

Stereo Review

OCTOBER 1973 • 75 CENTS

CHINESE MUSIC, PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

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一日仙
人壽年豐
節氣和



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8061

According to Audio Times, a leading publication devoted to audio manufacturing and retailing: "No piece of audio equipment is as eagerly awaited as the 'one four-channel unit that does everything — i.e., the receiver with built-in circuitry for SQ, RM and CD-4 record decoding.' "

It's here!

Pioneer has taken another giant step forward. Our new collection of quadraphonic receivers — QX-949, QX-747, QX-646 — has this total capability. They reproduce CD-4, SQ, RM and discrete four-channel sound without adaptors, add-on decoders or demodulators. And they're specifically designed to fully meet all of the standards established for these matrix and discrete program sources.

Bearing in mind that two-channel is, and will continue to be, a tremendous source of listening pleasure for many years to come, these new units are designed for it, along with their total quadraphonic capabilities. The QX-949 and QX-747 reproduce two-channel with augmented power due to Pioneer's new Power Boosting circuitry.

A whole new world of discrete sound with the built-in CD-4 demodulator

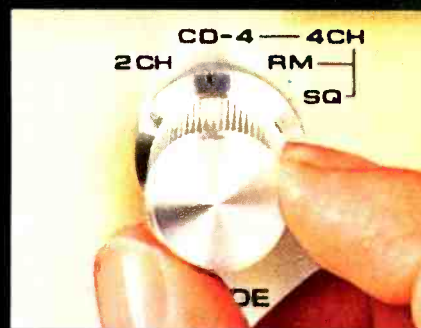
While many quadraphonic receivers have limited degrees of four-channel capabilities, Pioneer offers maximum versatility with built-in CD-4. Without

it you can't enjoy the increasing number of CD-4 discrete discs (the true four-channel record) from leading recording companies like RCA, Warner, Atlantic, Elektra, and others. CD-4 is a 'must' for optimum quadraphonic listening enjoyment.

Since the CD-4 circuit incorporates FET's and IC's, continuous, stable performance is assured. In addition, it uses a 30KHz subcarrier similar to that used in FM multiplex broadcasting. The subcarrier is demodulated by a Phase Lock Loop (PLL) circuit for each channel. The result is optimum channel separation — absolutely necessary to achieve the full, rich impact of quadraphonic reproduction. Convenient and simple-to-use front/rear left and right separation controls are on the front panels of all three models.

SQ and RM decoding bring to life the hidden ambience of matrixed and stereo records

With built-in RM circuitry, you can experience new brilliance from your present collection of two-channel stereo records and tapes. FM broadcasts, too. Also, new vistas of enjoyment unfold when you play the new four-channel SQ matrix records being released by Columbia, Capitol, Epic and Vanguard, to mention just a few of the prominent SQ record producers. No matter what the quadraphonic program source or the record label, Pioneer's new quadraphonic receivers flawlessly reproduce them all.



Total Capability Mode Switch — Fingertip switching to CD-4, SQ, RM quadraphonic sources, as well as two-channel stereo.

Matchless performance with powerhouse capabilities

As is traditional with all Pioneer receivers, the new quadraphonic units have power to spare. For example, the top model, QX-949, has a power output in four-channel operation, of 40 watts RMS/channel at 8 ohms, 20-20,000 Hz, four channels driven. THD and IM distortion is only 0.3% at 1 KHz.

Switching to two-channel operation, the new Pioneer Power Boosting circuit delivers 60 watts RMS/channel across the 20-20,000 Hz spectrum, with both channels driven, at less than 0.3% distortion.

By using super-size power transformers in the QX-949, in combination with four 10,000 microfarad electrolytic capacitors, this high power output is obtained at very low frequency. And it's further insured by direct-coupling in the output stage.

No overload with speaker protector circuit

Since direct-coupling feeds the signal directly to the speakers, an automatic



Pioneer.

The very best





U.S. Pioneer Electronics Corp.,
178 Commerce Rd., Carlstadt, New Jersey 07072

AN OPEN LETTER TO EVERYONE WHO HAS EVER BOUGHT
PIONEER EQUIPMENT -- OR HOPES TO

Many people who are ardent followers of the progress of high fidelity - and Pioneer's advancements, in particular - have asked us why we have limited our involvement in quadraphonic. The answer is quite simple.

By definition, high fidelity means pure, perfect sound reproduction. The number of channels has nothing to do with this state of perfection. Consequently, we have been directing our primary efforts to producing the finest 2-channel high fidelity equipment available. And we are continuing to do so.

During the past two years we have listened with great interest to the comments of consumers and audio dealers throughout the country. There appeared to be a 'wait and see' attitude because of the lack of 4-channel standardization on the part of manufacturers of equipment, records and tape.

However, the choice of a standard quadraphonic system has presently been narrowed down to where 4-channel is a viable, practical and delightful reality.

For this reason we have proceeded with every bit of enthusiasm and know-how at our command. The result is this new line of Pioneer quadraphonic receivers. These are total capability instruments. They embody all the presently known quadraphonic state-of-the-art. And they compare in all respects to the magnificent capabilities of Pioneer stereo instruments to produce the virtually perfect sound reproduction demanded by the audiophile.

If you've waited to buy a 4-channel receiver that could reproduce all quadraphonic reproduction systems - Pioneer has made the waiting worthwhile. We are proud to present to this industry these superb Pioneer "all-in-one" quadraphonic receivers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Bernard Mitchell'.

Bernard Mitchell
President



Four-Channel Level Indicator — See what you hear. Make instant adjustments with left/right, front/rear level controls.

electronic trigger relay system is used to protect the speakers from DC leakage or overload.

New and exclusive Power Boosting circuit

When switching from four-channel to two-channel reproduction, power is substantially increased with the new and advanced Power Boosting circuit, as described above. This exclusive circuit is built into both the QX-949 and QX-747 models.

Another plus feature attributable to the Power Boosting circuit is simplified switching from four-channel to two-channel operation. It can be instantly achieved without the usual re-connecting of speaker wires. This, too, is a Pioneer exclusive.

A tuner section the equal of separate components

The FM tuner section of the QX-949 is truly an engineering accomplishment. It incorporates two dual-gate MOS FET's in the front end, plus three ceramic filters and 6-stage limiters in a monolithic IC in the IF stage. The result is superb sensitivity and selectivity, and excellent signal to noise ratio.

Advanced circuitry includes Dolby adaptor input/output and 4-channel broadcasting multiplex output terminal

In anticipation of the future use of discrete quadraphonic broadcasting, the QX-949 and QX-747 include a quadraphonic multiplex output terminal. Depending on the system finally approved, all that ever will be required is a simple adaptor unit. And speaking of adaptor units, both the QX-949 and QX-747 highlight an input/output for a Dolby noise reduction adaptor unit.

Unique 4-channel level indicator

Regardless which quadraphonic

source is in operation, the sound level of each channel can be monitored by viewing the large scope-type level indicator on the top two models. Left and right front/rear controls permit instant adjustment. Indicator sensitivity controls allow for a maximum of -30dB adjustments at any sound level. The level indicator may also be used to view CD-4 channel separation adjustments made with the CD-4 separation controls.

Inputs/Outputs for total versatility

Pioneer has endowed these models with terminals for a wide range of program sources. The only limitation is your own listening interests and your capability to experiment with sound.

Convenient features increase listening enjoyment

Along with the total capability of these receivers, Pioneer has incorporated a wide array of additional, meaningful features. All three instruments include: loudness contour, FM muting, an extra wide tuning dial, two sets of bass/treble

controls for front and rear channels, function and mode selector with multi-colored indicator lights. Further refinement is offered with the QX-949's multiplex noise and high/low filters, plus signal strength and center tuning meters in one housing.

Admittedly, these new Pioneer quadraphonic receivers, like fine sports cars or cameras, are not inexpensive. However, they represent the high fidelity industry's most outstanding value. We have built them with the same quality, precision and performance you've come to expect from Pioneer stereo equipment. We offer them to you with the same pride and conviction that has always compelled you to say — "Pioneer, the very best."

QX-949 — \$699.95; QX-747 — \$599.95; QX-646 — \$499.95. Prices include walnut cabinets.

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90248 / Midwest: 1500 Greenleaf,
Elk Grove Village, Ill. 60007
Canada: S. H. Parker Co.

Specifications

Amplifier	QX-949	QX-747	QX-646
4-ch. RMS power, 8 ohms, 4 channels driven, 20-20KHz	40 watts/channel	20 watts/channel	10 watts/channel (1KHz)
4-ch. IHF	240 watts (8Ω) 380 watts (4Ω)	160 watts (8Ω) 220 watts (4Ω)	80 watts (8Ω) 108 watts (4Ω)
2-ch. RMS power, 8 ohms, both channels driven, 20-20KHz	60 watts/channel	40 watts/channel	13 watts/channel (1KHz)
2-ch. IHF	150 watts (8Ω) 230 watts (4Ω)	120 watts (8Ω) 170 watts (4Ω)	40 watts (8Ω) 54 watts (4Ω)
THD/IM Distortion	0.3% (20-20KHz)	0.5% (20-20KHz)	1% (1KHz)
FM Tuner			
FM Sensitivity (IHF) (the lower the better)	1.8uV	1.9uV	2.2uV
Selectivity (the higher the better)	80dB	60dB	40dB
Capture Ratio (the lower the better)	1dB	1dB	3dB
S/N Ratio (the higher the better)	70dB	70dB	65dB
Inputs			
Phono	2	1	1
Tape Monitor	2 (4-ch.) 2 (2-ch.)	1 (4-ch.) 1 (2-ch.)	1 (4-ch.) 1 (2-ch.)
Dolby adaptor input	1 (4-ch.)	1 (4-ch.)	—
Auxiliary	1	1	1
Outputs			
Speakers	2 (Front) 2 (Rear)	1 (Front) 2 (Rear)	1 (Front) 2 (Rear)
Headset	1 (Front/Rear)	1 (Front/Rear)	1 (Front)
Dolby adaptor output	1 (4-ch.)	1 (4-ch.)	—
Tape Rec.	2 (4-ch.) 2 (2-ch.)	1 (4-ch.) 1 (2-ch.)	1 (4-ch.) 1 (2-ch.)
4-ch. MPX output	1	1	—

\$600 is a lot of money for a speaker.



The AR-LST is a lot of speaker.

The AR-LST (Laboratory Standard Transducer) was developed to fill the needs of audio professionals, but its unsurpassed quality has made it greatly desired for quality home music systems.

The LST incorporates a total of 9 drivers mounted on three surfaces to provide extremely broad dispersion. And while it normally has flat frequency response, a front-panel knob may be used to select any of six pre-determined frequency response curves to suit different listening requirements and personal preferences.

You can get a great AR speaker for less money, if you're willing to settle for a little less speaker. If you've listened to the LST, you won't.

Write us for complete detailed information.



A TELEDYNE COMPANY

Acoustic Research, Inc. 10 American Drive, Norwood, Mass. 02062

'Lab measurements and listening tests confirm that this is an outstanding reproducer, second to none, in linear wide-range response and low distortion. The performance of the LST is truly prodigious. Its response was found to be among the most linear yet measured for a loudspeaker... virtually no directivity or coloration could be detected throughout the LST's range.

'It actually can handle power peaks up to 553.8 watts without distortion, while furnishing an output level of 112dB, which attests both to its ruggedness and dynamic capabilities.' HIGH FIDELITY.

'I soon found that these speakers tell me more about the sound than any others I have ever listened to. They represent for me a reference standard that is the present day state of the speaker art.' STEREO & HI-FI TIMES.

'In a word, it is superlative. To my ears, it can reproduce music from recordings with a verity I have never before experienced. For me, it is now the system against which others must be judged.' AMERICAN RECORD GUIDE.

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“AN IMPRESSIVE ACHIEVEMENT.”

— *Stereo Review*, August, 1973.

Excerpts from the equipment report in *Stereo Review*, from technical data supplied by Hirsch-Houck Laboratories.

“... the versatility of the Fisher 504 is exceptional, as a review of its features will show. Our test results speak for themselves.”

“FM distortion was 0.17% in mono and was actually lower in stereo, measuring 0.13%. Stereo separation exceeded 40 dB from 30 to 2,600 Hz (reaching 50 dB in the 100- to 200-Hz range), and was better than 25 dB at all frequencies up to our measurement limit of 15,000 Hz.”

“... it was entirely ‘bug-free,’ everything operated in its intended manner, controls were clearly marked, tuning was smooth and noncritical, muting action was excellent, etc. In other words, it is a superior product which does everything Fisher claims for it and then some. All in all, the Fisher 504 is a first-rate receiver and an impressive achievement.”

“... the best value we’ve yet encountered in a quadraphonic receiver.”
— *High Fidelity*, January, 1973, from technical data supplied by CBS Laboratories.

“The Fisher 504 is so loaded with features and so competent in its performance that we can confidently say it represents the best value we’ve yet

encountered in a quadraphonic receiver.”

“When the unit is switched from quadraphonics to the stereo mode, an odd thing happens. Into 8-ohm loads the total rated power increases from 128 watts (32 x 4) to 180 watts (90 x 2), into 4-ohm loads it *drops* from 160 watts (40 x 4) to 100 watts (50 x 2). This behavior... is a concomitant of the unusual 4/2-channel switching configuration plus the amplifier’s feedback circuits... Suffice it to say that for quadraphonic use, the 504 delivers plenty of power for each of the four loudspeakers— including extremely inefficient ones— of conventional design in any normal room, and even enough power for two sets (eight loudspeakers) in many situations.

“And being conservatively rated by Fisher (as the lab data show), it is also an unusually clean amplifier at rated output... This is... over-all the best amplifier performance we’ve yet encountered in a quadraphonic receiver.

“The tuner is also exceptionally fine. The stereo quieting curve is so good that it resembles the *mono* curve in many an inexpensive receiver; the 504’s mono curve is superb. The ultimate quieting in both (better than 50 dB in stereo, 60 dB in mono) suggests the finest of separate tuners.”

“A price of \$529.95 is not peanuts, but we have yet to examine in detail any quadraphonic receiver— at any price—

that offers more, over-all, to the music listener.”

“... a well-thought-out unit with exceptional performance.” — *Electron* (Canada), June 1973.

“Fisher Radio has been in the receiver business as long as there has been a receiver business, so it is no great surprise to find that their latest effort is a well-thought-out unit with exceptional performance.

“The first thing that strikes you about the 504... is its bulk. It measures 21" x 7" x 17" and weighs 43 pounds. But, considering what this unit has inside it, the size is not excessive.”

“Perhaps, from a practical standpoint, its human engineering is one of the unit’s most outstanding features. In spite of its 21 front-panel controls, its 27 input and output jacks, and its 21 speaker and antenna connections, we found this a very easy unit to master in a short time. But then, Fisher has been designing these things for a long time.”

For free test report reprints, write to Fisher Radio, Dept. SR10, 11-40 45th Road, Long Island City, N.Y. 11101.

FISHER 504
Studio - Standard

Fair trade prices where applicable.
Prices slightly higher in the Far West and Southwest.

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EDITORIALLY SPEAKING

By WILLIAM ANDERSON

A THOROUGHLY SUBJECTIVE ALLEGRO

WILLIAM WARBURTON, an eighteenth-century Bishop of Gloucester, is credited with observing that "Orthodoxy is my doxy; heterodoxy is another man's doxy." This sly differentiation springs to my mind whenever a reader writes to complain that our reviewers are not being "objective"—which is, often as not, merely another way of saying that their opinions do not agree with his. Though it is not strictly true that we surrender to subjectivity whenever we open our mouths (remember that our faces themselves can express an opinion perfectly well), a pure unclouded objectivity in aesthetic matters is an extraordinarily difficult attitude for humankind to sustain—which is no bad thing, since it is largely useless anyway.

A purely objective account (to avoid the word "review," since it suggests an individual, subjective viewpoint) of a record release could contain every "fact" imaginable in it, but the report would be worthless without some kind of subjective evaluation as well. The objective facts would tell us only the names of the composer, the work, the players, and the issuing company, plus the record number, the suggested selling price (a rather "subjective" figure in any case), and perhaps the playing time. A quick glance at our review section will reveal the not very startling fact that this is almost precisely what is contained in the heading paragraph of each review; from that point on, the devil's own subjectivity reigns. But surely, you will object, objectivity extends further than that—to, say, such information as whether the singer is in tune or the orchestra plays at the correct tempo. True, one might check whether a singer is strictly on pitch by using electronic measuring equipment (don't trust the reviewer's subjective ears) on every note—a very difficult thing to do—but the results of such measurements wouldn't contribute much of value if (a) the singer were deliberately off-pitch for musically expressive reasons, or (b) the fact of being slightly off-pitch were of piddling significance alongside other considerations—technique, beauty of tone, dramatic intensity, etc.—of a purely subjective nature. As for orchestral tempos, it is enough to ask what one can make *objectively* of such vague instructions from the composer as "*allegro, ma non troppo*." How fast is "fast"? When does it become "too fast"? And even if it were possible to answer such questions, is there any reason to believe that the objectively "correct" speed would be subjectively pleasing to every—or any—listener?

It may be that those who inveigh most heatedly against "subjectivity" in criticism of the arts are those most unsure of their own taste, those least ready to defend their opinions against the challenges of rude dissent. What they want—indeed, need—from criticism is armor for their prejudices; what they get are shafts that find the vulnerable chinks in what little defenses they have. For criticism is a pedagogical, not a legislative, activity; its concern is not the laying down of aesthetic laws, but the sharpening of aesthetic perception. (It should go without saying that I speak of *good* critics and *good* criticism—though there are as many and as much of the other kind—present company excepted—as in any other field.) The goal of the good critic should be to work himself out of his job, to teach his audience to know what he knows, to see (or hear) not so much *what* he sees as *how* he sees—to become, in short, their own critics. If that seems scarcely sensible of the critic, remember that he writes in a far from ideal world, that few among his readers will be ideal students. He will be kept in business by those greater numbers who, being either too busy to take the time or too lazy to take the trouble, are content to accept him as a service, to rely on him to do their choosing for them. Therein, of course, lies the best reason for a critic's existence: he is useful. But don't expect him to be either objective or infallible; only you are that.

The best automatic you can buy is also the hardest to get.

It's almost axiomatic that the best takes longer to make. Most likely because the concentration is on making it right rather than making it fast.

And that's precisely the reason the Miracord 50H Mark II is hard to get: it takes longer to make... precisely.

For example, let's take a simple, but critical, thing like speed accuracy. You'd think that all it would take is a good motor plus some kind of device to set speed accurately. Well, the 50H Mark II has a powerful hysteresis-synchronous motor and a built-in stroboscope to set speed accurately. But so do several other good automatics. What makes the 50H Mark II unique, and takes a lot of extra effort, is its ability to maintain speed accuracy no matter what. You don't have to take our word for it, either, because there's a simple way to prove it for yourself. Just put on a stack of records, say ten, and turn the machine on. (Obviously, you'll have to go to a dealer to do this, so make sure he sets the speed first by means of the strobe.) Now look at the strobe. You'll see that the speed remains dead on. To really convince yourself how tough this is, do the same test on any other automatic there. Pick the ones which are reputed to be best. You'll find that their strobe will quickly develop a case of the jitters.

Now we're not going to burden you with lengthy explanations about all the effort we have to put in to get that unshakable accuracy. But we will say that it's one of the things that makes the Miracord 50H Mark II so hard to get.

Another thing is our unique pushbuttons. Some people think we use those pushbuttons merely because it's more convenient. Certainly, it's more pleasant to press one button rather than to push several levers. But we didn't

put in all the effort necessary to get the force required to activate those pushbuttons down to 1/4-oz. just for convenience. We did it to avoid that inevitable initial shock other systems cause every time you start a record, resulting in wild gyrations of the arm and possible record damage.

Of course, even if that initial shock did occur, the arm of the 50H Mark II wouldn't be thrown by it. Because it happens to be balanced in all planes. It also happens to have a unique method for setting tracking force and cartridge overhang which also tends to reduce distortion as well as record wear. Add to that the least vulnerable pivot of any automatic turntable (especially important if you ever have to move the unit) and you've piled up more reasons why this automatic retains its accuracy so long. And takes longer to make.

We could continue this description of the unique, time-consuming features we've built into the Miracord 50H Mark II. But we think we've given you enough to give you a good idea of the machine. To get more details, go to your dealer, or send us your name and address. We'll send you literature which not only describes the 50H Mark II but also details all the other ELAC automatic turntables.

One more thing. Suppose you become convinced and want a 50H Mark II. Will you be able to find one? Well, you may have to check two or three dealers. But although the 50H Mark II may be hard to get, it's far from impossible.

ELAC Division, Benjamin Electronic Sound Company, Farmingdale, N.Y. 11735. A division of Instrument Systems Corporation. Available in Canada.

MIRACORD 50 H Mark II



ELAC You can't rush craftsmanship.

CIRCLE NO. 12 ON READER SERVICE CARD



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Bicentennial Controversy

● According to a recent news item, the Chicago Lyric Opera has commissioned an opera to honor the Bicentennial of the United States. In the apparent belief that two hundred years of independence are insufficient for America to have produced a native composer equal to the occasion, the powers that be in Chicago have awarded their commission to the Polish composer Krzysztof Penderecki. We certainly intend no reflection on Mr. Penderecki's undoubted abilities, but the American Music Center, on behalf of its large membership of composers, deplors this regrettably all-too-typical example of reverse chauvinism. In any other country with a musical culture as highly developed and creative as ours, the idea that such a significant national anniversary should be commemorated with a foreign work would be greeted with shocked incredulity. We don't suppose the Lyric Opera intended to make a deliberate gesture of contempt for the community of American composers, but such a gesture, made inadvertently, remains equally offensive. Perhaps other musical organizations making similar plans will wish to ponder the implications of this commission.

EZRA LADERMAN
President, American Music Center
New York, N.Y.

The Editor replies: It does begin to look as if we are never going to get out of our rompers. The last time we held one of these national birthday parties, we got Richard Wagner to toss off a casual note or two for the benighted colonials. Where music (and a lot of other things, for that matter) is concerned, we are still Romans waiting for the latest word from the Greeks. It is at least a fact, if not a fault, of our national character, one perhaps explained by our unusual cultural heritage, that we continue to lust like children after the approval of the world, that we despise the home-made and overvalue the imported. But we will deserve the world's approval only when we have learned to please ourselves first.

"Gradus ad Parnassum"

● Herr Dr. Backmessa's A/august article "Gradus ad Parnassum" (i.e., "Some Cellists Get In for Free") contains only one error. He confuses a *cappella* (which you let him spell *capella*, and that would be a hairy performance) with a *capulco*. It is nonetheless true

that the former means "from the head," but this is in fact a song from the shower.

DOMINIQUE-RENÉ DE LERMA
Bloomington, Ind.

Herr Dr. Prof. Beckmesser replies: Surely M. de Lerma's French background must have taught him, if nothing else has, that the double-p spelling belongs to that ancient and honorable tradition of music "from the chapel" which has so delightfully been preserved for us by the music-publishing firm of the same name. I am grateful to him, however, for laying to rest that pernicious error of pop-musicology, to the effect that "a capulco" refers to the general class of Mexican folk music. That notion, as M. de Lerma correctly points out, is simply all wet.

More on Moeran

● That the music of E. J. Moeran is virtually unknown in America, as David Hall acknowledges in his review of his *Sinfonietta* (August), is certainly no cause for satisfaction. A Chausson to John Ireland's Franck, his one symphony, like a dome of many-colored glass, deserves to rank with the Fifth and Sixth Symphonies of Vaughan Williams and Nielsen. Like them, it combines pastoral lyricism, mystically intense, with defiant, even bitter, indignation toward the modern age. Veteran record collectors will recall that it was recorded just when the tide began to turn in World War II, not "after the war" in Mr. Hall's conjecture. (The Hallé Orchestra, which commissioned the work, was under the direction of Leslie Heward who, I believe, died in 1943, the same year, ironically, as Leslie Howard.) The enterprising young conductor who rediscovers it is going to find that he has a tiger by the tail.

