).

This new *Norma*, a disappointment on almost every level, leaves unchanged the *status quo ante* as described by Andrew Porter in his April 1973 review of the Caballé/RCA set. Mr. Porter's encyclopedic discussion of the current *Norma* recordings—and of that encyclopedic central role—simplifies my task in evaluating the current effort, all the more so since I largely agree with his judgments.

The recording was made in England in the summer of 1973 after some performances with the same conductor and a similar cast at the Ravinia Festival outside Chicago, but it is evident all hands still have much to learn about this great and extremely difficult opera.

Beverly Sills's *Norma* would, I suspect, make a greater impact in an opera house, given her acting abilities, but the microphone has been a cruel taskmaster, revealing all too clearly her vocal limitations for this role. The voice is under constant strain, prevented from expanding and filling the music she must sing. Although throughout she gives a committed performance and rightly refuses the kind of vocal push-and-pyrotechnics that sometimes passes for a *Norma*, this is not enough.

The role's fiendish demand (well, *one* of them) is for a large, dramatic *cum coloratura* voice endowed at the same time with a measure of sheer vocal gorgeoussness. "*Casta diva*," for instance, must have a dreamlike, floating ecstasy, yet with a sense of ample reserve power. These qualities Sills can no longer command, even at this slow speed. The basic monochromatic quality of her present voice, with its persistent small quaver, vitiates the countless shading and expressive moments that crowd the score. I never felt either her presence as leader of her people or the tenderness—for her people, her lover, her children—

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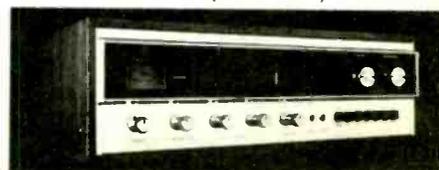
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that goes hand in hand with her rage and jealousy and that emerges in full in the final scene.

Norma must grow inexorably as the opera progresses, so that at the end she possesses the stage as fully as does Isolde, to the exclusion of all else. One of the best qualities of Caballé's recording (RCA LSC 6202) is precisely this dominance. In this recording, quite the opposite occurs: Norma fades away into the aural sludge of the final pages. The acoustics are partly responsible, but the fault cannot be laid solely there: Sills herself never commands center stage.

Moreover, she only rarely tries to employ the rubatos that should constantly illumine the vocal and instrumental line. True, this rubato technique can come only through deep knowledge of the score, in concert with a conductor with the same knowledge—which is why Callas alone (on her 1954 recording, Seraphim IC 6037, or the 1960 stereo remake, Angel SCL 3615) is able to do justice to this aspect. But *Norma* taken literally is *Norma* shirked, and no amount of vocal embellishment will help.

It is also true that Sills has received scant help from her conductor, James Levine, or from her recording technicians. Levine gives a robust, forthright performance—no energy crisis here—with the forte chords in the recitatives sounding like whip cracks. But although this kind of alive conducting is different from the usual somnolent Italian approach, it is no better.

In the first place, it is not what Bellini wanted, since it constantly sacrifices the ongoing line of the piece and never pays attention to the gradations of piano and forte (and even forte and accented forte, two quite different sounds) that enrich the score. But, beyond that, this mid-Verdian orchestral bellowing serves only to make the opera monotonous (as well as putting greater pressure on the singers). Levine's handling of the long set pieces, with their reiterated accompaniment, shows little expressive awareness, and some of his tempo choices—either glutinous, as with "*Mira, o Norma*," or rushed—seem more quixotic than logical.

The technical boys have also flubbed: The recorded sound is boomy and bass-heavy, as if recorded from inside the bass drum that intrudes (with the cymbals) at every climax. In the Act I trio the miking is so bad that Adalgisa is constantly drowned out by the others. Bellini's very careful orchestration is turned into an Italian *banda* concert, which is shameful.

The question of a soprano or mezzo Adalgisa has never been satisfactorily answered. (The original was a soprano; today all are mezzos.) It is a question not of range, but of timbre: Adalgisa, after all, is a *giovinetta* who should have a lighter, fresher, less-developed voice than Norma but who could become, in time, a Norma (as Grisi, the original Adalgisa, did). By this standard, all mezzo Adalgisas sound too matronly, although if there is a vocally strong Norma and the mezzo is young enough the right balance may be struck.

Shirley Verrett, despite her highly accomplished performance, strikes me as less right for the part than Christa Ludwig (with Callas on Angel SCL 3615) or Marilyn Horne (with Sutherland on London OSA 1394), because the voice lacks velvet and is too maturely handled. She is *already* a Norma, not an Adalgisa, especially against the smaller-scaled Norma of Sills.



Shirley Verrett  
Perhaps she should have been the Norma.

Enrico di Giuseppe, a serviceable tenor at the New York City Opera and the Met, is out of his depth as Pollione, which requires a heft and an agility he doesn't possess. Paul Plishka's rather woolly bass doesn't have the commanding presence of several other Orvosos.

A short footnote to Mr. Porter's discussion of the musicology of the score: "*Casta diva*" is sung in the original key (G), but otherwise the traditional version is used; no *maggiore* coda after the "*Guerra*" chorus. (The Bonyng/London set stands out for its consideration of Bellini's manuscript, including the restoration of a good deal of normally omitted material.)

In his review, Mr. Porter lamented the currently prevalent philosophy of opera recording in which, for various reasons of convenience, everyone settles for less than "the best and most considered work of which the artist is capable." This "journalistic" process (contrasted with the care a writer accords material for publication in book form) involves schedule-juggling for jet-hopping singers, hurried sessions, recordings made because of "star" singers or trendy works rather than because of devotion to the opera or to the composer. It also includes the recording of operas before the singers or the conductor have had time to acquaint themselves thoroughly with the work.

In the case of *Norma* the "journalistic" epithet has a special ring. I am convinced, the more I hear this opera, that it is one of the very greatest works the form has produced: a unique amalgam of music with dramatic and emotional power that is at once musical drama and pure music at its highest inspiration.

Its difficulties, both in the title role and in the orchestra, are immense, and indeed it is probably true that an ideal Norma (the role, not the opera) would be impossible to find. Yet I have seen or heard performances of *Don Giovanni*, *Meistersinger*, and Verdi's *Otello* which have satisfied me that the work was being done full justice and that the ideal was touched, if not captured. With the exception of Callas' *Norma*—and that applies mostly to

her contribution—I have never been similarly satisfied, on or off records, with a performance of *Norma*, good as many of them have been.

The reason, I think, is that *Norma* has never been considered worthy of the reverence accorded *Giovanni* or *Meistersinger*, that it has never been given the "conductor's treatment" it deserves. For example, if Toscanini had shown us exactly how great a score Bellini wrote, I doubt that we would be as easily satisfied as we are.

In a way, it is good to be able to say this, for it means we have a piece of recorded history to look forward to. There are casts singing and conductors at work today who could be drawn together to give us just such a performance. It will require planning (as to casting no less than as to the musicological details); it will require the expenditure of time, hard work, and, on the part of the Norma and her conductor, study, study, study. But it can be done, for *Norma*, despite its difficulties, is like *Tristan* a work of the theater, not of the archive. Any takers?

PATRICK J. SMITH

**BERLIOZ:** *Symphonie fantastique*. For a review of a recording of this work, see page 90.

**DANDRIEU:** *First Organ Book* (eight excerpts)—See Du Mage: *Organ Book*.

**DU MAGE:** *Organ Book*. **DANDRIEU:** *First Organ Book* (eight excerpts). Frank Taylor, organ (Fisk organ, Old West Church, Boston). ELYSÉE EDITIONS SD 1001, \$5.95 (Elysée Editions, 88 Lowell Rd., Wellesley, Mass. 02181).

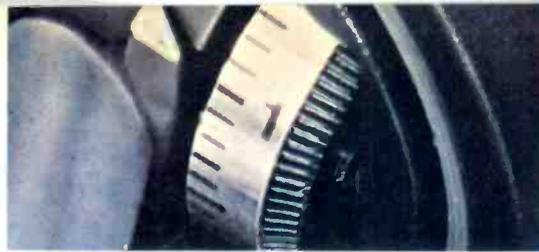
Pierre du Mage and Jean François Dandrieu were contemporaries, living and writing during the height of the Golden Age of French organ music, the age of Louis XIV (late-seventeenth/early-eighteenth century). It was a period of unparalleled creativity, which we begin to see when we realize that Couperin *le Grand*, Daquin, Clérambault, Marchand, De Grigny, and others were active at the same time. Unfortunately very little of this organ music is available in this country, which fact alone would earn Frank Taylor's new record a warm welcome. Fortunately, there is a great deal more to recommend it.

First of all, Taylor is one of the few non-French keyboard players who seem to understand the essence of French style. French composers of the period relied on the performer to supply a great deal that they did not write into the score, and they were notoriously vague about what was expected of the performer. It all depended on *le bon goût*, and Taylor has it.

Furthermore, he is using here one of the finest of contemporary American organs—the 1971 Fisk organ in Boston's Old West Church, an instrument very well suited to this music in a way that most American, English, and German instruments are not. It is very well recorded, clear, and articulate, though one might wish for a bit more reverberation (Old West Church is apparently a very dead building).

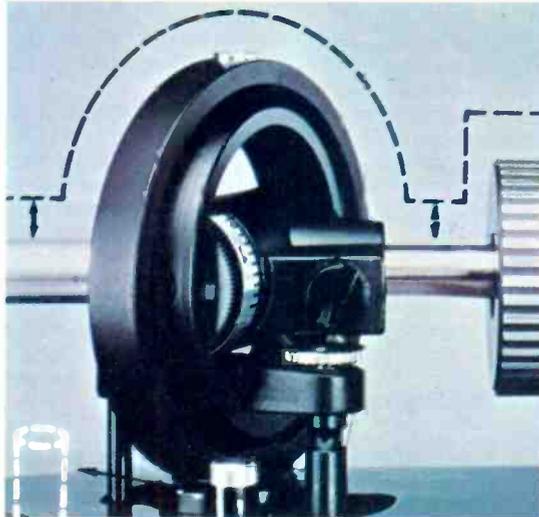
Du Mage's only surviving music seems to be this *Livre d'Orgue*, a suite of eight pieces in the standard forms of the time, such as *Tierce en taille*, *Basse de Trompette*, *Récit*, etc. Taylor plays it complete.

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Dandrieu's output was rather larger and more diversified. Taylor plays eight excerpts from *Premier Livre de Pièces d'Orgue*, a volume of sixty-three pieces grouped into six suites (three in major keys and three in their corresponding minor). Each of these suites, containing three to six movements, concludes with a six-movement Magnificat in the same key.

Except for Vox's excellent multivolume "Survey of the World's Greatest Organ Music" [see this month's feature review], which includes the complete Du Mage suite and a different (somewhat larger) selection from the Dandrieu *First Book*, no other recordings of these works are available here. But Taylor's record would be worth owning even if there were dozens of competing versions. C.F.G.

**DVOŘÁK:** Symphony No. 9. For a review of two recordings of this work, see page 95.

**ELGAR:** Falstaff (symphonic study), Op. 68;

*Cockaigne Overture*, Op. 40. London Philharmonic Orchestra, Daniel Barenboim, cond. [Paul Myers, prod.] COLUMBIA M 32599, \$5.98. Quadriphonic: MQ 32599 (SQ-encoded disc), \$6.98; MAQ 32599 (Q-8 cartridge), \$7.98.

**ELGAR:** Symphony No. 1, in A flat, Op. 55. London Philharmonic Orchestra, Daniel Barenboim, cond. [Paul Myers, prod.] COLUMBIA M 32807, \$5.98. Quadriphonic: MQ 32807 (SQ-encoded disc), \$6.98.

For at least sixty years the cultivated Englishman has tended to act as if loyalty to queen and country demanded the staunch affirmation of the belief that Elgar was a major composer, equal to the great men whom those foreigners on the Continent point to pridefully in their own countries. In fact, Elgar appears more and more to be a distinctly insular figure, a man of real talent who could do a few things exceptionally well but who totally lacked the largeness of mind, inventive powers or artistic vision of his greatest continental contemporaries.

## Solti's *Fantastique*: Shades of Toscanini?

by Robert C. Marsh

Toscanini's dedication to the music of Berlioz did not extend to the *Symphonie fantastique*, which did not figure in his repertory in England or the U.S. during the final period of his life. In this Solti performance, more than any other, I hear the qualities I believe a Toscanini version would have contained.

These begin with an over-all grasp of the architecture of the work, understanding that yields a rising arc of increasing dramatic intensity from the initial affirmation of the mood of the work in the introductory bars to the wild vision of damnation and horror at the close. Solti is a superb theater conductor, and the manner in which he states a phrase—with the internal accents of that phrase establishing contrasts of tension and repose, movement and rest—provides not only a revelation of the beauty and significance of a melodic line, but also the deepest awareness of its content.

Central to this is the function of rhythm, which for Solti always has a harmonic dimension that draws accents from the resolution of chords and movement from the harmonic flow into open or dissonant intervals. Thus no other performance of this much-played score moves more surely, more forcefully, more eloquently than this.

Moreover, no other performance has a better grasp of the proportion of details to wholes. This is music in which there is a great deal of detail that invites overaccentuation, the sort of thing that happened early in the stereo period when this symphony was used as a

showpiece and was debased and distorted in consequence. Solti restores to this music all the dignity it deserves but without robbing it of the excitement it must have. A conductor who can rival all his colleagues for both taste and thrills belongs in the Toscanini class.

Solti edits his scores with care. In this case he does not use the cornets in the ball scene (if you want them, Colin Davis is your man): he feels they coarsen the effect.

I have heard him play this music with both his Orchestre de Paris and the Chicago Symphony. The former provided four harps (which Chicago did not duplicate) and the distinctive sound of French winds and brass, but I confess I find the Chicago version more congenial to my concept of Berlioz' intentions. The players are not only of a much higher standard, but also unsurpassed for the beauty of their playing.

The recording was made in May 1972 at Krannert Center of the University of Illinois in Urbana and thus is contemporary with Solti's Beethoven Ninth rather than the more recent work from Chicago's Medinah Temple, with a different producer. The sound is fully as spectacular as the performance. Certainly no other disc gives a clearer idea of what the excitement over Solti and the Chicago Symphony is all about.

**BERLIOZ:** *Symphonie fantastique*, Op. 14. Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Georg Solti, cond. [David Harvey, prod.] LONDON CS 6790, \$5.98.

The problem with Elgar is not a lack of genuine nobility of spirit. His nobility manifests itself in many ways. No, the problem is probably related to his own lack of deep conviction of his worth, the result of having to move upward in a stratified society in which his betters were always eager to put him down. Thus he tended to overwrite, and the smug self-love that permeated the British upper classes of the mauve decade, the narcissism that bars one from seeing humanity in its common ties and common fate, infects his music and debases his finest ideas.

The Elgar score that has exported most successfully is the *Enigma* Variations, music based on warmth, friendship, and affection rather than tunes of glory and empire. The next most likely candidate for widespread assimilation is *Falstaff*, a work that has never been too well or too strongly represented in the American catalogue and that, in this stunning quad version (the stereo is good too), may finally achieve the audience it has long deserved. The problem with so much of Elgar's work is that you are always slightly fearful that he is about to break into a coronation march, that his pompous side is about to conceal his delight in strong personalities.

In Falstaff he has a real character to depict in musical terms, and his mastery of the orchestra and his gifts of melodic development are ideally employed. The work is, in effect, a tone poem in four sections with a detailed program that is probably best forgotten once the spirit and intentions of the work are grasped. The Falstaff shown here is that of the historical plays (less the scenes of battle) rather than of Shakespeare's *Merry Wives of Windsor* (which, of course, provided the basis for Verdi's opera). The end is filled with genuine pathos as the "fool and jester... so surfeit-swell'd, so old, and so profane" slips into exile.

The *Cockaigne Overture* is a sort of musical landscape of late-Victorian London, where wealth, pride, and position vie with all the more common yet vigorous things that go into the life of the city. Popular in England, the work is not especially well known here; again, this recording should give it a reputation and a public.

The First Symphony seems a strange mixture of sentiment and sinful pride. Dating from 1908, the work is a perfect example of Edwardian art and seems to close with some stately ceremony in which the King-Emperor, his gilded carriage surrounded by guards regiments in full dress, proceeds toward Trafalgar Square. The question is how one responds to scenes of this type today.

The contrasting mood is the familiar English love of nature, which Elgar conveys well, although in highly subjective terms. This, then, is music by a man of feeling who in certain situations had deep emotional responses growing quite naturally from the conditioning he received as part of his upbringing. He was, essentially, a quite ordinary Englishman of his day except for the fact that he had the musical resources to convey his thoughts in a manner the genuinely ordinary man could not.

My problem with Elgar is that I simply cannot identify with him in music such as the First Symphony. It is a period piece from an alien culture. Barenboim obviously thinks very differently. His performance reflects deep dedication to the score and is as convincing an account of this music as I have ever heard. I have no doubt whatever that it will increase the au-



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dience for the symphony in this country, and Barenboim's even more spectacular success with the two shorter works should at least create a situation in which the average American concertgoer is aware of more than one Elgar score.

All three performances are effectively recorded in stereo. The move to quad brings a broader sound source with a welcome room-filling effect in the overture and the symphony, but *Falstaff* goes beyond this to exploit the lighter textures of the work and to place the listener midway in the orchestra. I found a setting where I had the winds in front of me and the strings just behind, with the whole room playing—it was a delightful effect, well suited to the music and a fine example of quad technique.

It's rather paradoxical that music as fine as *Falstaff* should gain recognition in this country at last because of wide use as a quad demonstration disc, but it could happen. R.C.M.

**FAURÉ:** Sonata for Cello and Piano, No. 2—See Saint-Saëns: Sonata No. 1.

**FAURÉ:** Songs. Bernard Krusén, baritone; Noël Lee, piano. TELEFUNKEN SAT 22546, \$5.98.

La bonne chanson, Op. 61; Two Songs, Op. 76; Three Songs, Op. 85; Mirages, Op. 113.

Bernard Krusén's voice is not, I fear, easy to listen to. The tone is often insubstantial and throaty; every now and then he finds himself nearly overwhelmed by vibrato. Yet, as his recent Debussy recital (SAT 22540, reviewed in May) showed, he can be a very fine exponent of the *mélodie*: sensitive, vivid, and musical.

His gifts, I suppose, are essentially those of the *diseur*. Krusén projects the texts of French songs with mastery. Hardly a nuance, an evanescent mood, a wisp of feeling escapes him. He moves with perfect command through the shadowy realm of late-nineteenth-century French poetry, resonant as it is with the sound of hunting horns in the forest (Verlaine's "*Bonne chanson*") and the odors of perfumed summer nights (Samain's "*Accompagnement*," the last of Fauré's *Trois Mélodies*).

Fauré, no less than the other masters of the *mélodie*, achieves miracles of suggestiveness. Like Debussy he is both musician and poet, in that the texts he sets are perfectly realized in music without ever being submerged by it. However, unlike Debussy, whose vocal line aspires to the condition of recitative, of interiorized declamation, Fauré makes greater use of melodic utterance. Especially in the superb song cycle *La bonne chanson* he discovers a vein of pure lyricism that is both beautiful and touching. However, his chaste melodies are deceptively graceful. In them one finds a very civilized distillation of passionate feeling.

Unfortunately, Krusén is less adept at lyricism than at recitative. The gift of verbal communicativeness that enables him to sing Debussy with success does not serve Fauré so well. For this music one needs better singing, an easier and more pliant tone, a firmer line. By the end of the second side, one is both sated and unsatisfied.

Noël Lee, however, proves himself as satisfying in this music as in Debussy. In color and rhythm he is an expressive, poetic pianist.

The recording is a trifle overresonant. Surfaces are excellent. Texts, no translations.

D.S.H.

**GESUALDO:** Five-Voice Madrigals, Books I-VI. Quintetto Vocale Italiano, Angelo Ephrikan, cond. TELEFUNKEN SJA 25086, \$41.86 (seven discs, manual sequence).

"Musician and murderer" runs the subtitle to the best-known biography of that strangest of Renaissance composers, Carlo Gesualdo, prince of Venosa. Hailed as a genius, reviled as a second-rate poetaster, this tortured, talented psychopath remains a controversial figure even today.

Despite a recent surge in popularity, only a part of his output has been available on disc. Now in an extraordinary venture the Quintetto Vocale Italiano has recorded all six books of Gesualdo's five-voice madrigals, virtually his complete secular works. The sumptuous package of seven discs permits—with one great problem—an overview of the composer's achievements and failures. The problem is Telefunken's astonishing and inexplicable omission of texts (even in Italian), but more about that later.

Gesualdo was born in 1560, the second son of one of southern Italy's oldest and most distinguished families. His musical talent was immediately obvious, and he became a skilled performer and composer while still in his twenties. Although his temperament seems to have been decidedly melancholy even from



Carlo Gesualdo  
*The pleasure of pain.*

the beginning, Gesualdo's music might have followed a different course had he remained a wealthy dilettante with no further responsibilities. But in 1585 his elder brother died, leaving Carlo with a string of titles and the duty to carry on the family line.

His first marriage was disastrous. Maria d'Avalos came from a suitably high-ranking family, but her husband had no chance of satisfying her remarkable sexual appetite. Her affairs became the scandal of the court and a source of unbearable shame to her cuckolded husband. In 1590 Carlo Gesualdo hired assassins to murder his wife and her lover in their bed. Shortly thereafter he disposed of his second son, whose parentage he doubted. For the next two years the prince of Venosa literally hid in his castle, fearful of an anticipated familial vendetta that never occurred.

In 1594 Gesualdo married again, this time into the elegant and aristocratic Este court of Ferrara. The festivities were spectacular, and the musical prince must have been particularly happy about the lavish musical estab-

lishment at Ferrara, which featured the finest performers and composers of the day. But again the marriage was a political one, and Gesualdo seems to have had no rapport with any of his new family, another disappointment for an already unhappy man.

In 1597 the prince abandoned the D'Este, whose fortunes were crumbling on all sides, and retreated once again to his Neapolitan estates, where he lived out the rest of his life honored by fawning courtiers and despised by his household staff. A curious footnote—that he had to be beaten daily by his servants in order to defecate—might be of only sensational interest if it were not for the fact that constipation and flagellation are so evident in his later music. In 1613 he died, leaving the world some of the most painfully expressionistic music ever composed.

Gesualdo is at best a one-theme composer. Perhaps because he had only himself to satisfy in his music, he never explored the new fields of dramatic music, opera, or monody. His few essays in the canzonetta and instrumental music are negligible. Although the expressionistic possibilities of the texts drew him to the madrigal and the motet, he had none of the sensitivity to poetry so evident in many of his contemporaries. He set no distinguished poets with the exception of Tasso, another neurotic at the Este court with whom he got on rather well, and even there he preferred the second-rate verses written especially for him to the poet's better-known works.

Graceful word painting of the sort that provides us with the charming landscapes of Monteverdi was not a part of his palette. Although he was a good enough craftsman to execute a well-turned pastoral phrase, there was really only one thing Gesualdo did well, and he did it superlatively: He suffered. In his late works particularly, he is the poet of pain and self-pity *par excellence*. He has been equaled but never surpassed.

The first two books of madrigals, published in 1594 but composed much earlier, are comparatively conventional. Book II, which was actually composed first, contains some particularly charming pieces. "*Hai rotto e sciolto*" is a delightful example of Gesualdo's command of the common language, as is his setting of Tasso's text "*Non è questa la mano*." Occasionally a ray of chromaticism casts a shadow over words like "*duol*" or "*morir*," but by and large this is competent, well-constructed, and quite usual music for its time.

Book I brings us some further examples of the composer's skill. "*Mentre Madonna*," the only sonnet Gesualdo set (again to a text by Tasso) is a good case in point. But already the disruptive preoccupation with pain and sorrow begins to intrude on the conventional images. Violent clashing cries interrupt the smooth flow of "*Non mirar non mirare*"; an acrid conclusion douses sweet kisses with a dash of vinegar in "*Baci soavi e cari*."

These tendencies in Gesualdo's early style become more pronounced in his middle works. Some of the madrigals in Book III—"Meraviglia d'amor," for instance, or the lovely "*Del bel de'bei vostri occhi*"—clearly hark back to the composer's more carefree years. Others point toward the future. "*Non t'amo o voce ingrata*" introduces the bizarre unexpected progressions that characterize his later work. The same deliberate distortions appear in "*Moro e non moro*," again at the words for death and suffering.

It is important to realize that none of Gesualdo's contemporaries took these texts seri-



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ously. "To die" in late-sixteenth-century parlance meant only to suffer the little death of sexual fulfillment, hence the innuendos and double meanings about how one living dies or parting lives. Elaborate conceits of this sort were just a sly wink in the erotic world of the aristocratic court, and composers set them as such. But to the Neapolitan prince, dying—and perhaps sex as well—meant only pain, pain so sharp and bitter that only the most anguished cries could bring relief. (Are we back to the flagellation?)

It must be admitted that when he succeeds in integrating his feeling within a complete piece, the result is breathtaking. The soaring free soprano line of "*Languisco e moro*," dipping and twisting in daringly unexpected intervals; the attenuated dissonance of "*Io iacerò*" from Book IV, its never-ending harshness held in desperate control—this is mannerism to match the works of Tintoretto and El Greco.

Another characteristic of Gesualdo's later work, one that becomes overwhelming in his last two books, published in 1611, is oxymoron, the juxtaposition of opposites that plays such a part in manneristic poetry. Musically his equivalent for a phrase like "I burn, I freeze" is a passage of frantic coloratura, the voices tumbling over one another in bursts of sixteenth notes, followed by a long drawn-out succession of peculiar chords featuring the most *outré* progressions. Take too many of these rapid violent contrasts, each falling hard upon the last, and the result is not art, but chaos. "*Languisce al fin*" from Book V and "*Già piansi nel dolore*" from Book VI are so full of effects, of abrupt contrasts of images and feelings, that the listener loses all sense of what the pieces are about.

Gesualdo is not always so self-involved as to let the details on the trees spoil the view of the wood. "*Resta di darmi noia*" is a marvelous piece, its restless declamation and tortured harmony giving full rein to the affecting text. (For those who would see the sign of an avant-garde in Gesualdo's extraordinary harmonies, by the way, modern analysis has shown that his basically modal progressions come at the end of an era of sixteenth-century experimentation rather than heralding a new age.) Another effective piece of a different sort is "*Ardita zanzaretta*," though the sweet poison released at the conclusion of the madrigal by the ardent gnat does seem unnaturally toxic.

Whether one likes the music or not, Gesualdo is unique. His violent, unhappy, and aristocratic life set him apart from his contemporaries. His intensely personal style developed around the musical portrayal of sudden sharp grief, and in this area he is matchless.

The recording of these six books of madrigals is a significant historical document. Why, then, the decision by Telefunken to issue this set without texts or translations? (It does include a rather nice sleeve note in three languages.) If, like me, you are fortunate to have access to a large research library, you can get the Italian texts, with German translations only, in the back of the first six volumes of Gesualdo's complete works published in Hamburg by Ugrino Verlag. If not, I cannot imagine how you could possibly expect to listen to any, much less all, of the 124 madrigals with any degree of understanding or appreciation, especially since the enunciation of the Quintetto Vocale Italiano does nothing to help you out.

I have left the performance for last, because

it seems to me that in an undertaking of this magnitude more can be forgiven than might otherwise be the case. It is not easy to sing Gesualdo. The intonation problems are hair-raising, let alone the interpretive difficulties of expression, coordination, and tempo.

I do not like the rather thin and shrill sound of the Quintetto; the soprano is especially irritating, but I suppose anyone who has to hover around G and A as she does might get to sounding a bit querulous. Ephrikan conducts with a lot of heart, better to my mind than the surgical precision of Robert Craft, who has essayed another large Gesualdo project for Columbia. Perhaps Ephrikan overdoes the portamento effect that occurs from time to time, but I'm not so sure it's all that stylistically inappropriate.

At any rate, the performance is adequate, and I would be horrified to think of someone undertaking another recording of this entire collection, especially when there are so many unrecorded madrigalists awaiting attention.

S.T.S.

**GINASTERA:** Quartet for Strings, No. 2.  
**STRAVINSKY:** Three Pieces for String Quartet; Concertino for String Quartet. Juilliard Quartet. [Richard Killough, prod.] COLUMBIA M 32809, \$5.98.

Clearly it is no coincidence that Stravinsky's concertino of 1920 and Ginastera's quartet of 1958 share this disc. The roots of the later work are to be found in the earlier composition. Both are powerful scores, representative of one of the strongest lines of development in the music of this century, and in the hands of the Juilliard they receive incisive, assertive performances that could hardly make a better case for either composer.