DAVID WILSON
Carmel, Cal.

Cheers for Canada

● I would like to thank Noel Coppage and STEREO REVIEW for the thoughtful essay on some of Canada's fine musicians ("I Hear Canada Singing," August). It is good to see these fine artists get the publicity they deserve—particularly Ian and Sylvia, not because they deserve it more, but because they get so much less.

Two more Canadian musicians who deserve greater recognition in the States are

David Wiffen and Bruce Cockburn, who have been known to perform together. Wiffen is the composer of *More Often Than Not*, performed by Fred Neil, Ian Tyson, and Eric Andersen. He has an album on the Fantasy label. Cockburn has two Canadian albums out and his songs have often been recorded by Anne Murray, but it is his personal appearances which have endeared him to a great many Canadians.

JOE GALLAGHER
Elwood, Neb.

Liza Minnelli

● Just wanted to commend Peter Reilly for the review of Liza Minnelli's latest farce, "The Singer" (August). It was a refreshing change of pace from the usual patronizing reviews of critics who somehow cannot get out of their minds that Miss Minnelli is Judy Garland's daughter. As Mr. Reilly notably pointed out, she is "not a star. She is an ambitious and confabulated creation of canny show-biz management." Thank you, Mr. Reilly, for "telling it like it is" in another excellent review.

GERALD MCFADDEN
Drexel Hill, Pa.

● Concerning the review of Liza Minnelli's album "The Singer." I will agree that the album has some faults, but most of them are with the songs and the arrangements, and not with Miss Minnelli, who has vastly improved as a singer. She is a star: a star is someone who is recognized. Miss Minnelli has the recognition: the Daniel Plum Award, the Tony, the Oscar, the Emmy, and even the STEREO REVIEW Award for the best album (one of the best) of 1968. Not to mention cover stories in *Time* and *Newsweek*. With all of this, the public knows her as a star, the biggest star in Hollywood now. Miss Minnelli hasn't done her best work yet, but she is already giving the world something we seldom see or hear: she communicates.

JAMES SHUPE
New York, N.Y.

A Stamp for Ives?

● The United States Postal Service has initiated a series of commemorative stamps entitled the American Art series and has honored (or will soon honor) Robinson Jeffers, Willa Cather, Henry O. Tanner, and composer George Gershwin. As next year, 1974, marks the 100th anniversary of the birth of the great American composer Charles Ives, I feel that a stamp honoring him in this series would be appropriate. Those who agree with me might want to write the Postal Service requesting such a stamp. Write the Stamp Advisory Committee, United States Postal Service, Washington, D.C.

DOUGLAS B. MOORE
Williamstown, Mass.

Elitism and All That

● Underneath the elitist, pseudo-intellectual [sic] writing style of STEREO REVIEW's entire staff lies a great deal of valuable information, which is why I continue reading it. But the "Popular" music reviews are especially offensive. Apparently, the self-indulgent use of sophomoric [sic] vocabularies is designed to "show" the reader (the high level of reviewer intelligence and sophistication).

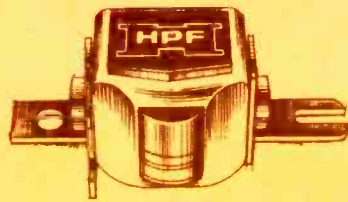
In the August issue, however, your cacophony of words was exposed as the literary exhibit

(Continued on page 10)



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bitionism that it is. Specifically, I am addressing myself to Steve Simels' review of a new David Bowie album, "Alladin Sane." No, I do not object to Mr. Simels' negative evaluation. Nor, for that matter, do I object to Mr. Simels' literary pomposity, as it was to be expected. What I am predisposed to point out is: How many right-on groovie [sic] guys and groovie girls what buy David Bowie records are buy dis kinda mag? Or unnerstan your kinda rap? I mean, who ya reviewin the disc for, anyway? Ya know wad I mean?

HERB GOLDMAN
Forest Hills, N.Y.

The Editor replies: "Elitist" and "pseudo-intellectual" are two rather recent (and therefore irresistible) additions to the vocabulary of thoughtless disdain. "Elitist" I can define as the contemptible intimidation of the ignorant by the informed, and since it is contemptible, I also deny it. "Pseudo-intellectual" is a little harder to corner—it sometimes seems to mean "I can't understand what you are talking about, so it must be nothing." But it also on occasion seems to mean "I do understand what you are talking about, and from my lofty and genuine intellectual perch I see it to be nothing." Neither slipper fits Mr. Goldman, who not only understands us, but perceives "a great deal of valuable information" in what we have to say. Ergo, it's not what we say but how we say it. I am therefore confident Mr. Goldman will know what I mean when I say that no apology will be offered here for the language our various contributors choose to communicate in. We have at our disposal (as does Mr. Goldman) the richest, most expres-

sive, most precise, and splendidly proliferous linguistic instrument the world has ever seen, and it would be folly not to enjoy it. And it is something well beyond folly—shall we call it elitism?—to presume either that our popular-music content is addressed solely to "right-on groovie guys and groovie girls" or that they would fancy being addressed in the insulting and condescending style Mr. Goldman apparently affects for them. (I do apologize for those [sics] up there; reading Mr. Goldman's letter unfortunately left me just too tired to correct his spelling.)

Future Shock-Rock

● In the July issue, Lester Bangs wrote about Iggy (Pop) and the Stooges, indulging in a pejorative free-for-all which includes such phrases as "this bunch of acne-ridden social reprobates," "crude, disgusting," "... a ragged tapestry of yowls, caws, raspy rants, epithets, and imprecations. . . ." But then Mr. Bangs says that this outrageous group is "undeniably the sound and look of the future." If so, God help us!

I disagree with Mr. Bangs' belief that the youth of America is buying this junk. In any big city there are no doubt several thousand youngsters who will go for this stuff, but there are tens of thousands of others who would retch and walk out of a typical shock-rock show—if they were stupid enough to have attended in the first place.

Why is this trash the "sound and look of the future?" Is there some sort of cultural Gresham's law which decrees that rottenness must supplant decency? I don't think so. In fact, I think the trend is in the other direction.

Space in a magazine like STEREO REVIEW must be valuable. I'm surprised you find room for critical comment on something which really can't be as significant as Mr. Bangs seems to think it is.

WELLINGTON ARTHUR
Birmingham, Mich.

Well, let's wait and see.

Too Much Applause

● Am I the only disc buyer in the world who finds no pleasure in hearing, over and over again, an identical recorded spate of applause after a piece of music? And if I am not the only one, is there any way to convey our feelings to the idiots who manage the production of records?

In the meantime, your reviewers could do me a great service by telling me when a disc contains applause. I never buy one if I know in advance that it does, and I always feel gulled when I find I have unwittingly bought such a record.

PHILIP J. RUNKEL
Eugene, Ore.

The Editor replies: Every rose has its thorn, but it can be stripped away. Mr. Runkel might do as I do—tape it. That way he can enjoy the music without the annoyance of ovations past.

The Coppage Condition

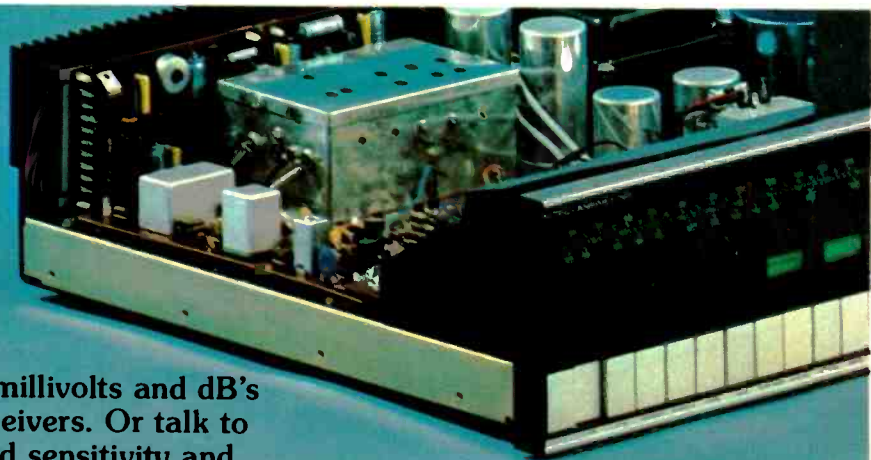
● I have a suggestion to offer: do not accept reviews for publication from Noel Coppage for a period of ten days after one of his dyspepsia attacks. Now, generally, Noel is a pret-

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ty good reviewer, but two of his reviews in the August issue can only be the result of some extremely uncomfortable malady which attacked him as he was listening to the records. My diagnosis is dyspepsia, but it could be some other similar affliction. I refer to his reviews of Steve Goodman's "Somebody Else's Troubles" and Ellen McIlwaine's "We the People."

In the case of Ellen this is the first time in my life I have heard a reviewer *complaining* about the versatility of an artist. Usually it's the other way around. Ellen becomes "conceited" because she shows she can handle a variety of material, and "flaunts" her "mastery of vocal technique"! What the hell does he want the poor girl to do—sound like Karen Carpenter?

As for the Goodman review, Noel's remark about *The Ballad of Penny Evans* sounding "totally ridiculous" shows such poor taste that I can hardly believe it. I remember hearing Steve sing this beautiful ballad to a packed house in Hill Auditorium on the University of Michigan campus, when he appeared there with Kris Kristofferson. The "jury" that night gave Steve a standing ovation, and that's a rather discerning crowd.

DOUG FULTON

Record Review Editor, Ann Arbor News
Ann Arbor, Mich.

Mr. Coppage replies: To the members of the Ultimate Jury in the Inquiry Into Just Who Has Dyspepsia Around Here: The accused herewith reports that he has reread the reviews mentioned to refresh his memory and see if perhaps he could espy an axe with

which to bludgeon Mr. Fulton's lance, and observes that Mr. Fulton's conclusion that the McIlwaine review complains about versatility is not supported by any language in the review; that "conceit" as used in the review and "conceited" as apparently understood by Mr. Fulton are not the same thing; that the accused continues to believe, perhaps stubbornly, that it is legitimate for a reviewer to find fault with technical showiness for its own sake; and that the accused finds it difficult to believe that Mr. Fulton finds it difficult to believe the accused could show such poor taste as to suggest that Steve Goodman's singing of Penny Evans shades toward the ridiculous—the accused points out, with some pride, that he has said and does say (although not, anymore, to stewardesses) things in considerably poorer taste than that, when he really gets wired up—and that, in any case, he doubts that Mr. Fulton, himself a critic, actually means to suggest that reviewers base their judgments upon standing ovations. Moreover, the accused hereby affirms that the point is moot now, as far as he, individually, is concerned, as he has seen Goodman in person a couple of additional times since the review was written and Goodman's vocals on those occasions seemed excellent; he is convinced that Goodman has real style and is particularly good at communicating with live audiences, and he has accordingly filed his positive vote with the foreman of the jury.

Brown, Blue Oyster, and Bruce

● In Joel Vance's review of the Blue Oyster Cult's "Tyranny and Mutation" album (August), he asks "But if we are going to have

blowsy and meandering 'poetic' lyrics, why not call in Jack Bruce?" Jack Bruce has never (with the exception of *Traintime* on Cream's "Wheels of Fire" album) written a lyric in his recording career. Peter Brown has always written most of the lyrics for which Jack Bruce writes the music. This was so with all Bruce's group efforts and solo LP's.

DAN REIMER
Canoga Park, Cal.

Oh, well, let's call him in anyway.

Pink Floyd Fan

● I think that STEREO REVIEW has been manifestly unfair to a British rock group by the name of Pink Floyd, and seems to be purposely underrating its talent. Joel Vance's review of the album "The Dark Side of the Moon" (August) is practically an obituary, and represents a bigoted, one-sided opinion. If Mr. Vance gave the group a fair hearing, he would realize that his taste in rock and r-&-b does not apply to a space rock band like Pink Floyd. Noel Coppage praised the group in the "Letters" section of the same issue, but this could easily be missed by the average reader, who would be exposed only to the torpedoing that Mr. Vance gave them.

GREGORY E. BORTER
Ocala, Fla.

Correction

● The price quoted for the Nakamichi 1000 cassette deck in the August "New Products" column was given incorrectly through a printer's error as \$1,000. The correct price is \$1,100.

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BOOKS RECEIVED

Compiled by
Louise Gooch Boundas

● *Songs of Work and Protest*, edited by Edith Fowke and Joe Glazer. Dover, New York, 1973, \$3.50 (paper), 206 pp.

Originally published in 1960 by the Labor Education Division of Roosevelt University, Chicago, this book contains one hundred songs, most of them associated with the American labor movement. The piano arrangements are simple, guitar chords are indicated, and notes discuss each song's origin and history. The brief discography lists some of the recordings by such artists as Pete Seeger, Woody Guthrie, Leadbelly, Odetta, and Merle Travis.

● *Joan Sutherland*, by Edward Greenfield. Drake Publishers Inc., New York, 1973, \$5.95, 64 pp.

This short volume is divided into three parts discussing Miss Sutherland's life, her voice, and her recordings. It is an adulatory once-over-lightly of the Australian soprano's career written in rather pedestrian prose by a British critic who is described on the jacket as "a longtime friend and admirer of Joan Sutherland." The illustrations are a selection of the most beautiful photographs ever taken of Miss Sutherland. The book contains a list of the singer's operatic debuts and a discography, but no index.

● *Great Songs of Broadway*, with introductions by Alan Jay Lerner and Jule Styne. Quadrangle/The New York Times Book Co., New York, 1973, \$17.50 (\$14.95 until December 25, 1973), 320 pp.

This collection of sheet music will probably find its way onto many a coffee table at Christmastime, but let us hope it won't stay there, for its content suits it for playing and singing just as surely as its format does (it is spiral-bound, within a hard cover, so that it will lie flat). There are seventy-four songs from sixty-three shows, from *Give My Regards to Broadway* and *Yankee Doodle Dandy* (both from *Little Johnny Jones*, 1904) to *I Don't Know How to Love Him* (*Jesus Christ Superstar*, 1971), and in between is an imposing array of song classics by such as the Gershwins, Cole Porter, Rodgers, Hart, and Hammerstein, Kurt Weill, Leonard Bernstein. The songs are all arranged for voice, piano, and guitar.

● *Four-Channel Sound*, by Leonard Feldman. Howard W. Sams & Co., Inc., Indianapolis, 1973, \$4.50 (paper), 144 pp.

Here is a brief discussion of how four-channel sound systems operate, matrix and discrete techniques, and factors to consider in selecting four-channel equipment. The book is illustrated with photographs and drawings, and there is a glossary.

● *The Songs of Paul Simon, as Sung by Simon and Garfunkel and Paul Simon*. Alfred A. Knopf, New York, \$5.95 (paper), 331 pp.

These are such good songs—this is such a good book (it's well produced, too)—that it's a little startling when Paul Simon says, as he does in his introduction, "I think my next

songs will be better." No matter how old you are, go find a copy of this book. Look at the songs. If you play the guitar or piano, play a few bars; or, if you have any of the recordings, play a few sides; or hum a few lines. Then read these lyrics, without the music. Wonderful!

● *WSM Grand Ole Opry Presents Stars of the Seventies*. Chappell & Co., New York, 1973, \$2.95 (paper), 77 pp.

This is the first in a projected series of songbooks to present Grand Ole Opry stars and their songs, each volume to cover a decade of the Nashville country music institution. This volume contains twenty-two songs, two each as performed by eleven artists, as well as photographs and short biographies of the stars and a brief history of the forty-eight-year-old Grand Ole Opry itself.

● *Acoustic Design and Noise Control*. Second Edition, by Michael Rettinger. Chemical Publishing Co., Inc., New York, 1973, \$22.50, 576 pp.

Mr. Rettinger is concerned not only with the physics of sound, room design, and noise control, but also with the relationship of noise to the quality of our environment. The book is illustrated with charts, graphs, and examples.

● *Player Piano Treasury*. Second Edition, by Harvey Roehl. The Vestal Press, P.O. Box 97, Vestal, N.Y. 13850, 1973, \$10, 316 pp.

The first edition of "The Scrapbook History of the Mechanical Piano in America as Told in Pictures, Trade Journal Articles, and Advertising," as it describes itself, was published in 1961, and the author has taken the opportunity of a second edition to put his book in a handier format, make some corrections (though you may still find a typo here and there), and add an index and some more illustrations. The result is entertaining and chock-full of information.

● *Bessie*, by Chris Albertson. Stein and Day, New York, 1973, \$7.95, 253 pp.

For his biography of "Empress of the Blues" Bessie Smith, Chris Albertson (who is a contributing editor of STEREO REVIEW) conducted numerous interviews with the great singer's friends and associates, and his book throws new light on her life and art. It is illustrated with photographs. (If you plan to read the book before the movie comes out, better hurry. Ronnie Elder is at work on a screenplay for a movie to be based on *Bessie*; it will be directed by Gordon Parks and will star Roberta Flack.)

● *Bird Lives! The High Life and Hard Times of Charlie (Yardbird) Parker*, by Ross Russell. Charterhouse, New York, 1973, \$8.95, 405 pp.

Ross Russell, now a jazz writer and lecturer, was once associated with Dial Records, and, when Charlie Parker was under contract to Dial, Russell was the saxophonist's personal manager. That establishes his credentials. Parker's credentials, of course, need no establishing. He was one of the most innovative musicians in a highly innovative music, and anyone who is more than casually interested in jazz owns every Parker record he can get his hands on. Such a person should also own this well-written biography. The book includes a discography, and is illustrated with photographs and pertinent documents.

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Trying to describe the superb craftsmanship of the Tandberg TR-1055 in a few paragraphs is virtually impossible.

The TR-1055 combines outstanding audio elements ... in the best possible proportions ... to create results unlike any you've ever heard.

To be specific, the tuner section on the TR-1055 ranks among the finest ever created—even when compared with separate component tuners. Our highly sophisticated AM and FM tuners both utilize dual gate MOSFETS ... the best available. And an integrated stereo decoder with phase locked loop oscillator. And two 4 pole phase linear ceramic filters give you superb FM selectivity. Distortion level? Not just low ... but truly **negligible** ... thanks to our integrated circuit IF-amplifier, limiter and detector.

The direct coupled, protected TR-1055 is a power star, too ... accomodating 3 tape recorders ... capable of delivering 2 x 55 watts power into 8 Ohm with less than 0.2 % distortion over the audio range. And the dual power supply circuits

(something most manufacturers don't bother with) are just one more example of our engineers singleminded perfectionism. But check the minimum specs at right for all the features that put the TR-1055 light years ahead of its closest competition. Of course, as is usually the case with a Tandberg, you can't **see** most of these features. But you **hear** all of them, and isn't that what counts?

The TR-1020 A

Rest on their laurels? Tandberg engineers barely take time to look at them. They're too busy trying to improve on their best ... and that's how the brilliant new TR-1020 A was born. It's a new version of the highly acclaimed TR-1020 ("flawless", "superb" were the reviewers' words)—now even better!

Our engineers use MOSFET transistors in both AM and FM to ensure the highest possible overload capacity ... and remarkably high sensitivity. Ceramic filters provide outstanding selectivity. And Tandberg's meticulous technology guar-

antees you silent, exact location of stations on the dial scale.

Here's **usable** power, too (2 x 40 watts into 8 Ohm with less than 0.2 % distortion over the audio range). That's clean real power. And you'll hear the results of our true complimentary output transistors. Cross-over distortion is undetectable. (That's a fact, not a promise. If you turn the TR-1020 A to a low, background listening level ... you **still** hear astonishingly clear, transparent sound.)

Just look at the specs for a better understanding of all that's built into the TR-1020 A. And keep in mind that as always, Tandberg guarantees these specs as working realities—not mere lab figures reflecting optimum conditions.

TANDBERG OF AMERICA

We've spent 40 years building a reputation for the finest audio equipment available ... we're not going to stop now.

TANDBERG

We're our only competitors

Address: TANDBERG OF AMERICA INC. Labriola, Court Armonk, N.Y. 10504

This is the least we can do for you. And we guarantee it. (If you understand specifications, this is music to your ears.)

Everybody in the business talks specifications. We're no different. Except that our specs—like the ones on this page—are literally *minimum* performance standards. Not design averages. Not theoretical maximums. Not figures reached using hand-picked, maximized units. But realistic figures that add up to this: We guarantee that any new Tandberg product you take out of the box will perform *at least* as well as advertised.* Under actual recording and playing conditions in your very own home.

How can we make this guarantee? Because our tape recorders and receivers undergo scores of high-standard tests and quality checks during construction. And because every unit is field-tested—twice. First by unforgiving Norwegian engineers back home in the Land of the Midnight Sun. And then again by our steely-eyed technicians over here. Only after this final inspection do we ship it to a Tandberg dealer.

We don't hide behind our specs. We stand behind them.

Tape Recorder Specifications		TCD-300	9000X	3300X
TAPE SPEEDS, i.p.s.		1 $\frac{7}{8}$	7 $\frac{1}{2}$, 3 $\frac{3}{4}$, 1 $\frac{7}{8}$	7 $\frac{1}{2}$, 3 $\frac{3}{4}$, 1 $\frac{7}{8}$
SPEED TOLERANCE		$\pm 1\%$	$\pm 1\%$	$\pm 1\%$
WOW & FLUTTER Maximum, W.R.M.S.		1 $\frac{7}{8}$, 0.15%	7 $\frac{1}{2}$, 0.06% 3 $\frac{3}{4}$, 0.11% 1 $\frac{7}{8}$, 0.21%	7 $\frac{1}{2}$, 0.07% 3 $\frac{3}{4}$, 0.12% 1 $\frac{7}{8}$, 0.25%
FREQUENCY RESPONSE ± 2 dB Specified tape		1 $\frac{7}{8}$, 50-13,000 Hz	7 $\frac{1}{2}$, 30-24,000 Hz 3 $\frac{3}{4}$, 40-18,000 Hz 1 $\frac{7}{8}$, 40- 9,000 Hz	7 $\frac{1}{2}$, 30-22,000 Hz 3 $\frac{3}{4}$, 40-16,000 Hz 1 $\frac{7}{8}$, 40- 9,000 Hz
SIGNAL TAPE NOISE, Maximum Speed IEC, A-curve, 3% Harmonic Dist.		Normal Low Noise 51 dB CrO ₂ 54 dB	Dolby Low Noise 59 dB CrO ₂ 62 dB	LH Tape, 4-Track 65 dB LH Tape, 4-Track 64 dB
HARMONIC DIST., max., From recording amp, 0 dB From playback amplifier From tape at 0 dB recording level		0.5% 0.3% at 0.775 V 3% or less	0.5% 0.3% at 1.5 V less than 3%	0.5% 0.3% at 0.75 V less than 3%
DIMENSIONS: Length: Height: Depth: Weight:		16 $\frac{7}{8}$ " 4 $\frac{1}{8}$ " 9 $\frac{1}{8}$ " 14.5 lbs.	15 $\frac{3}{4}$ " 7" 16 $\frac{1}{8}$ " 34.5 lbs.	15 $\frac{3}{4}$ " 7" 16 $\frac{1}{8}$ " 20.2 lbs.
Stereo Receiver Specifications		TR-1020A		TR-1055
Audio Section				
OUTPUT POWER: Continuous, both channels driven, 0.2% distortion, 20 to 20,000 Hz, 8 ohms		2 x 40 watts		2 x 55 watts
POWER BANDWIDTH at 8 ohms, 0.2% distortion		7 Hz to 30 k Hz		4 Hz to 40k Hz
INTERMODULATION. (250 Hz/8k Hz or 60 Hz/7k Hz, 4:1)		0.2%		0.2%
DAMPING FACTOR at 8 ohms max. output, 20 to 20,000 Hz		39		50
SIGNAL/HUM AND NOISE, max. output, 8 ohms., preset level controls at—6 dB Tape 1 & 2, 300 mV input signal Mag phono, 4 mV input/1k Hz Mag phono, 10 mV input/1k Hz		82 dB 68 dB 76 dB		82 dB 68 dB 76 dB
PHONO OVERLOAD		100 mV		100 mV
FM Section				
SENSITIVITY at 30 dB signal/noise		2 μ V/300 ohms (typical 1.6 μ V)		
SIGNAL/NOISE at 1 mV antenna voltage, unweighted (IHF)		68 dB, Mono; 66 dB, Stereo		
DISTORTION (IHF) 100% modulation.		Mono, less than 0.2%; Stereo, less than 0.3%		
SELECTIVITY:Carrier down, (alternate channel) IHF dynamic		100 dB 80 dB		100 dB 80 dB
CAPTURE RATIO, 1 mV antenna signal (selectively measured)		0.9 dB		0.9 dB
CHANNEL SEPARATION		40 dB, 100-12,000 Hz		
General	FM SECTION	Dual gate mosfet amplifier and mixer		
	AM SECTION	Dual gate mosfet mixer		
	Dimensions: Length	17 $\frac{3}{4}$ "		17 $\frac{3}{4}$ "
	Height	5 $\frac{3}{8}$ "		5 $\frac{3}{8}$ "
Depth	12 $\frac{1}{4}$ " + $\frac{3}{4}$ " knobs		12 $\frac{1}{4}$ " + $\frac{3}{4}$ " knobs	
Weight	21.5 lbs.		22.5 lbs.	

***All Tandberg specifications are subject to improvement without notice.**

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TANDBERG OF AMERICA, INC. LABRIOLA COURT, ARMONK, N.Y. 10504 A. ALLEN PRINGLE, LTD., ONTARIO, CANADA

OCTOBER 1973

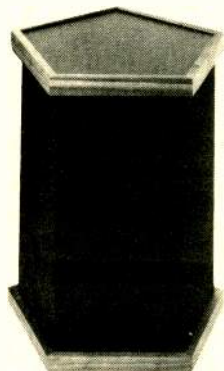
CIRCLE NO. 68 ON READER SERVICE CARD

17

NEW PRODUCTS

THE LATEST IN
HIGH-FIDELITY
EQUIPMENT

APL-9 Speaker System



● A new speaker system from Applied Physics Laboratory, the APL-9, is intended to approach the performance of the larger APL-16 system while using fewer drivers and a smaller enclosure. Like the APL-16, the APL-9 is a multi-directional sound radiator in the form of a pentagonal column with three driver arrays, one of which faces directly into the listening area. The other two arrays are on the two rear panels of the enclosure to provide an element of reflected sound. Each of these arrays consists of three 5¼-inch cone drivers (a total of nine) arranged in vertical rows. All drivers are operated in phase over the full audio-frequency range and are wired together by means of a specially

designed passive network that provides a nominal system impedance of 8 ohms. The fully sealed enclosure is constructed of ¾-inch particle board for the vertical panels, with 1½-inch board used for the bottom and top. An amplifier providing at least 20 watts continuous power per channel is required to drive the system, which has a power-handling capacity of 110 watts per channel continuous. Dimensions are 25½ inches high, 19⅝ inches wide. The five vertical sides of the cabinet are covered in brown grille cloth; top panels are available in walnut finish, or with an inlaid slab of imitation slate. The speakers are priced at \$496 per pair.

Circle 115 on reader service card

BGW Model 500R Stereo Power Amplifier



● A new high-power basic stereo amplifier from BGW, the Model 500R, has a rated continuous output of 200 watts per

channel into 8 ohms with both channels driven and a power bandwidth from under 5 to beyond 20,000 Hz. Hum and noise are more than 100 dB below rated output, and harmonic distortion is below 0.2 per cent (typically 0.01 per cent or less). Over the range of 20 to 20,000 Hz, frequency response is within +0, -0.25 dB. The input impedance of the amplifier is 47,000 ohms, and damping factor at low frequencies exceeds 1,000 for 8-ohm loads. The satin-finish silver front panel of the 500R is adorned only with a

light-emitting-diode pilot lamp and two large handles. In back are the inputs (phone jacks), the outputs (five-way binding posts), and the circuit-breaker/power switch. The amplifier's internal protective devices include a thyristor-activated shut-off circuit and current-limiting techniques. As the 500R, the unit measures 19 x 5¼ x 11 inches, and is drilled for rack mounting. Price: \$685. A version with a 7-inch-high front panel (Model 500 R-7) is also available.

Circle 116 on reader service card

Elac/Miracord Model 760 Automatic Turntable



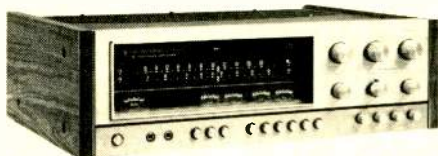
● BENJAMIN has added a new model, the 760, to the Elac/Miracord line of automatic turntables. The three-speed

turntable (33⅓, 45, and 78 rpm) has a 12-inch nonferrous platter driven by a four-pole induction motor. Separate calibrated adjustments are provided for tone-arm tracking force and anti-skating compensation, and the tone-arm cueing lift mechanism is fully damped. In the automatic mode, pushbuttons initiate the play sequence, cueing the tone arm to the record diameter selected. The automatic-play spindle, which can be replaced by a shorter spindle that rotates with the platter for manual operation, can hold a stack of up to ten records. The 760 has a pitch control, permitting a continuously variable adjustment of ±3

per cent around the nominally correct value of each playing speed, and the platter has stroboscope markings around its edge for the 33⅓- and 45-rpm speeds. Wow and flutter are 0.05 and 0.01 per cent, respectively; rumble is -40 dB. The tone arm's lateral tracking error is less than 0.4 degree per inch, and the bearing friction is under 0.05 gram. Dimensions of the chassis are approximately 14¼ x 12¼, with clearances of 4½ inches above and 3 inches below the motorboard required. Price: \$189.50, excluding optional wood base (\$17.50) and dust cover (\$13.95).

Circle 117 on reader service card

Kenwood KR-8340 AM/FM Four-Channel Receiver



● THE Model KR-8340 is representative of the new four-channel AM/FM

receivers recently introduced by Kenwood. Capable of supplying 25 watts per channel continuous into 8 ohms across the full audio bandwidth with all four channels driven, the unit will accommodate discrete four-channel sources and has built-in decoders for material recorded with the RM and SQ matrix systems. In addition, the KR-8340 will reproduce CD-4 discrete discs by means of an optional module (the Model KCD-

2) that plugs into a receptacle provided at the rear of the receiver. The module, which has complete sensitivity and separation controls for the CD-4 system, mates directly with electrical connectors within the receptacle slot (which will also accept Kenwood modules for any future four-channel systems that might be developed). An illuminated indicator above the receiver's tuning dial signals

(Continued on page 20)

Announcing "The Twenty-four Wives of Henry VIII" OR "The Six Wives of Henry VIII" in QUAD.

"This album touches a lot of bases in the course of 'Six Wives': Bach and his rapid toccata style is obviously anchor-man and Wakeman's strongest personal ancestor, but there are whiffs of rag-time, Chopin, jazz, modal English folk songs, French chromaticism, bagpipe tunes and some purple MGM effects courtesy of the Mellotron. Wakeman's electronic sophistication constantly introduces fresh textures through a most subtle and well-integrated use of ARP and Mini-Moog Synthesizers.

This music is a quad mixer's dream and everything here is heightened by an imaginative use of placement and a good sense of balance. Many happy listenings." — **John McClure, Independent producer**

"Devoid of lyrics, it is bursting with diverse sounds ... a bold piece of work—improvisatory, imaginative ... Wakeman writes in a manner that has the punch and power of rock combined with the taste and cohesion of traditional symphonic fare." — **TIME**



This A&M record has been SQ encoded for true compatible quadrasonic playback. The original multi-channel tapes were mixed and mastered at the A&M studios in Hollywood, California to reproduce the finest possible quadrasonic sound when played back through any matrix decoding device. This record is pressed on an anti-static vinyl,

developed for A&M Records, to insure low surface noise, reduce record wear and prolong record life. A rigid quality control standard has been maintained in all phases of manufacturing to insure its faithful sound reproduction. It can also be played on conventional stereophonic equipment with excellent results.

"The Six Wives of Henry VIII"
Rick Wakeman's solo debut in QUAD.
On A&M Records

NEW PRODUCTS

THE LATEST IN
HIGH-FIDELITY
EQUIPMENT

the presence of a CD-4 subcarrier on a phono disc.

The KR-8340's controls include a master volume knob, separate bass and treble controls for the front and rear channels, concentrically mounted left-right balance controls for both the front and rear speaker pairs, a separate front-rear balance control, and mode and input selectors. A row of push-on/push-off buttons selects either or both of two four-channel speaker arrays that can be connected to the receiver, operates tape-monitor switching for two two- or four-channel tape decks, and introduces loudness compensation, FM interstation-noise muting, and high- and low-cut filters. A ninth pushbutton reduces the sensitivity of the four front-panel meters that serve to monitor levels in all chan-

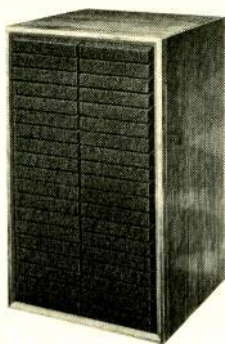
nels continuously. A signal-strength tuning meter functions for both AM and FM, and stereo headphone jacks for the front and rear channels are provided.

Further specifications for the KR-8340 include 0.8 per cent harmonic and intermodulation distortion at rated output, and signal-to-noise ratios of 60 dB for the phono inputs and 75 dB for high-level inputs. In two-channel operation the front and rear power amplifiers are "strapped" to provide a continuous output of 70 watts per channel into 8 ohms, both channels driven. Built-in protection circuits monitor both the output-stage current and power-supply voltage to detect overload or unsafe operating conditions. The FM section has an IHF sensitivity of 1.9 microvolts, a 1-dB capture ratio, 80 dB alternate-channel selec-

tivity, and 65 dB AM suppression. Image and i.f. rejection are 80 and 100 dB, respectively; stereo FM separation is 40 dB at 1,000 Hz and 35 dB at 10,000 Hz. A new circuit configuration in the receiver's multiplex section is said to provide improved stereo separation by more effective cancellation of crosstalk signal components. Overall dimensions of the KR-8340 are $21\frac{1}{4} \times 6\frac{1}{4} \times 14\frac{3}{8}$ inches, including the supplied walnut end pieces. Price: \$619.95, with the optional KCD-2 module costing \$79.95 more. Kenwood also has three more new four-channel receivers, with similar features and controls, ranging in price from \$419.95 to \$749.95. The top-of-the-line Model 9340 receiver has a built-in CD-4 demodulator.

Circle 118 on reader service card

Utah MP-2000 Speaker System



● A NEW speaker system from Utah, the Model MP-2000, is a three-way design suitable for shelf or free-standing installation. The enclosure, with a volume of about 4 cubic feet, employs a 12-inch woofer and a tuned, ducted port for low-frequency propagation. The mid-range is a 5-inch cone unit, acoustically isolated from the enclosure's internal pressures. The tweeter is a 1-inch phenolic dome type that radiates through a high-frequency horn. The system's crossover frequencies are 2,500 and 5,000 Hz, with 6-dB-per-octave slopes. Power-handling capability exceeds 60

watts; amplifier power of 10 watts per channel is said to be fully adequate to drive the system. A continuously variable control to adjust the output levels of the mid-range and tweeter is located on the back of the enclosure, adjacent to the input connectors.

The MP-2000 is finished in oiled walnut veneer with a removable acoustical-foam grille held in place by Velcro fasteners. Available grille colors are blue, brown, and burnt orange. Dimensions are $15\frac{1}{4} \times 24 \times 12$ inches. Price: \$139.95.

Circle 119 on reader service card

Sylvania AM/FM Four-Channel Receivers



● SYLVANIA has moved into the four-channel market with two AM/FM receivers, essentially identical except for power output. The Model RQ3748 (shown) is rated at 50 watts per channel continuous, all four channels driven simultaneously into 8 ohms at any frequency from 20 to 20,000 Hz, with less than 0.5 per cent harmonic or intermodulation distortion. Under the same conditions, the Model RQ3747 provides 25 watts per channel with the same distortion levels. For two-channel operation the front and rear power amplifiers

of the receivers are "bridged" to provide 8-ohm continuous-power outputs of 125 (RQ3748) and 60 (RQ3747) watts per channel, both channels driven in stereo. Signal-to-noise ratios are 60 dB for phono, 70 dB for high-level inputs, and frequency response is 20 to 30,000 Hz ± 1.5 dB. FM specifications for the two receivers include IHF sensitivities of 1.9 microvolts, 1.5-dB capture ratios, 55-dB alternate-channel selectivity, and image and i.f. rejection of 60 and 90 dB, respectively. Stereo separation is 35 dB at 1,000 Hz and 25 dB at 10,000 Hz. AM suppression is 45 dB. A 50-dB signal-to-noise ratio is achieved for an input of 2.8 microvolts. Full quieting occurs at an input level of 20 microvolts, affording a maximum signal-to-noise ratio of 67 dB. The FM muting threshold is 5 microvolts.

In their control and switching facilities the two receivers are virtually identical. In addition to discrete four-channel capability, both have built-in SQ decoders with switchable circuits to enhance

front-back separation for appropriate recordings. Bass and treble controls are separate for the front and rear channels; input and mode selection is by means of pushbuttons, with lever switches for speakers (four pairs accommodated) and FM interstation-noise muting. The high- and low-cut filters have 12-dB-per-octave slopes. Connections for two four-channel tape decks are provided, with monitor functions for each, as well as front and rear headphone jacks, signal-strength and channel-center tuning meters, and adjustable tuning-dial illumination. Only the balance controls differ on the two receivers: the RQ3747 uses a three-knob configuration and the RQ3748 has individual level adjustments for each of the four channels. Both receivers have master volume controls. The units are identical in size— $21\frac{1}{4} \times 7 \times 15$ inches—and come with walnut-finish wood cabinets. Prices: RQ3748, \$549.95; RQ3747, \$449.95.

Circle 120 on reader service card

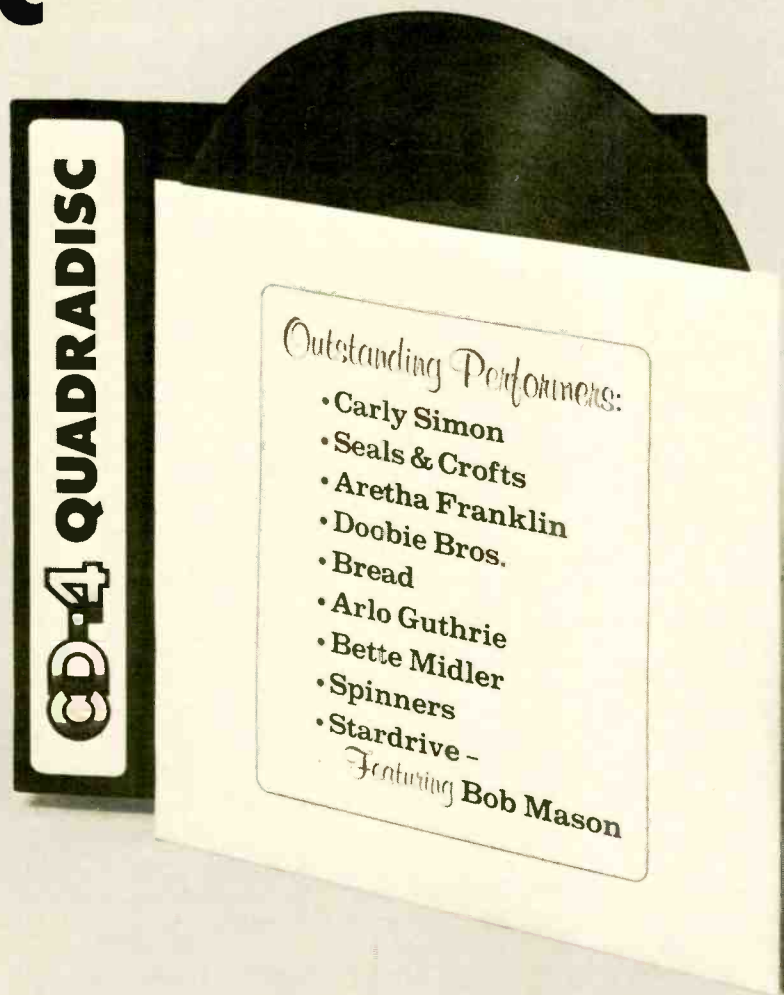
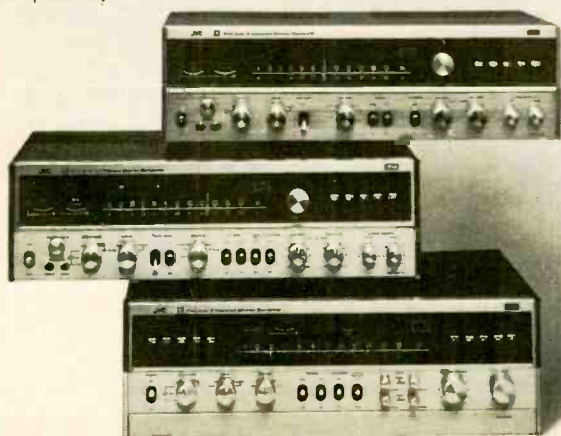
Lend us your ears and JVC will give you a true 4-channel demonstration Quadradisc*

Here is the new exciting sound of the seventies . . . waiting for you at your local JVC dealer today. A CD-4 compatible stereo/discrete 4-channel Quadradisc demonstration record — designed specifically for evaluating a CD-4 four-channel system.

While you're listening to this fascinating record, made with the ultimate up-to-the-minute recording techniques, look at the three new, exciting JVC 4-channel units that help make discrete quadra-sonic sound possible. Each one features a built-in CD-4 Demodulator to play the latest compatible discrete 4-channel discs incorporating four independent sound channels. Now for the first time, discrete 4-channel captures the natural reverberation, purity, presence, movement and resolution of music never fully realized on a record before CD-4. These receivers also include two-built-in matrix decoders to get the best out of matrix encoded programs, plus a realistic 4-channel effect from conventional 2-channel program sources. Other advanced features include JVC's patented Sound Effect Amplifiers that break the sonic spectrum into five bands, so you can exercise tonal control and complete freedom over sound in all crucial frequency ranges to compensate for room acoustics and individual tastes. Then there is JVC's exclusive Balanced Transformer-Less circuitry that links up the amps, so that all four are used when playing 2-channel stereo for double the output power, controlled right from the front panel.

These are only a few of the many JVC innovations that reflect the ultimate in 4-channel engineering and design. For complete details and your CD-4 demo record, visit your local participating JVC Hi-Fi Dealer today. For his name and address, call this toll free number, 800-243-6000. In Connecticut, call 1-(800)-882-6500, or write JVC America, Inc., 50-35B 56th Road, Maspeth, N.Y. 11378.

*(Valued at \$6.95. Yours for only a handling charge of \$1.00.)



To receive your CD-4 demonstration Record (yours for a \$1.00 handling charge), fill out this coupon (no reproduction) and present it to a participating JVC Dealer (Offer limited to 18 year olds and over and to the available supply of records, ends Jan. 1, 1974).

Name _____ Age _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Dealer _____

JVC
Hi-Fi

AUDIO QUESTIONS and ANSWERS

By LARRY KLEIN *Technical Editor*



Cassette Difficulties

Q. *Recently I have been buying a variety of brands of cassette tapes in an effort to find a reliable make. But I find that except for a few, they drag in fast forward or rewind and suffer from speed fluctuation. Can you explain these problems for me?*

PHIL DAVIS
Caribou, Me.

A. If you are in love with the 69¢ cassette specials available at your local drugstore, then either the cassettes or your machine could be at fault. However, if you are having troubles with the standard brands, such as are advertised in the pages of this magazine, then the chances are that your machine is out of adjustment mechanically or is otherwise defective. Of course, you'll find an occasional lemon even among the best brands of cassettes, but if you are having troubles with even five per cent of the *name-brand* cassettes you try, the drive mechanism in your machine almost surely needs adjustment.

Super-Power Add On

Q. *I'm using a late-model receiver with a 40+40 watt rating and I would like to step up to one of the super-power amplifiers. Is it okay if I use my old receiver as a preamp/tuner, or should I trade it in for a new preamplifier and tuner? What would you suggest?*

N. WONG
North Chicago, Ill.

A. First of all, make sure that whatever improvement you expect from stepping up from 80 to 300 watts or more will actually take place. What I'm saying is that an increase in power is *not* a cure-all. If you have bad sound because of standing waves or other room-acoustic conditions, or inadequate speakers, or whatever, super-power is not a panacea. However, if your problem is that your amplifier simply cannot supply enough power to your speakers

to achieve the listening levels you like without the amplifier's going into distortion, then greater power will help—assuming that your speakers can take it.

As to whether or not you will be better off keeping your present receiver or trading it in toward a separate preamplifier and tuner, this would depend on whether your present receiver has all the inputs and functions you like or need, and on whether the tuner and the preamplifier sections are up to the performance specifications you want.

If, after considering all of these factors, you decide to keep your present receiver, check to see whether it has a pre/main input-output setup as is common on many Japanese-built units. If it does, all you need do is plug in your new power amp to the "pre" output (after removing the jumpers or moving the pre/main switch from its "normal" position). However, a better idea might be to get yourself a four-channel SQ/RM matrix adapter and connect it to the tape input/output jacks of your receiver. The new super-power amplifier could then be used to drive your front speakers and the internal amplifier of your receiver could be used to drive a new pair of small rear speakers.

Speaker Power Response

Q. *I've heard the term "power response" applied to speakers, and it seems to relate to a speaker's frequency response rather than its power-handling ability. Can you explain the concept for me?*

ERIC LIPPS
Clinton, Mass.

A. When I first encountered the power-response concept about ten years ago, it immediately cleared up some puzzling questions involving frequency-response measurements. For years, manufacturers had been providing me with anechoic-chamber measurements which showed their speakers to be reasonably flat up to perhaps 15,000 Hz

(cycles per second in those days). When I listened to the same speakers at home, in many cases I found their high-frequency response was audibly far below the level of their mid-frequencies. I didn't understand this contradiction until I understood power response. The discrepancies arose simply because the frequency-response curve supplied to me was taken only with a microphone placed on-axis (directly in front of the speaker system). And although the high-frequency sound-pressure level put out by the speaker remained fairly constant on-axis, the high-frequency energy reaching the areas not directly in front of the speaker diminished almost in direct proportion to the increase in the frequency of the test signal. In other words, the total energy (or *power response*) coming out of the speaker fell off considerably at high frequencies despite the fact that the on-axis test microphone showed no loss. Of course, a microphone placed *off-axis* would have shown the loss of highs.

When a speaker with narrow high-frequency dispersion such as I've just described is installed in a normal room, a variety of effects can take place, depending on the specific acoustic circumstances. In general, if the room has enough hard surfaces to be fairly reflective, and the listener is distant enough from the speakers, the sound will be somewhat homogenized and the "beaming" of the tweeters will not be quite as evident. However, in a normally "soft" room, a listener may hear excessive highs when he is directly in front of the speakers, and inadequate highs when he is off at an angle. Note that boosting the treble will only aggravate the on-axis shrillness. The situation can be improved somewhat by installing directional speakers angled slightly inward so as to have them "cross-fire" into the listening area. A better solution, assuming that the speakers are good aside from their high-frequency beaming, is to install a pair of Microstatic wide-dispersion high-frequency adapters (see test report in the June 1971 issue).

Some manufacturers use a reverberant chamber to test a speaker's power response. The irregularly shaped chamber with highly reflective interior wall treatment homogenizes any sounds generated within it and adds both the on- and off-axis frequency response together to provide a total power response. A highly directional speaker, no matter how bright it sounds on-axis, will show a high-end deficiency when measured in a reverberation chamber.

Because the number of questions we receive each month is greater than we can reply to individually, only those letters selected for use in this column can be answered. Sorry!