Although both works are fundamentally tonal, rhythm becomes a more important unifying element than harmonic change. The sound is hard, demanding, assertive rather than pretty, so that in contrast the earlier Stravinsky *Three Pieces* of 1914 appear to be interesting miniatures.

The effect is comparable to a piece of modern sculpture made up of massive elements in which the surface texture is left rough and unfinished. But of course nothing is unfinished here—rather one finds that certain types of strong statement require strong language.

Stravinsky's concertino lasts six and a half minutes, about a quarter of the length of the Ginastera. Yet both works explore many of the same states of mind, which is to say this is anxiety music, achieved with artistry and skill, for a century in which anxiety replaced the Victorian concept of sin as our ever-present nemesis.

For both content and performance—not to forget very high-quality engineering—this is one of the major chamber music releases of the season.

R.C.M.

**HANDEL:** Suites for Harpsichord: No. 3, in D minor; No. 7, in G minor; Chaconne No. 1, in G. Malcolm Hamilton, harpsichord. [John Wright, prod.] DELOS DEL 15322, \$5.98.

**SCARLATTI, D.:** Keyboard Sonatas (14). Malcolm Hamilton, harpsichord. [John Wright, prod.] DELOS DEL 15321, \$5.98.  
Sonatas: in E, L. 23; in G minor, L. 49; in C, L. 104; in A, L.

Continued on page 96

# Stokowski at 91: Inimitable (and Infuriating) as Ever

by R. D. Darrell

IN WHAT I HOPE is prophetically labeled "The Stokowski Sound, Vol. 1," RCA pays well-warranted tribute to the nonagenarian conductor's fabulous career by combining his latest recorded version (the fourth, I think, but the first in stereo) of Dvořák's *New World* Symphony with an LP transfer of his long-famous Masterpiece Library M-1 78-rpm version of 1927.

The contrast between new and old might have been even more historically dramatic if a still earlier recording had been chosen. That was probably the first full-length symphony to be electrically recorded (in May and October 1925), although it was not released until the end of April 1926, well after the December 1925 release by English HMV of Sir Landon Ronald's electrically recorded Tchaikovsky Fourth. But, since initial engineering experience forced the omission of timpani in the 1925 version and demanded sarrusophone reinforcement of its string basses, that recording was soon superseded by the technically superior 1927 version—which was confusingly assigned the same disc and album numbers but which added an extra single-sided lecture disc to conform with such other early Masterpiece Library releases as the memorable Brahms First, Beethoven Seventh, and Franck D minor Symphonies.

So, after all, the 1927 choice well may be the preferable one. Certainly it provides startlingly effective testimony to the skills commanded by audio engineers within a couple of years after the introduction of "electrical" (rather than mechanico-acoustical) recording technology. Even to ears accustomed to latter-day stereo, to say nothing of quadriphonic, miracles, these 1927 sonics remain mightily impressive for their clarity, honesty, and impact.

But this whole arresting remembrance of things past is disconcertingly sobering not only to audiophiles who tend to equate early technology with the no longer listenable, but also to every discophile who has followed—with inextricably mingled admiration and exasperation—the dual career of Stokowski the idiosyncratic interpreter and Stokowski the well-nigh incomparable orchestral conductor.

Unexpectedly and regrettably, the new recording represents the current state of audio arts less well than the old one represented that of its time. The disc surfaces are only fair at best, the sonic qualities are somewhat hard in the tutti, there is at least some suspicion of instrumental-solo spotlighting,



and the acoustical ambience is less warm and expansive than we have come to expect nowadays for music of this kind. Possibly some of the tonal hardness should be more properly blamed on the New Philharmonia players, who, able as they are, are obviously no match for the (even technologically handicapped) Philadelphians of 1927, who prove conclusively here that their almost mythical fame was indeed soundly deserved.

Then, while age has never been able to dim either Stokowski's unique personality or his executant genius, it has brought about more moments of arbitrary vehemence on the one hand, more unabashed romanticizations on the other. Even in 1927 many of us who considered ourselves connoisseurs were making unfavorable interpretive comparisons between Stokowski's and Sir Hamilton Harty's *New Worlds*. The former, although praised as "daring, imperious, ruthless," was felt to represent only a "pseudo-Dvořák," lacking the fresh folkish spirit that Harty at least suggested and that native Czech conductors like Talich were later to capture authentically.

But what was—and still is—most "wrong" with Stokowski's Dvořák is only too devastatingly exposed in the appended outline-of-themes lecture, in which the conductor "explains" the composer's intentions in a way that sounds embarrassingly as well as mis-

leadingly old-fashioned. Resurrecting it, or any of his other appreciation-school lectures of its kind, does only disservice to both Stokowski and the composers involved.

Unfortunately, there is no currently available recorded performance of the *New World* (including of course the present two) that—in my judgment—does this too familiar music full justice. Szell's is the most magisterial reading still around, but its (originally Epic) sonic qualities now seem rather darker and less transparent than one would like. For sonic appeal itself, the Kertész version has yet to be beaten. And, even though Kertész' reading and performance fall somewhat short of the ideal, their buoyancy, lilt, and gusto are still the best.

In any case, it's endlessly fascinating—and educational—to compare these and other versions. How different the various versions of the same music may be in just one respect, that of tempo choices, is strikingly illustrated in the appended chart of pertinent movement and full-symphony *timings*. The disparities it reveals are relatively minor indications of the far more significant disparities between one conductor's approach and another's—and even between the same conductor's approaches of forty-six years apart.

R.D.D.

**B** **DVOŘAK:** Symphony No. 9, In E minor, Op. 95 (*From the New World*). Two recordings: New Philharmonia Orchestra, Leopold Stokowski, cond. [recorded July 1973; Richard Mohr, prod.]; Philadelphia Orchestra, Leopold Stokowski, cond. [from VICTOR M-1, recorded October 1927, mono; with "Outline of Themes," Stokowski, narrator and piano; John Pfeiffer, reissue prod.] RCA RED SEAL CRL 2-0334, \$6.98 (two discs, manual sequence).

**Comparisons:**  
Kertész/London Sym. Lon. CS 6527  
Szell/Cleveland Orch. Col. D3S 814

## A Tale of Four New Worlds

MOVEMENT TIMINGS	I	II	III	IV	Total
Stokowski/New Philharmonia (1973)	9:44	14:17	6:44*	12:18	43:03
Stokowski/Philadelphia (1927)	8:20	11:43	7:10	10:22	37:35
Kertész/London Symphony (1967)	12:25*	12:24	7:24	11:12	43:25
Szell/Cleveland (1960)	8:33	12:14	7:50	11:57	40:34

\* **Repeats:** In the first movement, only Kertész takes the exposition repeat; in the third movement, Stokowski 1973 omits two of the three repeats, all of which are taken by the others.

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132; in E flat, L. 203; in E, L. 257; in F minor, L. 281; in G minor, L. 338; in C minor, L. 352; in G, L. 387; in D, L. 415; in B minor, L. 449; in B flat, L. 500; in D minor, L. S. 12.

Comparison—Handel:  
Gould

Col. M 31512

Malcolm Hamilton is one of the finest of the younger harpsichordists, as is evident in his playing on these two releases.

I particularly like the Handel disc. Hamilton has a fine command of baroque style and plays this music with wonderful control and assurance. He is not afraid to ornament liberally, and he even takes such liberties as adding inner voices in certain two-part textures. But as he points out in his excellent liner notes, what Handel has left us is often more like a sketch to be filled in by the performer's imagination than a finished score. Hamilton even improvises an entire double in one instance (to the Sarabande of Suite No. 7), with striking and musically appropriate results.

The approach contrasts interestingly with that of Glenn Gould on his recent disc of the first four suites (his first harpsichord recording). Hamilton is more objective and less personal than Gould, but he is also less eccentric. He lacks Gould's extraordinary rhythmic flexibility in the slower movements and his driving forward thrust in the faster ones; but for those who like a more straightforward approach, he offers an attractive alternative. Though less brilliant than Gould's, his playing is always clear, musical, and true to the spirit of the music.

Hamilton's tendency toward rhythmic stiffness and registral heaviness is much more pronounced in his collection of fourteen Scarlatti sonatas (listed as Vol. 1, so presumably more will follow). The contrasts in mood, texture, and pacing—all essential aspects of this music—are played down to a large degree. The emphasis here seems to be on the larger shape of the composition, which is by no means bad in itself, but I do feel that many subtleties get pushed aside in the momentum toward the major cadences. As in the Handel, however, Hamilton plays everything with unusual precision and clarity; his considerable technique, which he uses in such a way that it never calls attention to itself, is impressive throughout.

The sound on both recordings is exceptionally good, though for some tastes it may be a bit closely miked: The instrument, a modern Bavarian harpsichord built by Kurt Wittmayer, sounds almost too big to be true. I rather like the quality, at least in this instance; it suits Hamilton's playing very well. R.P.M.

**D'INDY:** Symphony on a French Mountain Air—See Poulenc: Aubade.

**LISZT:** *Années de pèlerinage* (complete). Jerome Rose, piano. Vox SVBX 5454, \$9.95 (three discs, manual sequence).

**LISZT:** *Années de pèlerinage: Second Year*, Italy. Alfred Brendel, piano. PHILIPS 6500 420, \$6.98.

It was said that Telemann could set a postcard to music. Liszt did the same a century or so later while he was wandering about Europe. The *Années de pèlerinage (Years of Pilgrimage)* is a sort of musical scrapbook—three albums of sensitive tone paintings.

Some are picture postcards (e.g., *Les Jeux d'eaux à la Villa d'Este, Au lac de Wal-lenstadt*); others (the *Dante Sonata* and the two *Petrarch Sonnets*) are inspired by poetry. All but one or two pieces (notably the *Dante Sonata*, which is long-winded and chromatic in Liszt's familiar manner—a style that reached greatness in spite of itself in the B minor Sonata) may be commended as Liszt for people who hate Liszt. Those who judge this greatly maligned and misunderstood genius solely on the basis of *Les Préludes*, the *Liebes-träume*, and a seemingly endless procession of full-bosomed, empty-headed countesses and princesses have probably never heard these radiant, sensitive, refreshingly unpretentious essays.

Both of these new releases are highly distinguished, but I definitely prefer Jerome Rose's strong, assertive, unfustian performances to Brendel's much more high-strung, finicky style. There is no denying the sensitivity and patrician breeding behind Brendel's finely phrased interpretations, yet I am bothered by a certain self-denial, a decided trepidation to approach the music on its own terms. Rose may offer less in the way of nuance (although his tone is always sleek and euphoniously rounded), but he projects a stronger, more full-bodied image.

One piece, the *Canzonetta del Savator Rosa*, points up the essential divergences. Brendel plays the swaggering little piece rather briskly (and, I think, tepidly). Rose is not exactly to my taste in this piece either: Surely his deliberate tempo and stout accentuation solemnize it excessively. Still, I would rather live with the Rose if only for the reason that nobody else plays it quite this way. (I have heard many performances similar to Brendel's—and more dashingly successful.)

Another reason for preferring the Vox set is its price advantage: still another is its inclusion of the supplemental *Venezia e Napoli* (Brendel's disc offers only the standard *Second Year*). It should be noted, however, that Vox has juggled the order of some of the pieces for reasons of space. H.G.

**LUTOSLAWSKI:** Concerto for Orchestra; Funeral Music for String Orchestra; Venetian Games. Warsaw National Philharmonic Orchestra, Witold Rowicki, cond. PHILIPS 6500 628, \$6.98.

We have not as yet progressed, if that is the word, to the point where a disc of Lutoslawski's Greatest Hits is in order. But what Philips provides here is something far more serious and desirable, a compact edition of his three best-known orchestral works in performances of consistent merit.

The *Concerto for Orchestra* (1954) is thoroughly accessible and attractive, distantly influenced by Bartók's music of the same title, and certainly of interest to all those who find that score rewarding. Lutoslawski makes use of Polish folk music, although the work as a whole does not appear to be nationalistic in character. This recording, distinguished for its clarity of registration and strong sense of presence, is the finest of those available.

The *Funeral Music* of 1958 is dedicated to the memory of Bartók. It is a profoundly eloquent and moving score, based in fact on twelve-tone theory, but fundamentally lyric and dramatic in character and in no way for-

# THE METROPOLITAN OPERA



*John Macurdy, Jess Thomas, and Janis Martin*

As its ninety-first year drew to a close, the Metropolitan Opera made its customary genuflection towards the Easter season by reviving *Parsifal* for three performances. The production, new in 1970, is a cautious and generally solid effort by the house team, Nathaniel Merrill and Robert O'Hearn. The action moves sensibly and smoothly, the sets include a somber and traditional temple for the Knights of the Grail, a suitably erotic garden and cavern for Klingsor and—my only quibble on the visual side—a forest too shiny and plasticky to inculcate the spirit of devotion and suffering that should suffuse the first act.

Vocally the revival was not memorable. Jess Thomas does not now have the legato for the title role, though he gives splendid heft to such climactic lines as "*Amfortas! Die Wunde!*" The immensely long-winded role of Gurnemanz requires not only the reliable sonority of John Macurdy's voice but also a true distinction of utterance, particularly at a critical half-dozen points in the action: This we do not

get. Janis Martin, who once sang small parts at the Met but is now an established European star, showed a pliant voice and a sure dramatic power; but she permitted herself some vulgarities by overdoing Kundry's first-act whoops and hollers—something she didn't do at Bayreuth last summer. As Amfortas, William Dooley sang reliably but displayed insufficient agony. There is nothing but good to be said of Morley Meredith's Klingsor and James Morris's Titirel.

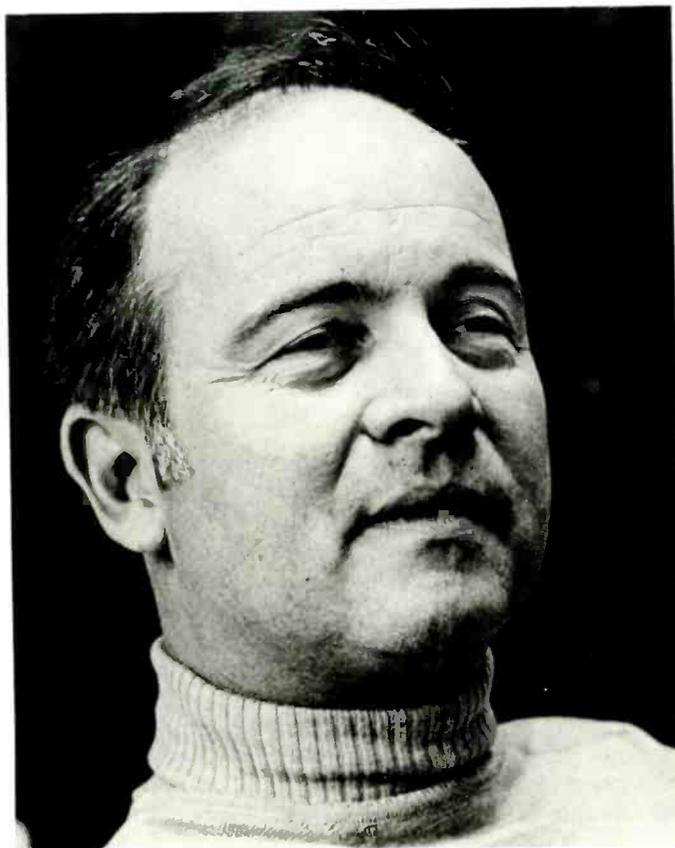
What lifted the evening high above the level of its vocal irregularities was the conducting of William Steinberg, at last back at the Met after an absence of a decade or so. He is one of the few surviving members of an entire generation of conductors who came out of central Europe between the two wars and set for all of us the shape and style of the music we listen to most. Klemperer and Szell are recently dead; the others—Kleiber, Furtwängler, Busch, Reiner, Walter, Weingartner—are now shadowy and

receding figures, their authority preserved only on records and in the memory of the middle-aged. Of course that generation of conductors was not exclusively German: Toscanini, Beecham, Monteux, and Stokowski were also members of it. But the men driven out by Hitler to seek refuge in America and elsewhere wrought profound changes in the performing standards of the orchestras and opera companies they found, and Steinberg's baton this night was a reminder of the entire phenomenon. The seventy-four-year-old conductor read us all a lesson in eloquence, in judgment, and in grace; he showed us how this music should go.

He started very slowly, then—as the Prelude moved on—gently advanced the tempo without disturbing the orchestral dynamics. It was a lyrical, natural, completely assured account of the *Parsifal* score, rising to its natural dramatic peak in the second transformation scene. You cannot say it was fast, or slow, or loud, or soft. Just very right. △

## DEBACLE IN DALLAS

The Symphony:  
down, out, and up again



Lawrence Kelly

**T**HE 1973-74 season began with promise for the Dallas Symphony. True, it was still without a music director, but artistic advisor Max Rudolf had begun to move quickly to implement needed changes in personnel and solidify ensemble. He added to the strings (including a fine new concertmaster, *Mr. Ardoin is music editor of the Dallas Morning News.*

William Steck from the Cleveland Orchestra) and hired an excellent new first horn, first oboe, and first clarinet. Another plus was the addition of Louis Lane as principal guest conductor and as number two man to Rudolf.

There was also a new mood prevailing. The spring before, plans were unveiled for the development of what was termed "a major symphony or-

chestra of the highest calibre" for the North Texas area. It was to be called the Texas Philharmonic and its nucleus would be the Dallas Symphony. There was serious talk for accruing a \$15 million endowment for the orchestra and attracting the finest conductor possible.

### Collapse

Yet by March of this year the Dallas Symphony collapsed and was forced to suspend its operation for over a month from lack of funds. "We can't even pay the rent," one official moaned. How was this possible? How could so much promise go so sour so quickly? A quick answer is found in a snow-balling accumulation of back bills owed printers, artists and publishers totaling \$250,000, plus a whopping \$600,000 owed a city bank. Attempts to borrow further funds from the same bank on a bequest due the orchestra in the spring failed. In effect, the bank said it had gone as far as it could go, and enough was enough.

In an effort to stay afloat, the DSO canceled a non-subscription *Messiah* and then its entire outdoor summer season (played each year at the State Fair of Texas grounds). On the morning of March 12, a press conference was called to announce the demise of the summer season. By late afternoon, the season itself was "temporarily" suspended. The president of the orchestra said that a minimum of \$200,000 was needed to reactivate the ensemble, and called on the citizens of Dallas to save its orchestra. Six weeks later only \$35,000 dollars had been raised from the public, while the board of directors chipped in an additional \$100,000. But the orchestra was still \$65,000 short of its proclaimed minimum of \$200,000. In the meantime, creditors pushed for payment of bills and the musicians went without their salaries for over a month. Though many of them held teaching jobs and could eke by, many more were badly hit and forced to skip bills and even put homes up for sale.

To make matters worse, before the orchestra suspended its season, Rudolf had refused to renew his contract for an additional year. At a luncheon before influential Dallas leaders in December, he told his audience in strong terms that he could not believe

that Dallas was serious either about its orchestra or its arts in general. Rudolf's plans for revitalizing the orchestra had been stymied by lack of funds, and he was in no mood to wait around for the city to change its attitude. Following his departure, Lane was made artistic advisor in his stead. Dallas then lost its first clarinet to Cleveland and a few months later, Steck handed in his resignation to accept the post of concertmaster in Atlanta. Other players began auditioning for whatever posts were available during the spring.

### Lane speaks his mind

As in common in such situations, everyone tried to put the blame somewhere. The press had been destructive towards the symphony—the citizenry was apathetic—big business cared not at all or no more than \$28,000 worth a season—there had been mismanagement on the part of symphony officials—there had been meddling on the part of the board. Fingers pointed in every direction. It began to sound like a Watergate West. The crisis even found its John Dean in conductor Lane. In a blistering interview given in Cleveland, Lane took aim at the Dallas Citizens Council, a body of city fathers who control much of what goes on in Dallas, including the approval of various fund drives. Their role in the symphony debacle had long been whispered and hinted at, but Lane was the first to come out and state it as fact.

Meaningful fund raising, Lane said, had been blocked by a "self-appointed oligarchy of leading bankers. . . . In recent years the Citizens Council approved only one major fund drive for the Dallas Symphony. That was a \$2 million campaign to match a \$2 million under the Ford Foundation's matching grant program. . . . As the orchestra's deficit continued to grow . . . the board made a last frantic appeal to the Council for approval of a campaign of \$1.2 million. . . . The Council said, in effect, that the orchestra was grossly mismanaged and was spending money like water. The Council's solution was either to cut the orchestra to fifty players or eliminate all summer activities, cut players' salaries drastically, or cut the budget somehow by \$700,000."

The Dallas Symphony board, according to Lane, at length "capitulated to the Council and agreed to reduce the orchestra to fifty players or reduce the season to twenty-six weeks" (the eighty-six-member orchestra was contracted for forty-six weeks for 1973-74). In exchange for this agreement, the Council was willing to OK a fund drive in June for \$500,000. This goal was not enough to bail the orchestra out of its current insolvency, and it made no provisions for funds to open in the fall. And should the orchestra not open another season, it stands to lose the matching Ford money which is due to be paid in the summer of 1976.

On April 14 the musicians of the orchestra agreed to play again on a deferred payment basis. The season was resumed with a week and a half of park and youth concerts. There were also three pairs of subscription concerts in April and May to be played (four had been canceled during the suspension). Though the musicians continued to negotiate with the management for lost pay during the suspension and the summer period, they received no concrete promises. The mood of the orchestra grew from impatient to hostile.

### Lawrence Kelly in the breach

It seemed that short of permanently disbanding the orchestra, matters couldn't be worse. Then, on April 24, it was announced that manager Kenneth Meine had resigned. He had come to Dallas from the Chicago Symphony and had served the DSO for two years. Meine's lawyer, however, implied that his client had been forced out and would seek compensation for the balance of his con-

tract. Into the breach stepped the general manager of the Dallas Civic Opera, Lawrence Kelly, as acting manager of the orchestra.

Had the appointment been a permanent one, it might have been cause for some confidence in the crumbling structure of the orchestra. Kelly is above all a man of high musical integrity, with the sort of commitment to the ideal of the performing arts unknown to the leaders of the orchestra. By sheer tenacity and daring, Kelly has kept the Civic Opera afloat for seventeen years and attracted international attention for the care and love given his productions. He is a renegade by Dallas standards, with his insistence on doing things his way and damn the establishment. This sort of approach might well turn the tide in the symphony mess. But the word "acting" in his title suggested that his power to change and reorganize would be limited or else temporary. One thing in Kelly's favor, however, is that he lived through nearly as crushing a financial crisis in 1970 with the opera company and rose phoenix-like to form a more stable operation which has doubled its subscriptions and even managed last season to come in under budget. What lessons he learned under fire four years ago might well be applied to the orchestra's woes.

As the crisis is a continuing one and with no ready answers, no solution is foreseeable at this moment. Kelly may or may not continue, funds may or may not be raised, players may or may not remain in the city once the last concert is finished, there may or may not be a season in the fall. The Dallas Symphony not only is not out of the woods, it cannot even see a light through the trees. △

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# CONCERT-PARTIES IN THE COUNTRY

## Out of the Biltmore and into the Berkshires

**D**URING the mid-Sixties, artist manager Ann Summers and part-time impresario Edgar S. Feldman, a New York insurance executive, teamed up to present a then-radical departure from traditional concert format: Instead of isolating the performers socially from the audience, Summers and Feldman chose to integrate them with a post-concert party where the artists could mingle, chat, and imbibe with the customers. No large orchestras, of course, just chamber groups and soloists; and no orthodox concert hall, but the Bowman Room of the Biltmore Hotel. The series was called, naturally enough, Concert-Parties.

They lasted three seasons as part of the self-conscious breaking down of formalized music-making mores that characterized the mid- and late Sixties. The Electric Circus became the In place for In concerts, serious music invading everything from museum exhibition areas to Filmore East. The Electric Circus is gone, exhibition areas have returned to exhibiting visuals, and Filmore East is about to become a synagogue.

But Concert-Party has returned. Not to the Biltmore, but to a prep school in a moderately isolated southwestern corner of Massachusetts. Feldman organized four of them at the recently coeducationalized Berkshire School in Sheffield this past season (Ann Summers had meantime left New York for Italy, where she set up headquarters in Rome). Why the Berkshire School? For one thing, the school's little gem of a 400-seat concert hall was just sitting there, generally unused (all right, the cathedral ceiling captures too much of the sound to allow for gutsy acoustics, but it *looks* beautiful). Secondly, a concert series would bring the Berkshire School to the attention of the Southern Berkshire's rather cultur-

ally astute community at a time when private prep and grammar schools without luxurious endowments are undergoing financial traumas. Third, the area's South Mountain/Tanglewood/Lenox Art Center/Jacob's Pillow/Music Mountain circuit becomes a musical wasteland in the winter. And fourth—perhaps most important—Feldman now has a home in Sheffield.

### Musical hunger

The series began in January with the (piano) Quartetto Beethoven di Roma, which played piano quartets of Mozart, Martinů, and Dvořák. February brought the duo-pianist Contiguglia brothers, Richard and John, in an all-Liszt-transcription program, and March the Tokyo String Quartet. A final spring Concert-Party by pianist James Tocco was still to come at this writing, and I have no idea of the program. Nor, apparently, does anyone else. It is a symptom of the musical hunger of the hiemal Berkshires that each of the first three concerts was jam-packed even though the audience had no inkling of the music that was going to be performed until finally armed with a program the night of the performance—except that word did get out that the Contiguglias would be playing Liszt's transcription of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony.

I caught that concert and the one by the Tokyo String Quartet. You'd think that Beethoven's Ninth, plus a brief opener to accommodate late-comers, would be a sufficient two-piano program. But no. After the opening Liszt transcription of Bach's *Sheep May Safely Graze*, the brothers actually hauled out the only original Liszt piece of the evening: the complete tone poem *Mazeppa*, transcribed by the composer. It was no better on two pianos than it is fully orchestrated, although the Contiguglias did seem to

be playing it with appropriate noise and bravura. At least it *looked* as though they were, and I'll bet that somebody suspended at the apex of the ceiling above them would have heard it that way too. The Ninth Symphony transcription was then introduced as its American premiere, and if you don't count the Contiguglias' recent recording of the work, or any broadcasts of the recording, it may very well have been. Liszt may have been serious in making his transcription, but during this phonographic era its only excuse for continued existence is its campy curiosity value. Therefore I am happy to report that it was great fun to hear. And to the curious among you: No, the boys did not have to sing anything.

Nor was that all. The starving music lovers gave such an ovation that the pianists returned for an encore, *Reminiscences de Norma*, Liszt's olio from the Bellini opera. Again lots of fun. And that was it.

But it shouldn't have been. Let's not forget the -Party half of the concept. The Contiguglias eventually emerged into the gathering, took a look at the Yankees, and hurriedly departed. Few seemed to mind, or even notice. But I say that's not cricket. If the main purpose of a Concert-Party is to bring serious performers and their audience into an informal relationship—and in the present instance it was hardly the noble quality of the music that enticed the full house—it should be part of the contract that the artists be charming, friendly, and social. And in a small group of some 400-odd listeners, where the community impresario would certainly know at least some of the patrons, he should see to it that the artists are introduced around. It's not that the musicians should have to encourage the customers to buy them drinks, for God's sake—and the refreshments were gratis in any event—but they should at least be required to stay.