These are keepers.

Here are the best reel tapes made by 3M, the "Scotch" people.

With LOW NOISE/DYNARANGE, we became the overwhelming choice of professional recording studios. It was a top notch tape, having a 3 db improvement in signal-to-noise over standard oxide tapes.

Then we gave them an even better tape. We came up with HIGH OUTPUT/LOW NOISE,

the "206" and "207" tapes: a 6 db improvement in signal-to-noise over standard oxide tapes.

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You use these tapes when you want to keep what you record.

So we put the tapes, all set with leaders and trailers, into a black storage box with a smoked lid. It looks beautiful while it waits.

You can't buy better tapes than "Scotch."

Start someone on a pipe today

(Why not yourself)



YELLO-BOLE®

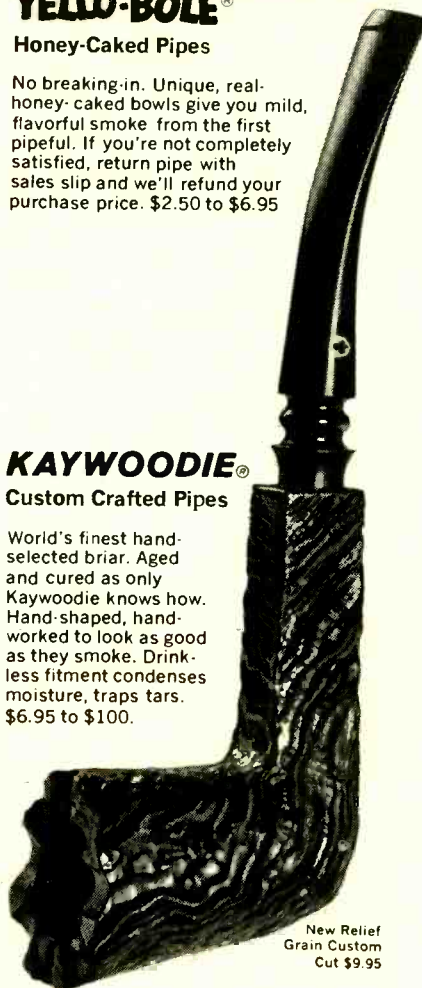
Honey-Caked Pipes

No breaking-in. Unique, real-honey-caked bowls give you mild, flavorful smoke from the first pipeful. If you're not completely satisfied, return pipe with sales slip and we'll refund your purchase price. \$2.50 to \$6.95

KAYWOODIE®

Custom Crafted Pipes

World's finest hand-selected briar. Aged and cured as only Kaywoodie knows how. Hand-shaped, hand-worked to look as good as they smoke. Drink-less fitment condenses moisture, traps tars. \$6.95 to \$100.



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CIRCLE NO. 35 ON READER SERVICE CARD

AUDIO BASICS

By RALPH HODGES



GLOSSARY OF TECHNICAL TERMS—4

- **Bandwidth** is a convenient technical term for the range of frequencies over which an audio or radio device or circuit is intended to operate. For example, the frequently encountered "20 to 20,000 Hz" is the *audio bandwidth*. In its strictest technical sense, a bandwidth specification usually states the specific points (frequencies) at which levels are 3 dB down from their values at the center of the band. In looser usage it merely indicates what range of frequencies is—or should be—handled.
- **Bass** is the name for the low-pitched musical tones (or frequencies), starting at perhaps 200 Hz and descending on down to about 16 Hz, approximately the lowest note in the registers of some large pipe organs. For the vast majority of music recordings, an audio system with a reasonably uniform bass response down to 45 Hz is probably adequate.
- **Bass reflex** is a type of speaker enclosure, based upon the principle of the Helmholtz resonator, that uses one or more openings in the cabinet (called *ports* or *vents*) through which bass frequencies can emerge to reinforce the output of the front of the woofer's cone. In a true bass-reflex design, the size of the port is carefully adjusted (tuned) so that the Helmholtz acoustic resonance of the air in the enclosure interacts with the electro-mechanical resonance of the woofer to provide smoother and usually more extended low-frequency performance. In many modern bass-reflex speaker systems, a relatively narrow conduit—called a *duct*—extends from the port opening into the interior of the enclosure. The duct provides an acoustical resistance that damps and smooths the low-frequency response of the system. Theoretically, bass-reflex designs are somewhat more efficient than acoustic-suspension systems over their operating frequency ranges, but a recent practice has been to damp enclosures and ports heavily—essentially a trade-off of electro-acoustic efficiency for response smoothness.
- **Bias**, in tape recording, is a steady signal of very high frequency (50,000 Hz or above) that is generated within the tape recorder and applied to the tape right along with the audio signal to be recorded. In the proper amount, the bias signal both increases the efficiency of the recording process and reduces distortion. If set at too high a level for the type of tape being used, the bias signal will reduce the high audio frequencies on the tape by partially erasing them as they are recorded; too low a bias level, on the other hand, will cause the finished recording to have a rising high-frequency response and something of an increase in distortion.
- "Bias" is also the term for a d.c. voltage or current applied to a circuit such as the output stage of a power amplifier to adjust it to the desired operating characteristics. This type of bias has much the same distortion-reducing and output-increasing effect as tape-recorder bias.
- **Binaural** (literally, "two-eared") recording is a two-channel microphone technique designed to produce recordings specifically for stereo-headphone listening. To make such a recording, two microphones are placed so that the distance between them approximates the width of the human head (sometimes a dummy head, made of, say, soft rubber, is used, and the microphones are inserted into the ear cavities). When the recording is heard through stereo headphones, the listener's head becomes, in theory, the dummy head present at the live performance, and his two ears perceive everything the two microphones did, and in just the same way. Although binaural recording is potentially capable of vivid and convincing impressions of realism, many listeners, owing to various psycho-acoustic factors, experience some spatial distortion and displacement of sound sources from their true locations.

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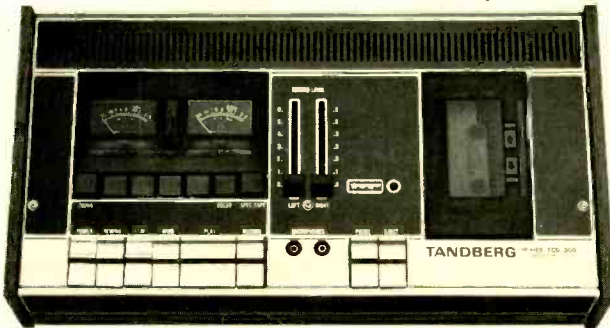
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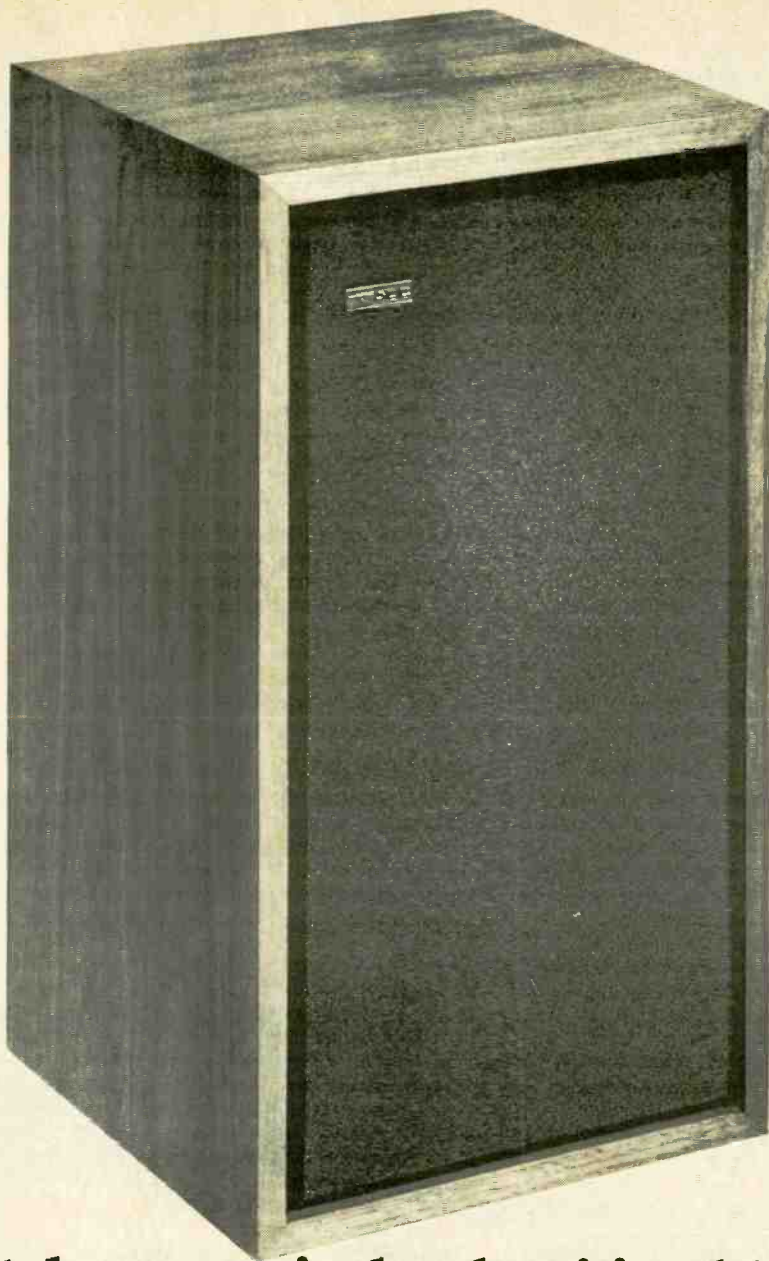
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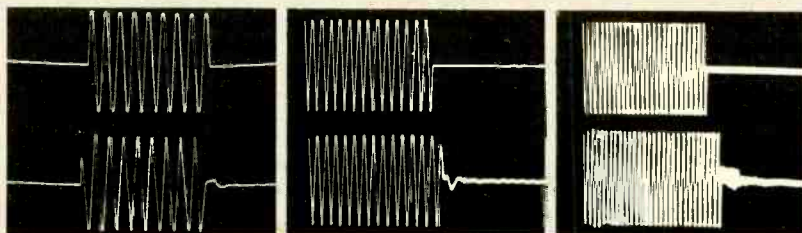
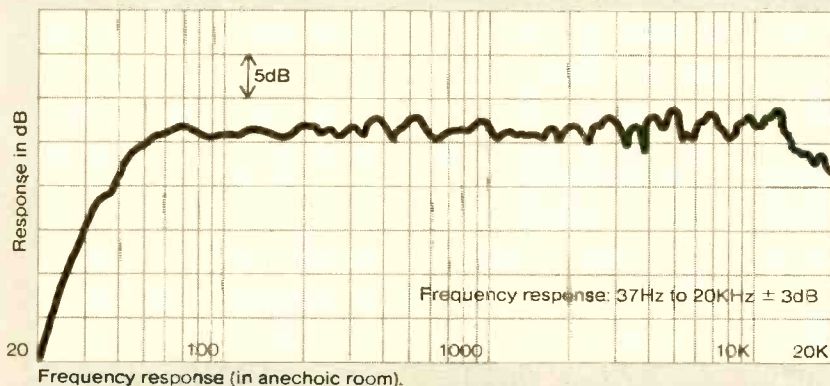
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TECHNICAL TALK

By JULIAN D. HIRSCH

● **DECODING THE DECIBEL:** Perhaps few technical terms are more widely used (and less clearly understood) than the *decibel*, abbreviated *dB*. The decibel is not usually used as an *absolute* quantity such as a watt or a volt; it expresses rather a *ratio* between two power levels (*P*): for example, *x* decibels = $10 \log_{10} P_2/P_1$. Some common power ratios and their decibel equivalents are shown in the table on the following page. As the table shows, a ten-fold power increase corresponds to a 10-dB increase. But *doubling* the power is equivalent to a 3-dB increase. The relationship is therefore not a one-to-one correspondence with the actual power level: ten watts is 10 dB more than 1 watt, but 100 watts is only 10 dB more than 10 watts (see table).

Power is equal to voltage (*E*) squared and divided by resistance (*R*). Thus, if the load resistance remains constant, the power is proportional to the square of the voltage. Decibels are frequently used to express voltage ratios, with the relationship $\text{dB} = 20 \log_{10} E_2/E_1$. This is valid only when both voltages are measured across the same resistance, though incorrect usage is unfortunately quite common.

Let us now examine the use of the decibel in audio-equipment specifications. If the power response of an amplifier is specified as 20 to 20,000 Hz ± 1 dB, the ± 1 -dB tolerance means the output power of the amplifier can vary ± 20 per cent from frequency to frequency over that range when it is driven by an input signal voltage of a constant level. A 20-watt amplifier can deliver from 16 to 24 watts and still remain within this specification; the output of a 100-watt amplifier could range between 80 and 120 watts.

A signal-to-noise ratio of 60 dB means that the noise power measures one-millionth of whatever the reference-power output (in watts) of the signal is. When the measurement is in terms of voltage, as it frequently is, 60 dB corresponds to a voltage ratio

of 1,000. A preamplifier with a 1-volt rated output would have a noise-output "signal" of 1 millivolt.

A tone control that boosts the amplifier's frequency response by 10 dB at 50 Hz calls for it to deliver ten times more power at that frequency than in the "flat" setting. If the power levels of typical music programs were equal for all frequencies (which, fortunately, they are *not*), and if we assume that 1 watt is an average mid-range power output, even this moderate boost might require the amplifier to generate 10 watts when a 50-Hz signal came along. The possible hazards of an excessive tone-control range are obvious. Some tone controls can boost up to 20 dB. In this example, the amplifier, while operating at a 1-watt mid-range level, would have to deliver 100 watts at 50 Hz with an equivalent drive signal! A slight (barely perceptible) 3-dB volume increase would double these power requirements, to 2 watts at middle frequencies (easy) and to 200 watts at 50 Hz (unthinkable for most amplifiers and speakers).

The selectivity characteristics of tuners are also

described in terms of decibels. An alternate-channel selectivity rating of 60 dB means that a signal only 400-kHz away from a desired signal must be 1,000 times stronger (in microvolts) than the desired signal to produce the same output. If the interfering signal is 5,000 times

stronger, its program will override the desired program. A better tuner, with 80-dB selectivity, would reject signals up to 10,000 times stronger, and might avoid interference problems the 60-dB tuner would be subject to. On the other hand, if the strengths of all the received signals on alternate channels fall within a 100-to-1 range, only a 40-dB selectivity would be required.

The same situation exists for images and spurious responses. The decibel rating expresses the ratio between wanted and unwanted signals for the same tuner output. Since we are usually dealing with volt-

TESTED THIS MONTH

●
JVC SX-3 Speaker System
PE 3060 Automatic Turntable
Yamaha TB-700 Cassette Deck
Altec 710A AM/FM Receiver

ages in tuner measurements, the E_2/E_1 relationships from the table are applicable.

In only one case can the decibel be used in an absolute sense—in the measurement of acoustic sound-pressure levels. For sound pressures, 0 dB is fixed at 0.0002 dyne per square centimeter; “SPL” (sound-pressure level) following the decibel number indicates acoustic values are meant. (Actual acoustic sound-pressure levels, stated in dynes per square centimeter, are usually too unwieldy to use because of the extremely wide numerical range likely to be encountered.) An acoustic level of 0 dB is considered to be at the lowest limit of audibility. Even a very quiet home in an isolated location will usually have a background noise level of 30 dB or more. Typical listening levels might be in the 70- to 80-dB range, while a level of 100 dB, even on brief program peaks, would be considered deafeningly loud by many people. The smallest audible change of level is between 1 and 3 dB, depending on the test conditions.

One might ask why decibels are used instead of the equivalent ratios of voltage or power. The decibel can express vast voltage and power relationships with a smaller number that is not only much easier to compute with, but to interpret subjectively as well. It is difficult, for example, to grasp the sig-

Decibel Correspondences
in Terms of Power and Voltage Ratios

dB	P_2/P_1 (watts)	E_2/E_1 (volts)
0	1	1
3	2	1.4
6	4	2
10	10	3.16
20	100	10
30	1,000	31.6
40	10,000	100
50	100,000	316
60	1,000,000	1,000

nificance of an image-rejection ratio of 10,000 to 1, as compared with the equivalent 80 dB. A two-to-one improvement—say, 20,000 to 1—might appear to be a very large change, but when it is expressed as a change from 80 to 86 dB, the two ratings can be compared in a way that is more meaningful to the mind and to the ear.

Also, when it is desirable to show very small quantities (such as percentages of distortion and noise) on graphs, the decibel permits the use of an expanded vertical scale. A linear representation, by contrast, would crowd all the data into a tiny area just above the zero line. In short, the decibel may be conceptually difficult, but it's certainly handy—and luckily one need not appreciate all its ramifications in order to use it in comparing specifications.

EQUIPMENT TEST REPORTS

By Hirsch-Houck Laboratories

JVC SX-3 Speaker System



● THE JVC SX-3, reported to be one of Japan's most popular speaker systems, is now available in the United States. It uses a 1¼-inch soft-dome hemispherical tweeter in combination with a 10-inch acoustic-suspension woofer. The cabinet, measuring approximately 20½ x 12½ x 11½ inches, is completely filled with polyester damping material. The drivers of the SX-3, installed flush with the front surface of the cabinet, are protected by black, perforated-metal grilles. These, together with a continuously variable tweeter-level control and a rectangular nameplate, are the only visible features of the sys-

tem's wood-finish front panel. The flush-mounted drivers and the absence of edge molding or trim on the cabinet are intended to provide a more uniform polar response through the elimination of diffraction effects. According to JVC engineers, a number of other special techniques and materials were used in the SX-3, but space does not permit describing them in detail.

The JVC SX-3 weighs about 29 pounds; it is rated to handle 25 watts of power continuously, and it has a nominal impedance of 4 ohms. The crossover frequency is 2,000 Hz. The tweeter-level control provides the “flat-test” response at its maximum setting. With floor or corner placement, bass response is normally enhanced, and a slide switch is therefore provided in the rear of the cabinet to reduce the woofer level by about 2 dB to restore balance if necessary. The JVC SX-3 is available with a cabinet of blonde spruce or of walnut. Price: \$159.95.

● *Laboratory Measurements.* The integrated-room frequency response of the JVC SX-3 was very uniform and free of sharp peaks or dips. Flattest overall response, measured with the rear-panel switch set for reduced bass, was ±2.5 dB from 50 to 18,000 Hz. There was a slight emphasis of about 2.5 dB in the mid-range between 400 and 2,000 Hz, and a similar broad peak centered at 80

(Continued on page 30)

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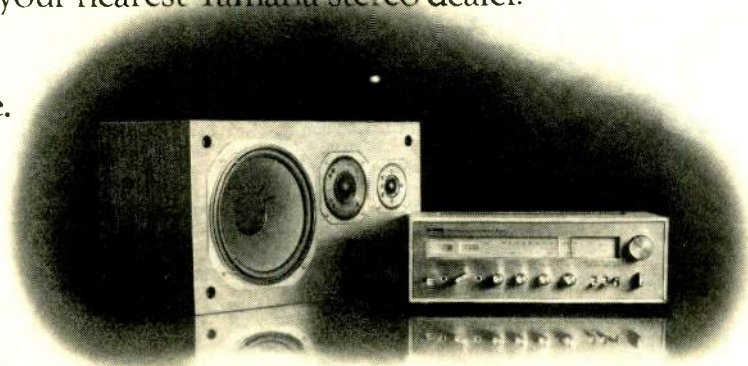
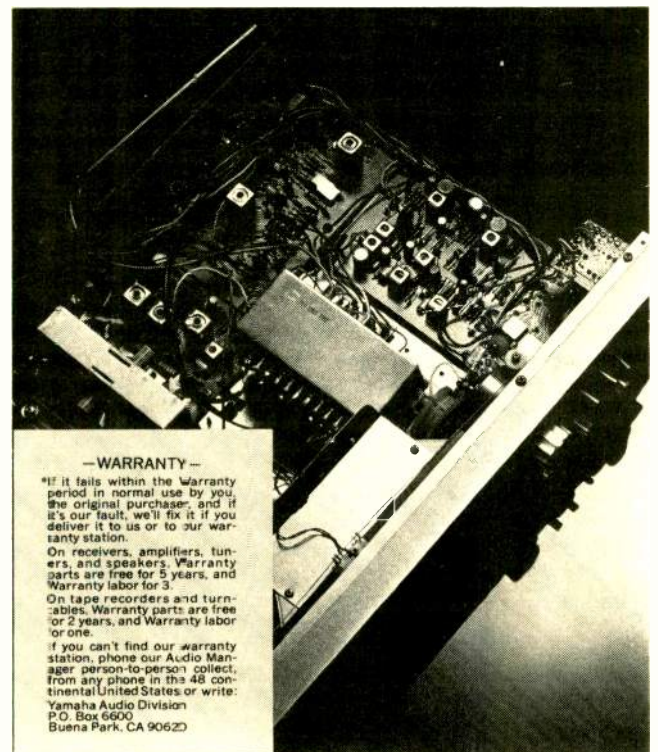
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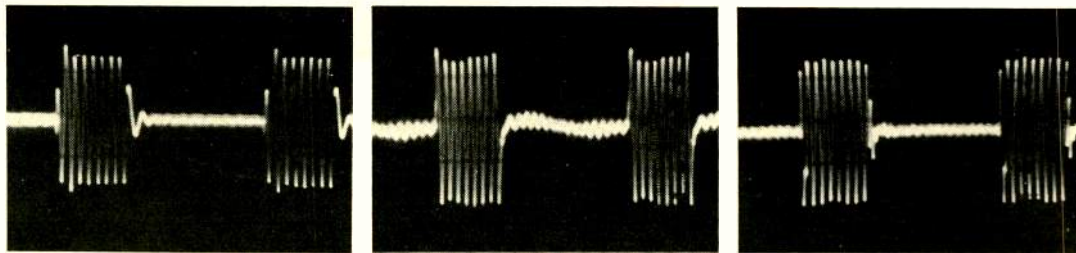
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The excellent tone-burst response of the SX-3 is illustrated at (left to right) 100, 1,000, and 5,000 Hz.

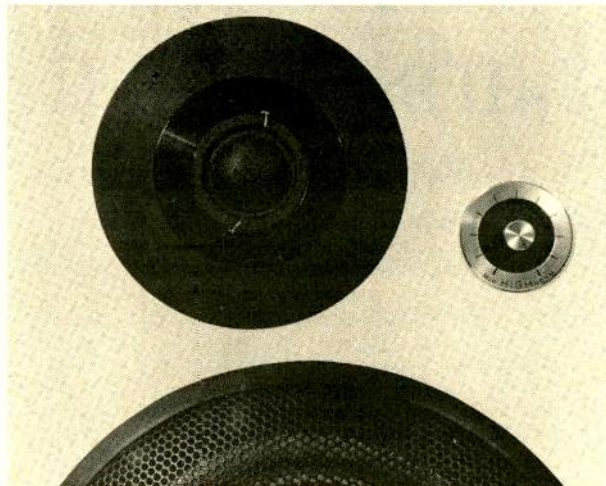


Hz. The dispersion at high frequencies was good, and the tone-burst response was uniformly excellent.

Efficiency was moderately low, as is typical of other acoustic-suspension systems of comparable size. About 0.5 watt input was needed in the mid-range for a 90-dB sound-pressure level at a distance of 1 meter from the speaker: at other frequencies, about 1 watt was required. The low-frequency harmonic distortion at 1 watt was under 1.5 per cent down to 50 Hz, reaching 6.5 per cent at 35 Hz. With 10 watts of drive (a very loud listening level), the distortion reached 2.2 per cent at 60 Hz, 5 per cent at 50 Hz, and 16 per cent at 35 Hz. The system impedance was between 4 and 5 ohms in the 20- to 30-Hz range as well as between 3,000 and 20,000 Hz. It rose to 10 ohms at the bass-resonance frequency of 65 Hz, and to above 20 ohms at 1,200 Hz.