Continued on page MA-40

*Leonard Marcus is editor of High Fidelity Magazine, and a year-round resident of the Berkshires.*



*Georg Semkow, who will take over in St. Louis—a breakthrough to excitement?*

## CHANGE OF COMMAND IN ST. LOUIS

### Susskind out, Semkow in, the road ahead steep

**T**HE TIGHT little circle that has governed the St. Louis Symphony since 1968 will be broken by the departure of Walter Susskind at the end of next season and of Leonard Slatkin a year later, in 1976. The two men had different reasons for leaving, but some of the reasons overlapped, and a sense of good tim-

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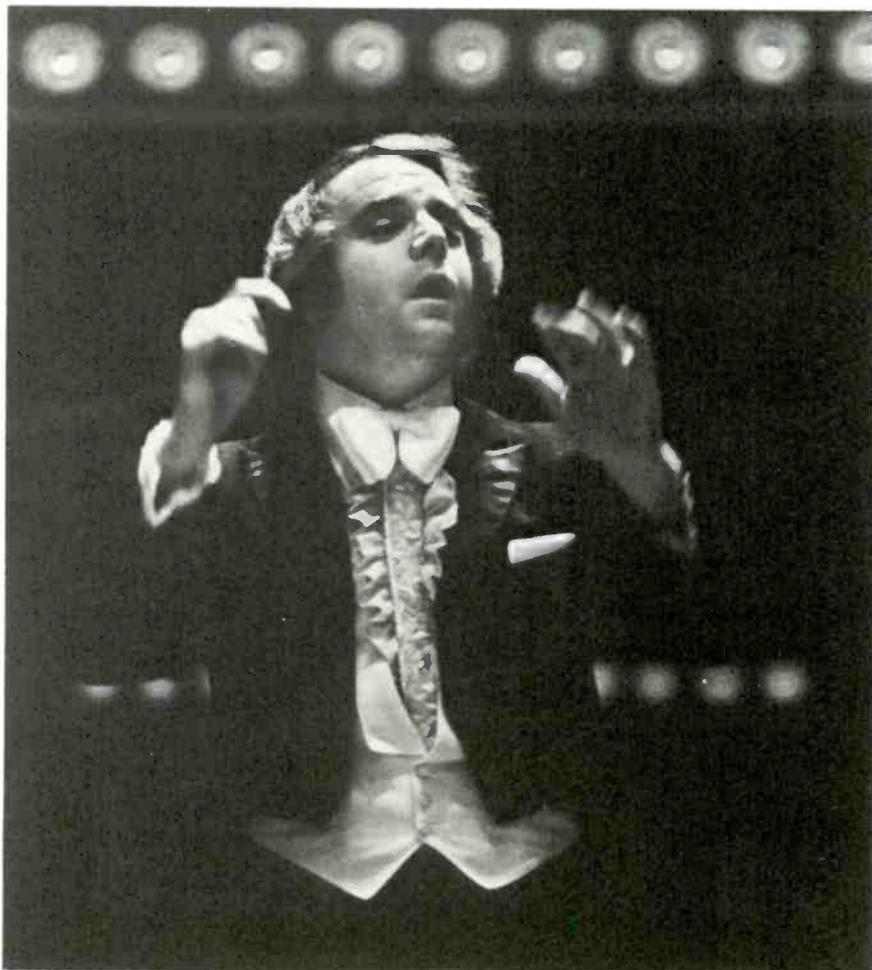
*Mr. Peters, music editor of the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, is winner of a Pulitzer Prize for music criticism.*

ing prompted both. Their announcements surprised everybody and stirred general feelings of regret, yet soon came to be regarded as inevitable. By the time Georg Semkow's appointment to succeed Susskind was announced, only seven weeks and a day after Susskind's decision was made public, the whole transition had taken on the orderly, decorous air of a change of vice presidents at General Motors.

Susskind made up his mind in December, a month before the first talks about renewal of his three-year contract as music director were to be taken up. He gave his decision to Peter Pastreich, the symphony's executive director, and left for a holiday in Jamaica. Susskind also told Slatkin, his protégé from pre-St. Louis times in Aspen, and Pastreich told James Cain, the orchestra manager. For about

two weeks the decision stayed in this circle; Susskind had a chance to change his mind. Then, one by one, board members were notified.

Susskind drafted a six-hundred-word letter to Ben H. Wells, the Symphony Society president. "In August 1975 I will have served for seven years. . . . This orchestra is now in the very front rank. A far-sighted board and a first-rate management team have diligently worked with me to help put it there . . . by bringing Peter Pastreich and James Cain together, I was instrumental in the creation of the finest managerial team imaginable. Through my insistence on engaging the young Leonard Slatkin as assistant conductor I helped to provide the organization with the most talented American conductor to emerge since Leonard Bernstein was a youngster . . ."



*Leonard Slatkin, an associate principal conductor on the move*

### Slatkin afield

At the moment this letter was released, Slatkin was in New York on the most important engagement of his career, conducting a set of Philharmonic subscription concerts as a substitute for Riccardo Muti. He got good reviews and an invitation to conduct the orchestra on its imminent Southern tour, an offer he had to decline because he was en route to London to make the sound-track record of *The Exorcist* with an orchestra of BBC Symphony musicians. The *Daily News* review was headlined "Philharmonic Is Saved By Slatkin, a Supersub," recalled the emergence of Bernstein under similar circumstances thirty years ago, and re-

marked that St. Louis "will be fortunate if it can hang on to him much longer."

News of Slatkin's New York and London invitations had got around St. Louis just before Susskind announced his resignation, so with the opening of the music directorship, attention quickly centered on the twenty-nine-year-old associate conductor. Slatkin is a prodigy, the product of a family of distinguished Hollywood musicians. An affable and courteous but tough-minded young conductor, Slatkin had earned a place in the St. Louis Symphony's inner council, sidestepped potential conflicts with Susskind, and worked into his sixth season without being touched by scandal or intrigue.

Susskind's letter continued: "But now . . . a nagging thought has been becoming more and more insistent. Whereas I was always available for long conferences, meetings, discussions, debates, auditions . . . I felt more and more limited in the area of that most precious commodity, time." Susskind is sixty and last year took his fifth wife, a student of twenty. "I have to concern myself less with mundane matters. I must conduct fewer concerts. I need more time to look into my inner self, to continue the search for the true soul of music and its innermost meaning . . ."

### Harder riding?

A rumor immediately started within the symphony board that Susskind had been advised not to seek a contract renewal. There was indeed some dissatisfaction with Susskind. As a conductor he has ups and downs, apparently originating in the moods of a complex character. He has the musical capacity for greatness, and many of his performances fulfill the promise. Many others have a coarseness of detail, a feeling of having been outlined in broad strokes, that speak not of ineptitude but of an artist too much in a hurry, too little involved. He is easygoing in rehearsal to the point that some of the musicians, especially the eager young conservatory products with whom Susskind has so effectively built up the orchestra, complain that they want to be ridden harder.

These circumstances make it easier for a guest conductor to shine in Powell Hall, or for Slatkin to shake the dust off such a work as *Messiah*, which Susskind performed annually and routinely until last December, and convert it into a triumph. Susskind never shows resentment on these occasions. His unselfishness in wanting the best for the orchestra, and diligence in pressing it forward from the provincial mediocrity in which he found it, are unquestioned. His programs, varied and resourceful, have not been in contention as were those

of his predecessor, Eleazar de Carvalho. His three young wives in six seasons, his colorful dress, his avoidance of tea parties (he is a brilliant, witty talker in congenial company) have caused subdued grumbling among some of the board members. In short, the complaints against Susskind were no more urgent than the usual sort that accumulate after five years of a musical directorship.

### The guest circuit

Privately Susskind pointed out, or acknowledged, some firmer reasons for leaving. With guest-conducting fees at \$2,500 to \$4,000 a week in his league, he can make up his St. Louis salary in twelve to fifteen extra engagements a year, even fewer counting tax deductions for travel. Susskind dislikes the load of summer concerts that has been added to the music director's schedule by the exigencies of a year-round musicians' contract.

Also, it will be hard to prolong the curve of orchestral improvement that has been so noticeable during Suss-

kind's regime. Money gets tighter and the deficit keeps growing; to move ahead from the present plateau will mean a costly, time-consuming process of adding string players to reach the Big Five complement, and working to inculcate a reliable, self-disciplined sense of style in an orchestra whose members' average age is young.

In other words, the road ahead is rocky and steep. Slatkin, at first clearly interested in the job, thought over these same considerations that had moved Susskind. For Slatkin there were other warning lights. He is the orchestra's *Wunderkind*, addressed by all the musicians as Lennie. If he took over he would be under constant comparison not only with Susskind but with his old image as the boy wonder; he would be confined in administrative patterns he had helped create; he would be dangerously familiar after eight years in St. Louis.

Slatkin, nearing thirty, is anxious to take wing on his own, without the protective fatherly authority that has always hovered over him. He consulted nobody about his decision, but told Wells by telephone that he

wanted to be removed from possible consideration as Susskind's successor. A few days later he was invited to conduct the Chicago Symphony in three April subscription concerts, substituting for Daniel Barenboim. Shortly after that he was appointed principal conductor of the Chicago Symphony's Grant Park summer series, and the St. Louis Symphony board, clearly reluctant to see Slatkin leave, named him associate principal conductor starting next fall. He will have six sets of subscription concerts next season and will probably enjoy a high degree of autonomy. At the same time a third conductor, Gerhard Zimmermann, was engaged to assist Semkow and Slatkin.

### Semkow approved

The changes at the top could not have been dealt with so smoothly if Semkow had not been available. To a remarkable extent the musicians agreed with the administration that Semkow was the man. The symphony leaders consulted the musicians' artistic advisory committee, a group theretofore not formally acknowledged, and in announcing Semkow's appointment Wells took prominent notice of the musicians' part in the decision. In ten guest-conducting dates since 1969 Semkow has showed an intensity of musical expression, and a firmness in rehearsal, that impressed the orchestra as much as the audience. The symphony hopes Semkow will be the man to lead the orchestra in a breakthrough—beyond the plane to which Susskind has steadfastly raised it, high in the respectable second rank, to the kind of eminence that commands admiration and generates excitement. A European tour has taken higher priority among the symphony's goals for the next few years, and a new recording contract with Vox should help build esteem for St. Louis in distant places. Semkow will spend twelve weeks in St. Louis in the first year of his contract, fifteen weeks in each of the next two years. △



Walter Susskind, St. Louis' seven-year veteran

## DEBUTS & REAPPEARANCES

Continued from page MA-18

and craftsmanly to dismiss. One hopes there will be other opportunities to hear it again, preferably by the same ensemble and after the players have lived with the piece for a while.

ELLEN PFEIFER

### Opera Co.: "War and Peace"

Prokofiev's *War and Peace* is one of the most talked about of operas, but we had a long wait for its United States stage premiere, which took place in Boston on May 8, Sarah Caldwell directing and conducting.

The work is problematic, and it was so even to the composer, who, after completing a first version in 1942, did not cease to tinker with the score until his death eleven years later. And it was in a way an impossible task, the subduing of what Henry James called "that wonderful mass of life." There is no capturing for the stage of the sheer size that is so essential to the design, to the patient building, layer upon layer, of the characters, and to the richness of the polyphony of the book on which Tolstoy refused to pin the label "novel." Andrei Bolkonsky dies, and it is an operatic death scene worked with pathos and skill, but we have no sense of his long road to the hut in Mytishchy. We have no idea of the strange mix of focus and confusion in the head of Pierre Bezukhov, and little of the caprice and that special magic of not-pretty-but-sometimes-beautiful in Natasha.

But if the opera is bound to frustrate those who know the book (and for whom Prokofiev was writing) and to confuse those who don't, still—and in spite of much of the automatic writing into which Prokofiev often slipped in his later years—the thing somehow makes an effect. Some of the Andrei-Natasha music is lovely and warm in a *Eugene Onegin* sort of way, and its transformation for Andrei's death is sensitive. Marshal Kutuzov's big aria is a strong piece. Even when he worked without strong musical inspiration, Prokofiev had energy, commitment, and stunning professionalism. The scoring, with its sharply distinct basses and luminous discants, is especially fine.

Caldwell, coping once again with the inadequacies of a converted movie house, produced the work ex-



Arlene Saunders, Gimi Beni, and John Moulson in *War and Peace*

citingly—perhaps a shade neutrally in peace, but with splendid concentration in war. Donald Gramm, sagging, bagging, crumpled, with Krushchev nose and beer-belly, was moving as the vulnerable and wise hero, Kutuzov. John Moulson, though not an elegant tenor, was an intelligent, touching, impressive Pierre (at least within the limits of the little Prokofiev allows). Arlene Saunders sang Natasha's music well; but a Natasha without youth or charm, a Natasha who looks like an opera singer, is no Natasha. Lenus Carlson was an adequate Andrei, and among those who did especially well in the countless but crucial small roles were Theresa Treadway, Gimi Beni, Edith Evans, David Eviitts, Phillip Steele, Harry Dworchak, and Alan Crofoot, many of them on double duty.

MICHAEL STEINBERG

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## CHICAGO

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### Chicago Sym.: "Bluebeard"

Twice a year Sir Georg Solti comes to town. He brings the Chicago Sym-

phony, sells out Carnegie Hall, offers New Yorkers some out-of-the-way repertory (often operatic), and rarely fails to astound the local concertgoers, who are a musically well nourished and even a blasé lot. That is how it was on May 1 when the program featured Bartók's early opera *Bluebeard's Castle*.

Written in 1911, the one-act opera pre-dates the angularities and dissonances most of us associate with the Hungarian composer. It is the work of a man who has not lost interest in orthodox orchestral sonorities, in the rhapsodic potential of a mass of strings or a unified squad of brass instruments. There are intimations of Mahler and Strauss throughout the work and at the climax (the opening of the Fifth Door) a blaze of Straussian exhilaration that could fit happily into *Zarathustra*. The story of the opera is overlaid with turn-of-the-century symbolism and portent. Bluebeard brings home to his castle his newest bride, Judith. She compels him to admit light into the gloomy hall by opening in turn the seven doors set in its walls. From each door there issues some dark element from Bluebeard's past. At the opening of

the seventh door it is time for Judith's death.

*Bluebeard's Castle* will have had a Metropolitan Opera production this summer by the time we appear in print, as part of a double bill with Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi*. Sir Georg set some awesome standards for the Met's musicians to emulate, for the blazing precision and mass of tone evinced by the Chicagoans is just not within the capacity of any opera-house orchestra in the world—and perhaps not even within the reach of another symphonic ensemble. The two voices were no less satisfying. Zoltan Kelemen's baritone, an instrument of uncommon power in excellent focus, was ideal for Bluebeard. And the plangent mezzo-soprano of Tatiana Troyanos, rich and infinitely feminine, was all that could be asked for the role of Judith. Why is this splendid artist not heard more frequently in New York?

The opera was given in Hungarian and listeners were provided with a bilingual libretto and enough light to read it by—a commendable piece of concert planning.

Listeners were also provided with an extended overture to the Bartók opera in the form of Schumann's Fourth Symphony, which comprised the first half of the evening. This is a notoriously difficult work to realize successfully but Solti and his musicians gave it a full-blooded, large-

scaled, essentially dramatic performance that drew attention away from its many passages of awkward scoring.

GEORGE MOVSHON

### Fromm concert: Crumb, Ghent

The 1974 Fromm Music Foundation-sponsored concert by Ralph Shapey's Contemporary Chamber Players at the University of Chicago officially honored the one-hundredth anniversary of Arnold Schoenberg's birth. But the real attention-getters at the April 19 event were newly commissioned works by George Crumb and Emmanuel Ghent.

Crumb's *Music for a Summer Evening* had actually received its first hearing three weeks earlier at Swarthmore College. The fifth of the six proposed sections was to have been completed in time for the Chicago performance. It wasn't, yet the forty-minute duration of the five completed portraits nevertheless qualifies *Music* as a long, not a major, opus. Scored for two amplified pianos and percussion, *Music* explores beginnings and celebrations. It evokes the "aahs" of knowing Ancients, a glittering, shimmery "Starry Night," primitive swarmings, mating calls, and eerie, open-interval space. Crumb paints gorgeous watercolors. But they tend to be superficial. The Bach chorale that caps *Music's* finale only underlines the emotional shallowness of the composer's own vision.

In his new *Lustrum*, Ghent also uses familiar sounds in unusual contexts. Jazz, blues, Dixieland, hymns, fugue tunes, you name it—it recalls Americana, it's fair game for the composer-in-residence of Bell Telephone Laboratories. The Canadian-born former student of Shapey has combined brass quintet with amplified double-bass and a space-age string quartet. The two violins, viola and cello, also products of Ma Bell's Labs, have no resonance of their own; bows vibrate the strings, but the sounds are entirely electronically generated. The other voice in Ghent's twenty-minute opus comes from a tape generated by the "Groove" computer, to which the composer attributes almost human qualities. Perhaps we should blame "Groove" for the musical mishmash of *Lustrum*, rather than accuse Ghent himself of easy-to-take groovinesses.

In contrast to the two new works, Schoenberg's Op. 29 Suite and the *Lied der Waldtaube* from *Gurrelieder* seemed to probe untouched depths of the human and musical soul.

KAREN MONSON

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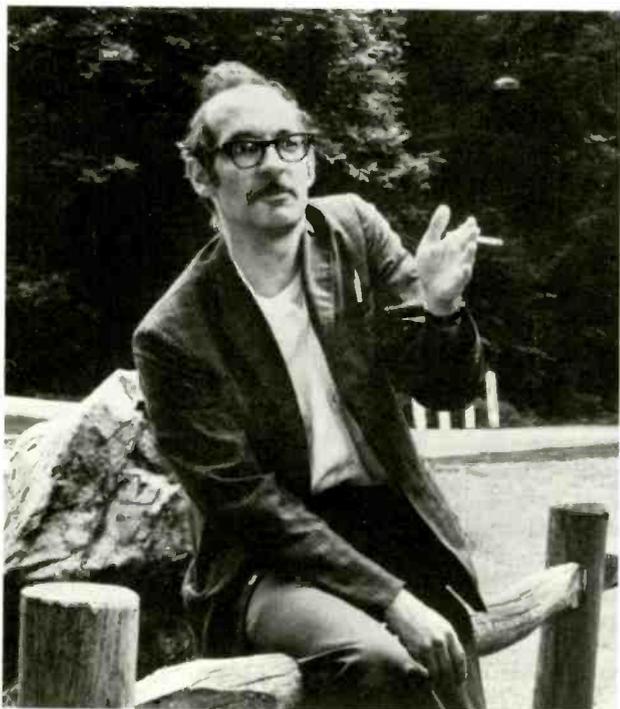
## JACKSON

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### Opera/South: "Otello"

Opera/South, the young black opera company based in Jackson, Mississippi, took another giant step with a little-short-of-brilliant mounting of Verdi's *Otello* on April 27, under the firm hand of Walter Herbert and with a last-minute substitution in the killing title role. A young black tenor named Karl Gipson had throat problems; Arturo Sergi, now of the University of Texas opera faculty, arrived less than two hours before the punctual curtain to sing his first *Otello* since the Met, an unspecified number of years ago. His still-superb technique and commanding presence overcame what few vocal difficulties he had in the first act, and the fact of his whiteness against the all-black cast was an interesting reversal of the customary.

The name to watch, however, is that of Arthur Thompson, just signed for the Met for the coming season, who was a spectacular Iago, displaying the biggest and best baritone heard here since Norman Treigle. It would appear at the moment that no



George Crumb



Arturo Sergio, Joy Blackett, Faye Robinson in *Otello*

role in the baritone repertory is outside his potential. Faye Robinson of the New York City Opera, a bit out of her coloratura bailiwick, was nonetheless an exquisite Desdemona, particularly in an "Ave Maria" of great sensitivity and restraint. The huge Opera/South chorus, from the choirs of Jackson State University, Tougaloo College, and Utica Junior College, which has drawn national raves in its past four outings, did not disappoint. And director/designer Donald Dorr achieved a rich, glowing production of brooding chiaroscuros in which vibrant colors shone like gems on black velvet. Opera/South continues its trail-blazing next season with the premiere of William Grant Still's full-length opera *Bayou Legend* (in November) and the first Mississippi production of *The Flying Dutchman* (in April).

FRANK HAINES

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## LOS ANGELES

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### L.A. Phil.: Chihara premiere

Paul Chihara's *Ceremony IV* provided the Los Angeles Philharmonic with a world premiere and a good-

natured opener for its programs of April 18 and 19 in L.A.'s Dorothy Chandler Pavilion. Written by the UCLA professor in 1973, *IV* displays an amiable collection of brass tattoos, tremolandoing strings, and percussive rattles rising and falling and shot through with 1940s big band sounds. It is at once musically kind to the instruments, adroitly orchestrated, and unabashedly enthusiastic. It is also short (about ten minutes), a fact which diminished its over-all impact on an agenda also including Mozart's Fifth Violin Concerto and Bruckner's massive Eighth Symphony.

Bruckner, of course, is very much LAPO conductor Zubin Mehta's thing. The swelling string passions and grandiose brass, the long, silken, poignant melodies and agitative transitions fire an intensity in him which in turn draws the best of musical impulses from the Philharmonic. In this Eighth there was much to remember, but particularly the responsive, melting lyricism of violins in the Trio; the elated, rolling, perpetually chimelike chorus of instruments in the Scherzo; and the majestic continuity of pulsating strings and cresting brass in that exceedingly long Adagio.

Rather surprisingly less satisfying was the Mozart Concerto with LAPO concertmaster Sidney Harth as soloist. Always an articulate, totally musical performer, Harth seems in this playing to have injected the Concerto with more tonal fiber, resolute energy and pure tension than it can gracefully bear. Mehta's accompaniment was similarly forceful, avoiding indelicacy on the one hand and, on the other, falling short of the radiance and free flowing spirit inherent in the work.

MELODY PETERSON

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## MINNEAPOLIS

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### Ruggles festival

Carl Ruggles has been receiving at least posthumous recognition lately in the state where he spent the years from 1907 to 1917, and where he organized and for nine years conducted the Winona (Minnesota) Symphony Orchestra. A mini-festival honoring Ruggles as both composer and painter began late in March in Minneapolis and St. Paul and was scheduled to conclude in June.

Its point of incidence was research by Nina Archbal, a University of Minnesota graduate student who set out to do a doctoral dissertation on Ruggles' music and became interested in his paintings as well. Through her enthusiasm the festival came into being, with participants including the Minnesota Orchestra, which presented a performance of his *Sun Treader* March 28 and 29, the University of Minnesota Gallery, which mounted an exhibition of about one-third of his paintings, the University's music department, the Schubert Club of St. Paul, and the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra.

From San Francisco came Alfred Frankenstein to lecture on Ruggles as a visual artist, and from Yale came Ralph Kirkpatrick to discuss Ruggles' music. *Sun Treader* was the major event of the Minnesota Orchestra's two subscription concerts conducted by chief guest conductor George Trautwein, the first of which took place in O'Shaughnessy Auditorium in St. Paul. The performance, thoroughly studied and expertly delivered, revealed the piece as not only Ruggles' masterpiece but a twentieth-century masterwork by any standard, completely original in language, masterly in its weaving of dissonant counterpoint and its instrumental dispositions, and transcendently eloquent in its rugged, blocky, upreaching climaxes and the aura of mystery in the lyrical interludes. Ruggles' ceaseless work of revision, too, has given it a stamp of thorough professionalism not always found in the works of his much more prolific and spontaneous contemporary Charles Ives.

Kirkpatrick's lecture-recital at the University of Minnesota centered on Ruggles' four *Evocations* for piano, but ranged rather widely over the composer's music. He chose to emphasize not the harmonic methods which serialists admire in Ruggles' music, but rather the roots it has in the older tradition in which the composer was reared.

He demonstrated the basic tonality of *Angels* and its qualities of an old hymn, pointed to a diatonic passage in his violin-piano sonata and to the persistence of certain triadic elements in the *Evocations*, and showed the Wagnerian character of the opening of *Portals*. He also played a tape of two early songs (1899 and 1901)

found in the Library of Congress which testified to Ruggles' warm admiration for the songs of Robert Franz.

At this writing, the final event, a concert by the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, was planned for a date in June to be announced. If music director Dennis Russell Davies could locate all the music, it was to duplicate a concert given in 1933 under direction of John J. Becker for the National Federation of Music Clubs in Minneapolis. That program included works by Henry Cowell, Ives, Wallingford Riegger, Ruggles (*Lilacs*), and Becker, then resident in St. Paul.

JOHN H. HARVEY

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## NEW YORK

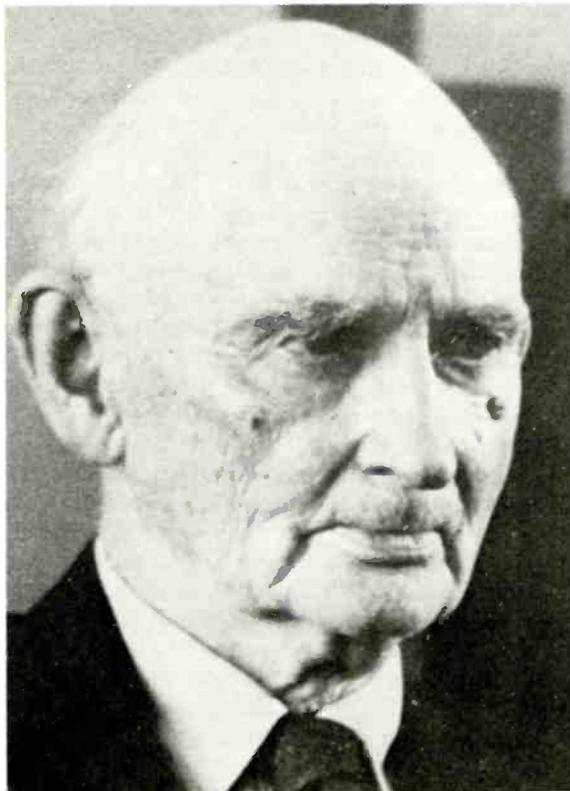
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### Fine Arts Qtet.: Johnston premiere

That popular American folk hymn *Amazing Grace* is being heard in lots of places outside of gospel meetings these days. Several folk-rock singers have taken a fancy to it, and it has even been recorded by a bagpipe band. Most recently, *Amazing Grace* was used as the theme for a set of vari-

ations by Ben Johnston in his Fourth String Quartet. Had this very important fact received wider publicity the premiere by the Fine Arts Quartet at Carnegie Recital Hall on April 21 might not have been so scantily attended. Someone involved with this effort should have realized that, like it or not, *Amazing Grace* was the big news, not the composer or the performers or the foundation which provided the commission. As for the score itself, little of the conviction and simple fervor of its famous theme is relayed to the ensuing variations. They are so melodramatic and overburdened with crossrhythms and soggy polyphony that one finally aches to hear the clean pentatonic intervals of the original tune. Despite a slender playing time of about ten minutes, Johnston's one-movement Quartet didn't sound a bit easy to perform. The Fine Arts Quartet, one of the most dependable ensembles around, did not seem deterred, and pressed on intelligently through the work's maze of linear and metric minutiae.

It also gave zestful, keen-edged performances of the Bartók Sixth and Fourth Quartets on the same program. About the only lapses occurred



Carl Ruggles

in the opening of the Sixth Quartet. The tricky viola solo wasn't completely in tune, and the remainder of the movement sound a bit glib—a reminder that even the most experienced players can't afford to take any of their tasks for granted.

ANDREW DERHEN

### Lorin Hollander, piano

Pianist Lorin Hollander celebrated his seventeenth season on the concert stage with a Carnegie Hall recital on April 24 that may well mark his musical maturity. Playing music of Copland, Brahms, Gershwin, and Ravel, Hollander demonstrated his accustomed virtuosity and sensitive awareness of tonal shading. What seemed winningly new was a deeper insight into each of the musical styles along with a probing, often profound expressivity.

The demanding *Piano Variations* of Aaron Copland received one of the most imposing interpretations within memory. The craggy music was revealed in all of its strength, but in addition, Hollander found more poetry within the music than years of listening had previously revealed.

Following the tremendous opening Copland, the Brahms F minor Sonata sounded a bit pale at first, but music and pianist worked toward a sparkling Scherzo that was applauded spontaneously, and the finale had both coherence and drama, qualities not often found at the same time. George Gershwin was saluted in this anniversary year by subtle, neatly insinuating readings of the familiar Three Preludes, and two novelties—*Promenade*, from 1937, and a bit of ragtime whimsy called *Rialto Ripples*, composed in 1916 in collaboration with Will Donaldson. As performed by Hollander, George Gershwin was more than welcome on what used to be referred to, unfortunately, as a "serious music" recital.

For a summary of Lorin Hollander's keyboard brilliance and sensitivity, Ravel's *Gaspard de la nuit* could hardly be surpassed. The three sections were played with delicacy and ravishing splashes of color. Former prodigy Hollander may not yet be an elder statesman, but his latest Carnegie Hall appearance was a musical delight all the way.

BYRON BELT

### Juilliard: 20th century works

The kind of performance a new or unfamiliar work of contemporary music receives can make it or break it in the ears of the audience or the critics. This has too often helped to quash an outstanding piece or retard the emergence of an important composer's *oeuvres*. Certainly any new work deserves a reasonable reproduction of the composer's intentions.

Perhaps some of the boredom pervading the April 24 concert in Juilliard's twentieth-century music series could be traced as much to performance as to problems in the compositions themselves. Richard Dufallo led the Juilliard ensemble in works by Crawford, Ruggles, Brown, Riemann, Schoenberg, and Berg.

This listener was disappointed that the three American works, presumably the focus of the program, made such a dull impression. Ruth Crawford, who wrote some remarkably forward-looking works in the 1930s, was represented by her *Three Songs* (1933) set to poems by Carl Sandberg. This was the first New York performance. Crawford's nontonal and rhythmically complex ostinatos were not clearly enough differentiated from the over-all sound-mass, and these conglomerate strands of textures seemed too diffuse, too mechanical, and too long. Most importantly, the vocal line lacked character and real musical content. Carl Ruggles' *Vox Clamans in Deserto* (1929) also seemed to lack character both in the vocal melody and the instrumental background. Further, the singers' diction in each piece was unintelligible. Are these two works really so uninteresting, or could this impression be due to lackluster performances? Given the stature of the composers one had to wonder.

In *Sign Sounds* (1972), composer Earle Brown and conductor Dufallo together conspired to produce a crushingly boring event. Here given its New York premiere, *Sign Sounds* marks another of Brown's "do-it-yourself" pieces. It relies on the conductor to determine the over-all shape and character, while leaving much of the detail to individual performers. Despite some attractive sounds, the inevitable result of this conception is an almost infallible pre-

dictability and the most standard gestures and banal dramatic structure. So much for the "element of surprise and discovery" that the program notes so hopefully prepared us for.

Receiving its American premiere at this concert was the Concerto for Piano and 19 Players (1972) by the German composer Aribert Reimann. The work is engaging and clean in its textures. Epigrammatic statements from discrete sound sources flow among the instrumental choirs and merge to and from the over-all complex of sound. The composer was present to share the applause with Dufallo and the able pianist Robert Black.

The program had begun with a suave and velvety performance of Alban Berg's Adagio for Violin and 13 Winds; Bruce Berg was the soloist. It closed with a rather gross but amusing cabaret number from Schoenberg's youth.

BRUCE SAYLOR

### Manhattan Theatre: "Tiresias"

Poulenc's *Les Mamelles de Tirésias* (The Breasts of Tiresias), composed in 1945, is one of the funniest, most off-beat, and yet most melodic comic operas ever written. The English-language production of it given by the Manhattan Theatre Club the last week of April did the work full justice. To begin with, the cabaret-style set-up of the Club lends itself perfectly to the atmosphere and setting of Poulenc's one-act opera, which makes deliciously ironic use of diverse music-hall styles. But the often difficult vocal writing of *Les Mamelles* calls for anything but cabaret-style singers, and it is one of the miracles of small productions such as this that so many excellent voices could be brought together for the all-too-short run of the show. I was especially impressed by the expressiveness and vocal control of Sheri Greenawald as Theresa, the harried wife who gets rid of her breasts and becomes a man for a while, leaving her husband to have 40,049 children on his own. Furthermore, I have rarely if ever seen operatic acting done with such life and conviction, and director Christopher Alden deserves an enormous amount of credit here.

Whether in the raised-eyebrow be-

musement of Clyde Walker as the Director, the wide-eyed bewilderment of Michael Best as the Husband, the pseudo-pompous buffoonery of Glenn Mure and Ed Dixon as Presto and Lacouf, the lecherous ineptitude of Randolph Riscol as the Gendarme, or the anonymous sophistication of Stefanie Dickman as the Newspaper Lady, each performer found and exploited to the hilt the key to his or her role, with the ensemble working together with ballet-like precision. The only thing lacking was the wit of Poulenc's delightful orchestrations. But music-director Ethan-Mordden, with the help of Bud Clark on the drums (on some evenings violin and clarinet were added), played the piano accompaniment with such virtuosity and flourish that I scarcely missed the other instruments. ROYAL S. BROWN

#### N.Y. Phil.: Reimann premiere

The novelty item on Pierre Boulez's mixed-bag program of April 25 with the New York Philharmonic was the American premiere of Aribert Reimann's *Cycle for Baritone and Orchestra*, written for—and performed by—Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau. Reimann, a young German composer known here for his opera *Melusine* which the Santa Fe Opera produced two years ago, has set the cycle to a series of poems by Paul Celan. The poems, almost untranslatable, are similar to Gertrude Stein's or to Edith Sitwell's for Walton's *Facade* in their non-linearity, and use of assonance, word-imagery, and vague symbolism (although here the poems are not meant humorously). As such, they form the perfect basis for Reimann's music, which is intensely mood-oriented in its pedal points, divided strings, short motifs, and color balances (he employs an orchestra without violins).

Reimann's strengths lie in his ability to set the voice and in the shifting colors of his orchestration, but—as with *Melusine*—his art goes deeper than the surface. The piece is more than the liquid shimmer that it seems to be, because Reimann's extremely fine-tuned ear is allied with a larger structural sense which saves the cycle from miniaturism. Its close, with the voice fading away to the accompaniment of six double basses (which

continue, and themselves fade to one) was particularly impressive—aided immeasurably by Boulez's rhythmic control of the long phrasing.

Fischer-Dieskau's voice is in excellent shape—pure, almost without vibrato, and with a floating aura one usually finds with beginning singers and not with those who have been through the vocal wars that he has. His articulation of the triple *piano* parts—firm, carrying to the back of the hall—is beyond praise: as a whole some of the finest vocalism technically and expressively I have heard in the past years. Given the roughness that had invaded Fisher-Dieskau's voice only a few years ago, its present condition borders on the incredible. Withal, Reimann's music continues to impress (the audience liked it too), and I look forward to his coming works.

The rest of the concert included a selection from Handel's *Water Music* that was long on musicological rethinking (debts admitted to Professor Christoph Wolff and Raymond Leppard) and short on Handelian brio, and a traversal of Beethoven's First Symphony that was clean, efficient, and like judging a town from the window of a train passing through. The concert closed with Hindemith's *Mathis der Mahler*. PATRICK J. SMITH

#### Phila. Orch.: Dvořák Requiem

The Dvořák Requiem is not one of the major essays in the form, and does not have the distinction of such offshoots as Fauré's lovely work, but for Dvořák lovers and later-romantic-music buffs it has its moments. What argues against the work is the overlay of slow-moving pietistical obeisances less to God than to the English Choral tradition from Mendelssohn on (not surprisingly, the world premiere of the Requiem took place at the Birmingham Festival in 1891). It inevitably calls up the shades of greater requiems, and the sober, unadventurous musical structure of the piece, which involves a "motto" theme in minor seconds (minor seconds suggest anguish) reappears endlessly in one or another instrument. The good features are Dvořák strengths: the harmonic colorations of certain sections (notably the *Tuba Mirum* and the *Benedictus*), the part writing (espe-

cially for woodwinds) and the gentle sincerity of the whole.

Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra contented themselves with a rather literal run-through, reminiscent in its beefy sonority, I suppose, of the work's English companion pieces. But it lacked the rhythmic snap, the sense of harmonics and cross-sectional phrasing and, above all, of an ongoing rubatoed ebb-and-flow which time and again in Dvořák can transform the commonplace into the magical. Especially in some of these stolidly massive set pieces. The Singing City Choirs did an effective job, and the soloists (Janice Harsanyi, Rosalind Elias, George Shirley, and Michael Devlin) were more than adequate, although it should be noted that the vocal difficulties that Shirley has recently been undergoing are still very much in evidence, causing him to force his voice throughout the range but especially up top. P.J.S.

#### Phila. Orch.: Shostakovich Op. 42

Having given the U.S. premiere of three recent Shostakovich symphonies over the past few years, Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra, in a strike-delayed concert given on May 6 in Avery Fisher Hall, turned to a long-forgotten miniature, the Five Pieces for Small Orchestra, Op. 42, which lay in limbo for over thirty years before getting its first performance in Russia (by Igor Blazhkov). Although they immediately precede the large-scale Fourth Symphony, which employs huge orchestral forces, the Opus 42 Pieces stand at the opposite end of the spectrum in the understated quiescence of their musical style. For the most part, each piece gives the impression of a kind of aphoristic entr'acte, with strange, often contrapuntal combinations of solo instruments contrasting with chilling sustained-string passages and creating a general feeling of cold, acerbic expansiveness that I found fascinating and haunting.

If the reduced forces gave a less than enthusiastically careful performance of the Shostakovich, the full orchestra came up with one of the better performances I have heard of Beethoven's Fourth Symphony, in

Continued on page MA-39

## “THE CATILINE CONSPIRACY”

Ian Hamilton's new opera: tough, relevant



Bob Anderson

*Politicians and their lady friends—each as detestable as the others*

**T**HE CATILINE CONSPIRACY, for which Ian Hamilton wrote both words and music, was his response to one of four operatic commissions from Scottish Opera. The company (which in its first ten years has produced Berlioz's *Les Troyens* and Wagner's *Ring des Nibelungen* in their entirety, superbly cast, produced, and performed at a standard no lower than what we expect in Covent Garden or Bayreuth) wants to pay our time's debt to new opera, quite correctly. It has acknowledged that debt and is now paying off the first instalment.

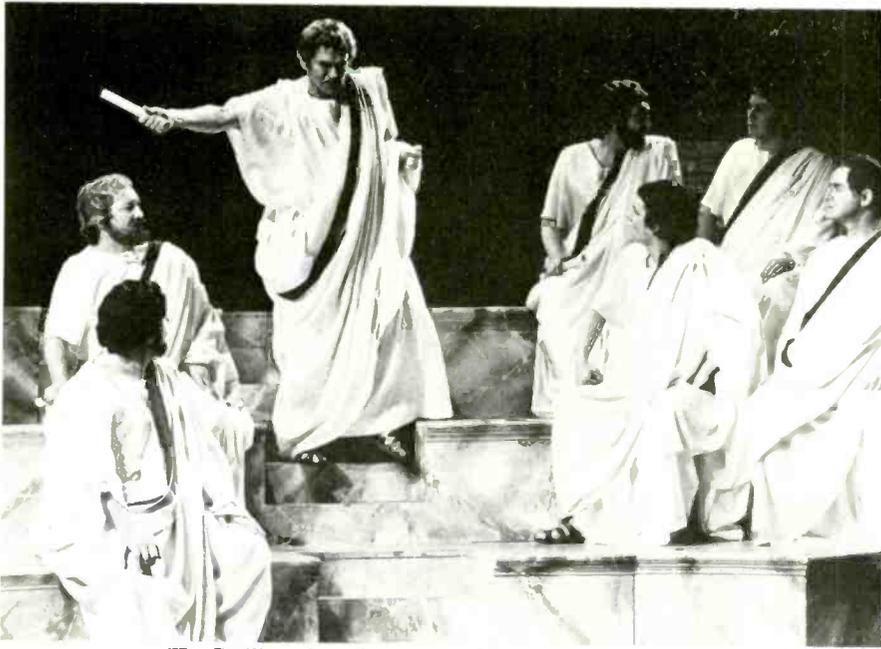
*William Mann is music critic of the London Times.*

Hamilton's *Catiline Conspiracy* happened to be one of three new British operas baptized within the short space of three weeks. Of the others, Gordon Crosse's *The Story of Vasco* (London Coliseum) was imaginative and fanciful, ill-timed dramatically but full of operatic intuition; Alun Hoddinott's *The Beach of Falesà* (Welsh National Opera) is successfully but conventionally worked out, a sort of harder, latterday *Peter Grimes*. *Catiline* is much more adventurous, more dramatic too, for all that the topic is an antique one, liable in advance to deter people who prefer plays about modern times.

### Politics eternal

Hamilton (a Scots native now resident in the USA) knows, of course, that political stories are eternally topical. Audiences are glad to watch Cicero and Julius Caesar on stage (made up as dead ringers in the persons of, respectively, Alexander Young and Thomas Hemsley; Donald Bell, too, looked just like Catiline in the famous romantic painting of his denunciation).

*Catiline* is about something more, the political idealist who knows how to rescue a country in disarray and does not mind how immoral the



*The Catiline Conspiracy: something to say to Americans*

the settings down with atmosphere. The characters are most important. For Nixon's country (and many others) the relevance will not be bypassed. *The Catiline Conspiracy* has much to say to American as well as European, perhaps other, audiences. I would prefer to compare it to an opera from another country. Truthfully it is the most eloquent opera I have seen since Harrison Birtwistle's *Punch and Judy*. Can't any other country produce a new sort of what Mozart called *una vera opera*? △

**give  
to the  
March  
of Dimes**

means so long as the result is desirable. In every country of the world we have our Catiline. Hamilton brings him to stage life, as well as the other Roman politicians and their lady-friends, each as detestable as the others (even Cicero whom my school-masters taught me to revere; Hamilton's sources are true, I later discovered).

*The Catiline Conspiracy* is a concise, two-act opera, closely argued and presented in dramatic terms, toughly set to music, though not without lyrical vocal solos for numerous characters. At first it seems obsessively declamatory, after study or repeated hearing truly dramatic and lyrical as well.

Of the three new British operas this is the most expert, the most progressive in musical language, the least effortful, and it contains the largest quantity of concentrated dramatic music for voices with orchestra, neither at the other's expense. There are grand vocal solos (Cicero has one at the end of the first act) but they happen on the drama's way and two or three bars of lyricism for one subsidiary lady had as much effect on an audience as, say, Tosca's "*Vissi d'arte*" (great because of its dramatic context).

Scottish Opera gave *The Catiline Conspiracy* a musically stern and compelling inauguration under Alexander Gibson, just right for the terse, effective music. The scenes moved swiftly; it would be wrong to weigh

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## I HEAR HUNGARY SINGING

A Western traveler finds Magyar consonants no threat



*A rock musical in Budapest*

**I**N THE sixth grade I read a book about life in rural Hungary. It was called *The Singing Tree*. The title referred to a great tree outside a Magyar farmhouse, a tree which seemed alive with song because of the hundreds of birds which perched on its branches. That image of music has somehow become tied up in my subconscious with the whole concept of Hungary, both as a place and a people.

"That's crazy!" you may say, "certainly no reason for thinking Hungary is filled with song!" Maybe not. On a recent trip to Budapest, no one I

asked had ever heard of *The Singing Tree*—it is as unknown to Hungarians as Mary Mapes Dodge's *Hans Brinker and the Silver Skates* is to Netherlanders. But the truth is that Hungary, if not filled with music, certainly devotes a lot of attention to it. From the simple, spontaneous pleasures of folk music and popular music, enjoyed in the family or among neighbors or young people's groups, to the professional level of concept and operatic performance, there is no doubt that music plays an important role in Hungary's cultural life.

Some measure of the interest

shown at the highest levels is the fact that the government supports not one but *two* opera houses and a handsome operetta theater with a seventy percent subsidy. This is for production costs, since salaries and maintenance are covered by other budgets. It means that ticket prices have stayed in a fifty-cent to two-dollar range.

Inexpensive seats, combined with expensive productions, in turn mean that performances are frequently sold out. Even special school performances of afternoon opera are crammed. One of these recently featured Ferenc Erkel's *Bánk Bán*. The

event began a bit forbiddingly, as a dark-suited theater administrator took the stage to lecture the young people on the significance of the plot and the music, and to give them some forceful advice on how to behave at the opera. This prologue lasted as long as some one-act operas. It had its effect, however, for by the third act, nearly three hours later, the young listeners were still glued to their seats, often halting the melodramatic action with the highly gratifying rhythmic applause which the Hungarians call "The Iron Clap."

*Bánk Bán* is virtually unknown outside Hungary, though there it has the status of the "national" opera. Erkel, a distinguished nineteenth-century Hungarian composer, managed the feat of abstracting the styles and qualities of Donizetti, Meyerbeer, and even a hint of Verdi. Under these he was still able to suggest, subtly but distinctively, native Hungarian rhythms. Some of the score seems derivative, but there are several arias of real power, such as Bank's soliloquy at the opening of Act II. His duet with his dishonored wife, Melinda, is also deeply touching.

Dealing with the Hungarian passion for freedom from foreign domination, the libretto (based on a play by Jozsef Katona) is rich with threats, plots, murders, madness, banishments, suicides, and attendant remorse. It has been given a good reading in a three-record Hungaroton album (LPX 11376-78). The school performance gave some younger singers a chance, and several were impressive: Stefania Moldovan as Melinda, Bank's mad wife; Sandor Szeki as Peter, leader of some dissident nobles; and Istvan Gati as Biberach, a German intriguer. Designer Gabor Forray's use of motifs from the medieval palace of Visegrad—scene of some of the events—permitted rapid changes of scene while enforcing a strong sense of feudal life.

#### "Don Carlos" and a birthday

Forray, who is the major set and costume designer for both the theaters of the National Opera, created a *Don Carlos* which makes the most of the shallow stage of the Erkel Theater, a twentieth-century house. Massive gilded arches close in the stage on three sides, with various locations set by statues, bushes, etc., in the arches.

Tivadar Mark's costumes, though severe and courtly Spanish Hapsburg, were still lavish and richly made. Istvan Rozsos as Carlos, Lajos Miller as Posa, Kolos Kovats as Philip, and Aniko Rohonyi as Elizabeth did well, but Margit Ercse—also the villainous German queen in *Bánk Bán*—showed an unseasoned nervousness as Eboli.

That the national and the traditional should be well served is only right, considering that the main stage of the State Opera will be ninety years old this year. Designed by Miklos Ybl, it is a handsome piece of neo-baroque, with an imposing foyer and stairway. Its stage contains one of the first hydraulic elevator systems built in Europe. The elevators need repair, but hydraulic power is still used to raise and lower set-pieces. The theater is slated for a general repair and refurbishing of the public parts, with reconstruction and modernization planned for the stage areas.

However venerable its boards, this

historic house is not too old to shelter the latest Hungarian operas. Recently, Sándor Szokolay's *Samson* was premiered on its stage. Visually it is quite striking, especially the great mill-wheel of the first act and the temple of the third act. Forray rigged the pillars so that they actually totter and fall as the curtain does likewise.

Saint-Saëns' reputation is safe. Szokolay's score, with a libretto by Laszlo Nemeth, covers the high points of the biblical story, but the relentlessly percussive effect from beginning to end—complemented strongly with the brass—is tiring rather than impressive. Fortunately there are some fairly lyrical moments for Delilah, which offer respite. György Melis was a powerful Samson and Sylvia Sass a wily Delilah, well supported by Laszlo Szigeti as Thimneus and Janos Nagy as Jefe. Andras Korodi conducted.

If Erkel imitated the styles of his age, contemporary opera composers



*West Side Story* at the Budapest Operetta Theater



Katalin Kasza and György Melis in *Bluebeard*

operate on the principle of every man for himself. The twelve-tone idiom, of course, encourages this. Among other recent works in the State Opera's repertoire are Szokolay's much-admired *Blood Wedding* (1964) and his *Hamlet* (1968), Emil Petrovics' fascinating *Crime and Punishment* (1969) [see *MUSICAL AMERICA*, January 1971], and György Ranki's *Tragedy of Man* (1971), based on what is almost the Hungarian "national" play by Imre Madach.

For a theater specialist like myself, it is staggering to think of the difficulties and costs of running two opera stages in tandem. Not to mention the fact that there are approximately seventy productions in the repertoire. A Bartók evening, for instance, requires the setting up of three quite complicated scenic environments for *Duke Bluebeard's Castle*, *The Carved Wooden Prince*, and *The Miraculous Mandarin*. The first has a series of solid-seeming, free-form wall-webs which effectually suggest a golden prison, with a variety of enormous crowns, swords, etc., which appear and disappear, symbolizing themes in the libretto. The *Prince* has an elaborate modernistic

three-dimensional structure center stage, with a curved bridge which can extend into space above the stage or angle down, forming a slide or a path. *Mandarin* is also three-dimensional, with an abstraction of a slummy New York apartment, flanked by tiers of shaky stairs, suspended in space. It is a stunning effect, moodily illuminated. The action is magnificently danced. This production is worthy of the New York City Ballet, and it has been acclaimed at the Edinburgh Festival.

So the technical aspects are admirable; the dancing is good; but how about the voices? It is true that there are no great voices to be heard regularly on the opera stage, but certainly men like György Melis—whom some call "Our Man of Iron"—do not disappoint. Melis and Katalin Kasza were excellent in *Bluebeard*. International stars do make guest appearances in Hungarian productions, of course—and the ticket prices go up when they do. But the status of music training in Budapest seems to be quite healthy. Interesting younger singers, such as those in *Bánk Bán*, promise well for the future.

## The lighter side

This year the elder opera house is ninety, but last year the Operetta Theater was fifty. It is an attractive neobaroque structure, from the Vienna atelier of the theater architects Fellner and Helmer. Inside, with its plaster Atlantids and rococo swirls, it evokes another era (as does the recently and handsomely restored coffee-house "Hungaria"—once known as the "New York").

Displays in the upper foyers of the Operetta Theater show the range and imagination of the productions, and also offer a chronology involving such famous names as Ferenc Lehár and Imre Kalman. Among the photos are some featuring Hannah Honty, now in her eighties, but a reigning queen of the operetta stage until just recently.

The New York agent Jean Dalrymple, when she produced musical revivals for City Center, used to counter complaints that she did no operettas by noting that musicals require "actors who can sing," while operetta demands "singers who can act." If this were relentlessly followed through, the Operetta Theater would have to have two entirely separate rosters of artists. Fortunately, with the help of Laszlo Vamos, young performers are being given special training in the styles and skills of the American musical theater.

Thus, it is possible to see some of the same bright, vital talents one night in Kalman's *The Circus Princess* and the next night in *Fiddler on the Roof*—or *Hegedűs A Háztelekén*, as it is called in Hungarian. *Hello, Dolly!* has enjoyed a huge success at the operetta, and *My Fair Lady*, *Man of La Mancha*, and *West Side Story* continue to sell out when programmed. Of course the fact that most shows in Budapest sell out makes this seem less than phenomenal, but the productions are effective. Music and theater lovers, thinking about a trip to Budapest—and worried about Magyar consonants—will surely find the Hungarian opera, operetta, musicals, and ballet will communicate their qualities with no difficulty. Then there are concerts at the art nouveau Academy of Music, founded by Liszt. It is a pilgrimage worth making, especially since Hungary has been too long cut off from the West. It is time to hear Hungarian singing!  $\triangle$

## COMPOSERS STRING QUARTET

Continued from page MA-19

quired amplification and the assistance of a technician who would adjust the dynamic range of the players during performance to measure between 25 and 90 decibels. Another left matters pretty much in the hands of the performers, starting them off with the advice that there should be eleven events within three seconds, followed by five seconds of silence ("But how can we evaluate this in relation to the others?" a judge complained); it was eliminated. Still another had no tempo or dynamic markings ("Funny that a man will take the trouble to write all those notes and not put in any dynamic markings," said Carter. "What can you do about that? It seems to me unprofessional"). But this piece, it was agreed, had "something," and was retained for further consideration.

Another score was dismissed with a "not appetizing"; another because it was "so damned repetitious." Still another was laid aside after the following conversation:

Rudiakov: "We kept this because Anahid didn't understand what was going on in it. I didn't either."

Carter: "You feel up to quarter tones?"

Rudiakov: "I hate them, personally."

Ajemian: "I have a feeling this would be shortlived with us. You have to think whether you ever really want to play this again, once you've learned it."

Carter: "If he's going to use quarter tones they ought to be used more effectively than this."

Weinberg: "If you're going to divide the octave by something other than eight, I don't think twenty-four is the best plan."

The playing sessions presented new challenges. One competitor had entered two scores, and they were tried one after the other. The first was smooth, legato, sonorous. "It will probably be effective, like Sam Barber's *Adagio for Strings* sort of thing," somebody remarked. The second score was astringent, determinedly modern in sound. It did not impress. "What happened to him?" one of the players said. "He seems much less competent in a modern idiom." "I like the other better," said Miss Ajemian, "It had a gorgeous sound for a

string quartet." "I must say this is kind of dreary," said a judge. Both scores were dropped.

The next score under consideration was in twenty-seven movements. "What's he concocted here?" a player wondered. "I don't know," said one of the judges, "but the obvious thing is that he doesn't understand how to write modern music." Several of the movements were played and found appealing, "but there are some movements you wouldn't want to give a prize to. It sounds like the rehearsal of a high school orchestra."

And so it went, through the better part of a day, until finally—quietly and unanimously, unfussily, almost with a sense of anticlimax—the prize piece was chosen. The opinion of Richard Swift's Fourth String Quartet was summarized by Henry Weinberg: "It is the one which seems to be composed through. It has been interesting today to see that the most coherent scores have not been by the youngest composers. Most of these pieces have taken pre-existing idioms, what's being done now. We all teach, and we've all had a lot of experience in what's going on currently. We're looking for something that gets beyond that, which takes some kind of idiom and then really works with it."

Elliott Carter said much the same thing: "Swift's is the most musical piece. There are about five or six types of composition going on now, and you can tell easily which is good of its kind. But when the composer doesn't seem to know which style he wants to pursue, you can tell right away. Some are good in patches, but when you play more you see they don't hold up."

"It's a beautifully crafted work," added Donald Harris. "He doesn't use any fancy or unusual notation, or any fancy or unusual string effects, but it is personal and expressive."

The Fourth Quartet, reviewed at its Boston premiere (on page MA-18) gives promise of holding up both internally and against the test of public performance. As part of the competition prize it will be recorded on Golden Crest Records and published in manuscript form by Theodore Presser. And happily, about a year from now, the CSQ will be sitting down again to choose the best of the next hopeful group of chamber music composers. A good service to contemporary music. SHIRLEY FLEMING

## DEBUTS & REAPPEARANCES

Continued from page MA-33

which the particularly rich rhythmic language was exceptionally well defined by Ormandy. This was followed by the Saint-Saëns Fifth Piano Concerto, Op. 103, which, after an attractively limpid first movement, rapidly sinks into the rather unconvincing exotica of the second and the sadistic but empty pyrotechnics of the finale. Soloist Byron Janis dashed the work off with enormous flair and vigor; lacking, however, was anything resembling tonal character, which may have been swallowed up by the hall's rotten acoustics, by Mr. Janis' Baldwin, or by some flaw in his execution. The program concluded with an unexciting rendition of Ravel's eternal *Daphnis and Chloë* Suite No. 2. R.S.B.

### Riverside Ch. Ens.: "Oberon"

In the hearing of a celebrated but unknown opera, the more skilled the singers and the more expert the orchestra, the more one's perception of the work is enhanced. Yet the dignified, well prepared, semi-professional accounting of Weber's *Oberon* in con-

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cert at Alice Tully Hall on May 12 by the Riverside Chamber Ensemble under the direction of Larry Newland, though unavoidably homespun, was not to be disdained. Mr. Newland's forces imparted a good idea of the beauties of this score which, ever since its premiere at Covent Garden in 1826, when it was conducted by the composer in his last year of life, has lain in relative limbo.

The reasons for this neglect are not hard to understand, especially after a live confrontation. Weber's music offers a series of virtually incidental rather than "set" numbers, commenting atmospherically on the dramatic developments of an Arabian Night's tale in which spoken dialogue shapes the action. Sung in this performance to the original English text by James Robinson Planché and provided with a running synopsis, Weber's opera proved enchanting but dispersed, differing in its pageant-like progress from his two more highly centralized masterworks, *Der Freischütz* and *Euryanthe*, just as Mozart's *Flute* varies in organization from *Figaro* and *Don Giovanni*. Alongside the libretto of *Oberon*, however, that for the *Flute* is Shakespeare, Goethe, Noel Coward—take your pick.

In spite of structural oddities—and sometimes because of them—*Oberon* does charm the ear, make the imagination tingle. Of the principal singers (a professional group) on this occasion, Johanna Meier undertook the music of Rezia (notably the famous aria, "Ocean, thou mighty monster") with solid rather than brilliant results. John Sandor was a Sir Huon less comfortable vocally than Miss Meier but more involved in the poetry of what he had to sing. David Bender was a sympathetic Oberon, Clyde Walker a lively Serasmin, and Carole Walters had some charming moments as Fatima. Newcomb, conducting a community orchestra that brings free classical music to senior citizens' homes, cultural centers, and New York City parks throughout the year, had a firm hold on his surprisingly able forces. Two choruses took part in the performance: the Choral Society of the Hamptons, directed by Hugh Ross, and the New Amsterdam Singers, prepared by Clara Langstreth. A worthwhile evening.

ROBERT LAWRENCE



## Carol Rosenberger, piano

Judging from her recital at Tully Hall on April 22, Carol Rosenberger is in search of a repertory compatible with her temperament and her technique. The American pianist seems to have made the right find with Karel Szymanowski's four Etudes, Op. 4. Despite their early vintage, these pieces confirm their composer as one of the more interesting post-Romantic/pre-modern figures. Miss Rosenberger played them with an easy, spontaneous grace which captured their heady exuberance and made their idiosyncratic harmonic progressions seem logical. A similar quality of exhilaration distinguished Miss Rosenberger's performance of Chopin's B flat minor Sonata. She is no powerhouse, though, and the climaxes in the first movement and the funeral march needed a more potent display of force.

For the rest of the program, Miss Rosenberger played three sonata miniatures by Soler in a brittle, cramped manner which voided their Scarlattian humor and ill-served the cause of baroque authenticity. Schubert's A minor Sonata, D. 845 fared little better. The pianist made her way through this half-hour long work very, very carefully, as if she were afraid of divulging its Romantic elements.