● *Comment.* Upon first hearing the JVC SX-3, we were struck by its easy, effortless sound. It was always sweet and musical, but with a tendency toward warmth or even heaviness in the bass when placed on the floor. Use of the reduced-bass-response switch is clearly indicated in such a case. The SX-3's smoothness and freedom from obvious coloration make it a sonically "invisible" speaker, in the sense that one soon becomes unaware of its presence. This, of course, is an ideal attribute and makes the speaker very easy to listen to for extended periods.

This same characteristic was further evidenced in our simulated live-*vs.*-recorded tests, where only a slight softness in the extreme highs prevented the SX-3 from receiving a solid "A" rating (we would classify it as an "A-"). However, a slight assist from the amplifier's treble tone control was sufficient to produce a nearly perfect simulation of the original program. The expressed goal of



A close-up view of JVC's soft-dome tweeter. Normally the dome is protected by a perforated grille cover similar to that seen on the woofer just below. The slotted holes keep it in place.

JVC was to build an accurate reproducer, with a uniform, well-dispersed output over a wide frequency range, free of obvious transient distortions and nonlinearities. Our tests indicate that they have been quite successful in reaching that goal.

The somewhat unconventional appearance of the JVC SX-3 might make it seem slightly out of place in a traditionally furnished room, but its appearance struck us as a triumph of functional design. At any rate, it is a truly fine speaker whose sound would do justice to the finest of high-fidelity components.

For more information, circle 105 on reader service card

PE 3060 Automatic Turntable



● THE PE 3060, Perpetuum-Ebner's finest automatic turntable, is imported by Impro Industries, Inc. Its heavy, cast nonferrous platter, 10¹¹/₁₆ inches in diameter, is driven through a rubber idler wheel by an induction/synchronous motor. A lever selects the operating speed (33¹/₃, 45, or 78 rpm), and a concentric vernier speed adjustment has a range of about 6 per cent overall. A separate stroboscope disc is supplied for setting the turntable speed. The tone arm, measuring 8¹/₄ inches

from pivot to stylus, is mounted on gimbal bearing assemblies. The tracking-force dial, incorporated in the pivot structure, is calibrated from 0 to 3 grams, with a rated accuracy of ±0.1 gram. There are calibration marks at 0.1-gram intervals from 0.2 to 1.5 grams, and at 0.5-gram intervals from 1.5 to 3 grams.

Anti-skating correction is applied by a sliding lever on the motorboard. There are separate scales, marked to correspond to the tracking force for conical and elliptical styli. This placement of the anti-skating control, physically separate from the arm, makes adjustment possible while a record is playing. The straight tubular arm is balanced by an elastically isolated counterweight that is rotated for "fine-tuning" the balance adjustment. The offset cartridge head has an integral finger lift and a cartridge-mounting slide, removable for easy installation, which has provision for exact overhang adjustment with a plas-

(Continued on page 32)

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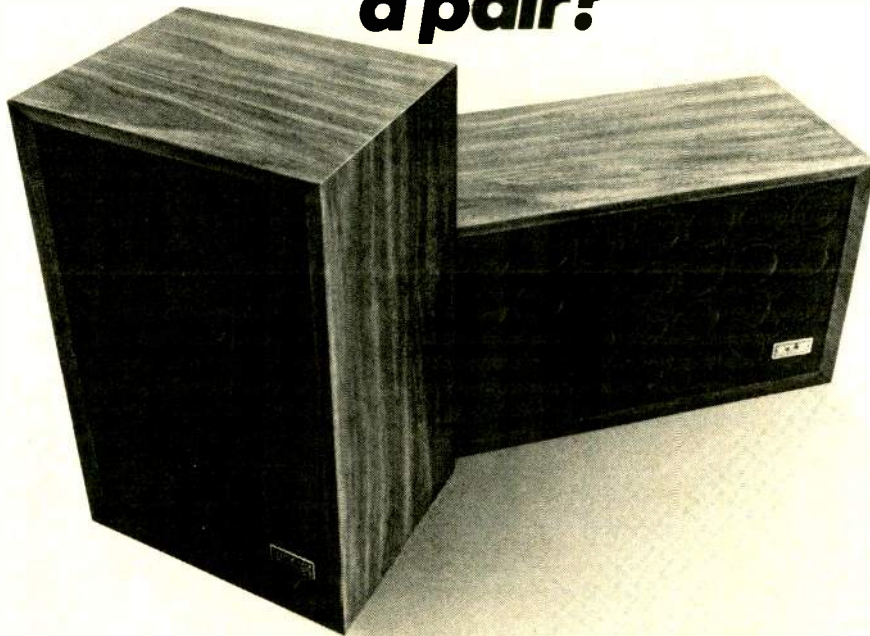
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tic jig provided with the player. A small button on the end of the slide adjusts the cartridge's vertical tracking angle for a single record or the center of a stack of six. The button, which latches and unlatches when pushed, is marked to indicate single-play or automatic mode of operation.

A single, long light-pressure lever initiates the playing cycle when moved to the left; it interrupts play, returns the arm to its rest, and shuts off the motor when moved to the right. For manual operation, the arm is simply lifted from its rest post; this action starts the motor. An arm lock is integral with the rest. The cueing lever, placed to the right of the arm, operates very smoothly with damped action in both directions.

A unique feature of the PE turntables is their automatic record-sensing and indexing system, which prevents the arm from leaving its rest during automatic operation unless a record is on the platter. A small feeler post an inch or so distant from the center of the platter (within the usual record-label area), senses the presence of a record and allows the arm to index. It is also used in a most ingenious manner as part of the record-size indexing system. The platter is "dished" so that the post is depressed further by a 7-inch record than by a larger disc. A second "feeler" emerges from the motorboard just outside the platter area when automatic play is initiated. If it contacts the edge of a record (and the center sensing post is partially depressed), the arm indexes for a 12-inch diameter. If it does not, the arm moves in to play a 10-inch disc. Finally, if it rises fully and the center sensing post is fully depressed, the arm indexes for a 7-inch diameter.

An automatic-play spindle, holding up to six records of the same size, locks into the center hole of the turntable with a twist (it does not have to be removed when unloading records). An optional automatic spindle is available for 45-rpm, 7-inch records. For single-play operation, an interchangeable short spindle is supplied that rotates with the turntable. The price of the PE 3060 is \$169.95. An optional wooden base and dust cover are \$12.95 each.

● **Laboratory Measurements.** The unweighted rumble (combined lateral and vertical) was -39 dB, and the lateral rumble alone was -42 dB. With RRLA audibility weighting, the rumble was -55 dB. These measurements are about as good as we have ever measured on an automatic turntable.

The wow and flutter were also low, the former being 0.06 (45 rpm) to 0.07 per cent (33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm), and the latter 0.04 per cent for both speeds. Corresponding figures for

78 rpm were 0.075 and 0.05 per cent. The turntable operating speed was absolutely unaffected by line-voltage changes from 105 to 135 volts, and the vernier adjustment range was +5.3, -4 per cent—a somewhat greater range than is usually available. The cycling time in automatic operation was better (shorter) than average: 10.5 seconds at 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm, 8 seconds at 45 rpm, and 5.5 seconds at 78 rpm.

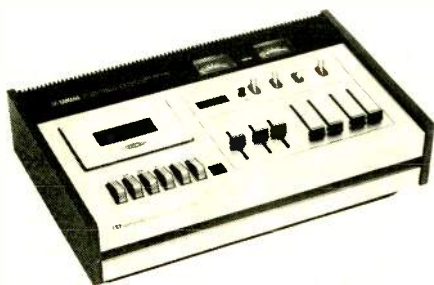
The tone-arm pivot friction was low, and we judged it to be quite compatible with PE's minimum rated tracking force of 0.5 gram. In setting up our first sample, we found that after the arm was initially zero-balanced in the horizontal plane in accordance with the instructions, the applied tracking force measured 0.4 to 0.5 gram higher than the dial indication. A second sample, however, was quite accurate. And in both samples, once the zero setting was correct, the tracking-force dial proved to have less than 0.05 gram error from 0.5 to 1.5 grams, and negligible errors of less than ± 0.2 gram at higher settings. At the top of a half-inch stack of records, the tracking force increased by a negligible 0.1 gram at a 1-gram initial setting of the calibrated dial.

The arm's lateral tracking error was extremely low, falling within the measurement resolution of our protractor. Between record radii of 2.5 and 6 inches, the error was less than 0.25 degree per inch, and it was still only 0.5 degree per inch at a 2-inch radius. Using a 1-gram vertical tracking force, any anti-skating setting from 1 to 2 grams seemed to give good results. There was no arm-position drift during cueing descent, even at the maximum anti-skating setting. The measured capacitance of the turntable's signal cables was 245 picofarads—a figure typical of modern record players.

● **Comment.** The performance of the PE 3060 speaks for itself. Clearly, this unit belongs in the top rank of automatic turntables, and is easily able to hold its own in comparison with some costing considerably more. Even more important was its smooth, gentle, and flawless operation. It is not unusual, in our experience, to find such problems as "hang-up" of records in automatic operation, excessive sensitivity to jarring when operating the controls, etc. None of these idiosyncrasies marred the performance of the PE 3060. And aside from its fine performance, we consider the PE 3060's unique record-sensing system to be a significant feature, somewhat analogous to an especially tasty icing on an already well-baked cake.

For more information, circle 106 on reader service card

Yamaha TB-700 Stereo Cassette Deck



● Most of the real differences among high-end cassette decks lie in their flexibility and special operating features. The Yamaha TB-700 has many features that can be found on other quality machines: Dolby noise reduction,

a hot-pressed ferrite head, and automatic end-of-tape shut-off and tape-drive disengagement. But it has some other features that are less common, including a *three-position* tape selector (which sets optimum recording bias, equalization, and level for standard and low-noise ferric-oxide tapes as well as for chromium-dioxide tape). It also has separate line and microphone inputs with full mixing capability, and a fast-acting, slow-release limiter to prevent distortion on unexpected program peaks. However, the Yamaha TB-700 has one operating feature that we have not seen elsewhere—a motor-speed (PITCH) control that in playback provides a ± 5 per cent variation about the nominal 1 $\frac{7}{8}$ -ips tape speed. The speed control acts through the servo system that normally stabilizes the d.c.

(Continued on page 40)



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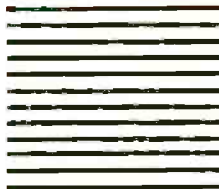
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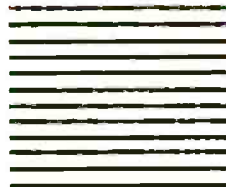
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A brutally honest receiver.

Brutal honesty is the next step beyond honesty. It means laying your facts on the table and letting them speak for themselves. Unfortunately, however, not all facts are created equal.

Take the Concord CR-250, for example. It's rated at 25 rms watts per channel. What the spec doesn't say is that we arrived at that rating with both channels being driven at rated output, using an 8-ohm load with total harmonic distortion no higher than our listed 1%.

Frankly, that's the most conservative way a receiver can be rated. For example, if we had given the rating with only one channel driven into a 4-ohm load, our power rating could have gone as high as 33 rms watts per channel. But we know that when you use the CR-250 in your home, you'll be driving both channels and more than likely your speaker impedance will be 8 ohms.

In other words, we would have been honest, but not brutally honest. And that's important when our receiver prices are so modest.

Now we don't mean to imply that all other manufacturers rate their equipment less

conservatively than we do. We don't know which ones do and which ones don't. All we can say for sure is that the Concord CR-250 specs are brutally honest. And so are the specs on all of our receivers.

In some cases, that seems to put us at a disadvantage. We're willing to accept that. Providing you're willing to accept the idea that, specs notwithstanding, our receivers may actually sound better when compared against theirs in a listening test. And listening is the real test. It's where honesty proves to be the best policy.

If you want to know more about the CR-250, just send us your name and address and we'll be glad to mail you a full color brochure which describes our entire line of receivers, starting with our modestly-priced CR-100 and including our new CR-400 quadraphonic receiver. Like the receivers, the brochure is brutally honest, too.

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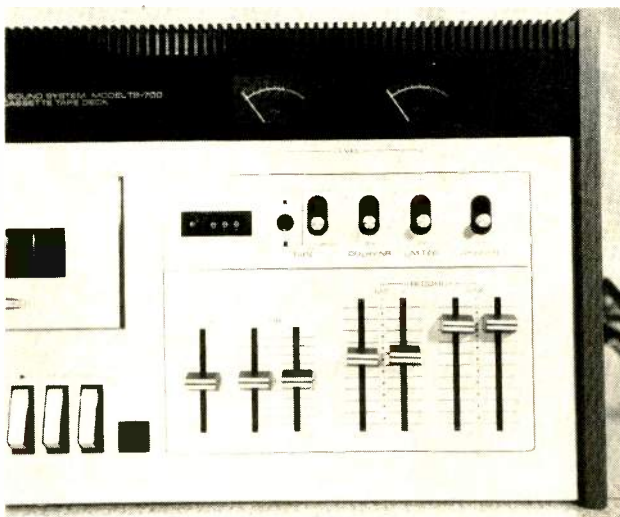
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motor speed, making the Yamaha machine independent of line frequency (it can be used in 50-Hz areas without mechanical modifications) and reasonably immune to line-voltage changes.

The TB-700 has two illuminated meters (reading recording-input or playback-output levels) toward the rear of its top panel, with RECORD and DOLBY indicator lights between them. Three toggle switches control the a.c. power, limiter, and Dolby systems. A fourth toggle switch, working in conjunction with a pushbutton, adjusts the recording characteristics for the three types of tape. There is also a three-digit index counter.

In front of the switches are seven slider controls: two pairs of recording-level adjustments, permitting separate settings on each channel for the microphone and line inputs; two playback-level sliders, detented lightly at their mid-points (-10 dB); and, finally, the PITCH (speed) control slider calibrated in approximate percentage change about the detented center 1⁷/₈-ips speed setting. At the



From left to right, slider controls on the TB-700 are: pitch adjustment, two playback levels, and two each for microphone and line recording levels. Dolby and tape switches are above.

left of the panel is the cassette well, with a tinted window exposing the center portion of the cassette during operation. The six transport-control pushkeys in front of the well are: RECORD, REWIND, FAST-FORWARD, PLAY, STOP, and EJECT. A smaller square PAUSE button completes the operating control lineup.

Along the front edge of the wooden base are the stereo headphone jack and two 1/4-inch microphone jacks (designed to receive the outputs of dynamic microphones with impedances between 200 and 50,000 ohms). In the rear of the base are the line inputs and outputs, with a high/low input-sensitivity switch to accommodate a wide range of input levels. There is also a DIN input/output connector. The Yamaha TB-700 measures 15³/₄ inches wide, 9³/₄ inches deep, and 4¹/₂ inches high, and it weighs 11 pounds. Price: \$289.50.

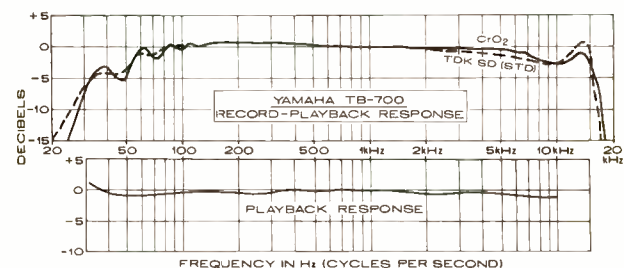
● **Laboratory Measurements.** We measured the playback response of the Yamaha TB-700 with two different test tapes, obtaining similar (and outstandingly good) results. With the Nortronics AT-200 tape, the response was ± 1 dB from 31.5 to 10,000 Hz, and with the Teac test tape it was ± 0.8 dB from 40 to 10,000 Hz. For record-playback response measurements, we used several different types of tape, together with different settings of the recorder's TAPE switches. With all ferric-oxide tapes, there was a peak at about 14,000 to 15,000 Hz, preceded by a shallow dip in the 10,000-Hz region. With TDK SD tape, ei-

ther the STD (standard) or LH (low-noise, high-output) bias setting produced a response varying only about ± 2 dB from 50 to 16,000 Hz (the LH position gave a slightly more prominent 15,000-Hz peak). A BASF LH cassette with the LH bias setting gave a response similar to that of TDK SD. Memorex, with STD bias, was ± 3 dB from about 45 to 16,000 Hz. The flattest measurements were obtained with CrO₂ (chromium-dioxide) tape and the appropriate switch settings. The high-frequency peak was negligible, and the overall response was ± 2.5 dB from 40 to 16,000 Hz.

We checked the frequency response, with the Dolby system on, at levels from -20 to -40 dB. A slight misadjustment was evident at the -20 dB level, resulting in a 5-dB response dip in the 4,000- to 9,000-Hz range. At other levels, the overall response was unaffected by the Dolby system. An input of 46 millivolts (HIGH switch position) or 10 millivolts (LOW) produced a 0-VU recording level at the line inputs. A 0.3-millivolt level was needed for 0 VU at the microphone inputs. The playback output was 0.65 volt. Using Memorex tape and STD bias, 3 per cent distortion was measured at 0 VU. With TDK SD and LH bias, 3 per cent occurred at +3 VU, and with CrO₂ tape at about +1 VU.

The signal-to-noise ratios (referred to the levels corresponding to 3 per cent distortion) were 53 dB with Memorex (STD), 54.5 dB with TDK SD (LH), and 53.7 dB with Memorex CrO₂. The noise reduction afforded by the Dolby system improved these figures by 4.5, 6, and 6.8 dB, respectively. Measured through the microphone inputs, the noise level was about 10 dB higher.

Since the PAUSE button turns the motor on and off, the tape does not start or stop instantaneously, but the sound is muted before the tape begins to slow down, and it returns smoothly after the tape has again come up to speed. This feature nicely eliminates the usual slow-down and start-up wow during playback pauses, but it does not prevent a recorded wow if the PAUSE button is pressed or



released during recording with an input signal present. With the PITCH control at its center detented position, the tape speed was exact. The measured range of adjustment was +5, -4.4 per cent. Increasing the line voltage from 120 to 135 volts had no effect on speed, and lowering it to 105 volts reduced the speed only 0.5 per cent. The wow and flutter were, respectively, 0.06 and 0.16 per cent—typical of a good cassette transport. In fast forward or rewind, a C-60 cassette was handled in about 93 seconds.

● **Comment.** Needless to say, since its measured performance was on a par with other high-quality machines, the Yamaha TB-700 sounded as good as any cassette recorder we have heard. Its compatibility with different ferric-oxide tape formulations, highly accurate yet adjustable tape speed, and microphone mixing capability do, however, set it apart from many competitive machines. The signal-overload limiter circuit was also excellent, with an attack time of a fraction of a second and a decay time of 4 to 5 seconds. It proved virtually impossible to make a distorted recording with it in use, since a sudden
(Continued on page 44)

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In 1915, our Mr. Pridham built the first moving-coil loudspeaker, true ancestor of high-fidelity horns.

We've been improving sound ever since. And everything we've learned in the intervening years has gone into our

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The MAX 12 (shown) has a 12"

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Don't settle for less.

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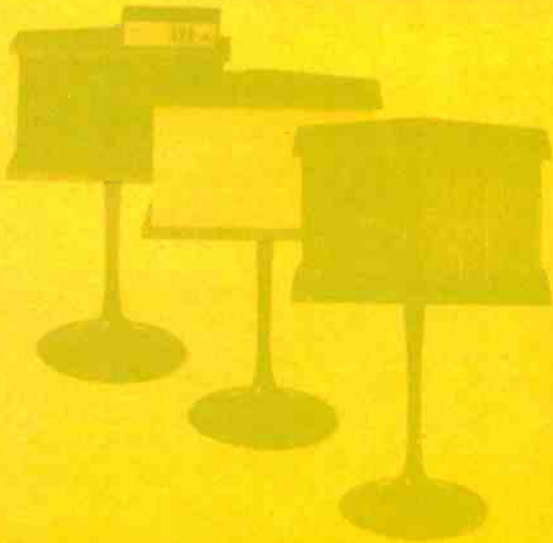
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Introducing the new...

BOSE 901 SERIES II

The original BOSE 901 was the product of a twelve year research program on acoustics.* The large sales that have grown from the worldwide acceptance of the 901 now support what we believe is the industry's most sophisticated team of researchers, dedicated to improving home music systems. All forms of loudspeakers, new and old, are studied.

The concepts of direct and reflected sound, acoustically-coupled, full-range speakers, active equalization, and flat power radiation have emerged from the research as fundamental for optimum music reproduction. We doubt that these will change.

However, what is changing is the accuracy with which we can realize these concepts in a producible speaker design and the adaptability of the design to a wider range of home environments. The 901 SERIES II represents the combination of all the technological advances that have emerged from our research department over the past five years.

The 901 SERIES II features a completely new equalizer design. It provides a type of equalization for program source variations not available on other speakers. The new equalizer also enables the 901 SERIES II to adapt to a much wider range of room environments. The 901 SERIES II can even

be played in front of drapes and still reproduce music with the proper frequency balance.

The new cone formulation in the 901 drivers provides an unprecedented uniformity of response. BOSE now employs a blue coloring and the BOSE logo to distinguish the basic cone material for special quality control measures, starting right with the manufacture of the cone material.

The 901 SERIES II represents a new height in precision control of audible performance in production speakers. This is thanks to the recent introduction of the SYNCOM™ II speaker testing computer, developed by BOSE specifically to measure performance parameters directly related to our aural perception of sound.

The 901 SERIES II carries a FIVE-YEAR warranty covering parts and labor on both the electronic active equalizer and on the speakers.

*If you would like to know about the research that developed the 901, and about the state-of-the-art of sound recording and reproduction, you will want to read Dr. Bose's articles in the June and July '73 issues of TECHNOLOGY REVIEW. A 20 page combined reprint of these articles is available from BOSE for \$.50. Also we'll send you a complimentary copy of the 16 page, full-color 1801 amplifier brochure and information on the new BOSE 901 and 501 SERIES II speakers. Write Dept. RS and request the "complete literature package."

BOSE 501 SERIES II

The Design Goals of the new 501 SERIES II:

- To duplicate as many of the sonic characteristics of the 901 SERIES II as possible, within the cost constraint that dictates the use of a woofer-tweeter approach.
- To match the frequency balance of the 901 SERIES II as closely as possible, so that the 501 and 901 can be used together to produce a Direct/Reflecting® QUADRAPHONIC system that represents a large advance over conventional, direct-radiating QUAD systems.
- To increase the high-frequency power handling capability beyond that of the original BOSE 501.

How the goals were achieved:

- By designing a new tweeter that has *double* the magnet size of the original design.

- By using four additional circuit components in the crossover network.

- By 100% selection and matching of the woofers and tweeters with the SYNCOM™ II computer—the unique computer designed and constructed by BOSE CORPORATION and put into service in August, 1973, to achieve a new level of speaker performance.

The Performance:

You must be the judge. If our efforts have succeeded, you will know immediately when you A-B the 501 SERIES II with any other speaker up to the price of the 901 SERIES II. (If you make the test in a store, be sure to clear at least 20 inches on each side of the 501, so that its reflected sound will be free to bounce off the rear wall.)

BOSE®

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increase of input signal (to as much as 50 volts!) produced a transient lasting (we estimate) less than one-tenth of a second, followed by perfectly normal sound quality. A sudden level reduction was heard as a drop in volume because of the slower decay time, but less abrupt program-level changes were followed smoothly and imperceptibly.

The headphone volume, though hardly earsplitting, was considerably higher than that provided by most cassette decks. It should be evident from our report that we have had a very positive reaction to the first Yamaha product to reach our test bench.

For more information, circle 107 on reader service card

Altec 710A AM/FM Receiver



● THE Altec 710A is a compact, medium-power AM/FM receiver. Its front-panel controls consist of five knobs and eight pushbuttons forming a line across the lower portion of the panel and a large tuning knob to the right of the "blackout" dial area, which occupies most of the panel. The control markings are considerably more legible than on most of the audio equipment we have tested recently.