There is no denying, however, that Miss Rosenberger certainly works magic with Szymanowski. Maybe she has her work cut out for her. A. DER.



Carol Rosenberger

SHEFFIELD  
Continued from page MA-24

## Tokyo String Quartet

The Tokyo String Quartet C-P was another matter. They did stay, and were gracious to boot. Their performances were absolutely extraordinary and the program was of first-rate music: Haydn's Op. 76, No. 1; the Smetana Quartet, and Beethoven's Op. 59, No. 3. All standard fare? In places like Sheffield, no chamber music is standard fare. This was all first-class material, and audience loved it.

And why shouldn't they? The Tokyo String Quartet may be the most brilliant quartet around for the Romantic literature. Haydn not Romantic, you say? Listen to their DG recording of that same quartet. Readers may remember that two years ago it won one of the three First Prizes in the HIGH FIDELITY/Montreux International Record Awards as best recording of the year. Their ensemble—not only rhythmically, but in dynamics, phrasing, and even vibrato—sounds absolutely welded together. They must breathe with the same lungs, since they maintain their remarkable ensemble even in the most free-sounding rubato. Most oriental musicians I have heard are prone to rubato, and the TSQ's perfection of ensemble even here makes them to the Romantic repertoire what the Juilliard Quartet once was to Bartók.

I did have the distinct impression, however, that these rubatos were exactly the same as on their recorded performance. Could it be that they weren't making music freely, but had merely subjected themselves to back-breaking rehearsals of particularly expressive passages to simulate an improvisatory feeling? A chilling thought.

At any rate, if the TSQ played Haydn as a Romantic, they played the Smetana with as much variety of coloration as if it were a Debussy orchestral work, and the Beethoven's last movement like a Paganini Caprice. Scholars can take it or leave it, but it was one hell of a concert.

Though the *hors d'oeuvres* were ordinary and the champagne "punch" undrinkable, the audiences were completely taken over by the Concert-Parties and plans are already under way for next season. △

bidding to any listener of moderate sophistication.

In the *Venetian Games*, written for the 1961 Festival of Contemporary Music in Venice, the composer introduces improvisation (which is done splendidly in this recording) and thus provides the first aleatoric music that a listener reared on Beethoven and Brahms is likely to take easily in stride. In fact, this is an enormously exciting composition (the games, of course, take place in the music, not in Venice) and Rowicki's performance is filled with the necessary zest and bravura.

The clear intention of this disc is for us to follow the composer through seven years and a major change in his approach to his work. This is an invitation that anyone concerned with the music of this century would find difficult to ignore when presented with a recording of such high technical standard as this and with performances that go so consistently to the heart of the music and project it with such obvious insight and respect. R.C.M.

**B** **MESSIAEN:** *Trois petites liturgies de la présence divine.* Yvonne Loriod, piano; Jeanne Loriod, ondes martenot; Chorus and Chamber Orchestra of the ORTF, Marcel Couraud, cond. MUSICAL HERITAGE MHS 1820, \$3.50 [from MUSIC GUILD MS 142, 1966] (Musical Heritage Society, 1991 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023).

Messiaen's *Trois petites liturgies*, written in 1943-44, stands as a kind of compendium of many of the strikingly original techniques incorporated by the composer into his musical language. Lest this make the work sound like a mere academic exercise, I will immediately add that the *Liturgies* contains some of the most dynamic, colorful, and often hypnotic music written in the twentieth century.

I say hypnotic because, whether in the ethereal, slow unisons sung by the women's chorus over birdcall patterns played on the piano and celesta in the first movement (*Anthem of Inner Conversation*); in the joyous, repeated, almost oriental patterns of the second movement (*Sequence of the Word: Divine Hymn*); or in the more primitivistic chant of the third (*Psalmody of Ubiquity Through Love*), Messiaen's music pulses within an expanding universe that seems unrestrained by normal temporal limitations, allowing the listener more or less to float free within the various dimensions. These dimensions are musically re-created by an unusual and exotic scoring including women's voices (generally singing in unison and octaves), solo piano, the bizarre sounds of the ondes martenot, celesta, vibraphone, percussion, and string orchestra, all combined in various color configurations (Messiaen refers to the work as primarily "color-music") in which the separate timbres maintain a remarkable independence.

Formerly available on Music Guild and originally released on Erato, this indispensable disc has been made available once again by Musical Heritage, which has preserved the excellent sound quality of the original (indeed, it is an improvement over the Music Guild issue). It features a definitive performance of incredible intensity and vigor. Much of the effect of this exceedingly difficult work lies in the sustaining of various kinds of momentum, and I have rarely heard a group work

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Eugene Ormandy—sonically splendid Mussorgsky and Ravel.

together with such ease and unflagging energy (and apparent devotion) as Couraud and his forces. An absolute must in any twentieth-century discography. R.S.B.

**MOZART:** Concertos: for Clarinet and Orchestra, in A, K. 622; for Bassoon and Orchestra, in B flat, K. 191. Alfred Prinz, clarinet; Dietmar Zeman, bassoon; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Karl Böhm, cond. [Ellen Hickmann and Werner Mayer, prod.] DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 411, \$7.98.

*Comparisons—same coupling:*  
Brymer, Chapman, Marriner/Academy Phi. 6500 378  
Brymer, Brooke, Beecham/Royal Phil. Sera. S 60193

These are most attractive performances. Both soloists (from the Vienna Philharmonic) play smoothly and with personality, and Böhm's conducting of the relatively large, lush orchestra is full of his characteristic masculine sobriety without being unduly grim about it.

But all that said, this disc simply doesn't match the best of its competition. Best, in this coupling, is the Marriner Philips disc, which throws in the Andante for flute and orchestra (played by Claude Monteux) as a delightful bonus. Marriner's record is more clearly recorded, more energetically and personally conducted, and more alert and refreshing in its soloists. And the smoothly idiosyncratic Beecham record is clearly the leader in the budget field. J.R.

**MOZART:** Serenades for Winds: in E flat, K. 375; in C minor, K. 388. Vienna Philharmonic Wind Ensemble. [Rainer Brock, prod.] DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 369, \$7.98.

*Comparisons—same coupling:*  
Collegium Aureum BASF KHB 29312  
De Waart/Netherlands Wind Ensemble Phi. 802 907

This record, presumably the first of a series, is lovely to listen to. The only trouble is that the two other discs listed above are even lovelier to listen to. And a forthcoming set is loveliest of all.

Edo de Waart's Philips disc offers playing of far more polish and grace than the conductorless Viennese can offer. And the Collegium Aureum pairing boasts the pungent sound of

the "original instruments" (valveless horns and the like).

Best of all are Jack Brymer's versions with the London Wind Soloists, presently out of print but promised in the London Stereo Treasury series. These are performances of enormous verve and soloistic personality in sound that easily holds its own with the others, even though it is more than ten years old. J.R.

**MUSSORGSKY:** Pictures at an Exhibition (orch. Ravel). **RAVEL:** Bolero. Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond. [Max Wilcox, prod.] RCA RED SEAL ARL 1-0451, \$5.98. Tape: ● ARS 1-0451, \$6.95; ●● ARK 1-0451, \$6.95.

Certainly neither of these coruscating scores has ever before been recorded with more powerful sonic authenticity and solidity. It's only when I measure these excitingly vivid aural signals against my interpretive predilections and prejudices that I become just a bit unsatisfied with *Bolero*, definitely dissatisfied with *Pictures at an Exhibition*.

Where *Bolero* is concerned, my complaints are both minor and somewhat unreasonable, for the only significant missing elements—a more distinctively Gallic grace and at least a suggestion of Dionysian frenzy at the climax—can't fairly be expected from either Ormandy or his orchestral personnel. On the other hand, they are to be warmly praised for not resting on their previously won *Bolero* honors, even those of the deservedly acclaimed last of several fine Columbia versions (MS 7673). Again, the ostinato beat is rock-steady, but at least the pace is fractionally slower (the over-all timing is now 15:42 vs. 15:07). Again, too, the long crescendo and wide texture expansion are just as precisely graduated, while the tonal colorings (both of the early wind-instrument solos and of the thunderous later tutti) are even more magically varied, contrasted, and blended.

The Mussorgsky-Ravel score is also taken just a shade more broadly (31:47 vs. 31:08) than in the c. 1968 Philadelphian Columbia version (which remained the same, by the way, while appearing under no fewer than three different disc numbers). But the present,

even more dramatically effective recording exacerbates a consistently grimly ferocious interpretive treatment unrelieved by the slightest gleam of humor, even in such bubbling moments as those in the *Tuileries*. Ballet of the *Unhatched Chicks*, and *Limoges*, to say nothing of the satirical musical caricatures of *Samuel Goldenberg and Schmuyle*. (How magnificent here, and throughout, is the first trumpeter—Gilbert Johnson, I presume.) The fidelity to Ravel's orchestration is almost obsessively exact: the perception of Mussorgsky's ironic wit and character empathy is lamentably vestigial.

Well, one can't have everything, and there's no denying that one's most avid sheerly sonic expectations are met with overabundance.

R.D.D.

**POULENC:** Aubade for Piano and Eighteen Instruments. **D'INDY:** Symphony on a French Mountain Air, Op. 25. Joela Jones, piano; London Symphony Orchestra members (in the Poulenc), Westphalian Symphony Orchestra (in the D'Indy), Paul Freeman, cond. ORION ORS 74139, \$6.98.

Like many Poulenc compositions, the 1929 *Aubade* affords the listener a kind of pure sense of enjoyment lying beyond the often wistful tunes and the rich harmonic language. In this "choreographed concerto" for piano and eighteen instruments (the ballet's subject is Diana's lamented chastity), Poulenc uses the solo instrument in an almost constant series of repartees with the chamber group, often creating a feeling of childlike naiveté through literal, immediate repetition of the work's numerous short motives, a device often encountered in recent French music.

And in a manner typical of the composer, the *Aubade*'s over-all emotional and musical atmosphere grows out of the sharp contrasts between the unbridled wit and brilliance of some sections and the Gallic melancholia of others. The whole affair concludes with a characteristic fade-out that has been preceded by a short "allegro feroce" about as audacious as anything Poulenc wrote (one sees here another side of Stravinsky's influence on the composer).

The D'Indy *Symphonie sur un chant montagnard français*, composed in 1886, is like the Poulenc, more or less an unlabeled piano concerto. But in its sprawling and occasionally melodramatic Romanticism, it lies at the opposite end of the aesthetic scale from the Poulenc. Indeed, D'Indy's somewhat Wagnerian orientation (one also hears a bit of Bruckner in the first movement) represents the very sort of thing against which Poulenc and his *Les Six* cronies revolted. But in spite of a heaviness that does not sit very well with the Gallic thematic material (the finale, in particular, is almost ludicrously bombastic), the *Symphonie* is often marked by an appealing lyricism, with the frequently high-register piano part providing an effective antidote to much of the excess weight from which the orchestra suffers.

You will not find a livelier or more clearly played rendition of the Poulenc *Aubade* than the one offered here by Joela Jones and the London Symphony soloists conducted by Paul Freeman, who is currently artistic director of Columbia's Black Composers Series and conductor-in-residence of the Detroit Symphony. The Poulenc spirit pervades every moment of

the collaboration, whether in the élan of the opening Toccata or the more subdued nostalgia of the slower sections.

I also very much like the pacing and control shown by conductor and soloist in the D'Indy. Freeman, for instance, creates a stunning crescendo leading into the opening piano statement of the first movement. But in this work, the orchestral playing lacks precision and depth and has received somewhat muddy recorded sound, in which the piano is all but swallowed up. The Poulenc, on the other hand, benefits from bright, up-close sonics.

In both cases, the surfaces are utterly horrendous, making appreciation of the music and performances all but impossible, at least for my pressing. Orion has been making very important contributions to the recorded repertory; the company deserves something other than the rotten quality control it has been getting. R.S.B.

**RACHMANINOFF:** Etudes Tableaux (9), Op. 39; Variations on a Theme by Corelli, Op. 42. Vladimir Ashkenazy, piano. LONDON CS 6822, \$5.98.

Another important, albeit belated, by-product of last year's Rachmaninoff centennial, this disc offers pianistically brilliant accounts of some of the composer's less popular works.

The second set of "picture studies" (No. 6 is actually a reworking of one of the three Rachmaninoff rejected from his earlier set, Op. 33) was the last thing he composed before he left his native Russia. His financial position in America forced him to turn full time to the piano; as a result, few subsequent compositions emerged from his pen. In fact, the *Corelli Variations* (a misnomer—the theme *La Follia* was merely used by Corelli in his Op. 5, No. 12 Violin Sonata) is the only solo-piano work from Rachmaninoff's American years.

Evidently he had doubts about the *Corelli Variations*. In performance, it is reported, if the audience seemed restless he would drop certain variations. He even sanctioned the deletion (by others) of Variations 11, 12, and 19—a practice Ashkenazy rightly will have none of.

In truth, the work is more satisfying as pianism than as music. As with the much earlier set of variations on Chopin's C minor Prelude, Rachmaninoff often succumbs to his own redundancy of texture and overlushness of harmony. Op. 42 is very obviously a dress rehearsal for the immensely satisfactory *Paganini Rhapsody*. But without the diversity of orchestral tone color, a certain banality comes unpleasantly to the fore.

The *études tableaux*, more elaborate than the preludes and extremely difficult to play really well, are nevertheless shorter pieces and provide more contrast and diversity when heard in toto. For Rachmaninoff, these are surprisingly modernistic at times. And page after page suggests "Old Russia" in much the same primitivistic way as parts of Mussorgsky's *Pictures*.

Ashkenazy recorded the *Corelli Variations* for Angel in the early years of his career (indeed, they were on his very first Carnegie Hall program back in 1958). That youthful performance was technically remarkable for its fluency, but the almost totally lyrical reading, sensitive though it was, suggested only a fraction of the work's potential.

Today, Ashkenazy has broadened and sharpened his conception. The new reading is far more deliberate, bolder in contrast—in short, much more interesting than before. There is more diversity of touch: Caressing pianissimos alternate with equally light passages of diamond brilliance; fortissimos tend to have far more plangency and body to them. In many ways, Ashkenazy's present style is close to Rachmaninoff's own way with his music. One can really hear the similarity in some of the études that Rachmaninoff recorded himself (he never recorded the Variations).

The sound is particularly brilliant, similar to last year's all-Chopin recital (London CS 6794). I prefer this centered sonority to London's usual softer-hued, reverberant piano reproduction. A handsome release. H.G.

**RAVEL:** Bolero—See Mussorgsky: Pictures at an Exhibition.

**REINECKE:** Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1—See D'Albert: Concerto No. 2.

**SAINT-SAËNS:** Sonata for Cello and Piano, No. 1, in C minor, Op. 32. **FAURÉ:** Sonata for Cello and Piano, No. 2, in G minor, Op. 117. Jerome Kessler, cello; Beverly Carmen, piano. ORION ORS 73124, \$5.98.

Comparison—Fauré: Torteller, Hubeau

MHS 1286/90

In the Saint-Saëns' first Cello Sonata, Jerome Kessler and Beverly Carmen do full justice to a work that turns out to be a major revelation. Although it pays its respects to such predecessors as Beethoven and Schubert, the sonata, written in 1872 during a bleak period of French history, actually benefits from the clarity growing partially from its classical forms, in the midst of which appears material that is breathtakingly original in its musical language and emotional effect.

The first movement's theme, for instance, breaks the Beethovenesque flow of the first theme with a series of poignantly beautiful chordal progressions replacing anything resembling a true melody, while the second movement offers a simple chorale theme presented in a gracious interplay between cello and piano. Throughout, Saint-Saëns manages to combine the cello and piano in consistently intriguing and ear-pleasing configurations in which the independence of each instrument is never forgotten. All of this is admirably heightened by Orion's bright and realistic stereo sound and by the sonorous, beautifully balanced, and rhythmically dynamic playing of Kessler and Carmen.

The artists fare much less well in the 1922 Fauré Second Sonata, a rather breathless and diffuse rendition. This more melodically oriented work emphasizes weaknesses in tone and intonation that occasionally intrude upon Kessler's otherwise fine cello playing. Furthermore, the thematic material is developed in a more complex fashion than the Saint-Saëns, and it takes a somewhat broader overall view—and a bit more subtlety—than shown by Kessler and Carmen to bring the whole thing off convincingly.

But the sonata offers a wealth of the kind of mellow, sustained lyricism, the filigree harmonies, and the set styles—such as the second-

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movement elegy—that Fauré excels in. And although the performance is not as good as that of Tortelier and Hubeau on the five-disc Musical Heritage chamber music set, the Saint-Saëns makes this recording a necessity. R.S.B.

**SCARLATTI, D.:** 14 Sonatas—See Handel: Suites for Harpsichord.

**SCHUBERT:** Goethe Lieder. Elly Ameling, soprano; Dalton Baldwin, piano. Hermann Prey, baritone; Karl Engel, piano. PHILIPS 6500 515, \$6.98.

**AMELING/BALDWIN:** Mignon Lieder. Kennst du das Land: Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt; Heiss mich nicht reden. So lässt mich scheinen. Die Liebende schreibt. Nähe des geliebten. Heldenroslein. Liebhaber In allen Gestalten.

**PREY/ENGEL:** Gesänge des Harfners: Wer sich der Einsamkeit ergibt; Wer nie sein Brot mit Tränen ass; An die Türen will ich schleichen. Der Sänger. Erköinig. Ganymed.

All the texts here are by Goethe, and each singer's principal grouping—the four *Mignon Lieder* for Ameling and the three *Gesänge des Harfners* for Prey—comes from *Wilhelm Meister*. But what interests me most about this record is why I like Ameling so much better than Prey.

Prey has a cleanly produced, operatically hefty baritone. But his success on-stage hasn't hindered him from singing and recording lots of art songs. The trouble, as far as I'm concerned, is the unfortunate balance between manliness and preciousness in his singing. Perhaps quibbling subtleties and a pervasively

larmoyant style are inevitable in this Fischer-Dieskau-ian age, when such a premium is placed on sophisticated detail. But it doesn't really suit Prey's own gifts or, worse, the song literature he sings.

Ameling, on the other hand, is perhaps today's best example of the artfully simple Lieder singer. Of course she doesn't "just" sing: Self-contained perfection of this sort is always a matter of artistry. She happens to have a lovely, unassuming soprano, expressive yet never forced into coarseness through years of effort to attain a properly operatic amplitude. What she has above all else is the gift to sing these songs in a way that never precludes the most delightful personality, yet never lets that personality intrude between the listener and the song.

In short, this disc is worth getting if just for the Ameling side. Karl Engel accompanies Prey sturdily; Dalton Baldwin partners Ameling exquisitely. J.R.

**SCHUBERT:** Lieder—See Schumann: Dichterliebe.

**SCHUBERT:** Piano Works. For a feature review of recordings of these works, see page 74.

**SCHUMANN:** Dichterliebe, Op. 48. **SCHUBERT:** Lieder. Hermann Prey, baritone; Leonard Hokanson, piano. [Hans-Gerhard Lichtorn, prod.] PHILIPS 6520 002, \$6.98.

**SCHUBERT:** Der Wanderer. Die Forelle; Auf dem Wasser zu singen; Lachen und Weinen; An Sylvia; Lied eines Schiffers an die Dloskuren; Der Wanderer an den Mond; An die Musik.

Hermann Prey is an intelligent, conscientious artist. Yet his performance of *Dichterliebe*, while worthy of respect, fails to convince. It does not impose itself upon the listener with a sense of inevitability and imaginative rightness.

The raptures, the pains, and the ironies of love as set forth in Schumann's extraordinarily beautiful cycle are, as one might expect from this singer's previous Lieder work, carefully presented. Prey obviously understands Heine's particular poetic voice: his lack of sentimentality, the edge he gives to apparently straightforward statements, his skepticism, his profound melancholy. For the most part, the texts of these sixteen poems are delivered with point and a full awareness of their implications. Yet in mediating between the sparseness of Heine's verse and the moving emotional transmutations it undergoes in Schumann's music, Prey often—and fatally—loses sight of the composer's tact, his ability to play off feeling against irony and achieve thereby an insight into the workings of the heart that has nothing of self-pity about it.

Schumann's great accomplishment is to create an extended lyrical meditation of the difficulties of love that transcends the knowledge of failure and arrives, by the end of the cycle, at understanding, conciliation, and self-enrichment. The postlude to the final song, "*Die alten, bösen Lieder*," is an attestation of love's power to enlighten rather than merely cause pain. Schumann imbues his will on Heine. The original poem of "*Die alten, bösen Lieder*" is scathingly ironical, almost sardonic, yet the composer sees beyond its limits to

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something more searching. At every point he tempers intelligence with wisdom.

Prey's response to the challenge of these songs is to overemphasize the element of feeling. The cautionary ironies of "Ein Jüngling liebt ein Mädchen" become so heavy-handed that the poet sounds boorish and obvious. "Im Rhein, im heiligen Strome" loses its grandeur because Prey, beginning rather slowly, then introduces a ritard and a sudden diminuendo at the end of the first verse (at "heilige Cöln") and is consequently unable to make an effective ritard at the place specified by the composer at the end of the song. Similarly, in "Am leuchtenden Sommermorgen" the magical modulation at "Sei unserer Schwester nicht böse" goes for less than it ought because, at the speed he has adopted from the start, Prey is hardly able to manage the absolutely necessary double ritards the phrase demands. The same kind of problem is evident in "Ich hab' im Traum geweinet."

The fast, light-fingered songs are in a different way equally unconvincing. Prey's curious use of a rather nasal head voice suggests inhibition rather than delicacy. Likewise in the familiar, graceful Schubert songs like "Die Forelle" or "Auf dem Wasser zu singen," he misses the composer's spontaneity, the sense of melodic inspiration welling up without surcease. Indeed, "An Sylvia" and "An die Musik" are as labored in their way as his very slow and sentimental version of "Der Wanderer."

Fischer-Dieskau's *Dichterliebe* (DG 139 109) is a more satisfying performance than Prey's. A wartime broadcast by Hans Hotter is available on Preiser and worth hunting out in stores specializing in imports. Ely Ameling and Christa Ludwig have recorded many of the Schubert songs superbly. Hotter's Seraphim album of *Lieder* (IC 6051) contains an unforgettable account of "Der Wanderer."

Leonard Hokanson provides sensitive accompaniments but, especially in the Schumann, is sometimes too discreet to give the piano parts their appropriate importance. The recording is exemplary. Texts, no translations. D.S.H.

**B** **SCHUMANN:** Introduction and Allegro appassionato for Piano and Orchestra, in G, Op. 92; Introduction and Allegro for Piano and Orchestra, in D minor, Op. 134; Overture, Scherzo, and Finale, Op. 52. Michael Ponti, piano (in Opp. 92 and 134); Luxembourg Radio Orchestra, Louis de Froment, cond. (in Opp. 92 and 134); Westphalian Symphony Orchestra, Richard Kapp, cond. (in Op. 52). TURNABOUT TV-S 34537, \$3.50.

Comparisons—Op. 92:	
Serkin, Ormandy/Philadelphia	Col. MS 6688
Richter, Wislocki/Warsaw Phil.	DG 138 077
Comparison—Op. 134:	
Serkin, Ormandy/Philadelphia	Col. MS 7423
Comparisons—Op. 52:	
Solti/Vienna Phil.	Lon. CS 6696
Inbal/New Philharmonia	Phi. 6500 288

Schumann made things hard for himself! It is bad enough to write two nonvirtuoso *Konzertstücke* for piano and orchestra. But then to further confuse matters by calling one "Introduction and Allegro appassionato" and the other "Introduction and Allegro"! Small wonder that he came up with two nonstarters. . . . But if Schumann fell short in catchy merchandising, both of these scores are near master-

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pieces, and nearly a century and a quarter after their appearance—thanks largely to several recordings and to years of tireless concert-hall advocacy by Rudolf Serkin and a few other brave souls—the music world is beginning to become aware of their existence.

A few years back, these basically exciting Ponti performances would have easily eclipsed the competent though dull disc competition. But alas, he must now contend with the redoubtable Serkin in Op. 134 and with Serkin and Richter in Op. 92. Ponti here turns in some of his best playing to date. His pianism is clean-limbed, biting resilient, and brightly incisive. He phrases in a refreshingly direct, unpretentious manner and manages feats of undenied bravura and clarity. M. Froment and his disciplined ensemble support

their spirited soloist with a clean, cool, typically Gallic sonority that works well in such thickly scored writing as this.

These are splendid performances as far as they go. But they do not go nearly so far as Serkin's supreme accounts. He too gives ample emphasis to the athletic side—the Florestan side, if you will—of Schumann's character, but in so doing he never slights the poetic introspection. Even more, Ponti's approach contents itself with a mere breezy clean-cutness, whereas Serkin's vigor is a more deeply complex, highly demonic fury. Ormandy and his larger orchestra second Serkin's more diversified interpretations with appropriately massive sonority, and Columbia's sound is at least as fine as Turnabout's.

Richter's patrician Op. 92 boasts a coloristic

refinement beyond Ponti if not Serkin. It's a lovely reading, well reproduced, but my preference remains for the exciting Serkin/Ormandy performances of both these works.

For some curious reason, there has been of late a phonographic run on the Overture, Scherzo, and Finale. Kapp's reading is much more genial than most. He plays the Overture with a great deal of affection, is a bit too staid in the Scherzo, and favors a loose-limbed, multitempo Bruno Walter-ish approach in the Finale where others have found exhilarating drive and reminiscences of the finale to Schubert's great C major Symphony. There is a great deal of musicality and character to his interpretation, but frankly the Westphalian orchestra's seedy, ill-disciplined execution is depressing. I continue to prefer the Solti version, though listeners preferring a less powered approach are directed to the Philips disc. Inbal gets smooth, luscious execution from the New Philharmonia for his warmly genial reading. H.G.

**SCHUMANN:** Scenes from Goethe's "Faust." For a feature review of a recording of this work, see page 73.

**STRAVINSKY:** Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in D. **WALTON:** Concerto for Violin and Orchestra. Kyung-Wha Chung, violin; London Symphony Orchestra, André Previn, cond. [Christopher Raeburn, prod.] LONDON CS 6819, \$5.98.

Kyung-Wha Chung has already brought us beguiling recordings of Romantic works for violin and orchestra, but her sympathies clearly go far beyond that literature, for here she provides unusually effective performances of two of the major violin concertos of the present century. Indeed, her reading of the Walton is far and away the best account of that music I have ever heard and greatly increased my respect for the score.

Miss Chung, moreover, is not an artist who blossoms only in the recording studio. In a live concert situation she can play with all the virtuosity and force in projection one finds in her recorded performances. She has a high place on anybody's list of leading violinists.

The trick here is to play the Walton the same way you do the Stravinsky: with a light touch, great care in rhythm and accent, and a firm propulsive sense. This eliminates the pompous quality that mars it so often, and, when you add Miss Chung's deft way of handling a lyric phrase, the interpretive problem has been solved. The result is a quite new view of the Walton concerto, which in performances such as this clearly deserves a larger place in the repertory as the most successful mixture of twentieth-century attitudes with conservative musical devices. Can we call it the leading Tory violin concerto?

Stravinsky's concerto was written nearly a decade earlier than the Walton but is far more advanced in terms of the music of this century. Its status as a twentieth-century classic hardly seems open to question, but its primary spirit is that of neoclassicism: Once one accepts its more sophisticated harmonies, it is no more forbidding than Vivaldi and, in the long run, probably more interesting. Miss Chung is amazing in the lightness and elegance of her playing, her fine grasp of meter and phrase.

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**STRAVINSKY:** Three Pieces for String Quartet; Concertino for String Quartet—See Ginastera: Quartet No. 2.

**VAUGHAN WILLIAMS:** Dona nobis pacem; Toward the Unknown Region. Sheila Armstrong, soprano; John Carol Case, baritone (in *Dona*); London Philharmonic Choir and Orchestra, Adrian Boult, cond. [Christopher Bishop, prod.] ANGEL S 36972, \$5.98.

Comparison—*Dona nobis pacem*: Abravanel/Utah Sym. Van. VSD 71159

Ralph Vaughan Williams may not have been the twentieth century's greatest composer, but I can't think of one I would rather have known personally, based on the "presence" I have always gotten from the music itself—that of a spirit uncommonly generous, courageous, tender, bluntly honest, compassionate, and radiating a life-affirming optimism that occurs on such a scale rarely in the tonal arts. (You can hear it in Bach and Dvořák, but that's only once a century!)

One couldn't find a more sterling example of that greatness of heart than in the major work on this new Angel release. Completed in 1936 (though the fourth section was begun a generation earlier), *Dona nobis pacem* is set to the Latin Mass, the Bible, and secular poetry, mainly by Walt Whitman. Why it took thirty years to reach commercial disc (Abravanel's Vanguard recording) is a mystery to me, but there is poetic justice in the fact that such a debut took place in the America of the Sixties, embroiled in the most pointless, dehumanized war that memory can find.

Vaughan Williams, in his "give us peace" plea, stressed the humanity of war's victims above all else. Thus, the second movement (*Beat, Beat, Drum!*) represents the angry juggernaut of militarism tramping over the everyday life of people at their studies, at their love-making, at the plow, and caring for their children. The third movement is a visionary elegy for solo baritone, who whispers the poignant truth that "my enemy . . . a man divine as myself is dead." The awesomely solemn fourth section is a *Dirge for Two Veterans*, father and son.

The finale returns to the Biblical and sacred sources of the opening, with a brilliantly festive vision of a better and more peaceful world. In Vaughan Williams' rapturous vision (composed contemporaneously with the Fourth Symphony), cynicism and despair are banished. There is indignation and pain, of course, but dominating all is a caressing warmth for the human life that might have been.

It is hard to choose between the two splendid recordings of this music. Abravanel and Boult share a sense of firm authority in unfolding the score, the former with a more headily triumphant peroration to the finale, the latter with a touch more thrust and point in the phrasing throughout. The Salt Lake instrumentalists are fully equal to the musical and

technical demands of the work, with the LPO adding a touch more finesse, especially in the winds. The British chorus is also marginally better disciplined than its American counterpart.

Certainly Angel's Armstrong and Carol Case are far the more secure and stylish of the two vocal teams. Moreover, Vanguard has misbalanced its two soloists, baritone William Metcalf being far too forward relative to the off-mike Blanche Christensen. Otherwise, the older recording is superb, with more biting brass sound, fuller bass, and more dramatic choral stereophony than one hears on Angel. The latter, however, is superior in orchestral spread.

If I lean slightly to the new Boult, the couplings could swing things either way for the prospective buyer. *Toward the Unknown Region*, a "song for chorus and orchestra" composed in 1906 to words by Whitman dealing with death, is a competent but not maturely characteristic piece. It also seems very opaque in its scoring. Abravanel's coupling, *Flos Campi* for viola, chorus, and orchestra, is one of Vaughan Williams' most haunting and formally unique creations.

Boult's is the only current recording of *Toward the Unknown Region* (Angel used to have a mono version by Sargent). But Van-

guard couples the very same performance of *Flos Campi* alternately with other material—to say nothing of the rival Angel *Flos Campi* by Aronowitz and Willcocks. Surely, not an unhappy choice position. A.C.

**WALTON:** Concerto for Violin and Orchestra—See Stravinsky: Concerto.

## recitals and miscellany

**FRENCH AND SPANISH SONGS.** Marilyn Horne, mezzo-soprano; Martin Katz, piano. LONDON OS 26301, \$5.98.

**BIZET:** Chanson d'avril; Adieu de l'hôtesse arabe; Vieille chanson; Absence. **DEBUSSY:** Chansons de Bilitis. **FALLA:** Seven Popular Songs. **NIJ:** Villancico castellano; Jesus de Nazareth; Villancico asturiano; Villancico andaluz.

Marilyn Horne is more effective in the theater than on records. Her rather harsh timbre is suited to the large spaces of the opera house, where in conjunction with her physical pres-

## "Charm": The Secret Is Sincerity

by Kenneth Furie



After grumping at a succession of recent "charm" records, I'd begun to wonder whether I'm really such a sourpuss. Fortunately Angel came up with this winning collection of spirituals to underscore the lesson: Yes, classical artists can unwind, but whether the vein is light or serious the key to success is conviction instead of cutesiness, sincerity instead of gimmickry.

Martina Arroyo is generally in lovely voice, delivering these fifteen numbers with bite, polish, and ringing freedom. This record and her Donna Anna on the Davis *Don Giovanni* (Philips 6707 022) are the most encouraging news since her ill-advised Met encounter with Verdi's Lady Macbeth two seasons back.

She gets helpful support from the combined choruses under the expert direction of Dorothy Maynor, who is now executive director of the Harlem School of the Arts. In eight numbers Arroyo is joined by a second soloist. As it happens, my favorites are the songs with baritone T. Ray Lawrence: "There's a Meeting Here Tonight," "He Is

King of Kings," and "Ev'ry Time I Feel the Spirit."

Ms. Maynor has contributed a thoughtful discussion of the spiritual, "a strange hybrid and synthesis of things Hebrew, Babylonian, Christian, and African." There's no doubt that the music communicates the pain and implausible exhilaration of its slave roots.

Okay, I'm hooked.

**MARTINA ARROYO:** There's a Meeting Here Tonight. Martina Arroyo, soprano; various other soloists; Choirs of the Harlem School of the Arts and St. James Presbyterian Church, New York, Dorothy Maynor, cond. [George Sponhalt, prod.] ANGEL S 36072, \$5.98. Tape: ● 8XS 36072, \$6.98; ●● 4XS 36072, \$6.98.

Spirituals: There's a Meeting Here Tonight; I Stood on de Ribber of Jerdon; Let Us Break Bread Together; Little David, Play on Your Harp; My Lord, What a Morning; On Ma Journey; There Is a Balm in Gilead; I Gotta Robe; Were You There?; He Is King of Kings; Steal Away to Jesus; I Want Jesus to Walk with Me; Ev'ry Time I Feel the Spirit; A City Called Heaven; I Couldn't Hear Nobody Pray.

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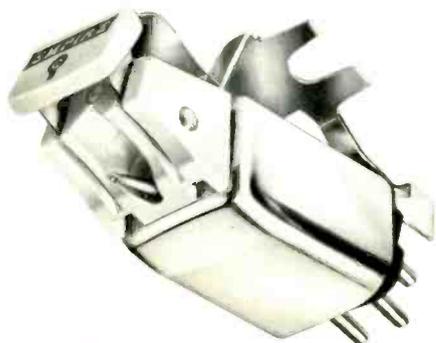
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ence her vocal gifts make an undeniable impact. Isolated by the loudspeaker, the voice sounds monotonous, lacking in personality, and above all passionless.

It is hard to feel stirred by anything on the present recital. Horne communicates care, seriousness, and diligence, but—to me, at any rate—she does not communicate involvement. The Falla songs, which one might have thought ideally suited to her voice and personality, are a distinct disappointment; like so much of Horne's work they exemplify the limitations of mere pertinacity. Despite her show of bravado and the unmitigated forcefulness of her approach in the more outgoing songs, nowhere does the listener feel the singer yield herself up to the emotional truths of the music.

Both she and her accompanist are rhythmically cautious. "El paño moruno" is slack; "Asturiana" is listless; "Canción" is square-cut. Songs like these need more tautness, more snap. "Seguidilla murciana" and "Polo" display Horne's formidable chest register, but not, I fear, to any illuminating purpose. Conchita Supervia, by whom Horne seems to have been influenced, sings this material with much greater subtlety and, paradoxically, with far greater power.

The same is true of Bizet's "Adieux de l'hôtesse arabe," where Horne is cavalier about details, and unlike Supervia fails to make anything of the final plaintive line "bel étranger! hélas! adieu! souviens-toi!" ("handsome stranger! alas! farewell! remember!"), ignoring the composer's instructions that it be sung in a voice broken by sobs. Her disregard of such markings is a constant puzzlement. The last line of Debussy's "La flûte de Pan," which is meant to be sung almost tonelessly, sounds far too robust and therefore inappropriately defiant.

Throughout the Debussy songs Horne seems lost, alternating between a crooning head voice and strident braying. There is something awesome about the booming noise she produces for the line "Il me dit: Les satyres sont morts" ("He told me: The satyrs are dead") in "Le tombeau des Naiades," but it doesn't have much connection to musical feeling.

However, those who find her voice more communicative than I do will doubtless be pleased to have such unacknowledged material as four of Nin's *Ten Spanish Christmas Carols* and the Bizet songs, though they may well be as puzzled as I by the excision of the middle verse of "Absence." Horne's French and Spanish are very commendable indeed, though neither is so immediately understandable as to obviate the necessity of texts, which London fails to provide.

The recording is close. The surfaces of my review copy were noisy. D.S.H.

**ARTHUR GRUMIAUX PLAYS HIS BEST-LOVED ENCORES**, Vols. 1 and 2. Arthur Grumiaux, violin; Istvan Hajdu, piano. PHILIPS 6599 372 and 6599 373, \$6.98 each.

The good Arthur Grumiaux was in a very sentimental mood when he chose the twenty-nine works for this pair of discs. There is scarcely a technical dazzler in the lot (well, one, in Vol. 2—the Paganini Andante and Allegro from the Sonata No. 12, Op. 3, No. 6).

The prevailing pace is andante, the prevailing mood one of heavy sweetness—the stuff to

send an audience out not with pulses pounding, but rather at a slow stroll and home to bed. It seems a curious miscalculation not to have included a bit of Tartini or Sarasate or Wieniawski, at least a little of the old dynamite to knock 'em in the aisles and lessen the humidity somewhat.

There are, of course, nice moments. In Vol. 1 a Mozart Rondo is bright, articulate, and well planned; Granados' *Danza española* No. 5 (*Andaluzá*) is warm and compelling, with its minor-major cadence as magical as ever; Kreisler's *Schön Rosmarin* is beguiling.

Grumiaux is no Viennese, though, and occasionally is stodgy, despite his fine technique. In Vol. 2, a Veracini Allegro steps up the pace briefly, and a fairly awful Elgar *La Capricieuse* suggests something going on in a music hall (though I'm not sure just what). Albéniz's *Tango*, Op. 165, No. 2, once again reveals Grumiaux as deliberate rather than scintillating.

In short, a mixed bag, to be explored in small grabs. S.F.

**GEORG HANN: Singer Portrait.** Georg Hann, bass-baritone; various choruses and orchestras, Clemens Krauss, Arthur Rother, Robert Heger, Hans Steinkopf, and Bernhardt Zimmermann, cond. BASF KBF 21486, \$9.98 (two discs, mono) [recorded 1938-45].

**BEETHOVEN:** Fidelio: Hat man nicht auch Gold beineben. **CORNELIUS:** Der Barbier von Bagdad: Mein Sohn, sei Allahs Friede hier (with Walther Ludwig, tenor). **GOUNOD:** Faust: Le veau d'or. **HAYDN:** Lo Speciale: Sempronio's Aria. **LORTZING:** Der Waffenschmied: Auch Ich war ein Jüngling, Zar und Zimmermann: Den hohen Herrscher würdig zu empfangen. **MASCAGNI:** Cavalleria rusticana: Il cavallo scalpitá. **MOZART:** Die Zauberflöte: O Isis und Osiris. **PUCCINI:** Tosca: Act I finale (with Hildegard Ranczak, soprano; Erich Zimmermann, tenor; Wilhelm Strienz, bass). **SMETANA:** The Bartered Bride: Now then, my dear man (with Ludwig). **R. STRAUSS:** Capriccio: Hola, ihr Streiter in Apoll! **VERDI:** Simon Boccanegra: Ate l'estremo addio. . . Il lacerato spirito. Rigoletto: Monterone's Curse and Act I. Scene 1 finale (with Heinrich Schlusnus, baritone; Helge Roswaenge, tenor). **WAGNER:** Das Rheingold: Schwüles Gedünst. . . Abendlich strahl der Sonne Auge (with Hilde Scheppan and Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, sopranos; Marie-Luise Schilp, mezzo; Bernd Aldenhoff and Erich Zimmermann, tenors; Hans Heinz Nissen, baritone). Die Walküre: Wotan's Farewell. (All sung in German.)

BASF's series of Singer Portraits continues to throw light on dark corners. Georg Hann is an artist who, like Tiana Lemnitz or Helge Roswaenge, would doubtless have enjoyed a full-scale international career had it not been for the political upheavals of the 1930s and 1940s. Like Lemnitz and Roswaenge, he made most of his appearances in Germany, where from 1927 until his death at the age of fifty-three in 1950 he was a member of the Munich State Opera. But unlike them he never enjoyed widespread phonographic fame. Not, at any rate, during the days of 78s.

Outside Germany, he came into his own only after World War II. In 1947 he sang with the Vienna State Opera at Covent Garden as Leporello and Pizarro and thereafter made guest appearances in various European capitals. During the 1940s he recorded several buffo items for Polydor and DG (some of the latter were collected on a long-since deleted LP, "Georg Hann in Memoriam." He was the Daland of Mercury's *Flying Dutchman* with Hotter. He was also heard on Urania's *Wolf Der Corregidor* and the Haydn Society's *Seasongs*.

BASF's double album gives a more comprehensive view of his talent than we have yet been vouchsafed. After the retirement from the stage of Paul Bender, Hann became Munich's leading buffo bass. In Germany, a buffo bass means an exponent of Abul Hassan in Cornelius' *Barbier von Bagdad*. Falstaff in Nicolai's *Die lustigen Weiber von Windsor*. Stadinger in Lortzing's *Waffenschmied*. Van Bett in his *Zar und Zimmermann*, and Baculus in his *Wildschütz*. All the excerpts from *Waffenschied*, *Zar und Zimmermann*, and *Barbier von Bagdad* are very good indeed. Hann sings with the relish and naturalness of the born singing actor—as witness the scene in which Van Bett rehearses a local choir in a cantata to honor the tsar. Wonderfully characterized too is the scene between Abul Hassan and Nuredin and that between Kecal and Jenik from *The Bartered Bride*.

But as a glance at this album's contents reveals, Hann was more than a comedian. He was one of those indispensable artists who could sing an enormous variety of parts with commanding ease: Alfio, Scarpia, Fiesco, Monterone, Mephisto, Rocco, Wotan, Sarastro, La Roche in *Capriccio*. The latter's great monologue, a souvenir of the world premiere, is especially fine. The *Rheingold* and *Walküre* finales are magisterial. His Scarpia is powerful.

In the scene from *Tosca* one can sample the art of the Moravian-born Hildegard Ranczak, an important Strauss singer who retired a couple of years after creating the role of Clairon in *Capriccio*. Ranczak made only a handful of 78s, and they enjoyed only limited circulation. Here she sounds like an intelligent artist, though the voice is not ingratiating.

BASF's information is sketchy. In the *Rheingold* finale the twenty-six-year-old Schwarzkopf presumably sings the first Rhinemaiden. One female voice seems to be missing from the cast. There are no texts or translations, and the proofreading is appalling: Gounod is misspelled and so is Clemens Krauss; the translator from the original German seems to think there is a character in *Tosca* called Messner (Mesner, with one s, is the German for Sacristan). Nevertheless, a fascinating pair of records. D.S.H.

**MYRA HESS:** Piano Recital—See Beethoven: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 4.

**ITALIAN RECORDER SONATAS, VOL. 2.** Frans Brüggen, recorder; Anner Bylsma, cello; Gustav Leonhardt, harpsichord and organ. TELEFUNKEN SAWT 9589, \$5.98.

**FRESCOBALDI:** Canzon (*La Bernadina*). **CIMA:** Sonatas: in D minor; in G minor. **MARCELLO:** Sonata in D minor, Op. 2, No. 11. **CORELLI:** Sonata in F, Op. 5, No. 4. **VERACINI:** Sonata in A minor.

It's difficult to write more than one review of this remarkably talented young Dutch recorder player, since one tends to use up all his superlatives immediately. And I did just that in June 1973 in discussing his three-record set of recorder solos, sonatas, and diverse pieces entitled "Frans Brüggen Plays Seventeen Recorders." It's still a fact, though, that Brüggen plays with phenomenal skill, musicianship, and stylistic flair.

The six works on this new disc fall roughly into two stylistic categories: three from the

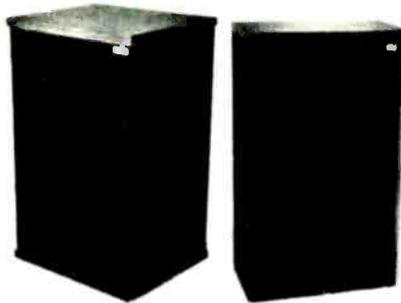
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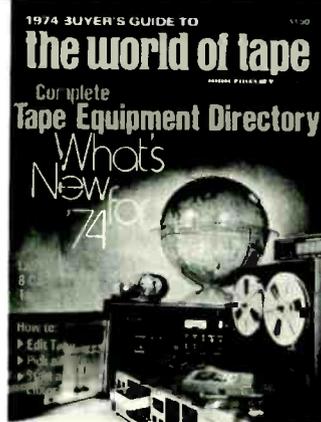
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very early baroque (Frescobaldi and G. F. Cima), and three from the middle or high baroque (Marcello, Arcangelo Corelli, and Veracini). The early works are the more unusual and, to my taste, more interesting rhythmically and harmonically since they were written before Italian instrumental music had settled into such regular and predictable patterns. However, Brüggen's selections from the later baroque are also quite good, each work having some special features that raise it above the humdrum level.

The accompaniments are admirably handled by Anner Bylsma and Gustav Leonhardt, who plays a positive organ in the three early works and harpsichord in the others. The recording and over-all presentation are also superb. C.F.G.

**B** **GEORGE LONDON:** Famous Operatic Monologues. George London, baritone; Columbia Symphony Orchestra, Jean Morel, cond. ODYSSEY Y 32669, \$2.98 (mono) [from COLUMBIA ML 4999, 1955].

**R** **GRUENBERG:** The Emperor Jones: Standin' in the need of prayer. **MASSENET:** Thais: Volla donc la terrible cité. **MUSSORGSKY:** Boris Godunov: I have attained the highest power; Clock Scene. **VERDI:** Rigoletto: Pari siamo. Otello: Credo. Falstaff: E sogno? **WAGNER:** Die Meistersinger: Was duftet doch der Flieder. Wahn! Wahn! überall Wahn!

The idea for this recital, which originally circulated briefly in the mid-Fifties, is an excellent one: The monologue is one of the most special, characteristic, and potent of operatic forms, and, except for the *Emperor Jones* number, these are among the finest specimens.

Hans Sachs, Boris Godunov, Athanaël, Verdi's Rigoletto, Jago, and Ford—the range is so enormous that it's hard to imagine a single singer encompassing them all, and in the original languages yet! So it's no discredit to George London that these performances from his mid-thirties are hardly "legendary," notwithstanding the rubric of Columbia's reissue series. They are, however, consistently well sung and intelligently read.

The voice is a bit smoother than it later became, but not much—not the most sensuous sound, but in its gravelly way a compelling voice. Listening to the Mussorgsky/Wagner side, it's easy to hear why London moved strongly in these directions. His later recordings of these excerpts, however, are considerably more effective, not because he really got much deeper into the scores, but because he got vastly more enlightened orchestral support from Melik-Pashayev (on the complete *Boris*, Columbia M4S 696) and Knappertsbusch (on a beautiful Wagner disc that included Sach's monologues, the Dutchman's "*Die Frist ist um*," and Wotan's Farewell). Morel is both black and colorless. Still, there have been few better-sung accounts in our time.

Morel's work has much more point in the three Verdi excerpts, though London doesn't sound comfortable in this writing. We hardly need a middling "*Pari siamo*" and "*Credo*," but it's always good to hear Ford's glorious, savagely ironic musing on his supposed cuckoldry—a pity it isn't more often recorded.

The *Thais* scene, the monk Athanaël's powerfully sweeping, sweaty denunciation of wicked Alexandria, could use a good recording—i.e., well sung and played. London does perhaps his most distinguished work here, singing in beautiful if not letter-perfect

French. Morel, alas, plods through Massenet's scintillating accompaniment; it's such brutalization that makes this gifted composer sound like a hack.

For anyone who has craved another "Standin' in the need of prayer" to complement Tibbett's, well, here it is. That's two more recordings than I want.

London would be heard to better advantage if London Records reissued that stereo Wagner disc with Knappertsbusch's memorable accompaniments—every bar richly detailed and characterized. This Odyssey reissue is valuable primarily for the repertory. It would have been especially commendable to operatic newcomers had Columbia included texts instead of just synopses. K.F.

**MINIATURES FOR STRINGS.** Juilliard Quartet. [Richard Killough, prod.] COLUMBIA M 32596, \$5.98.

**GERSHWIN:** Lullaby. **HAYDN:** Quartet in B flat, Op. 103: Andante grazioso; Menuetto. **MENDELSSOHN:** Variations and Scherzo. **PUCCINI:** I Crisantemi. **SCHUBERT:** Quartet No. 12, in C minor, D. 703 (*Quartettssatz*). **WOLF:** Intermezzo in B flat.

This program's title is doubly misleading. First, it erroneously evokes—for veteran discophiles, at least—the early days of serious-music recording when the string quartet, and indeed the whole chamber repertory, was considered to be of such exclusively elitist appeal that it could be risked only in isolated short single movements or in salon-piece transcriptions. Second, the present programming is by no means confined to what most listeners would consider "miniatures": encore or other small-scale pieces lasting some two or three minutes, just right for a ten- or twelve-inch disc side in 78-rpm days. The shortest piece here is almost six minutes long; the others run from eight minutes up to eleven and a half.

More significantly, though, none of the six selections is excerpted from larger completed works. Three are standard if hardly hackneyed classics; the other three are all refreshingly well off the beaten repertorial paths.

The Schubert independent quartet-movement is the only really familiar work here, since both the two-movement Haydn and Mendelssohn items represent only occasionally recorded unfinished quartets. A definite recorded first is the disarmingly naive but liltily tuneful, mildly Mexican-flavored *Lullaby* stemming from George Gershwin's composition-study days, c. 1919, with Edward Kilenyi Sr.

No similar claims for "world premiere recording" are made for the oddly erratic Wolf *Intermezzo*, but I can't remember ever having encountered it before on disc. And I find it difficult to describe appropriately except by swiping from Harold C. Schonberg's *New York Times* review of a recent Juilliard Quartet concert performance: "[The *Intermezzo*] starts with a rather sentimental tune, wanders off into a wacky kind of development . . . has some pages near the end that suggest *Der Rosenkavalier* (although it was composed almost twenty years before the Strauss opera), and is the work of a very individual mind."

Finally, there is the offbeat Puccinian elegy, *The Chrysanthemums* (in its original 1889 string-quartet version), based on themes later used in *Manon Lescaut*. It's richly Romantic

stuff—a bit on the lachrymose side at times perhaps, but certainly more interesting in this scoring than in the orchestral expansion recorded a few years ago by Kostelanetz in a now-OP Columbia disc.

The present recorded performances must have been made a few years ago, when Raphael Hillier was still the violist, but I'd be hard put to say how they could be bettered, in interpretation, execution, or technology. To be sure, the playing itself is characterized by more frankly expressive eloquence than was usually found in the group's more objective approaches of earlier years. Yet there is no loss of the distinctive Juilliard verve and precision.

The audio engineering here admirably solves both the problem of achieving chamber intimacy without producing over-life-size sonic images and that of achieving warmth without suggesting an inappropriately large auditorium ambience. R.D.D.

**B** **CLAUDIA MUZIO:** Recital. Claudia Muzio, soprano; piano and orchestral accompaniments. [James Gladstone, reissue prod.] ODYSSEY Y 32676, \$2.98 (mono) [recorded 1920-23].

**BELLINI:** Bianca e Fernando: Sorgi, o padre. **BUZZI-PEC- CIA:** Mal d'amore. **CILEA:** Adriana Lecouvreur: Del sultano Amuratte... Ecco, respiro appena... Io sono l'umile ancella. **GLUCK:** Paride ed Elena: Spiagge amate. **HANDEL:** Rinaldo: Lascia ch'io pianga. **LEONCAVALLO:** Zazà: Ammogliato... Dir che ci sono al mondo. I Pagliacci: Silvio! a quest'ora (with Mario Laurenti, baritone). **MASCAGNI:** L'Amico Fritz: Son pochi fiori. **MEYERBEER:** L'Africaine: Sur mes genoux (in Italian). **ROSSINI:** La Separazione. **VERDI:** La Forza del destino: Pace, pace, mio Dio!

Claudia Muzio's enduring fame rests firmly upon the series of records made in Milan by Italian Columbia in 1934-35 not long before her death at the age of forty-seven. One side in particular, the "Addio del passato" from *Traviata* Act III, has achieved almost legendary status—not so much for Muzio's singing as for the expressiveness of her parlando. In the reading of Giorgio Germont's letter, which precedes the aria proper, she enunciates the text with such a poetic vividness that it is hard to believe anyone has equaled it since.

Thirteen of the thirty-two sides that make up the Milan set, once on COLH 101, are now available on Seraphim 60111, a record that belongs in any collection of distinguished singing.

It is usually said that these late records show Muzio in vocal decline. It is true that the voice is not always ideally steady or the intonation exact. It is also true that her top notes are lacking in security. What gives these performances their enduring distinction is her expressivity, her ability not only to make the words tell, but also to manage the vocal line so that through coloration and rhythmic emphasis the appropriate mood, feeling, and situation are always clear.

The eleven sides *Odyssey* has chosen from her more than forty 1920-25 Edison Diamond Discs (not all of which were published) naturally reveal a more youthful voice, greater pliancy, a lighter timbre. But in face of what is usually said about these records it needs to be emphasized that the Muzio of the early 1920s is essentially the Muzio of ten years later. The voice, for all the differences previously noted, is the same instrument. Even in 1920 it lacked ideal firmness and was not always exact in intonation.

Moreover, high notes were never easy for her. As one can hear from these Edison discs, her tendency to sing *piano* at the top is not so much an artistic decision as a technical necessity. A full-voiced B flat such as she risks in "Pace, pace" is chancy. She gets the note, but it is neither attractive nor secure, and she abandons it before the score says she should. In the lullaby from *L'Africaine* she simply omits all the top Bs.

The result of this technical weakness is that, whatever qualities Muzio had, grandeur of utterance was never among them. Leonora di Vargas sounds frailer and more vaporous than the character Verdi created, though it must be said that the final "Maledizione's" of her aria are thrilling.

Muzio's forte was subtlety, delicacy, nuance. The rare aria from *Bianca e Fernando* is exquisite, the line being molded with sensitivity and sensuousness. Both the Gluck and Handel arias are hopelessly wrong in style—they end up sounding like Bellini—yet it is hard not to be captivated by Muzio's fineness of manner.

This, however, is not Muzio's only style for she was also wonderful in *verismo* opera. The arias from *Adriana Lecouvreur*, *Zazà*, and *L'Amico Fritz* are especially exciting in their emotional directness. In this music one is aware of Muzio's greatness as an actress. Even through the very heavy surface noise of the original 78s—only slightly modified on this rather plain job of re-recording—she reaches



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No texts or translations; poor notes. The titles, correctly listed above, are incompletely set forth on the record jacket. D.S.H.

**B** **PERCUSSION MUSIC.** New Jersey Percussion Ensemble, Raymond Des Roches, cond. [Marc J. Aubort and Joanna Nickrenz, prod.] NONESUCH H 71291, \$3.48.

**VARÈSE:** *Ionisation*. **COWELL:** *Ostinato Pianissimo*. **COLGRASS:** *Fantasy-Variations*. **SAPERSTEIN:** *Antiphonies*. **KILSUNG OAK:** *Amorphosis*.

Those who believe in the inevitability of progress will find this collection disappointing. The two best works are also the two earliest, the Varèse and Cowell, both more than forty years old and both dedicated to Nicolas Slonimsky, who was then before the public here and in Europe as a prophet for new American music. (Slonimsky is eighty this year, and this record is at least one way to salute him for his many services to music.)

The problem in writing percussion pieces is that many of the instruments are of indeterminate pitch and incapable of producing sustained or conventional legato tones. How, then, does one convey a sense of form in a work when denied real themes, the traditional means of thematic development, or, indeed, any kind of orthodox harmony? The answer, of course, is that you use other available means: rhythm, timbre and texture, dynamics.

Both Varèse and Cowell manage this very well, producing true structures in sound without the need for tonality. In the case of Cowell's *Ostinato Pianissimo*, a classic that is insufficiently known, the key elements are rhythm and the artful use of a restricted dynamic range. The far better-known and justifiably popular Varèse *Ionisation* uses the notorious siren (how that must have shocked audiences in 1931!) not only as an instrumental color, but also as a theme and, very genuinely, as a device to bring unity to the work.

Oak gets around the problem by adding a soprano voice, which has a legato line, although it is used as a sound among sounds rather than to project a text. The mixture is interesting, and, of the three recent works on the record, I find this bears replaying most easily.

The Colgrass and Saperstein are effective, well-scored percussion pieces of the genre we have come to accept in recent writing of this type. They are at moments exciting, and they are consistently well-played. But one need only refer back to the Varèse or Cowell to realize that a truly talented composer can impose his profile on music of this type, producing something that is clearly and unequivocally individual, while the less talented bring forth craftsmanlike work that is meritorious but not greatly different from the labors of other equally skilled craftsmen.