The knob-operated controls include a power/speaker switch (for two pairs of speakers, either singly or in combination), bass and treble tone controls, and balance and volume controls. The tone controls have detented center-flat settings and four positions of boost and cut, and the balance control is detented at its center setting. Four of the pushbutton switches select the program source: PHONO, FM, AM, and AUX. The others control tape monitoring, FM muting, loudness compensation, and stereo/mono mode. There is also a front-panel headphone jack. The dial scales are very legible, and are calibrated at 1-MHz intervals for FM. Identifying letters (FM, AM, etc.) are illuminated to show the selected mode. The tuning meter is of the relative signal-strength type.

In the rear of the Altec 710A, the speaker and antenna terminals are spring-loaded insulated clips. A slide switch reduces the FM sensitivity to prevent overload from very strong local signals, and another switch changes the phono gain by about 10 dB to accommodate cartridges having different output levels. There is a pivoted AM ferrite antenna, two speaker fuses, a line fuse, and two a.c. outlets, one of which is switched.

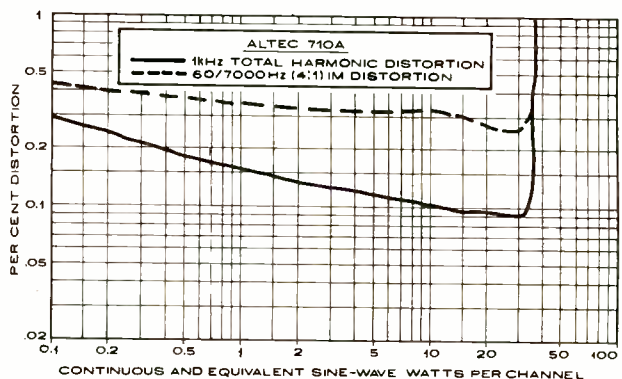
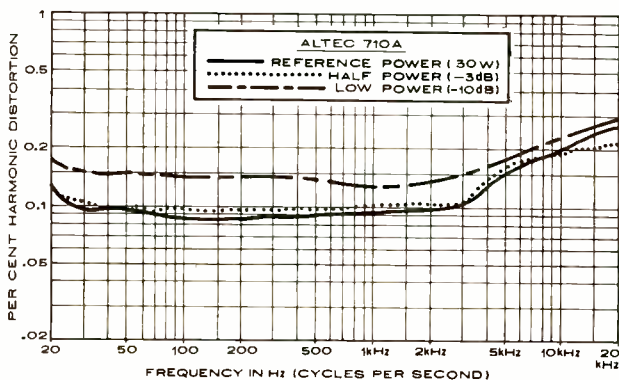
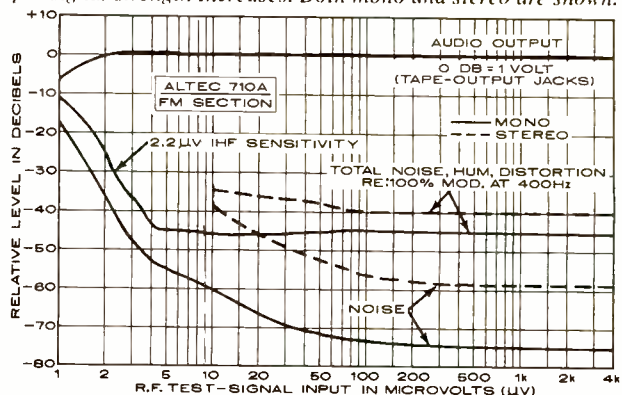
The Altec 710A is rated at 2.5 microvolts IHF FM sensitivity, and at 30 watts per channel continuous-power output into 8 ohms over the full audio-frequency range, with both channels driven, at less than 0.5 per cent harmonic or intermodulation (IM) distortion. It is supplied

with a metal cabinet finished in simulated wood grain. The receiver measures approximately 16½ x 5¾ x 15½ inches, and it weighs 23½ pounds. Price: \$375. A walnut cabinet is available for \$29.95.

● **Laboratory Measurements.** The FM tuner of the Altec 710A had a 2.2-microvolt IHF sensitivity, reaching a 50-dB signal-to-noise (S/N) ratio at 3.3 microvolts in mono. In stereo, S/N was 50 dB at 35 microvolts. Ultimate quieting was 74.5 dB in mono and 58.4 dB in stereo. FM distortion was 0.56 per cent in mono and 1 per cent in stereo. The capture ratio was a good 1.3 dB at 1,000 microvolts (4 dB at 10 microvolts), and the AM rejection was exceptionally good at 60 dB. Image rejection was a satisfactory 57 dB, and alternate-channel selectivity was 34.4 dB on the high-frequency side and 41.5 dB on the low-frequency side of the received channel. Though not exceptional, this was completely adequate for our listening area, which is served by more than fifty FM stations. The FM audio-frequency response was down 2 dB at 30 Hz and 3 dB at 15,000 Hz. Stereo separation was excellent—better than 25 dB from 30 to 15,000 Hz, and reaching 43 dB at 1,000 Hz. The FM muting threshold was 9 micro-

(Continued on page 50)

The curves below compare the levels of random noise and of total noise, hum, and distortion with the audio-output level as input-signal strength increases. Both mono and stereo are shown.



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Conservatively rated, the AR-1500 puts out 180 watts, 90 per channel, into 8 ohms, with less than 0.2% intermod distortion, less than 0.25% harmonic distortion. Two computer-designed five-pole LC filters and the improved 4-gang 6-tuned front end combine for an FM selectivity better than 90 dB, 1.8 μ V sensitivity. And here are some things the specs won't show you. There are outputs for two separate speaker systems, two sets of headphones, bi-amplification, and oscilloscope monitoring of FM. Standard inputs — all with individual level controls. Electronically monitored overload circuitry. There are even two dual-gate MOSFETS, one J-FET and a 12-pole LC filter in the AM section for super sound there!

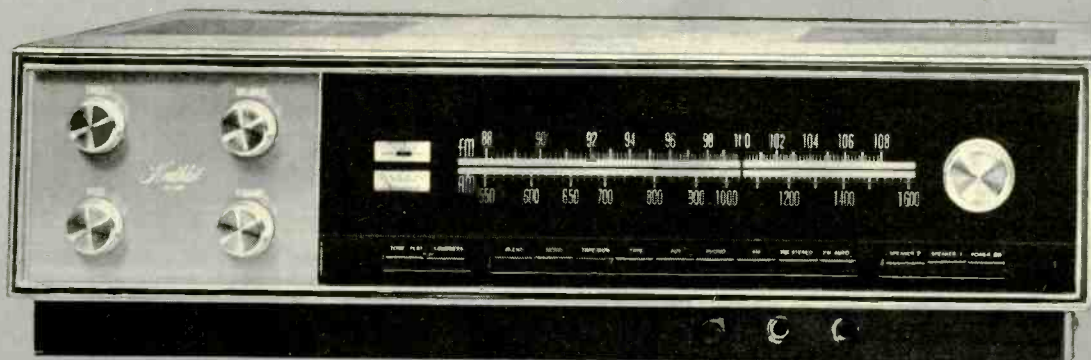
But don't let the astounding performance throw you. You can build yourself an AR-1500 even if you have never built an electronic kit before. Parts are packaged in con-

venient sub-packs, so you assemble one circuit board at a time without confusion. And there's no second guessing the Heathkit Assembly Manual. Every step is explained and illustrated. Plus there are extensive charts showing voltage and resistance measurements in key circuits as they should appear on the built-in test meter. You fully check-out your work as you go! Of course, all this special circuitry stays with the receiver so you can perform service checks over the life of the component.

The AR-1500 is simply the best receiver we have ever offered. And at the low kit-form price, it's an incredible value for the audiophile who demands excellence. Build it, listen to it, and you'll believe it.

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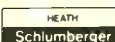
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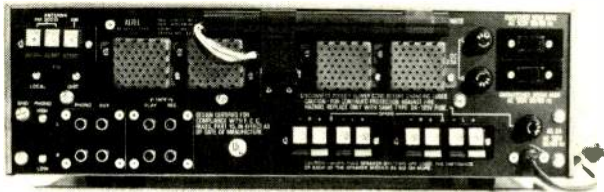
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volts, and the automatic stereo-switching threshold was 10 microvolts. Leakage of the 19-kHz stereo-broadcast pilot carrier into the audio outputs was 52 dB below 100 per cent modulation at 400 Hz. The AM tuner frequency response was rather limited, being down 6 dB at 50 and 2,400 Hz, referenced to 400 Hz.

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● *Comment.* The Altec 710A is a capable, no-nonsense receiver for people who are more concerned with basic function than with flashy styling or control frills. In spite of its rather modest appearance—or perhaps because of it—this receiver can do just about anything required of a high-quality stereo receiver, and do it well. Our tests confirmed Altec's somewhat conservative ratings for the 710A, and we could not fault its listening quality and overall handling characteristics.

For more information, circle 108 on reader service card



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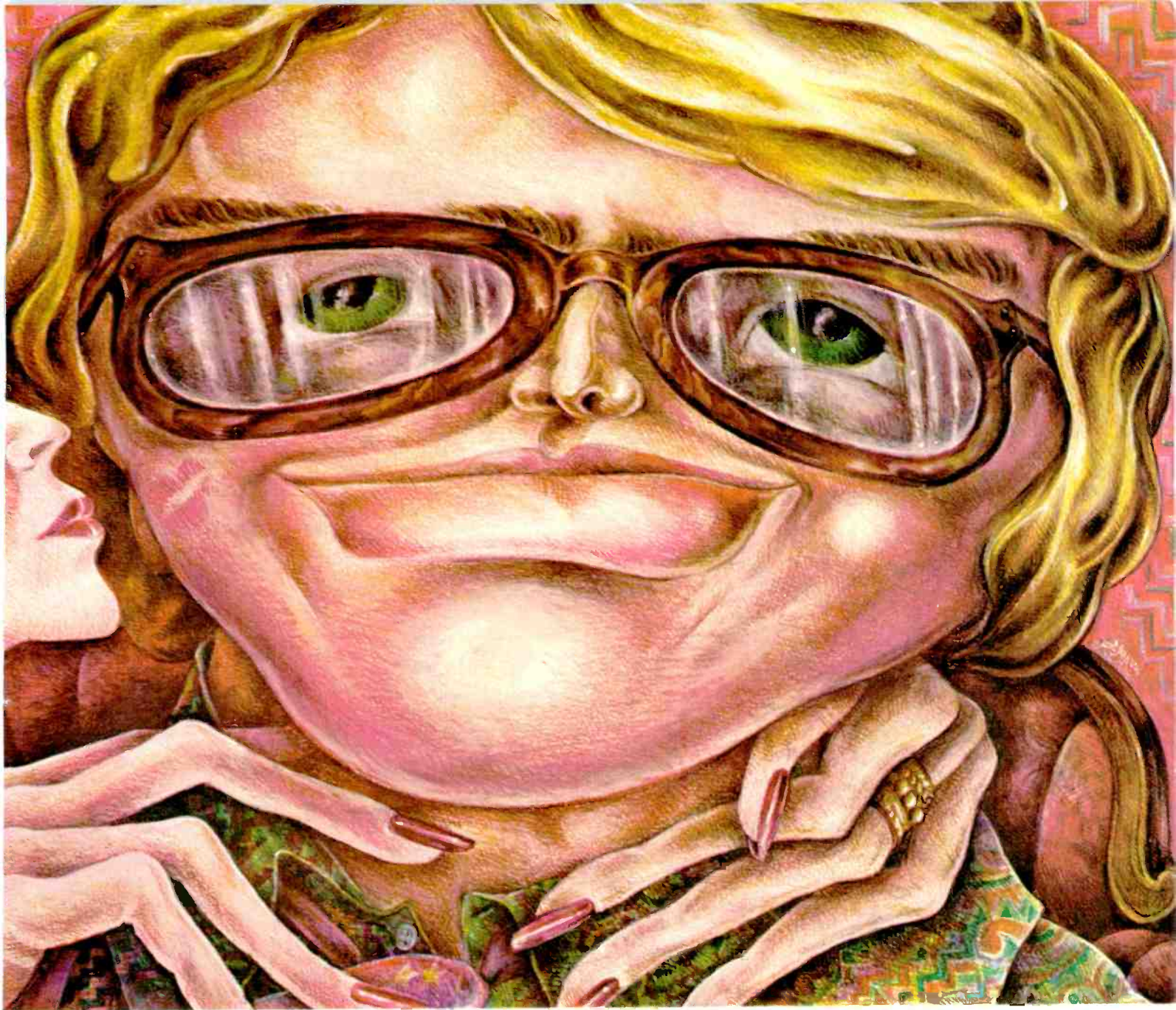
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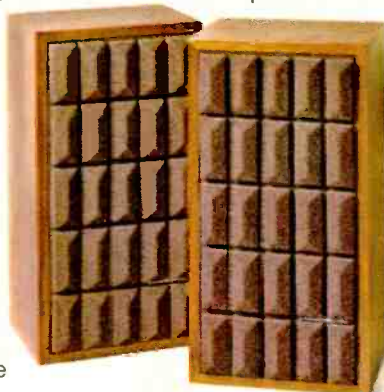
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MIN MAX MIN MAX

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MIN MAX MIN MAX

2 4

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FRONT
L 1 TAPE R 3

SOURCE
OUTPUT

REAR
L 2 TAPE R 4

SOURCE

REC STOP PAUSE

RECORD MODE
L 1 ON R 3
OFF
PLAY 2 CHAN
EQ BIAS
HIGH
4 CHAN
NORMAL L 2 ON R 4
OFF

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GOING ON RECORD

By JAMES GOODFRIEND
Music Editor



SEEMS LIKE OLD TIMES

ON July 18 of this year, Columbia Records held a press conference to announce the signing of the young conductor Michael Tilson Thomas to an exclusive contract. There is a significance to the signing, and to the press conference, that seems to go beyond the bounds of the ordinary, and that is worth some discussion.

To begin with, the press conference itself was the first (that I can remember, at least) in some time to be attended by Goddard Lieberson. Lieberson, at Columbia, carries a certain special aura about him. He was, of course, the president of the company before Clive Davis, at a time when Columbia may not have made as much money as they have made, for several years at least, under Davis, but when its reputation as a musical institution was considerably higher than it is today. Lieberson, after all, is a composer and a musician, a first-rate producer, and essentially a "record man." Davis is a lawyer. Lieberson had an interest in music for the sake of the music as well as for the money, and Columbia Records had a certain pride, at that time, in the very non-commerciality of some of the music they released. It was not that they were unconcerned about selling records; far from it. Rather, the release of something as far out as, say, Webern, made everything else not quite so far out—say, Bartók—look commercial, and Columbia marketed Bartók the way other companies marketed Brahms.

At any rate, Lieberson was at the conference, and with him something of the old Columbia feeling seemed to be in the air. Thomas was a logical artist for them to sign and Columbia was a logical company for him to sign with: everyone was aware of the propriety of the situation. Thomas is a young man with ideas. His first two Columbia ideas, which he announced at the conference, are to record the complete music of Carl Ruggles and the complete music of Perotin, the

twelfth-century Notre Dame composer. Nobody blanched, nobody fidgeted. It seemed like old times.

Actually, the idea is far from unpromising commercially. Quadraphonic sound is a reality, and its major stumbling block has been a lack of imaginative musical scholarship concerning the repertoire and its spatial layout. Both the Ruggles repertoire and the Perotin offer possibilities for musically inventive uses of four-channel recording, which will in turn add to the basic interest of this all-but-unknown music.

Thomas is twenty-eight years old, currently the Director of Young People's Concerts with the New York Philharmonic, Principal Guest Conductor of the Boston Symphony, and Director of the Buffalo Symphony. He is the *Wunderkind* type and reminds everyone, especially Leonard Bernstein, of Leonard Bernstein. Though he has previously made records (even a piece by Ruggles) for Deutsche Grammophon, he is obviously Columbia's kind of artist, not DG's. The German tradition has been to leave ancient music to the musicological specialists (they make special labels for them—Archive, Das Alte Werk, etc.) and contemporary music to the contemporary specialists (frequently composer-conductors—Maderna, Stockhausen, etc.). It is doubtful that a hot young prospect who wanted to explore the extremes of the repertoire would have fitted in with their thinking very comfortably or for very long.

But he obviously will fit in with Columbia's thinking; in fact, he will be part of that thinking. He will not have to do standard repertoire with a standard orchestra, but will lead, at times, the New York Philharmonic, the Cleveland Orchestra, perhaps his own Buffalo Symphony Orchestra, and various smaller ensembles and pickup groups deemed valuable for special projects. Lacking only information on repertoire specifics, the Thomas-Columbia future unrolls

before our eyes like a preselected road map.

THE interesting question now is what RCA will do—for the United States, in terms of classical music, is still a two-company country. In the past, most readers will remember, the specific competitions between RCA and Columbia kept things interesting in the classical field and probably benefited both companies as well as the industry as a whole. There was something almost sports-like in the teaming of Toscanini, Munch, Heifetz, Rubinstein, and others on the one side, versus Walter, Ormandy, Bernstein, Stern, and Serkin on the other. Is there the possibility of such a benevolent rivalry again?

There are, of course, other young conductors besides Thomas. The one that comes to mind most immediately is James Levine, another sort of *Wunderkind*, with a musical personality quite different from Thomas'. If Thomas is a Columbia-type artist, it seems to me that Levine is very definitely an RCA type. His first area of interest is opera, and RCA is an opera company in a way that Columbia has never been. If Levine has unconventional ideas about music, they are for the most part not, like Thomas', in the area of far-out composers and repertoire, but in interpretation and, perhaps, in the lesser-known operas of well-known composers. All this fits in well with RCA's traditional mode of thought, which has never been devoted to the systematic exploration of unusual repertoire, but which makes its occasional (sometimes even frequent) forays into the unknown at the behest of one of its established artists and then withdraws after committing that single work to disc. It is probably the system that works best for RCA, and departures from it have not been outstanding.

Levine has been signed to conduct Verdi's *I Vespri Siciliani* for RCA. Beyond that point, no one is talking. Yet RCA could, if they made a commitment to Levine and threw their promotional weight behind him, help to build the sort of complementary rivalry that stirs up excitement and benefits the whole industry. Young artists may not be what it's all about for young, about-to-be-converted listeners; no one has yet really figured out the formula guaranteed to pull them into the classical orbit. But there are many, already converted, who have for the last few years had a certain feeling of both satiety and *déjà vu* as Serkin *père* did the Beethovens once again or Ormandy re-recorded for RCA what he previously recorded for Columbia. And for them, new, young artists with new ideas make up the magic potion that clears the system and whets the appetite, and (to preserve the metaphor) the excitement of musical competition is the *apéritif* of record consumption.

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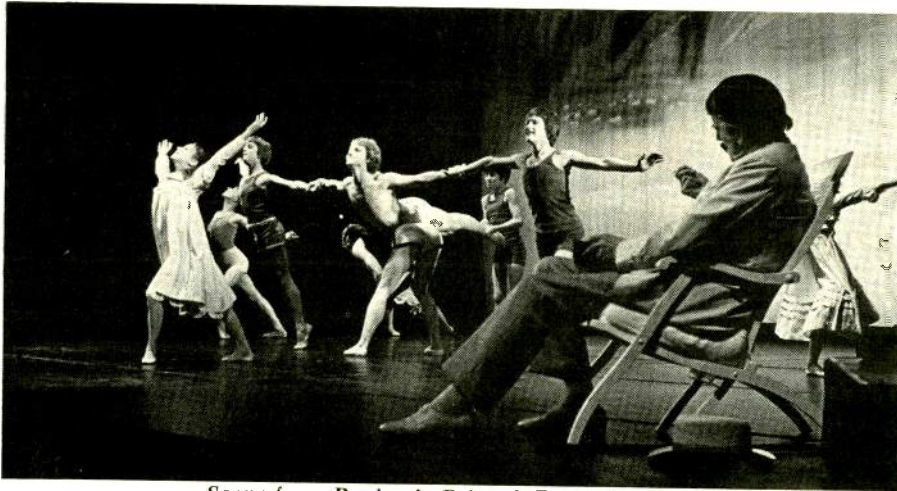
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Scene from Benjamin Britten's *Death in Venice*

LONDON LETTER

A PLETHORA OF MODERN OPERAS

By Henry Pleasants

MODERN opera has been in the forefront of the late season. At Glyndebourne we have had Gottfried von Einem's *The Visit of the Old Lady*, a British premiere, and at Aldeburgh the world premiere of Benjamin Britten's *Death in Venice*. The Royal Opera at Covent Garden has transferred Britten's *Owen Wingrave* from TV to the stage, and has revived—with discouraging results at the box office—Alban Berg's *Wozzeck*.

This concentration has thrown into sharp focus one of the persistent vexations of modern opera: the conflict of orchestra and word. They are all literary operas, drawing on Duerrenmatt, Mann, James, and Buechner. And they deal primarily with problems: greed, homosexuality, pacifism, and social injustice. The problems are set forth, developed, and argued in a literary manner, if hardly in texts that do justice to the original authors. But the composer's medium, the instrument by which he gets into the act, so to speak, is the symphony orchestra. In every case with the operas under discussion—least so in *Death in Venice*—the orchestra intervenes between singing actor and listener, rendering most of the text unintelligible.

To compound the mischief, the writing for voices is in a declamatory or parlant style closer to speech than to song, and often less musical even than speech. The listener is denied the purely lyrical pleasure provided in older operas by arias and concerted numbers, where textual intelligibility is less telling than melodic and vocal blandishment. No one leaves a modern opera whistling or humming a memorable melody, which is one of the reasons why, once the excitement and notoriety of a premiere are past, so few ever go back.

The coincidence of *Owen Wingrave* and *Death in Venice* offered further food

for thought about the place of opera in a cinematic age when so much of humanity spends so much of its life looking at a moving picture screen. *Owen Wingrave* was written for TV and *Death in Venice* for the stage. The overriding impression I took away from *Death in Venice* was that it should have been the other way around.

Death in Venice has, to begin with, seventeen scenes, with action and setting shifting constantly from Venice to Lido and back again, from beach to hotel, from gondola to dry land. Not all the ingenious stagecraft of Colin Graham and the graphic skill of John Piper could solve the problem of confining so much movement, so much scenery, and so many people to a mere stage. Nor could they realize, as Visconti's film did, the pervasive and symbolic presence of the sea, the sunbaked beach, the period charm of an Edwardian Lido, and the threat of a festering Venice.

There were other difficulties in translating Mann's novella into opera, not the least being that the novella is written largely in indirect discourse. In a film, or on TV, this could be accommodated by the use of a narrator. In Britten's opera, the indirect discourse becomes dialogue and monologue, and in Myfanwy Piper's libretto the result is a dire catalog of stilted and improbable utterance. It is hard to imagine so fastidious a person as Gustav von Aschenbach saying: "Foul exhalations rise under the bridges, oppress my breathing, dispel my joy," or "I feel my spirits soar," or "O voluptuous days, O the rapture I suffer, the feverish chase, exquisite fear. . . ." And page after page of the same, and worse.

Another problem, more easily solved on film than on stage, is the fact that, in the novella, Aschenbach and the boy never speak to each other. The boy is simply an object. Britten has made him a

dancer, and has treated him and his playmates, even his family, choreographically. It is an imaginative ploy, but, while heightening the import of Mann's Hellenistic allusions, it also seems to be loading the dice against poor Aschenbach. The grace of Mann's narrative is its understatement. Britten, with his balletistic play, has spelled temptation in capital letters.

WHAT saved the venture, at least in this production, was Peter Pears' superlative vocal and histrionic performance as Aschenbach, a crowning achievement in an already illustrious career. Pears was nearly matched by John Shirley-Quirk, appearing and reappearing as Aschenbach's Dionysian tempter in the form of the traveler, the gondolier, the fop, the hotel manager, and the barber. Finally, there was the familiar marvel of Britten's way with orchestra and chorus, fluently realized by Stuart Bedford in place of the absent composer, who is convalescing from heart surgery.