Still, for its modest price, this is a welcome collection. The New Jersey Percussion Ensemble is a first-class group, and the recording is very clear, bright, and faithful to the character of the various instruments. The two golden oldies more than justify acquisition if you have any interest in the genre. R.C.M.

**SURVEY OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST ORGAN MUSIC:** France. For a feature review of this series, see page 78.

## in brief

**BURGMULLER:** Sonata for Piano, in F minor, Op. 8. **MENDELSSOHN:** Andante con variazioni, Op. 82; Variations sérieuses, Op. 54. Adrian Ruiz, piano. [Robert F. Commagere, prod.] Genesis GS 1043, \$5.98.

Burgmüller's sonata is a big bore. Empty and epigonous, all of its material comes from the public domain. The gushy liner notes call this perhaps his most remarkable work; if so, that does not augur well for the rest. On the other side, Mendelssohn's two familiar sets of variations receive an undistinguished performance. The theme of the *Variations sérieuses* is presented in a near-comatose state. Afterward things pick up a bit; but Adrian Ruiz is a mannered pianist, and his constant tempo changes and undulating dynamics are firesome. The business of having the right hand on daylight time while the left follows standard time has long since been abandoned. The disc is full of annoying noises—it pops and crackles like a breakfast cereal. P.H.L.

**B** **CHOPIN:** Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1, in E minor, Op. 11. Emil Gilels, piano, Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond. [Thomas Frost, prod.] Odyssey Y 32369, \$2.98 [from Columbia MS 6712, 1965].

This is a good, solid, virtuosic performance that still strikes me as a bit heavy-handed, unflowing, and lacking in sensitivity. The sonority, whether from the slightly monochromatic piano or from the over-hefty orchestra, is a bit coarse and bloated; everything is in its proper place but too generalized, cut-and-dried. On a high level of professionalism, certainly, but nothing that would make me want to part with Lipatti (Seraphim 60007), Rubinstein/Skrowaczewski (included in RCA VCS 7091), or Pollini (Seraphim S 60066)—all similarly available at budget price. H.G.

**DAVIDOVSKY:** Inflections; Chacona. **STREET:** Quartet for Strings. **TRYTHALL:** Coincidences. Chamber ensemble, David Gilbert, cond. (in *Inflections*). Jeanne Benjamin, violin; Joel Krosnick, cello; Robert Miller, piano (in *Chacona*). Concord Quartet (in the *Street*). Richard Trythall, piano (in the *Trythall*). [Carter Harman, prod.] Composers Recordings SD 305, \$5.95.

Like most records of new music, this disc was subsidized. There are many complex ways to explain why this is necessary, good, and even honorable, but what it means is that nobody really expects such music to pay for itself by attracting enough people to buy records. The four pieces here were composed by the three winners of the 1973 Naumberg Recording Award. The most attractive is Tison Street's 1972 quartet, which for all the complexity of its means never entirely sacrifices expressive ends. The piece's effect is enhanced by a typically intense, even fevered performance from the young Concord Quartet. Both of Mario Davidovsky's compositions confine themselves to live instrumentalists, as opposed to his many works that use electronic sounds. These are very different but equally austere. Richard Trythall's piano piece has a certain doggedness of purpose that lends it some distinction, but the prevailing effect remains dry indeed. J.R.

**HILLER and BAKER:** Computer Cantata. **MELBY:** 91 Plus 5. Helen Hamm, soprano; University of Illinois Contemporary Chamber Players, Jack McKenzie, cond. (in the cantata). Contemporary Brass Quintet, Roman Pawlowski, cond. (in 91 Plus 5). Composers Recordings SD 310, \$5.95 [Cantata: from Heliodor HS 25053, 1966].

The 1963 *Computer Cantata* of Lejaren Hiller and Robert Baker is a reissue and a most welcome one. Hiller's collaborative computer pieces, beginning with the *Illiad Suite* (1957), have generally been dismissed as mere experiments, devoid of musical worth. The *Computer Cantata*, however, full as it is of the most intriguing sounds, makes an undeniably artistic effect. Melby's piece is perhaps slightly less interesting, but it is another testimonial to the growing body of works that make use of computers in either composition or performance. J.R.

**B** **PUCCINI:** *Tosca*. Simona dall'Argine (s), Tosca; Nino Scattolini (t), Cavaradossi; Scipio Colombo (b), Scarpia; Alfred Poell (b), Angelotti; Karl Donch (b), Sacristan; Waldemar Kmentt (t), Spoletta; Walter Berry (bs), Jailier; Harald Pröghhof (bs), Sciarrone; Hans Breitschopf (s), Shepherd; Vienna Chamber Chorus; Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Argeo Quadri, cond. Westminster Gold WGMO 8251, \$5.96 (two discs, mono) [from Westminster WAL 302, 1951].

Don't snicker at the cast list: This is a satisfying *Tosca*, with a dramatic consistency superior to many of the fancier rivals. The principals sing well and with commitment; the Germanic supporting cast (note those names!), far from sounding unidiomatic, seems more involved than the average routine Italians. Quadri's tempos are slow, but the music has shape and coherency, and the orchestra is generally superb—you will hear string articulation and wind and percussion details absent from the stereo versions. Any competent performance will grab us *Tosca* freaks. But this one's the real thing; at budget price, only the 1938 Caniglia/Gigli/Borgioli/De Fabritiis set (Seraphim IB 6027) is on this level, and its playing and sound can't compete. K.F.

**TCHAIKOVSKY:** *Francesca da Rimini*, Op. 32; 1812 Overture, Op. 49; *Marche slave*, Op. 31. Members of the Royal Military Band (in 1812); Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam, Bernard Haitink, cond. Philips 6500 643, \$6.98.

Major interest here centers on Haitink's idiomatically colorful and lyrically expressive *Francesca*. Excellently played by the Concertgebouw at its rich and resonant best, this ranks among the score's best interpretations, and it is gorgeously recorded. The *1812* is rather sober: Not even the addition of extra band players in the climax (no cannon, though) makes it more than a judicious reading. The *Marche slave* is, as always, an anticlimax following the *1812*. Superb sound; impeccably quiet surfaces. P.H.

**THE ART SONG IN AMERICA, VOL. 2.** John Kennedy Hanks, tenor; Ruth Friedberg-Erickson, piano. Duke University DWR 7306, \$6.50 (Duke University Press, 6697 College Station, Durham, N.C. 27708).

Excellent taste is on display here. The poems chosen are uniformly first-rate, and their settings are highly skilled, occasionally sensitive, and generally conservative in manner. The singing is serviceable, the piano-playing beautiful. What one misses is any real eloquence on the part of the composers—any marked inspiration (for lack of a better word), any clear-cut creativity. There is a hint of it in Paul Earls's unaccompanied setting of the famous speech of Ruth to Naomi in the Bible ("Whither thou goest . . ."); and Vincent Persichetti's setting of a little devotional poem by Hilaire Belloc is delightful. Except for John Duke's offensive vulgarizations of poems by E. E. Cummings, the rest can be taken or left. The other composers are Ned Rorem, Richard Cumming, and Lester Trimble. Cumming's setting of Blake's *The Little Black Boy* is one of the better things in this generally colorless lot. A.F.

**WM. NEIL ROBERTS:** Baroque Harpsichord. Works by Bach, Gibbons, F. Couperin, and Scarlatti. Wm. Neil Roberts, harpsichord. [Harold L. Powell, prod.] Klavier KS 524, \$5.98.

I loved his two lively "Ragtime on the Harpsichord" records, but when Wm. Neil Roberts turns his attention to Bach, Couperin, Scarlatti, and Gibbons, the results are only boring: His tempos are invariably plodding, finger work uneven, and touch irregular. There just doesn't seem to be a spark of life in any of the dozen pieces recorded here. The unidentified harpsichord is a pleasant-sounding instrument, beautifully recorded; so the record could safely be used as background music where a sudden intrusion of personality or passion would be inappropriate. C.F.G.

# the lighter side

reviewed by  
MORGAN AMES  
ROYAL S. BROWN  
R.D. DARRELL  
HENRY EDWARDS  
KENNETH FURIE  
MIKE JAHN  
JOHN ROCKWELL  
JOHN S. WILSON

\* **JOHN STEWART:** The Phoenix Concerts Live. John Stewart, guitars and vocals; vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Kansas Rain; The Pirates of Stone County Road; Roll Away the Stone; July, You're a Woman; The Last Campaign Trilogy; California Bloodlines; Never Goin' Back to Nashville Anymore;* nine more. [Nikolas Vernet, prod.] RCA CPL 2-0265, \$6.98 (two discs).

John Stewart has a large and devoted following west of the Rockies and plainly deserves much wider recognition. He is adept at both folk and rock, though folk ballads are clearly his forte. He has written some excellent ones, including "July, You're a Woman." "The Pirates of Stone County Road," and several others on this fine two-disc set.

His first "live in concert" recording, "The Phoenix Concerts," offers a representative sampling of both ballads and rockers. My favorite is "California Bloodlines." Stewart's smooth, country-folky tribute to the land that has given him his greatest audience. M.J.

**PROCOL HARUM:** Exotic Birds and Fruit. Gary Brooker, vocals and piano; Barrie Wilson, rhythm accompaniment; Alan Cartwright, bass; Mick Grabham, electric guitars; Chris Copping, organ. *Nothing but the Truth; Beyond the Pale; As Strong as Samson;* six more. [Chris Thomas, prod.] CHRYSALIS CHT

1058, \$6.98. Tape: ●●L8C 1058, \$7.97; ●●L5C 1058, \$7.97.

Procol Harum has been around for a long, long time; yet there are no signs of fatigue. The group's latest, "Exotic Birds and Fruit," is a gratifying listening experience even though it breaks no new musical ground.

Procol's creative showpiece is Gary Brooker, who plays keyboards, co-authors almost all of the group's selections, and also sings lead. The versatile musician once again offers up the powerful, compelling instantly recognizable set of musical figures that serve as the basis of Procol's haunting musical themes. These melodic configurations make amusing lyrics seem even funny and help remove the "cutes" from selections that are a wee bit silly.

They best serve "The Thick End of the Edge," which could be used as the theme for a remake of Olivia de Havilland's *The Snake Pit*. No other band but England's Procol Harum is this adept at translating anguish and mental dislocation into stylish popular music.

H.E.

\* **QUINCY JONES:** Body Heat. Quincy Jones, leader, arrangements, some vocals and songs, mixing. *Boogie Joe the Grinder; One-Track Mind; Soul Saga;* five more. [Quincy Jones and Ray Brown, prod.] A&M 3617, \$6.98. Tape: ●●BT 3617, \$7.98; ●●CS 3617, \$7.98.

It is difficult to explain the full role of Quincy Jones in his own work. Some of it has to do with presence, a word that refuses to be defined in any functional way. But I can think of no one else in our business who could collect this group of stars and thoroughbreds and have half as much fun—or fewer headaches. Where else will you find Herbie Hancock, Billy Preston, David Grusin, Richard Tee, Bob James and Mike Melvoin all on the same album? What other producer would give a new singer (Benard Ighner) his own song in the middle of his album? Jones didn't even take any publishing on it.

So much for the indefinable.

With this album, Quincy Jones makes a crossover that has proved all but impossible for most jazz-oriented musician/leaders. The musical challenge had to do with simplicity, a word that most beboppers think of in a specialized way. The stylized simplicity of the jazz era is a world away from the earthy simplicity of today's finest pop/rock/r&b music. For Quincy, it was a matter of going backward as well as forward. He had to look to his roots, before he loved jazz, when there was only church and the cats on the corner. Somehow he managed to re-enter his love of music from the other end. Something like that. How much can be said about someone else's creative process?

At any rate, what has emerged is an album of enormous scope and broad appeal. Jones may offend his hard-core jazz audience, but he will attract a lot of line riders, those who have a mixed-together appetite for jazz and pop and blues and r&b, so long as it's good.

"Body Heat" is a sensuous track, hot but underplayed, with the tight rhythm section laid way back and a fine lead vocal by Bruce Fisher. "Soul Saga (Song of the Buffalo Soldier)" is Jones at his utmost, full of theater, punctuated by voices with dramatic vocal lead by Jim Gilstrap.

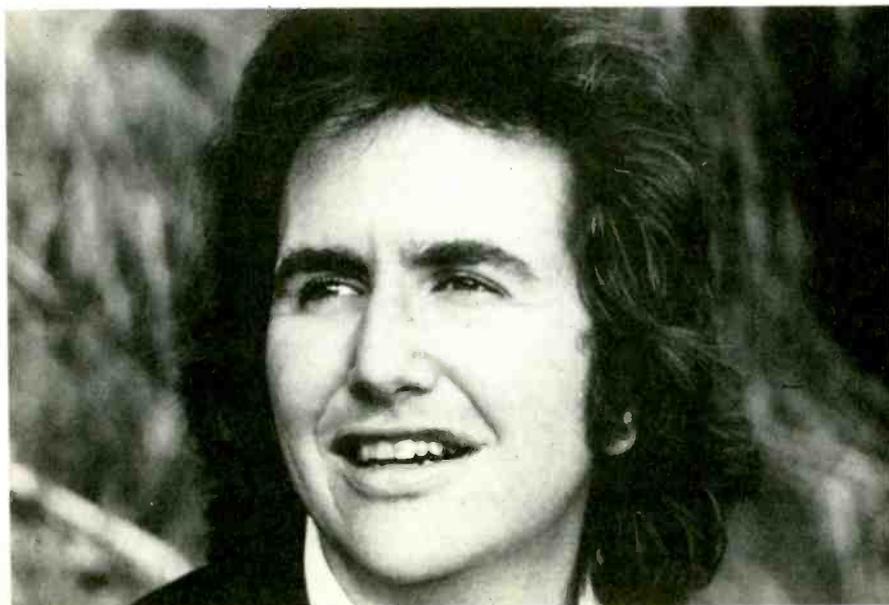
"Everything Must Change" is the exquisite ballad written and sung by Benard Ighner in a voice made of honey and comfort. Jones himself finally makes a vocal appearance on a direct and beautiful song by Valdy entitled "Just a Man."

Quincy Jones likes a lot of input. If he were a juggler, he'd work with four dozen oranges while tap dancing and reading your fortune. The credits on this album go on for days. He co-arranged with Dave Blumberg and Tom Bahler. Bahler also is responsible for much of the excellent background vocal writing and singing.

Jones has found a way to stay true to himself musically without losing touch with the best of today's record market—a most stimulating arena for those it doesn't chew up. You can take the Quincy out of the music, but you can't take the music out of Quincy. I wonder where he'll go next. M.A.

**DUBINUSHKA:** More Popular Russian Music. Soviet Army Chorus and Orchestra, Osipov Balalaika Orchestra, and various other artists. *Dubinushka; Jingle Bells; Ah, Nastasya; Mother Siberia;* thirteen more. MELODIYA/ANGEL SR 40251, \$5.98.

One of the most enticing introductions to "genuine" Russian folk, traditional, and light music is the Melodiya all-instrumental sampler program "K amarinskaya!" (SR 40223), which I praised here in July 1973. The present sequel does just as good (if less ar-



John Stewart—a folk and rock talent deserving wider recognition.

## Explanation of symbols

\* exceptional recording

Recorded tape:

- Open Reel
- 8-Track Cartridge
- Cassette

restingly novel) a job for other Russian favorites, most of which feature solo or choral singing. (Exceptions are the Osipov ensemble's scintillating *Flight of the Bumblebee*, intoxicatingly whirling traditional *Russian Dance*, and kaleidoscopic *It's Raining Outside*.)

Everything's done with infectious zest and inexhaustible exuberance. Most musically memorable are the darkly sonorous "Shine My Star" sung by Boris Shtokolov, one of those subterranean bass voices only the Slavic countries seem capable of producing, with the Kirov Theater Orchestra; the magnificent unaccompanied U.S.S.R. Chorus' haunting "White Birch Tree" and solemn "Down the River Volga"; and a rowdily catchy patrol piece, "On the March" by the Soviet Army Chorus and Orchestra under Boris Alexandrov.

No full texts, but these are helpfully paraphrased and summarized in English in the jacket notes. R.D.D.

**BUFFY SAINTE-MARIE:** Buffy. Buffy Sainte-Marie, vocals and guitar; Charlie McCoy, Billy Sanford, John Reid, Jimmy Colvard, Reggie Young, and Dan Fogelberg, guitars; David Briggs, piano and organ; Norbert Putnam, bass; Kenny Malone and Kenny Buttrey, percussion; et al. *Can't Believe the Feeling When You're Gone; Sweet, Fast Hooker Blues; That's the Way You Fall in Love*; seven more. [Norbert Putnam, prod.] MCA 405, \$6.98.

Singers who set about to change their images risk alienating their old fans without picking up new ones, who may have already pegged and rejected the artist in his old form. With Buffy Sainte-Marie's efforts here to move beyond her role as Indian spokeswoman and turn herself into an (admittedly just slightly self-parodying) rocker/sex object, there is a double problem. She must cope not only with the problems of any image change, but with the added burden of abandoning an old image based on purity, simplicity, and idealistic fervor.

Actually, it's not all that bad. Miss Sainte-Marie has been creeping toward rock for quite awhile now, and her folksy purity was always healthily leavened with humor and a little flash.

Quite apart from her past, this disc has its charms. The peculiarly evocative Sainte-Marie voice, with its driven, fluttering vibrato, works fine in blues-based rock-and-roll vocals, and many of the songs come over very well indeed. J.R.

✳ **TEN YEARS AFTER:** Positive Vibrations. Alvin Lee, vocals, guitars, and harmonica; Leo Lyons, bass; Ric Lee, drums; Chick Churchill, keyboards. *Nowhere to Run; Positive Vibrations; Stone Me; Without You; Going Back to Birmingham; It's Getting Harder; You're Driving Me Crazy; Look into My Life; Look Me Straight into the Eyes; I Wanted to Boogie*. [Alvin Lee, prod.] CHRYSALIS PC 32851, \$6.98. Tape: ● PCA 32851, \$7.98; ●● PCT 32851, \$7.98.

This British blues-rock quartet, which has been popular for half a decade, is back with one of its strongest recordings to date.



The Spinners—a neatly paced, winning disc.

"Positive Vibrations" is a fine example of the good that can result when taste and restraint are applied to blues-rock. Most practitioners of the genre tend to produce loud and vulgar music. In this album, songs like "Stone Me," "Positive Vibrations," and "Without You" are subtle yet exciting, bold yet noble. M.J.

✳ **ROGER KELLAWAY CELLO QUARTET:** Come to the Meadow. Roger Kellaway, piano; Edgar Lustgarten, cello; Chuck Domanico, bass; Emil Richards, percussion. Composed and arranged by Roger Kellaway. *Seventide; Estero Beach Landscape; Mostly on a "D" String*; five more. [Stephan Goldman, prod.] A&M 3618, \$6.98.

The Roger Kellaway Cello Quartet is a fond misnomer probably stemming from the fact that the cello is one of Kellaway's favorite instruments and that the sound of his quartet is built out of its cellist, Edgar Lustgarten. This is the second Cello Quartet album. The first is a classic of sorts. It did not make money, but those of us who were lucky enough to stumble onto it have played it to death.

A word of business, while I'm at it: A&M sends me every pop and rock album it puts out, whether it's good or it's trash, complete with bio, photos, etc. But I had to make a trip across town to pick up Kellaway's album because it wasn't sent to me. I never did see any promo information on it. True, the Cello Quartet is not in the marketplace, but surely it could make more of its money back with at least a minor promo campaign. Otherwise, why make it at all?

Kellaway and producer Steve Goldman have worked on a short budget this time. No strings, no needs. For all of it, the music is as charming as any I've heard since the last Cello Quartet album, the one where they let Kellaway write for orchestra, something he does exquisitely well.

Market energy exists. Artistic energy exists. Kellaway's power is enmeshed with sheer musical art, and it has a right to breathe. On the one hand, I am grateful to A&M for making it possible for me to have this work on my turn-

table. On the other hand, even granting that Kellaway's natural audience is slim by market standards, I deplore the business practice that allows a record company to go to the expense of producing such an elegant album as this and then throw it in the trash through nonpromotion.

It gets more and more difficult for me to find a balance between broad and narrow, between art and money—both are so attractive. Roger Kellaway must find the subject troublesome too. Whatever his struggle, he continues to write and play warmly and beautifully, and I hope you support him. M.A.

✳ **SPINNERS:** Mighty Love. Filipe Wind, Henry Fambrough, Billy Henderson, Pervis Jackson, and Bobby Smith, vocals; instrumental accompaniment. *Since I Been Gone; I'm Coming Home; Love Has Gone Away; Love Don't Love Nobody; Mighty Love*; three more. [Thom Bell, prod.] ATLANTIC SD 7296, \$5.98. Tape: ● TP 7296, \$6.97; ●● CS 7296, \$6.97.

The Spinners have been around for nineteen years, even if they haven't been a nationwide success for quite that long. On stage, they make a curious impression: Some of the men are a little overweight and rapidly approaching middle age, but there they are anyway, cranking through a soggy set of choreographed routines. Yet by the end of the set they usually manage to work up a good deal of excitement. And on record, free from the visual distractions and their show-biz imitations, they can sound very good indeed.

That is especially true of this album, which benefits from the enormously solid, effective arrangements of Thom Bell, the Spinners' Atlantic producer. It's a winning disc, neatly paced and full of enough quality that their most recent hit, "Mighty Love," doesn't overpower the other cuts unduly. J.R.

**DR. JOHN:** Desitively Bonnaroo. Dr. John, vocals, guitar, piano, muted fingerettes, and zigola; keyboards, rhythm, and horn accompaniment. *Quitters Never Win; Stealin'; What*

*Comes Around (Goes Around)*; nine more. [Allen Toussaint, arr. and prod.] ATCO SD 7043, \$5.98.

The Dr. John cult has become a national-sized fan club, making the honky-tonk New Orleans keyboards artist something of a middle-aged superstar. At his best, Dr. John does make delightful music. For example, on this new disc "Everybody Wanna Get Rich (Right Away)" is an instant hit. The tune has classy horn arrangements and urgent backup vocals. It relentlessly surges forward as Dr. John's gravelly voice repeats the words over and over again to the accompaniment of a throbbing rhythm track. There is lots of control as well as brilliantly articulated musical insanity on this cut.

The rest of the LP—a number of short selections and an obvious search for a Dr. John hit single—is genial when it should be compelling. So much of this man's music sounds alike that you have to be a devotee to stave off boredom.

*Desitively Bonnaroo* has its moments. Mostly I yawned. H.E.



**DAVID ALLAN COE:** *The Mysterious Rhinestone Cowboy*. David Allan Coe, vocals and guitar; vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *A Sad Country Song; Crazy Mary; River; The 33rd of August; Bossier Song; Atlanta Song; Old Man Tell Me; Desperados Waiting for the Train; I Still Sing the Old Songs; The Old Grey Goose Is Dead*. [Ron Bledsoe, prod.] COLUMBIA KC 32942, \$5.98. Tape: ●CA 32942, \$6.98.

David Allan Coe, a young country singer, is a cohort of the "new Nashville" school: Kris Kristofferson, Mickey Newbury, and Steve Goodman. Coe has all the makings of a major country star. His voice is hickory-smoked and real. His writing ability is considerable. His own "A Sad Country Song" is one of the LP's best. And his choice of songs by other composers is likewise excellent. He does a fine reading of Michael Smith's superb "Crazy Mary."

The only low point on the album is a rather maudlin arrangement of Newbury's "The 33rd of August." But this is a minor fault indeed, and I look forward to more good music from Coe. M.J.

**DAHANN CARROLL.** Diahann Carroll, vocals; orchestral accompaniment. *Easy to Love; Anybody Else; After Being Your Lover*, seven more. [Joe Porter prod.] MOTOWN M6-805S1, \$6.98.

Diahann Carroll is, among other things, a supper-club singer and Broadway musical-comedy star. Once Broadway and the supper clubs were great symbols of show-business magic. As the focus shifted away from these areas to the burgeoning recording industry, established stars found great difficulty translating their talents into music that the young record-buying audience wanted to hear.

Diahann, a case in point, has not recorded in quite some time. Now she's on the Motown label, and Motown has done its best to convert her into a contemporary pop-singing artist. The results, alas, are disheartening.

Diahann has not been encouraged to sing



Billy Cobham—his newest release is almost hot enough to burn your turntable.

the standards in her repertoire with new arrangements that would satisfy both the songs and the dramatic and liberated musical formats of today. She has instead been given a batch of new material—country-and-western tunes, rhythm-and-blues numbers, and a dash of rock—and she just does not have the wit and power to cut them. On the Ashford-Simpson "I Can't Give Back the Love I Feel for You," she even attempts one of those soulful monologues that belong to the early Diana Ross period in Motown's history; the results are ludicrous.

This disc is draggy and spiritless. There must be a way to turn Diahann Carroll into a new-style package, but it's a difficult task. H.E.



**BILLY COBHAM:** *Crosswinds*. Billy Cobham, songs and arrangements, percussion; instrumental accompaniment. *Spanish Moss; Heather; The Pleasant Pheasant*, four more. [Billy Cobham and Ken Scott, prod.] ATLANTIC SD 7300, \$5.98.

Billy Cobham is a New York-based musician who worked in the studios and in clubs there and stayed fairly quiet, waiting for his shot. Atlantic gave it to him, and his first album, "Spectrum" (SD 7268), exploded onto the charts in unheard-of fashion. He is a drummer, after all, and he can play jazz. "Spectrum" has been on the *Billboard* charts for six months now.

This is Cobham's second outing, and it is so hot that it almost burns your turntable. So fierce is his concentration that it locks the listener in.

Side 1 is made up of "A Sound Portrait," a suite in four parts, opening with "Spanish Moss," a mover whose time patterns are complicated but never intellectual. "Savannah the Serene" is a muted, haunted ballad, and "Storm" is a simply amazing percussion solo by Cobham (and I happen to hate drum solos!). "Flash Flood" brings the circle around, echoing the early time patterns.

His band is: John Abercrombie, guitars; Michael Brecker, woodwinds; Randy Brecker (an original member of Blood, Sweat, & Tears), trumpet; Garnett Brown, trombone; George Duke, keyboards; Lee Pastora, Latin percussion; and John Williams, basses.

Cobham's music is not quite r&b nor is it jazz, but obviously it appeals to both audiences, plus the pop audience. Along with Herbie Hancock, he has found a way to break through barriers of style, taste, ability. When Billy Cobham found himself, all the rules went out the window. He even took the superb photograph that covers front and back of the jacket. When it's right, it's *all* right. M.A.

**DEODATO:** *Whirlwinds*. Eumir Deodato, keyboards; instrumental accompaniment. *Moonlight Serenade; Ave Maria; Do It Again; West 42nd Street; Havana Strut; Whirlwinds*. [Eumir Deodato, prod.] MCA 410, \$6.98. Tape: ●T 410, \$7.98; ●●C 410, \$7.98.

Eumir Deodato is the enterprising young man who thought to subject the opening of *Also sprach Zarathustra* to a Latin beat, add a sprinkling of light jazz, and emerge with a pop hit. I know two or three keyboard players who kicked themselves around their Moogs for not thinking of it first. Now Deodato is here with his third LP based on the same strategy.

The opener is Glenn Miller's "Moonlight Serenade," which is handled exactly as Richard Strauss and, later, Gershwin were handled by Deodato. There follows a sultry yet amazingly respectful reading of what is perhaps the most improbable tune yet selected by him: Schubert's *Ave Maria*. An aggressive "Do It Again" and a number of spunky Deodato originals round out this excellent LP.

Deodato's work is excellent, if a bit predictable at this point in time. M.J.

**EAGLES:** *On the Border*. Glenn Frey, vocals, guitar, and piano; Don Henley, vocals and drums; Bernie Leadon, vocals, guitar, banjo,

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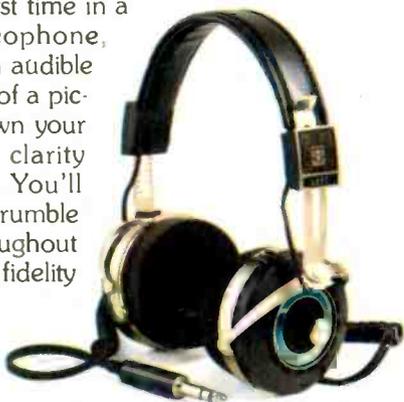
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and steel guitar; Randy Meisner, vocals and bass; Don Felder, electric guitar. *Already Gone*; *You Never Cry like a Lover*; *Midnight Flyer*; *James Dean*; six more. [Bill Szymczyk and Glyn Johns, prod.] ASYLUM 73-1004, \$5.98.