Owen Wingrave at Covent Garden, on the other hand, was fascinating as proof that transferring an opera from TV to opera house may be just as difficult as transferring a standard opera from opera house to TV. The problem, in either case, is essentially a matter of space. Opera in the opera house assumes a considerable distance between audience and stage. Opera conceived for TV assumes no distance at all. The Royal Opera production could not get around the fact that Britten, in fulfilling his BBC-TV commission, knew exactly what he was doing and why.

The Visit of the Old Lady, curiously, was the first of Einem's operas to be heard in England, discounting a recent university production of *The Trial*. It was, predictably, less indulgently received than Britten's operas have been, although hardly inferior. Einem's problem—and it is sometimes Britten's too—is that he overwrites for the orchestra, and seeks to ride the din by setting for his singers vocal requirements that are the very opposite of singing, often manageable only by recourse to unseemly and unintelligible yelling. But he also knows how to pace and build a meaty scene. *The Visit of the Old Lady* is an unpleasant opera, just as it was an unpleasant play and an unpleasant film. But it has its moments of real theater, and Kerstin Meyer, as the old lady, knew where they were.

A possibly significant shift in operatic procedure may be noted in *Death in Venice*. There are longish stretches where Aschenbach sings in unmetered recitative, accompanied, and quietly, only by piano. Much is left to the singer's discretion, and with a singer such as Pears, every word is heard. It seems to be looking back to Monteverdi—and that's not such a bad idea.

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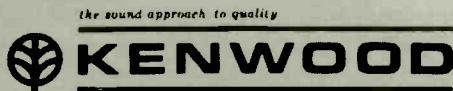
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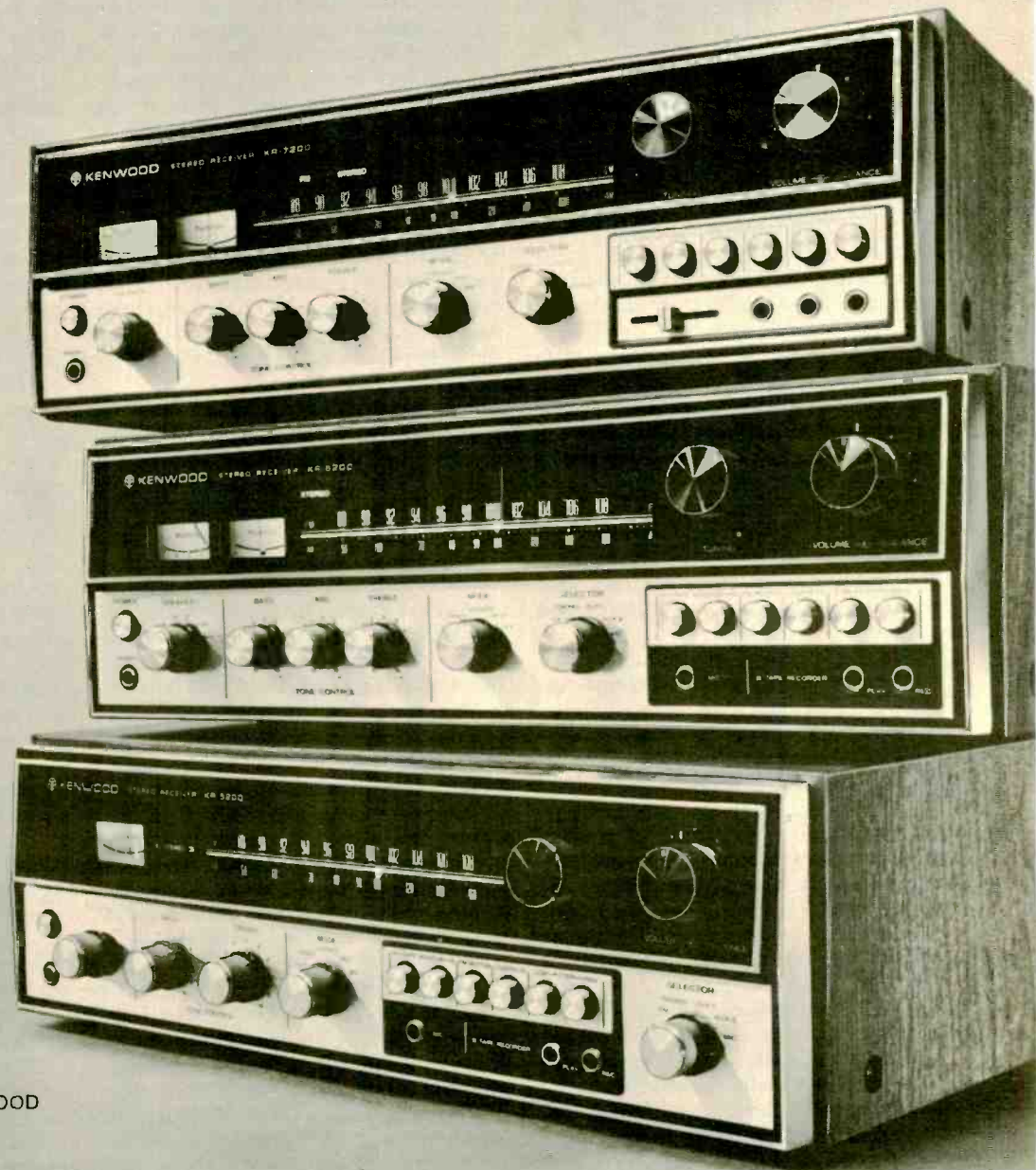
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THE FIRST WORLD RECORD CONGRESS



A report by
William Livingstone

MOST international scholarly or professional meetings are set in the large capitals of the world, but the convention billed as the First World Record Congress (Primo Congresso Mondiale di Discografia) took place from June 11 to 18 of this year in the surprisingly small city of Treviso, Italy. Located in the Veneto region, not far from Venice, Treviso is a pleasant, attractive little city unspoiled by tourism.

Participants in the congress had little time to explore Treviso, however, because the energetic critic Giuseppe Pugliese, who directed the congress, had planned a full agenda of lectures and conferences. These covered such aspects of recordings as production and distribution, copyright protection, records as educational tools, criticism, jazz, rock, spoken word, and the discographies of Guillaume Dufay, Verdi, Wagner, Mahler, and Janáček.

Most of the meetings took place in Treviso's Teatro Comunale, a beautifully decorated, well preserved nineteenth-century opera house whose board of directors had organized the congress. The polyglot assembly could hear the proceedings in simultaneous translation in Italian, English, French, or German. Italians predominated, of course, but critics, editors, musicologists, record producers, and collectors had come from such countries as the United States, Japan, England, France, Austria, Germany, Poland, and Czechoslovakia.

Ronald Kemp of Great Britain reported that consumption of classical recordings in Western Europe had increased 400 per cent in the last five years. Musicologist Gotaro Kawakami pointed out

that Japan, a leader in audio equipment, lagged behind Europe and America in record production, but in 1972 produced 152 million discs (on 140 labels), of which about 20 per cent were of classical music. Discussing production in Eastern Europe, Janusz Letowski, of the Polish Academy of Science, stated that classical records accounted for 40 per cent of the total output in Russia and 50 per cent in East Germany. Such statistics led the Italians to proclaim their country musically underdeveloped because only one out of every hundred records sold in Italy is classical. (According to the Recording Industry Association of America, 4 per cent of the LP's sold in the United States in 1972 were classical records.)

The young townspeople of Treviso seemed more interested in the excellent exhibit of antique phonographs in a nearby palace and in the display of modern audio equipment in the lobby of the theater than in the proceedings inside. But a number of them attended the roundtables on jazz and rock, both of which were disappointing. The panel assigned to discuss "Where Is Jazz Going?" spent almost all its time telling where jazz had been. In the rock meeting an older critic attacked the twenty-five-year-old rock writer Massimo Villa, demanding to know whether Bob Dylan was for John Cage. Villa retorted that he'd like to know whether Cage was for Dylan . . . and so on.

The discussion on record criticism bogged down in a debate over whether a recording is an accurate document of live performance (I held that it isn't and shouldn't be). The mild argument that resulted was brought to a sensible end when a French editor intervened from the floor to state that the first purpose of record criticism is to guide readers bewildered by the great duplication of repertoire and help them decide which of the many recordings of Beethoven's Fifth to buy.

Among the scholarly papers presented, the one on recent recordings of Mahler (by Ulrich Dibelius of Germany's *Hi-Fi Stereophonie*) was much admired. He offered the opinion that we need no longer regard Bruno Walter as the ultimate Mahler conductor, and dismissed Leonard Bernstein for exaggerating certain elements in Mahler's music.

But to me the star performer among the critics was Rodolfo Celletti, a highly regarded Italian vocal specialist, who spoke succinctly and authoritatively on the role of records in the bel canto revival. Giving due credit to Maria Callas, Celletti maintained that the revival really got under way *after* the Callas era and cited the London recording of Handel's *Alcina* with Joan Sutherland as the real beginning of an epoch. Among the other bel canto albums singled out for praise were Donizetti's *Lucrezia Borgia* with

Montserrat Caballé (RCA), Donizetti's *Roberto Devereux* and *Maria Stuarda* with Beverly Sills (both ABC), Rossini's *The Barber of Seville* and *Cenerentola* with Teresa Berganza (both Deutsche Grammophon), and Rossini's *Semiramide* (London) with Sutherland and Marilyn Horne, whom Celletti considers to be quite simply the greatest Rossini singer of the century.

A roundtable originally listed as "The Minor Works of Verdi" was retitled "The Other Verdi," since few Italian critics are willing to admit publicly that anything Verdi wrote could be called minor. There was a little shouting ("How can you say you love Verdi if you don't love *La Battaglia di Legnano*?"), but everyone agreed that the *entire* Verdi canon should be recorded.

Three prominent singers of the early period of recording were honored by discussions of their recorded legacies: Enrico Caruso and Feodor Chaliapin, on the hundredth anniversary of their births, and Titta Ruffo, on the twentieth anniversary of his death. Professor John Clarke Adams of Syracuse University brought authority to the Caruso evening because he had heard the great tenor in live performance, and Marina Chaliapin, the very elegant daughter of the Russian basso, spoke charmingly about her father—he never practiced or did vocalises and was the despair of record producers because when he began to sing he would act his role and forget to sing into the horn.

FOR most of us the principal virtue of the congress was that it provided a pleasant atmosphere in which music lovers from many countries could chat and gossip. No monumental decisions were reached in Treviso—this was not the purpose of the congress—but a lot of information and impressions were exchanged and a few prognostications and hopes for the future were expressed. Mr. Kawakami recommended that Japanese manufacturers make a prompt decision on *one* standard four-channel system, Rainer Brock of Polydor International declared that the future of recordings lies in the video disc, and Pugliese deplored record companies' reluctance to release sales figures and looked forward to a day when they will be made public in the same way as circulation figures of periodicals. Other speakers called for more attention to recordings from newspapers and clearer separation between criticism of live performances and recordings.

When it was over, we were treated to an all-Ravel concert by the orchestra of the Teatro La Fenice conducted by Georges Prêtre with Martha Argerich as piano soloist. It was moving, but after so many days and nights of talking about music without hearing a note, I could probably have been stirred by a rendition of *Santa Lucia* on the harmonica.



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Bruckner's Symphony No. 4, in E-flat, "Romantic"

WHEN he was thirty-two years old, Anton Bruckner accepted a position as organist of the cathedral in the Austrian town of Linz. In line with his duties there, he composed a considerable amount of choral music for the Roman Catholic liturgy. Then, in 1863, when he was nearly forty, he attended a performance of Richard Wagner's opera *Tannhäuser*, which completely changed his life as a composer. Shortly afterwards, he composed a Symphony in F Minor, now called the "Study" Symphony, which reflected Wagnerian harmonic and orchestrational techniques, and, once launched as a composer of symphonies, he proceeded to produce ten more over the remaining three decades of his life.

On New Year's Eve, 1873, Bruckner completed his Third Symphony, a work that so impressed Wagner that he asked Bruckner to dedicate it to him. This, needless to say, Bruckner was delighted to do. Two days after completing the Third Symphony, he immediately began another one. The Fourth, in E-flat Major, is the only one of the Bruckner symphonies to carry a title conferred upon it by the composer himself. In dubbing the score the "Romantic" Symphony he invited all kinds of speculation concerning his intentions. An early biographer, Ernst Decsey, declared that the first movement was all about knights in medieval days, and attached a similar "program" to the other sections. The devoted Brucknerian Gabriel Engel published a different account of the symphony's program in the January, 1938, edition of *Chord and Discord*, the quarterly journal of the Bruckner Society of America:

Many years after he had finished the original version of the Fourth Symphony, when its premiere was at last being planned, a friend said to him, "Bruckner, I know you must have had some story in mind when you wrote this symphony. It is so vividly descriptive. Come, tell us about it." "Well, let's see," said Bruckner obligingly. "Perhaps you're right. The first movement is a scene out of the days of chivalry. You know, knights and such things. The second is a rustic love scene. A peasant lad makes love to his sweetheart but she scorns him. The third movement is a hunt interrupted by a village dance, and the last—the finale—really, I'm sorry, but I've forgotten just what it was about."

This casual dismissal of the last movement's "program" is probably an indication of Bruckner's real feelings where such matters are concerned. As

a committed symphonist by the time of the Fourth Symphony, he probably never intended to suggest anything but a general mood and atmosphere in tagging the score "Romantic." But in so doing he virtually affixed the seal of popular appeal to the work, as is so often the case with music that carries a descriptive subtitle.

CERTIFYING to the popularity of the Fourth is the fact that it is the most frequently recorded of all the Bruckner symphonies, with eight different performances currently available. Among them, my favorites are those conducted by Daniel Barenboim (DG 2530336), Bernard Haitink (Philips 835385, reel-to-reel L9171), Eugen Jochum (DG 2-2707025, reel-to-reel K 9135), and Zubin Mehta (London CS 6695). Now available only on tape, but worth looking for on disc, is the one conducted by the late István Kertész (London CS 6480, reel-to-reel N 80177).

Jochum's performance inhabits a special and unique province. More than any of his younger colleagues, he stresses the mood of mystery and rapture in the score. This may be an old-fashioned concept, but it works quite well. With the Berlin Philharmonic in top form, and with powerful reproduction of the playing, Jochum's is an eminently satisfying account. Haitink and Kertész adopt a more straightforward approach; both conductors observe the composer's markings faithfully, and the music emerges with welcome spontaneity. Haitink invests his account with a degree more of rhythmic flexibility, but Kertész has the better of it where sonic splendor is concerned. Mehta's is altogether more brilliant, with greater emphasis on the shifting moods of the music and an underlining of the richness of the scoring.

Which brings me to the newest of all the Bruckner Fourth recordings—Barenboim's, with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. As he does with everything he touches, Barenboim invests this music with enormous personality. His is the most dramatic reading of the lot, with a contagious exuberance and vitality and great rhythmic snap. The Chicago Symphony musicians play for him with all their hearts, and the recorded sound is superb. You can't go wrong with any one of the five performances I recommend, but Barenboim's is for me the cream of the crop.



THE MUSIC OF CHINA



Now that the parting of the bamboo curtain once again affords the West a glimpse of the Middle Kingdom, perhaps a note or two from its ancient musical tradition will filter through as well

By Fritz A. Kuttner

THE political developments of 1972 and 1973 have created a considerable interest in things Chinese among the American public, an interest that goes far beyond diplomacy. The likelihood of exchanges between the United States and the People's Republic of China in scientific, medical, technological, and cultural fields has given rise to a great deal of speculation and curiosity, and what we have thus far seen and heard of—for example—ping-pong, acupuncture, and Chinese acrobats has whetted our appetite for more information. Americans are beginning to wonder about such things as the state of music in China today. What is the possible future development of Chinese music, and what are its contributions to the international, particularly to the Western, musical scene likely to be?

Such questions are difficult to answer. Although China looks back on the longest uninterrupted musical civilization in the history of mankind—dating back to 1400 B.C. or even earlier—the first somewhat detailed and reliable information about Chinese musical traditions did not reach Western

countries until around 1780 A.D. The reason for this is that China, throughout its long history, has preferred to live its cultural and social life in splendid isolation from most of its Asian neighbors and from European curiosity in particular. This was true even when Europeans made occasional contacts with the Far East between the eighth and seventeenth centuries. The bamboo curtain that came down around China with the establishment of the Communist regime in 1949 represented by no means a *new* policy of international isolation, but rather the reaffirmation of attitudes typical in the nation for a thousand years before our time. Under these circumstances, precise information about China's musical life *at present* is not only very scanty but rarely reliable.

Equally difficult and risky is any attempted prognosticating about the immediate future of Chinese music. The situation brings to mind an anecdote of the 1920's: General Joseph Pilsudski, then Premier of Poland, was asked by foreign journalists on the eve of a national election who, in his opinion, was going to win. He reportedly replied: "Gentlemen, I shall be glad to tell you what will happen in twenty or thirty years, but I can't possibly know what will happen tomorrow." So it is with China: predictions may be made only if one looks far enough into the

◀ *In this twelfth-century representation of a long-standing legend (left), Confucius plays the ch'in, a seven-string zither, for his ten disciples. The figure striking the bells (above) is from a rubbing of a stone relief in a third-century tomb.*

There is in fact no such thing as art for art's sake, art that stands above classes, art that is detached from or independent of politics.

Chairman Mao Tsetung

future—at least the risks are lessened, for by then both prophet and prophecies are likely to have been forgotten. But any prediction of a distant future must be based on our knowledge of what has happened in the past, and the best way to understand what the Chinese may do in years to come is to know what they have done previously.

The most important aspect of historical developments in the nation's musical life is its extremely slow movement over the ages. Most of the essential features of Chinese musical tradition were well established as early as the two Han Dynasties (from 202 B.C. to 220 A.D.). At that time, the Chinese already had a system of twelve semitones per octave, of which only five were used at a time for building scales and melodies (pentatonic scales), and they possessed a large arsenal of plucked string instruments, woodwinds, and percussion (including bells and sonorous stone chimes). Furthermore, they had organized vast orchestras to perform at court ceremonies, religious rites, and other official functions. Finally, they had created a large bureaucracy which was in charge of training, rehearsing, and conducting the musicians for all functions of state and also controlled the manufacture, standardization, storage, and maintenance of all instruments. That bureaucracy was even in charge of all official composition, musical acoustics, and theory, plus rules for the composition of poetry and song texts to be used in the musical settings for rites and ceremonial occasions.

In later centuries, subsequent dynasties added to this fairly rigid establishment of state-controlled and publicly financed musical practices with refinements, innovations, and moderate amounts of experimentation, especially in the range of private musical activities, which remained essentially the domain of a wealthy, highly educated elite. Outside of this privileged class there existed, as in most other civilizations, the music of the common people in the form of folksong and simple instrumental music, which were as amateurish and primitive as they are practically anywhere else in the world. Occasionally, for brief periods in history, the pentatonic scale system was experimentally extended to seven and even nine tones per octave, but these efforts never took hold for any length of time. In fact, up to the present, the masses of the Chinese

people seem to prefer their five-tone scale to any extended tonal system, with one important exception: the Chinese are very fond of tonal inflections (up, down, or undulating) of the original pitches, and quite a few of their stringed instruments are constructed in a way that facilitates and encourages such pitch "deviations." This musical preference is obviously related to an important characteristic of the Chinese language, a so-called "tone" language in which tiny inflections (four to seven) of the speaking pitch drastically change the meaning of every word. For example, the syllable *ma*¹ in a high, level pitch means an old woman or a nurse; in a high, rising tone, *ma*² means hemp; in a low, rising tone, *ma*³ means horse; in a high pitch falling to low, *ma*⁴ means to curse, to abuse.

ATTEMPTS to introduce harmony or polyphonic techniques into the nation's music have been rather unsuccessful. And apparently no extensive rhythmic differentiation or complexity (as exists in the music of India, for example) has ever appealed to the Chinese either; the great body of their traditional music has been mostly in simple 4/4 time.

How utterly incompatible Chinese musical preferences were with those of Western civilizations may be suggested by the account of a French Jesuit priest, J. J. Amiot, who lived and worked in China for more than forty years. In a famous book on Chinese musical achievements and traditions (published in 1780 in Paris) he tells about the disas-

In Nanking, Chinese school girls play a simplified (two string) version of the traditional Chinese yüeh-ch'in, or moon guitar.



Wide World Photos

trous fiasco that occurred when he tried to introduce eighteenth-century French keyboard music to a highly sophisticated Chinese audience. Apparently a very competent harpsichordist, Amiot played a program of compositions by Rameau and other great French masters, but found that his listeners were not only unimpressed and uninterested but in fact heartily detested what they heard.

By the end of the nineteenth century the limited expressive means—five-tone scale and absence of harmony, polyphony, and rhythmic variation—along with the rigid, unchangeable tradition of the official repertoire produced the natural consequence: the nation's musical resources, having been overused, dried up. In 1911, the last dynasty abdicated and all the court and other official musical organizations disbanded. Then, except for simple folk and amateur music and the mass entertainment of Chinese opera, which is actually much more a kind of dramatic theater than a musical drama, the country's great musical tradition fell practically silent, creating an almost total vacuum in a nation that unquestionably ranks among the most musically gifted in the world.

With overwhelming impact, the wealth of Western music filled this vacuum. What had seemed impossible in 1780 became an amazing phenomenon of the period between 1900 and 1966. A generation of young Chinese, starved for great music, began flocking to Russian teachers who had arrived in the coastal areas after the Revolution of 1917.

Chinese virtuosity has never been confined to a single field, as the Shenyang Acrobatic Troupe proved in a 1972 U.S. tour.



Wide World Photos

Politics cannot be equated with art, nor can a general world outlook be equated with a method of artistic creation and criticism.

Chairman Mao Tsetung

These Russians were soon followed by Italian, English, and French musicians who set up classes and helped to create music schools and conservatories. After 1933, when immigrant musicians from Nazi Germany and Austria settled in Shanghai, every conceivable kind of instruction in vocal training, theory, composition, instrumental performance, and conducting had become accessible to Chinese music students. Soon the best of them would go to Russia, Europe, and the United States to continue their education under famous performers and teachers. When I arrived in Shanghai in 1939, the city's municipal orchestra, a body of about seventy-five professionals under the direction of an Italian conductor, consisted exclusively of European instrumentalists. When I left the country, ten years later, practically every desk of the organization had been taken over by a Chinese instrumentalist, trained in China, playing under a Chinese conductor. By the 1960's, numerous young instrumentalists and singers had emigrated to Europe and the United States and established themselves as respected performers, including a number of very gifted composers and conductors. In Peking around 1965-1966 there was staged a giant Communist pageant which employed several hundred musicians playing every instrument of the Western symphony orchestra, in addition to hundreds of singers and dancers. The enormous score had been composed in a late-Romantic Western style by Chinese composers—not a really significant or original work, to be sure, but fully competent in the style selected for the work in all questions of rhythm, harmony, polyphony, and orchestration. The performance, circulated abroad in an abridged recording (six sides) in a limited number of copies under the name *The East Is Red*, proved to be highly professional by exacting Western standards for symphonic and choral productions—on a level, in fact, of which quite a few Western organizations would be proud. All of this had been developed, virtually out of nothing, within less than thirty years and in spite of the fact that probably only a few, if any, of the participants had ever been outside of China.

During the same period (from about 1930 to 1966) Chinese musical scholarship flourished after it had been all but dormant for several centuries. At the newly founded National Institute for Musico-

We oppose both works of art with a wrong political viewpoint and the tendency towards the "poster and slogan style" which is correct in political viewpoint but lacking in artistic power.

Chairman Mao Tsetung

logical Research in Peking, a new breed of first-class historians and theorists were working and publishing on a level fully comparable to that of the best modern musicologists in Western nations.