If you believe that the essence of rock and roll is defiant, excrement-kicking energy, then Eagles won't be your band. Eagles is the descendant of all those country-rock acts that started coming out of Southern California in the late 1960s. If you trace its ancestry even farther back, you can detect a debt to the plasticized surfer sound of the earlier Sixties.

This album, the group's third, is perhaps a bit tougher in its sound. But the over-all effect remains the same: laid-back, casually prettified country-cowboy rock. And whatever else it may be, it is certainly comfortable to listen to. J.R.

**IAN LLOYD & STORIES:** *Traveling Underground*. Ian Lloyd, vocals; Steve Love, guitar; Kenneth Bichel, keyboards; Bryan Madey, drums; Kenny Aaronson, bass; vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Bridges*; *Soft Rain*; *If It Feels Good, Do It*; *Mammy Blue*; *Earthbound/Freefall*; four more. [Kenny Kerner, Richie Wise, and Stories, prod.] KAMA SUPRA KSBS 2078, \$5.98.

*Stories'* 1973 hit *Brother Louie* typified the group as a Top 40 act. *Stories'* new album, "Traveling Underground," indicates that they are much more than that. Lloyd, an Anglophilic New Yorker, successfully sings a combination of Rod Stewart and Janis Joplin, while the band manages to sound like a mix of the Moody Blues and Faces. Best is *Earthbound/Freefall*, a long tune that shows off the considerable talents of Kenneth Bichel on keyboards, including piano, ARP synthesizer, and mellotron. M.J.

**KING CRIMSON:** *Starless and Bible Black*. David Cross, violin, viola, and keyboards; Robert Fripp, guitar, mellotron, and devices; John Wetton, bass and vocals; William Bradford, percussion. *The Great Deceiver*; *Lament*; *We'll Let You Know*; five more. [King Crimson, prod.] ATLANTIC SD 7298, \$5.98.

King Crimson makes complicated music that combines rock and jazz with a healthy dose of all the miracles of sound that can be produced by a technological age. The gentlemen will twist the dials on any newfangled sound system they can get hold of; the result of their thinking is usually intricate, novelty-filled music.

On this disc, there are long stretches of flowing melody: "Trio" is one of this season's most beautiful themes. Then there is a dose of inane lyrics in which King Crimson tries to be avant-garde and is merely puerile. Over-all, though, "Starless and Bible Black" is both talented and precocious work. The underlying note of seriousness in this band's composition and execution forces one to pay complete attention to it. H.E.

**PAUL SIMON:** *Live Rhymin'*. Paul Simon, vocals and guitar; Urubamba and Jessy Dixon Singers, vocal and instrumental accompaniment, Me and Julio down by the Schoolyard;

American Tune; Jesus Is the Answer; The Boxer; Duncan; El Condor Pasa; Homeward Bound; America; Mother and Child Reunion; Loves Me Like a Rock; Bridge Over Troubled Water; The Sound of Silence. COLUMBIA PC 32855, \$6.95. Tape: ● PA 32855, \$7.98; ●● PT 32855, \$7.98.

In this, his first recording of a live concert, Paul Simon gives us a casual—sometimes *too* casual—run-through of some of his most famous songs. While the greatest part of the LP is great, at times he tends to lean back and let his accompanists do the work for him. Thus, a shabby, oversung "Sounds of Silence" falls way short, while a simple, majestic "American Tune" and "The Boxer" ring very true.

An interesting note for Simon fanciers is the addition of a new (to me, anyway) verse in "The Boxer." M.J.

## jazz

**CHARLIE PARKER:** *First Recordings*. Charlie Parker, alto saxophone; Bernard Anderson, Orville Minor, Dizzy Gillespie, and Cootie Williams, trumpets; Bud Gould, trombone and violin; Trummy Young, trombone; William J. Scott, Bob Mabane, Don Byas, and Sam Taylor, tenor saxophones; Jay McShann, Clyde Hart, and Arnold Jarvis, piano; Mike Bryan, guitar; Gene Ramey, Al Hall, and Carl Pruitt, basses; Gus Johnson, Specs Powell, and Sylvester Payne, drums; Rubberlegs Williams, vocals. *I Found a New Baby*; *Moten Swing*; *Wichita Blues*; *What's the Matter Now*; *4-F Blues*; *Floogie Boo*; seven more. [Don Schlitten, prod.] ONYX 221, \$5.98 (mono).

By a twist of the jazz fates, Charlie Parker happened to be in a band that was recorded just as he was beginning to develop his highly influential style. But—and here is the real twist—those 1941 recordings by Jay McShann's band focused on the singing of Walter Brown, deemed the best selling feature for its records! As a result, we get only a few teasing glimpses of Parker.

But now Don Schlitten has partially corrected the problem by putting together a collection of early Parker recordings that includes seven selections by a small version of McShann's band in 1940 as well as a 1942 recording of Parker playing "Cherokee," the tune that is always cited as the one on which he discovered, in 1939, how to play the lines that until then he had only heard in his head.

Previously the earliest known recorded version of "Cherokee" by Parker was his ultimate, definitive performance in 1945, which he called "Koko." In this newly discovered "Cherokee," despite a very gritty surface (the recording was made on a *paper* disc, apparently at Clark Monroe's Uptown House in Harlem), Bird emerges clean, bright, and airy, with the bridge that he used on the "Koko" recording already formed.

The McShann performances, recorded in



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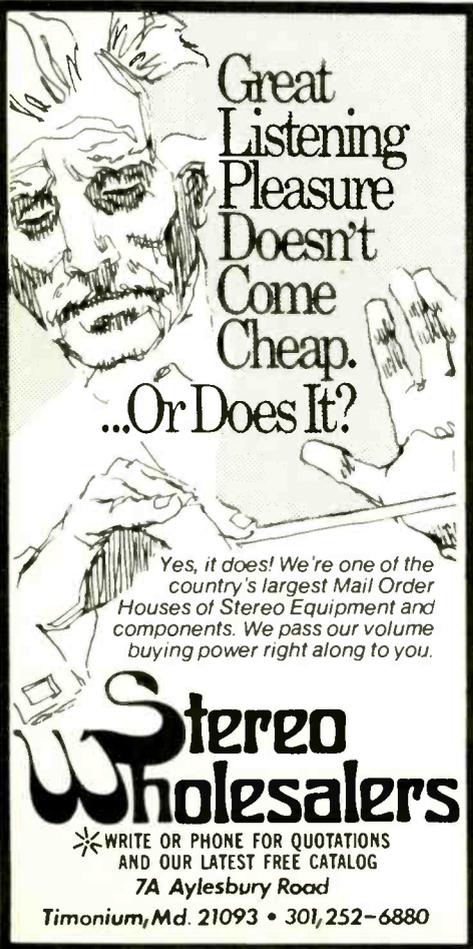
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Wichita, not only provide glimpses of Parker at a time when his Lester Young roots can still be clearly heard, but show us what an excellent, prototypical Kansas City group McShann had. His own piano is idiomatically Basie, most notably on "Lady Be Good," and he has four sidemen who stand out on these performances even more strongly than Parker: Orville Minor, an exciting, crackling trumpet; two tenor saxophones—William J. Scott and Bob Mabane—who are in the Herschel Evans bag; and Bud Gould, a trombonist whose Teagarden leanings come through strongly on "Wichita Blues" and who doubles on a lively violin on "Honeysuckle Rose."

The five sides by a group backing Rubberlegs Williams, a singer, have an eye-popping list of sidemen—Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Don Byas, Trummy Young, Clyde Hart, and Mike Bryan—who, of necessity, are subordinated to Williams' singing, although Parker and Byas play beautifully behind him. J.S.W.

**MODERN JAZZ QUARTET: Blues on Bach.** John Lewis, piano; Milt Jackson, vibraharp; Percy Heath, bass; Connie Kay, drums. *Regret; Blues in B Flat; Precious Joy*, six more. [Nesuhi Ertegun, prod.] ATLANTIC SD 1652, \$5.98.

The Modern Jazz Quartet gave a concert with the Juilliard String Quartet in New York in December 1973, in which Bach shared programming with the blues. This disc is apparently an outgrowth of that concert but without the string quartet. Four original blues—two by John Lewis, two by Milt Jackson—alternate with Lewis' adaptations of three Bach chorales, a fugue, and a prelude. It makes for an unbalanced set, because the Bach does not adjust easily to the MJQ manner (and vice versa), winding up as neither Bach nor jazz. But the blues, which is part of the quartet's basic business, allows the group to settle into a genuinely swinging groove, a groove that has become stronger and more vitalizing as the years pass.

The result is an oil-and-water set in which Lewis' continuing effort to pull the quartet over onto the classical side of the court is at least partially offset by his lovely "Blues in B Flat" and Jackson's "Blues in F." J.S.W.

\* **JOE SULLIVAN: Piano.** Joe Sullivan, piano; Yank Lawson, trumpet; Ray Conniff, trombone; Sidney Bechet, soprano saxophone and clarinet; Jerry Jerome, tenor saxophone; Pops Foster and Bob Haggart, basses; George Wettling, drums. *Begin the Beguine; Fidgety Feet; Only a Dream; Got It and Gone; Sister Kate; St. Louis Blues*; five more. FOLKWAYS FA 2851, \$5.98 (mono) [recorded 1944-46].

When he died in 1971, Joe Sullivan had had a sparse recording career that did not adequately reflect his talents. There were a handful of solo recordings, four by the fine little band he led at Cafe Society in 1940, and several as a sideman, including about a dozen with Bob Crosby's band. Ironically, his recordings with Crosby came during his second stretch with the band, by which time three of his best-known originals—"Little Rock Getaway," "Gin Mill Blues," and "Just Stroll-

ing," which he had brought to the band during his first, brief stay—had been recorded by Crosby with Bob Zurke playing the piano solos.

This collection, recorded between 1944 and 1946 but not previously released, gives a much clearer impression of the range of Sullivan's playing than his other recordings do. His essential style comes from Hines and Tatum, but there was a stamp of individuality on the way he adapted their hallmarks.

We hear Sullivan not only with the jaunty swagger that colored most of his recorded work, but also in the neglected (on records) role of a sensitive developer of ballads. "The Way You Look Tonight," for example, shows a Sullivan barely hinted at on his other discs, and a lovely, Ellingtonian original, "Timothy," builds from a pensive opening chorus to an easy beat and a bridge that sparkles.

His originality also comes out in his personal approach to familiar material—giving Benny Carter's "Blues in My Heart" a strong boogie beat; turning the Dixieland warhorse, "Fidgety Feet," into a piano solo; using the well-worn "Begin the Beguine" as a wrap-up for a display of his stylistic devices. In addition to these solo pieces, there are two band selections with Sidney Bechet and one with a Lawson-Haggart group, ensembles whose exuberance fully matches Sullivan's.

This set does a bit of needed justice to one of the best pianists in jazz. J.S.W.

**RAGTIME PIANO ORIGINALS.** Mike Bernard, Harry Thomas, Malvin M. Franklin, Joseph Batten, Clarence Jones, Willy White, Frank Banta, Sid Reinherz, Frank Herbin, Sam Gould, Rube Bloom, Jean Paques, Donald Thorne, and Arthur Schutt, piano. *Blaze Away; A Classical Spasm; It's a Peach*; thirteen more. FOLKWAYS RF 23, \$5.98 (mono). **RED ONION RAG.** Roy Spangler, Frank Banta, James P. Johnson, Fred Longshaw, Jelly Roll Morton, Al Siegel, Clarence Williams, Cow Cow Davenport, Arnold Wiley, Rob Cooper, Joe Sullivan, and Willie the Lion Smith, piano. *Red Onion Rag; Wild Cherries Rag; Tomato Sauce*; thirteen more. HERWIN 402, \$5.95 (mono).

These two sets, both compiled by David A. Jansen, a young pianist and ragtime historian, go a long way toward filling the gap between the ragtime era (which ended about 1917) and the stride and jazz pianists of the Twenties and Thirties. This was a period when piano novelties, as exemplified by Zez Confrey's "Kitten on the Keys," were popular.

The Folkways set leans toward these piano-novelty specialists, many of them long forgotten but a few—Mike Bernard, Frank Banta, Rube Bloom—with names that linger on. A jazz-oriented pianist like Clarence Jones stands out immediately from most of his confreres on this disc.

The Herwin collection, on the other hand, gives a brief nod to the novelty men: Banta again, Roy Spangler, Arnold Wiley. But it focuses primarily on the jazzmen who came out of the ragtime background: James P. Johnson, Fred Longshaw, Clarence Williams, Jelly Roll Morton, Willie the Lion Smith.

Longshaw is a distinct surprise. Known mostly for his work as an unobtrusive accompanist for blues singers (including Bessie Smith), he steps out in strong, lively, and very

authoritative fashion on his own piece, "Chili Pepper."

There are quite a number of familiar pieces in the Herwin set: Morton's "Frog-i-More" (well recorded in 1926) as well as his "King Porter Stomp" and "Kansas City Stomps" (from the tinny Library of Congress records of 1938). Joe Sullivan's "Little Rock Getaway," and the Lion's "Finger Buster." But there are also interesting rarities, such as an odd magpie of a pianist, Wiley; Rob Cooper, an easygoing Texan; Williams' relaxed "Wild Flower Rag"; and one of Johnson's lesser-known but charming pieces, "Scoutin' Around."

The Herwin set has more inherent jazz interest, but the Folkways puts the Herwin in perspective. J.S.W.



**RAM RAMIREZ:** Rampant Ram. Ram Ramirez, piano. *Prelude to a Kiss; Lover Man; Lil Darlin'*; eight more. [Bill Weilbacher, prod.] MJR 8122, \$5.50 (Master Jazz Recordings, Box 579, Lenox Hill Station, New York, N.Y. 10021).

Although Ram Ramirez has been playing piano since the 1930s, mostly as a soloist or with trios, he is known now—where he is known at all—as the composer of "Lover Man." That's fine, but, as this collection shows, there is a good deal more to him than one hit song.

There are some other Ramirez originals here, most notably "Mad About You," an oddly haunting melody that Warren Evans recorded back in the 1940s. But it is Ramirez the pianist who is the center of attention here.

He has an easy, casual manner that swings ever so lightly and easily. In his reflective solos, he is often reminiscent of Duke Ellington without resorting to Ellingtonian runs or fills. He plays the Duke's "Janet" (which, so far as I know, has otherwise been recorded only by the composer) with a flair that captures the essence of the Ellington version without copying it. But he goes his own way on the Duke's "Prelude to a Kiss," floating the melody on a warm, cushioning bass figure.

There are two blues originals named for the liquid support that inspired them—"Hennessy" produces a warm glow, but "Martell" is, for some reason, a bit nervous and jumpy (which suggests an interesting way to evaluate brandies).

Ramirez sings one of his songs, "I Just Refuse to Sing the Blues," a good, smoky saloon song for which his throaty, froggy voice is an appropriate vehicle. J.S.W.

## in brief

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The New Riders, the first rock group to add an @ to its name, is back with a recording of a concert appearance. It's a good one, very representative of the group's lively country rock. M.J.

**KIKI DEE:** Loving and Free. ROCKET/MCA 395, \$6.98. Tape: ● T 395, \$7.98; ●● C 395, \$7.98.

Rocket Records was formed by Elton John, who coproduced this album by a lady whose name sounds like baby talk or diaper-changing time. But if you can get past the name, you've got something. She's a terrific singer—calm and warm and knowing.

The album is superbly produced and features some dynamite songs worth mentioning: "Lonnie and Josie" by Elton John and Bernie Taupin, "Travelin' in Style" by Yamauchi/Bundrick/Kirke/Rodgers/Kossof, "You Put Something Better Inside Me" by Egan/Raferty, and "Song for Adam" by Jackson Browne. The weakest tracks are Ms. Dee's originals. This is the kind of artist who may start off slowly because she is low-key. But as a singer she definitely has the goods. M.A.

**GLADYS KNIGHT AND THE PIPS:** Claudine. BUDDAH BDS 5602, \$6.98. Tape: ● L 85602, \$7.97; ●● L 55602, \$7.97.

Gladys Knight and her backup group have an absolutely wonderful stage act, but her records generally haven't been able to equal it in either consistency or intensity. This one, the soundtrack to the movie, is well worth hearing, however, since Curtis Mayfield's hand ensures careful attention to composition, arrangement, and production. J.R.

**LIZA MINNELLI:** Live at the Winter Garden. COLUMBIA PC 32954, \$6.98. Tape: ● PCA 32954, \$7.98; ●● PCT 32954, \$7.98.

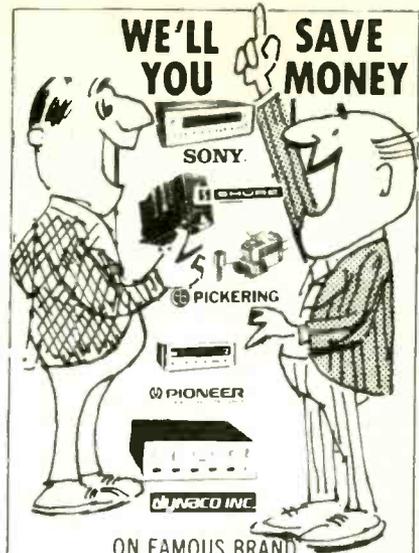
On-stage at the Winter Garden, Liza Minnelli was like a windup toy: her performance was colorless and unappealing. On disc, this very same set sparkles: In fact, it may very well be the best Minnelli recording to date. Until Liza perks up, fans might as well play the record and use their imaginations to conjure up a truly vital in-person singing star. H.E.

**MULESKINNER:** A Potpourri of Bluegrass Jam. WARNER BROS. BS 2787, \$5.98.

This group includes my favorite country fiddler, Richard Greene, who coproduced with Joe Boyd. Also with Peter Rowan, Dave Grisman, Bill Keith, Clarence White (his last album), John Kahn, and John Guerin. The sound is kind of updated bluegrass, and I love how it came out. M.A.

**THE MAIN INGREDIENT:** Euphrates River. RCA APL 1-0335, \$5.98. Tape: ● APS 1-0335, \$6.95; ●● APK 1-0335, \$6.95.

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# the tape deck

BY R.D. DARRELL

**Bach Condominium in the Brazilian Jungles.** What veteran connoisseur of off-the-beaten-path music can ever forget those intoxicating Villa Lobos *Bachianas brasileiras* discoveries of the late-78-rpm and early-LP eras: Bidú Sayão's haunting vocalise in No. 5 with its darkly sonorous eight cellos, and Werner Janssen's vivid orchestral evocation of the *Little Train of Caipira* toccata movement of No. 2? (Some of us fondly remember even farther back to the now legendary Elsie Houston's first phonographic representations of Villa Lobos for French HMV.) But in more recent years the remarkable Brazilian genius, who died in 1959, has been given relatively scant attention on discs and less still on tapes.

Hence the special relish with which I greet the taping of an all-*Bachianas brasileiras* program by the Orchestre de Paris and various soloists directed by Paul Capolongo—a brand-new name to me, but that of a conductor who's obviously a fervent aficionado of Villa Lobos' music—(Angel 4XS/8XS 36979, cassette and 8-track cartridge, \$7.98 each). The four-movement No. 2, with its famous *Little Train* toccata finale, is of course played in its entirety; No. 5 stars soprano Mady Mesplé with eight cellos not only in the magical aria, but also in the score's additional *dansa* movement; No. 6 is a fascinatingly piquant chorus and fantasia for unaccompanied flute (Michel Debost) and bassoon (André Senedat); No. 9 is a grave *preludio* and buoyant *fuga* for strings alone. If some of us captious graybeards may complain that Mesplé can't erase our memories of Sayão or that Capolongo's subtleties may miss some of Janssen's rougher impacts, even we can't deny that all the performances here are distinguished by French elegance at its best and that Angel's recording is a well-nigh ideal model of sonic transparency and vividness.

Welcoming this release also gives me an apt opportunity for recalling attention to two other relatively recent tape tributes to Villa Lobos: the bewitching guitar concerto plus various guitar solos by Julian Bream (RCA/Stereotape reel ERPA 3231 C; also RCA 8-track cartridge R8S 1209), and the fabulous Sayão/Stokowski *Forest of the Amazon* tone poem (United Artists/Stereotape reel UST 8007 C). Referring to the latter just over a year ago, I had to recommend

the then new Stereotape processing unheard. But since then I have had a chance not only to hear it, but also to compare it with my carefully saved copy of the long-out-of-print original United Artists reel edition—and to find it generally superior, thanks to progress in processing technology. The c. 1960 recording and rather dry acoustical ambience themselves inevitably show some signs of age, but all these are quickly forgotten as one listens spellbound to the exotic music composed as a film score for W. H. Hudson's *Green Mansions*.

**New RCA/Stereotape Revivals.** The latest classical release list from the Stereotape Division of Magtec backs up the label's earlier promise and preliminary practice of digging back into the catalogues for recordings no longer—or never before—available in open-reel tapings. Foremost among the returns to reels are three of the most popular RCA Red Seal complete-opera productions, topped by the Price/Tucker/Leinsdorf *Madama Butterfly* (EOPC 6160 W, \$23.95) and including the Price/Corelli/Karajan *Carmen* (EOPC 6199 W, \$23.95) and the Moffo/Merrill/Solti *Rigoletto* (EOPB 7027 K, \$16.95).

These are all so well known (from RCA's own OP 1963 and 1965 reels and from the more recent imported RCA Italiana cassette and cartridge sets of *Carmen* and *Rigoletto* discussed here last October and November) that there is nothing new to say about them—except that the Stereotape processings are accompanied by postcard requests which must be mailed in to obtain the librettos prepared for the disc editions. This is not the ideal solution to the libretto problem, but it is at least an acceptable one and better certainly than having tapes with no librettos whatever.

**Grand Pianism Commemorations 1: Paderewski.** The only first taping in the latest RCA/Stereotape classical release list that I've had time to hear this month is one that all fans of supreme pianistic virtuosity and of Romantic keyboard music have been yearning for (without much real hope) every since Earl Wild's recordings of the Paderewski Concerto in A minor, Op. 17, and *Fantaisie polonaise*, Op. 19, with Arthur Fiedler conducting the London Symphony, appeared just over three years ago. In the just-out 7½-ips reel version (ERPA 3190 C, \$7.95) the performances are as incandescently spectacular as ever, while the recordings themselves now seem to boast even more sonic glitter and impact.

For some aesthetic sensibilities, indeed, there well may be just too much in the way of flamboyant executant fireworks here, to say nothing of reproduced timpani and bass-register piano tones

solid enough to rattle listening-room doors and windows. But there's genuine excitement throughout, and the concerto at least reveals a powerful creative talent in the young Paderewski (the *Fantasia on Polish Themes* is both less imaginative and less tautly organized) likely to bowl over everyone who knows him only by such crowd-pleasers as *the Minuet* in G or only by his extra-musical fame as Polish patriot and post-World War I premier.

**Grand Pianism Commemorations 2: Rachmaninoff.** Recording celebrations of the great Russian composer/pianist's centennial (April 1, 1973) were slow enough appearing on discs and slower still on tapes, where it's unlikely that the finest of such commemorations (the complete reissue of all his own recorded performances) will ever appear at all. And I'm still impatiently awaiting the tape release I anticipate most eagerly: the London/Ampex Ashkenazy solo-piano recital featuring the Op. 42 *Variations on a Theme by Corelli*. Meanwhile, however, there are on hand two other notable tributes, by Van Cliburn and Jorge Bolet (RCA Red Seal ARK/ARS 1-0352 and 1-0357 respectively, cassettes and 8-track cartridges; \$6.95 each).

Cliburn combines his June 1960 "live" Moscow performance of the monumental Sonata No. 2 in B flat minor, Op. 36 (mainly in its original rather than later, somewhat simplified version), with bravura 1970-72 studio recordings of the stormy Etude Tableau, Op. 39, No. 5, and five Preludes (Op. 23, Nos. 4, 5, 6, and 7; and Op. 32, No. 5). In marked contrast with both this all-Rachmaninoff program and Cliburn's grandly magisterial approach are Bolet's programmatic featuring of transcriptions (by rather than of Rachmaninoff) and a lighter, more exuberant interpretative approach. His only three "originals" are the *Polka de W.R.* and the Op. 23, No. 10, and Op. 32, No. 12 Preludes. The deftly ingenious, surprisingly pianistic transcriptions (which Rachmaninoff prepared for his own recital-encore use) are mostly of familiar short orchestral works by Bizet, Mendelssohn, Mussorgsky, and Rimsky-Korsakov; violin pieces by Bach (the bravura S. 1006 Partita Preludio) and Kreisler (*Liebesfreud* and *Liebesleid*); and an elaboration of Tchaikovsky's Op. 16, No. 1 Lullaby.

With admirable appropriateness, the audio engineering in each case is adroitly tailored to fit the particular characteristics of each performer: impressively big and rich for Cliburn, lighter and brighter for Bolet. Both musicassette editions can be warmly recommended, but in the case of the 8-track-cartridge editions Cliburn's is innately less well suited to mobile entertainment than Bolet's. ●



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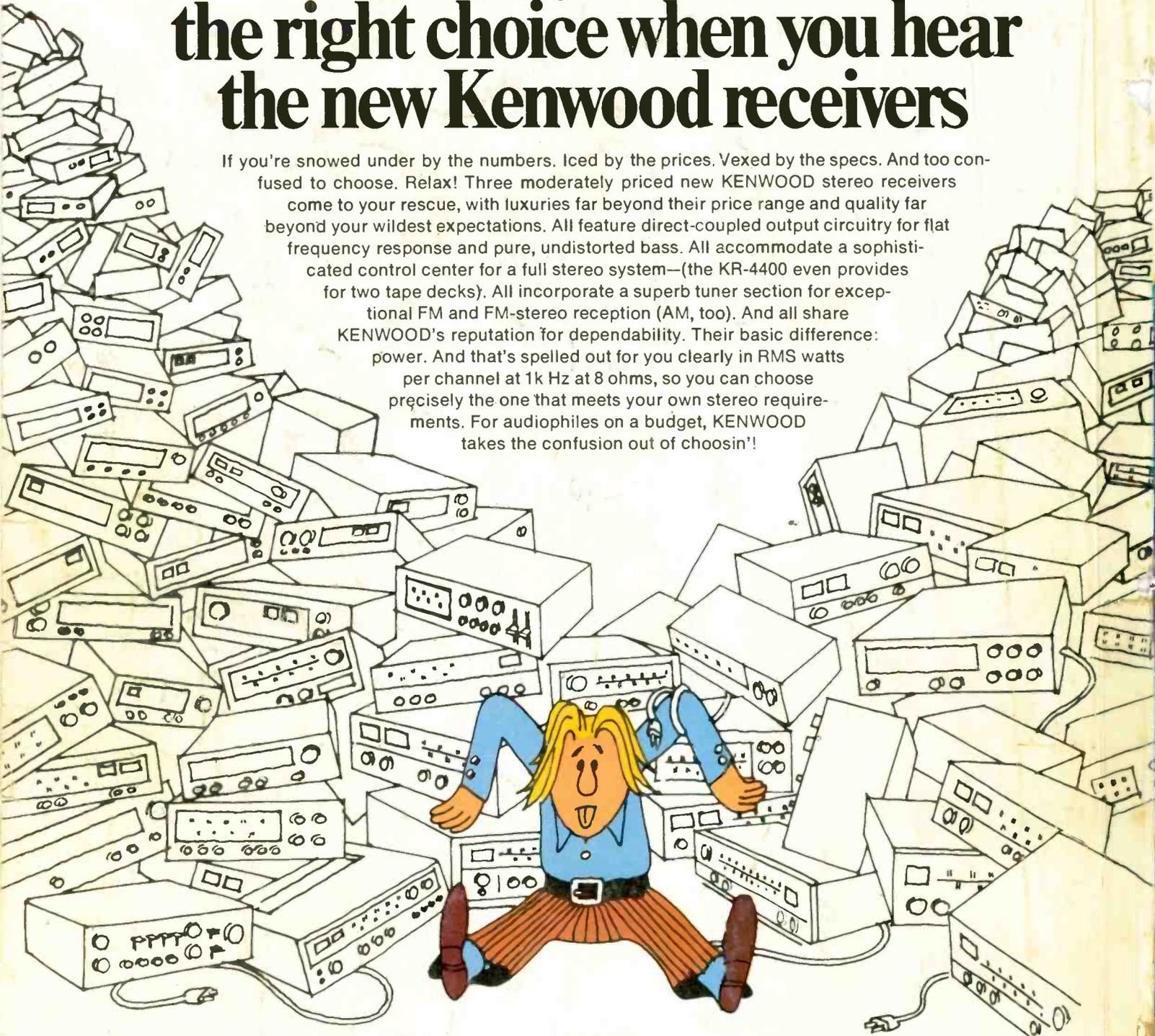


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