But all of this rich achievement and work was brought to a sudden brutal halt with the onset, in 1966, of the so-called "Cultural Revolution," which, among many other drastic measures, proscribed all cultural activities related, or thought to be related, to Western civilization. All performance and teaching of Western or Western-sounding music was banned; orchestras and other musical groups were disbanded; the National Institute in Peking was closed, even though its work had been devoted exclusively to *Chinese* musical history; distinguished musicians and conservatory administrators were reportedly jailed or shipped to rural districts to do forced agricultural labor for their indoctrination and "re-education." Rumors reaching the Western world told of roving bands of youthful Red Guards who allegedly destroyed countless Western musical instruments and assaulted performers known to have specialized in Western music. One horror story related that one of the nation's best young pianists was attacked in his home in Shanghai and that both of his wrists were broken by these hoodlums to prevent him from ever playing the piano again. It will probably never be possible for Westerners to confirm or refute any of these stories, but considering the large amount of violence that has been reliably credited to the "Cultural Revolution," it is not unreasonable to assume that the field of Westernized music was among the victims.

WHAT the situation is now, in the fall of 1973, cannot be established with any degree of certainty, because for several years little indirect information (let alone comprehensive reporting) on the state of music in China has reached the Western world. So, at this point, speculation and intelligent guesswork will have to take over, based on the knowledge of the political-cultural conditions in other fields of activity since 1967. Most important in any such assessment is the realization that all views about the social, cultural, and political functions of music and the other arts have been radically changed in Communist China. The governing doctrine is that music,

along with the other creative arts, must always and exclusively serve the education and indoctrination of the great masses of the population, must always further the policies, philosophies, or ideologies of the Communist state and its government. This view imposes definite and strict rules on the functions of music in society and excludes many of the other functions that music previously had in China and still has in Western countries. Music as entertainment or for simple enjoyment is out of favor for the time being, and even more so are the types of highly sophisticated music that might appeal particularly to an educated and well-to-do elite—but then a leisure class no longer exists in the People's Republic. This situation obviously eliminates or at least severely restricts the creation and performance of instrumental (that is, "abstract") music, which cannot very well carry ideological or political connotations and messages. Instead, emphasis is placed on songs, oratorio-type works, or other choral compositions, with or without instrumental accompaniment and, frequently, in combination with expressive dance and spoken recitations.

An important aspect of musical life is the economic situation of the musician, who cannot be trained and earn a living unless society pays for it in one form or another. Since in a socialist state no private funds are available for the training and maintenance of musicians, the state alone can allocate monies for this purpose. And thus the state decides who is to be trained and what those selected will be allowed or required to do with their skills. The consequence is that art of no type, form, or content can flourish and survive unless it is approved by the government agencies in charge of cultural affairs. Thus, for example, the whole repertoire of the famous Chinese opera companies—of both the Peking and South China styles—has been banned because it was essentially based on heroic or romantic themes from Chinese history and legend. In order to fill the vacuum in China's most popular mass entertainment, a large repertoire of new operas is being created, and these new works deal with the heroes of the Communist revolution, with work in the factories and in agriculture, or with other topics of an ideological or political nature. If you wonder whether there are no courageous individualists who insist on pursuing their own independent careers in music while being supported by families, friends, and admirers, the answer is that there cannot be. They would have no place to receive training and no opportunity to perform, except in a private home. And very soon the state would single them out as parasites and ship them off to do some "useful" work on a farm or in a factory because

they refused to play an assigned role within the nation's important plans for productivity.

At present no information is available as to what has become of the many performers and teachers of Western music. Presumably, most of them have been assigned to agricultural and industrial work. The same would probably be true of the musicological scholars who were engaged in historical and theoretical studies. Neither teachers nor scholars of Western music would be of much use now at any rate: economic factors must certainly have played some part in the suppression of Western music, which would require imported Western instruments (pianos and good violins are expensive), scores, textbooks, and recordings. All this calls for foreign currencies, of which there is always an extreme shortage in China, and the government is not likely to allocate funds for such "unnecessary frills."

Also unknown is the present situation of music schools, conservatories, teachers, and students in the field of traditional Chinese music, but it is safe to assume that this kind of activity is gradually returning to something resembling normalcy, for performances of this type are needed for political reasons and for ideologically controlled entertainment of the working masses. There are also the first faint indications of some relaxation in the previously imposed restrictions. The wife of Chairman Mao Tse-tung, Mme. Chiang Ching, who has exercised complete control over all cultural trends and activities (and personally revised a revolutionary opera

for public performance), has recently reinstated the use of the piano, which had been banned in China since 1967. Similar signs of minor relaxations could be observed in an enormous exhibition of Chinese arts and crafts which opened in Peking in November 1972. Among the thirteen thousand exhibits there were quite a few that featured traditional or legendary subject matter of the type that would have been destroyed on sight by the Red Guards only a few years earlier. And the large number of traditional music instruments in the show indicated that traditional Chinese music is being encouraged by the government. Commenting on this new trend in the exhibition, the leading political-theoretical journal stated that the traditional arts and crafts should not be neglected but be "turned to suit present-day need." A major relaxation of previous rules brought the London Symphony to perform in Peking and Shanghai, and the Philadelphia Orchestra made the trek in September. And, for what it is worth, the film *The Sound of Music* is currently being shown in several Chinese cities. What all this may mean in the future is open to speculation.

AND thus we now come to the "prophetic" look into the future of music in the People's Republic of China. According to General Pilsudski, this should be the easiest part of the task, but to me it seems extremely difficult. First, I will state emphatically that the Chinese people are so eminently gifted musically that they have a strong potential for de-



Chinese Information Service



White World Photos

Contrast between the old and the new is almost alarmingly evident in this juxtaposition of a traditional Chinese opera character holding a pi-p'a, or short-necked lute, with a scene from Red Detachment of Women, the contemporary opera seen by President and Mrs. Nixon in Peking.

velopment in any conceivable direction. Their hearing, especially their precise sense of pitch, is, in my opinion, superior to that of the people of most Western nations. Their memory for melodic and rhythmic configurations is truly outstanding, and their gift for reading complex Western scores at sight commands the foreigner's admiration. (Their talent for sight reading is well schooled from early childhood, of course, by training in their own very complex written language.) As instrumentalists, the Chinese share that fabulous stamina and patience displayed by many Orientals for acquiring manual-technical skills. Few Western students could stand the countless hours of cruel daily practice in the struggle for virtuosic mastership that I observed time and again among young Chinese musicians. Thus, I am convinced that they can achieve anything their government and society will permit them to achieve. If we add to these factors the weight of their enormous numbers—800 million people must produce, with statistical certainty, more highly gifted potential musicians than any other nation on earth—we should conclude that, on that basis alone, China could lead the world in musical achievement fifty or one hundred years from now.

On the other hand, we have a great unknown quantity: what importance and functions will a socialist government allot to music in China's cultural life? The recent readmission of the piano as an officially sanctioned instrument indicates the possible revival of Western-style harmony and polyphony in the country's musical creation. What seemed impossible to Père Amiot in China around 1760 now has a definite chance, for two reasons: the traditional monophonic five-tone system has been exhausted because of its extremely limited number of melodic or tonal combinations; also, the Chinese public's frequent exposure to Western sound phenomena during the last forty to fifty years, via live performance, radio, and recordings, has led to a gradual and growing acceptance of that kind of sound. This does not mean that the future tone system in China will be the traditional Western system of twelve semitones per octave, with seven-tone scales and triadic (or more elaborate) harmony. The fondness of the Chinese for subtle pitch inflections—deviations from central or ideal pitch—means the easy acceptance of micro-intervals which are *not* easily accepted by a majority of Western listeners. It is therefore quite possible that future Chinese tone systems might be a good deal more complex or sophisticated than our traditional Western models.

Still, it is most unlikely that much in the way of musical experimentation, avant-garde movements, or "revolutionary" musical developments would be



The imperial past and the proletarian present declare themselves artistically in this painting by Ch'iu Ying (c. 1510–1551) of a musical summer day, and the representation, by the contemporary Huang-Yung-yu, of a Sahnii girl playing on a pipe.



tolerated by the government. It is one of the ironies of modern political ideologies that the most revolutionary governments are usually the most conservative or reactionary in cultural affairs. Equally improbable is the development of computer and synthesizer music—for the same ideological reasons, plus an overruling economic factor: the state will certainly not furnish funds for expensive electronic equipment for cultural purposes when similar

We should take over the rich legacy and the good traditions in literature and art that have been handed down from past ages in China and foreign countries, but the aim must still be to serve the masses of the people. Chairman Mao Tsetung

equipment is needed for urgent military, scientific, and administrative tasks.

The highly commercialized popular music of the United States and other Western countries (including some of the European socialist nations) will have no comparable equivalent in China for quite a while because the state is unlikely to spend otherwise needed revenue for such “trivial and frivolous” mass entertainment. Music without important ideological functions will have, for some time to come, no place in this socialist society, and the private initiative that creates such entertainment in the West would be considered, in China today, a deplorable waste of national resources and manpower. The easy-going attitude toward professional standards that characterizes, with few exceptions, rock and other Western pop music styles today is unthinkable in China for another reason: traditionally, the Chinese have always taken great pride in supreme craftsmanship in all their arts and crafts. They would never admire nor reward amateurism or limited skills and training, nor would they encourage public appearances by less than finished performers—quite apart from official attitudes which would dictate suppression combined with contempt. American audiences now have had occasion to appreciate this Chinese pride of craftsmanship and supreme professional skill through tours in this country by two performing groups, the Shenyang troupe of acrobats (the Chinese have always excelled in acrobatics) and a famous group of dancers from Peking.

It would be wrong to assume that for ideological reasons governmental restrictions will bring most musical activities to a virtual halt for any length of time. Music in the service of the state has a tradition

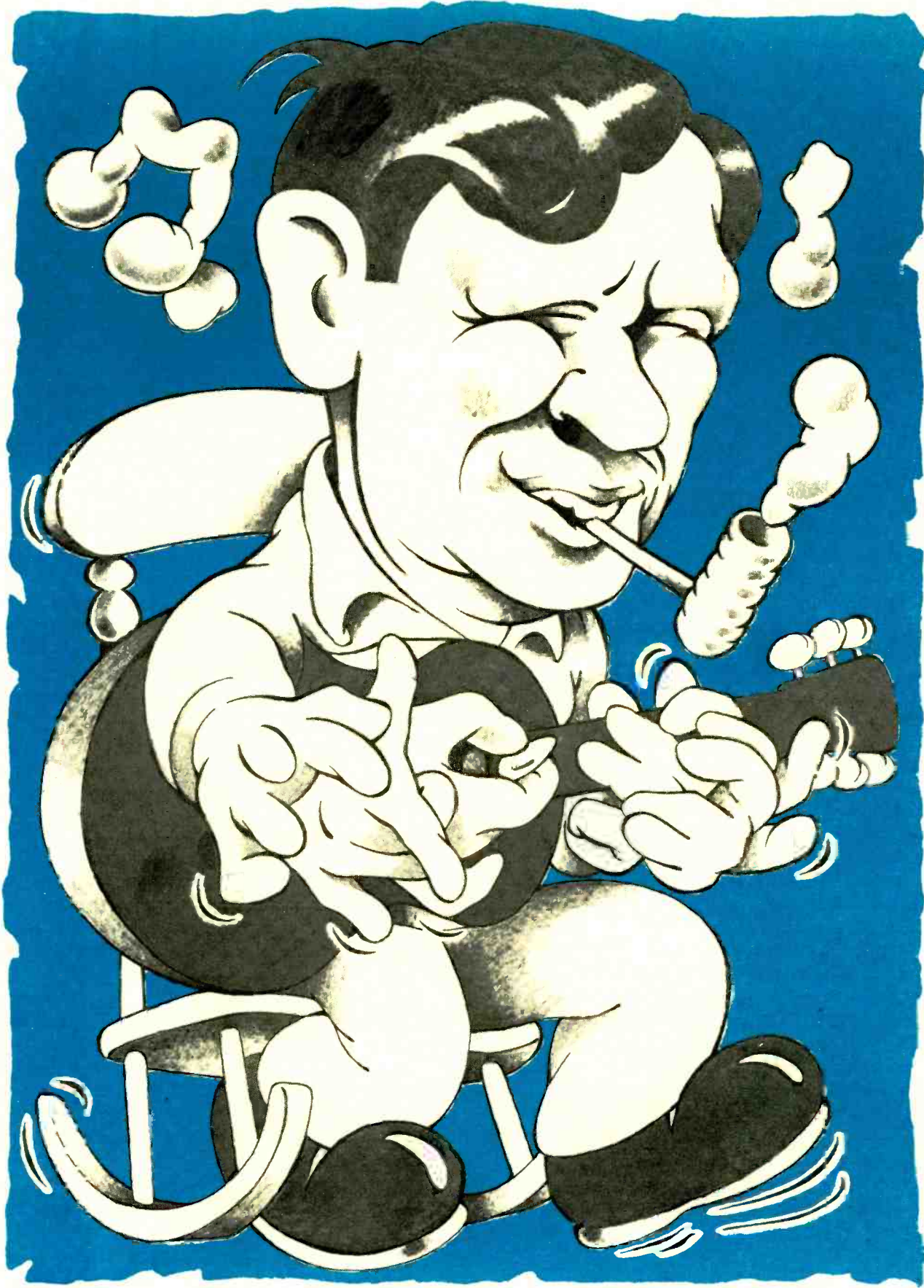
of more than two thousand years in China, and the country will always be able to mount spectacular pageants with hundreds or even thousands of performers. Court orchestras with up to a thousand instrumentalists, singers, and dancers have existed throughout the nation's history. One difficulty, however, may influence China's musical potential in the near future: musical skills atrophy and die rapidly if there is no fully active continuity of practice and performance and if there are not enough first-rate teachers to train the new generations. When the fabulous performers of the imperial court disbanded and became inactive in 1911 after the abdication of the last dynasty, it took less than fifteen years for a superb tradition of various performing arts to disappear. According to those still alive who witnessed these court offerings before 1911, there is really no comparison possible between the prevailing standards then and today, even considering the famous and internationally acclaimed Peking Opera Company of the 1950's and 1960's.

THE future of Chinese music, seen in the broadest terms and over a relatively long period of time, is likely to be a complex amalgam of native tradition with Western idioms in a social context favoring folk art and ideological-educational mass functions. To what degree Western elements and “elitist” fine-arts developments will enter into this fusion process, however, will depend ultimately on what governmental policies encourage or prohibit.

For a fairly long period official emphasis in China will probably be on a “simple,” nonintellectual music easily understood and accepted by all the people (although it may not be simple by our Western standards). Later on, as the economic and political condition of the country stabilizes and becomes stronger, the time for changed priorities and relaxed attitudes may arrive. By then the Chinese sense of competitiveness in the arts may be aroused, and governmental ambitions could partly free the nation's music for contests in the world arena.

The strongest factor in all future developments of music in China will therefore be the tension built up between the vast resources of national talent and the limited activities permitted to this talent under governmental restrictions. If this seems to hedge the prediction a good deal, it might be well to re-establish a sense of balance in our considerations by asking just how far we can really see into the future of music in *Western* civilization.

Fritz Kuttner, one of the world's leading authorities on Chinese music, has been a frequent contributor to STEREO REVIEW on subjects as diverse as bells and the pianism of Simon Barere.



Cartoon by Lincoln Perry

DOC WATSON

“Unquestionably the greatest flat-picker alive”

By Noel Coppage

THANKS AND HOWDY: “After a welcome like that, it makes a fellow feel like he did when he was a little boy and got exactly what he wanted for Christmas. I’ll tell you right now we’ve got to pick awful pretty after a welcome like that. If somebody hasn’t heard our show before, I’d like to warn you that we’re just as informal as the music we play, and if you’ve come to hear a flashy show, doggone it, you’re gonna be disappointed. But if you come to hear some good old country pickin’, that’s what we’re here for.”

Perhaps you first heard of him in the early Sixties. Some of the people who discovered Earl Scruggs then, and rediscovered Pete Seeger then, discovered also a blind North Carolina singer and guitar player named Doc Watson. Devotees of country music, many of whom ignored the whole folk “movement,” soon came across Doc in their own circles: he certainly never regarded himself as anything but country, and his flat-picking style tended to identify him, in many minds, with bluegrass and its forerunners, the traditional country music first out and then in with people who like Country if you call it Folk. And then, only recently, his involvement with several almost legendary country musicians in the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band’s three-record “Will the Circle Be Unbroken” album beamed Doc’s soothing, mellow voice and rippling guitar toward an entirely different—and vast—audience.

He was, as they say back home, “no spring chicken” when all this started—he’s fifty now—and it has changed his audience a lot more than it has changed him.

Backstage, Doc says, “I grew up with genuine old-time country music, cut my teeth on it. I’m thankful for that. . . . Another thing I’m thankful for is I grew up in a hard-working family. When I was about thirteen, my dad said, ‘Well, I can’t give you your sight, but I can teach you how to work and help yourself.’ So he laid a crosscut saw over a log and I took the other end of it and we went to work. I didn’t help cut down the trees, ‘cause that was too dangerous, but once they were on the ground, I sure did a lot of sawing. It was hard work, but that kind of thing tones up your attitudes as well as your muscles. And once you worked the soreness out of your muscles, you’d sleep!—man, you never imagined such good sleepin’—and eat like a horse.”

Leather Britches: “I better do a flat-pick tune right here, Merle. I’d like to do a little bit of a tune that I learnt from an old boy down home. . . . The first part of this, now, for you fans of real old-timey country music, will sound a little like a dulcimer, but I finally get to makin’ it sound like a guitar.”

“I’ve added things here and there, but I’ve never deserted country pickin’,” Doc says. “I’ve been lucky.”

Ralph Rinzler, musician and folklorist, who was later to become the mandolin player of the Greenbriar Boys and still later to have his scholarship recognized—and himself hired—by the Smithsonian Institution, deserves most of the credit for “discovering” Doc Watson. Rinzler went to the South in the early Sixties, looking for Clarence “Tom” Ashley, an old-time banjo player from Tennessee, and happened to hear Doc. He of course recognized a great guitarist when he heard one. So did his partner, Greenbriar guitarist John Herald, who later backed Ian and Sylvia, among others.

“Johnny could do a lot of things,” Doc says, “but he was shy. He was at my house one time and we were going over some things on the guitar, and then he wandered off and nobody knew where he was. We were saying, ‘Where’s John?’ and lookin’ all around, and finally we heard music—coming from under the porch. He was sittin’ back under the porch steps, practicing. He says, ‘Well, I didn’t want to bother anybody.’”

In 1964, Rinzler persuaded Watson—“against my better judgment,” Doc says—to work the coffee-house circuit full-time. Doc’s son, Merle, larger than his father but conveying, almost with his whole body, the same sort of mellowness, was himself quite a picker by that time. He worked with his dad for the first time in 1964 and started traveling regularly with Doc in 1966. To understand what that means to Doc, it is not necessary to ask, or even to know (as owners of the “Circle” album know) that Doc named his son after Merle Travis, “hopin’ some of that good pickin’ would rub off”—but merely to see the two of them alone together on the stage, where Doc’s best friend executes countless sweet, bluesy, sliding guitar riffs to complement Doc’s more rhythmic style. Merle often flat-picks the lead, too, leaving Doc free to concentrate on singing in a nothin’-to-hide baritone.

Before the early Sixties, though, Doc and his wife, Rosalee, were scrambling to make a living. Doc was earning a little money playing electric guitar with a country swing band first called the Rail Riders (because Jack Williams, the leader, worked for the railroad, “and still does,” says Doc) and later called Jack Williams and the Country Gentlemen. The acoustic guitar simply wasn’t loud enough to compete with the other instruments in such a band in those days when guitar amplifiers were usually the only amplifiers available.

“Playing that electric guitar lightened my touch,” Doc says. “Beyond that, it was just a matter of practice and hard work.”

(Continued overleaf)

Deep River Blues: "I learnt this tune from the Delmore Brothers, but I never could pick it the way they did, somehow or other. And then I began to hear old Merle Travis pick the guitar and I thought, well, I'll steal me one of old Merle's licks and I'll learn this thing some way. I learnt this little thumb vamp on the bass strings here. . . . And then, after I'd practiced it about ten more years, I started to pick up the lead part something like this. . . ."

Doc and Merle still play coffee houses or folk clubs, but now they mostly play concerts. They are in great demand for concerts where the audience's blue denim comes in the shape of bib overalls, and they are in just as great demand where the audience's blue denim is laboriously and often beautifully decorated with patches and needlework.

"I can't look out over an audience and see what kind of people are there," Doc says, "but we've certainly had some warm response in such places as New York City. I'd say our audience is much broader since the 'Circle' album, and yet people are people. If you do your job and don't talk down to people, I think you'll find they usually treat you well."

Doc talks to an audience the same way he talks to one person.

Life Gets Tedious, Don't It: (Voice in Audience: "Tennessee Stud!") "We're gonna find that one in a few minutes. Right now, I'd like to get a little fun song in, a sort of portrait in words of a lazy boy—I won't say a country boy, 'cause if you changed a couple of words this could fit any old boy that didn't want to move around much on a hot day. You know how that feels. . . ."

Doc was born Arsel L. Watson in 1923 on land his great-grandfather, a Scotsman, received as a land grant when he emigrated to the United States. Doc's present home is in the little Blue Ridge Mountain town of Deep Gap, North Carolina, within three miles of his birthplace. Getting back there is usually on his mind, or about to be. Recently, a small college in nearby Boone conferred an honorary doctor-of-music degree on him. "You better believe I go back home every chance I get," Doc says. "Being with my wife and daughter (Nancy) is the most important thing in the world to me. We break these tours up in little pieces. To me, as much as I love to play for people, traveling is hard. It's the real work involved in this kind of life—people call the shows the work, and after two hours or so before an audience you do feel as tired as you would after a whole day of hard labor, but it's a different kind of tiredness, kind of pleasant. But traveling is a drag."

Back home, Doc expects his neighbors to treat him like a neighbor, and mostly they do. "They might kid me about something like this honorary degree business," he says, "but they pretty much treat me the way I treat them. The people who try to treat you like a celebrity are the same ones that wouldn't speak to you when you wore patches on your overalls and split your own stove wood. I don't like that kind of people much."

Tennessee Stud: "I want to do Tennessee Stud from a certain United Artists album. Let's see . . . there was Earl Scruggs, Maybelle Carter, Roy Acuff, Jimmy Martin, Merle Travis, and Doc Watson got together with a group called the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, and we did a set called 'Will the Circle Be Unbroken,' and we're every one proud of the response it's received."

John McEuen, Nitty Gritty banjo player (and brother of Nitty Gritty manager Bill McEuen, who presided over the live-mixed "Circle" project) approached Merle about Doc's participation in it.

Doc says, "I thought, well, it can't hurt me none, and it might help them. In fact, though, it has broadened our audience—God, it has broadened it tremendously. The only thing I regret about that album is that I didn't stay there and pick behind Jimmy Martin. He's a good old boy and I like to be around him, 'specially when he's sober." Doc laughs and slaps his knee—not with one of those long-fingered, "sensitive" stereotypes many musicians do, in fact, hang from their wrists, but a chunky, meaty, short-fingered hand that obviously has been every bit as intimate with saw handle and cordwood as it has been with a guitar pick.

In one or the other of these working relationships, Doc has learned economy of movement. When he plays, say, *Black Mountain Rag* at almost double the speed it's done on the "Circle" album, he does it without a frenzy of wild flailing; he uses short, quick strokes that don't seem to be taxing him much. But there the notes are, right on time and in clear, ringing tones.

Doc and Merle range far from bluegrass and into more modern country, back into old country swing, into more overtly British-influenced folk, and even into the blues. Doc spikes a song now and then with some rakish lines on the harmonica, in a style that's mainly old-time country but shows a feeling for the blues harp. "I listen to a lot of different things," he says, "and I guess my playin' reflects that. Nobody's style is entirely his own—well, that might not be entirely true, but most people come under various influences. . . ."

Match Box Blues: "Merle and I dearly love the good old traditional blues. Most of the time, we just pick like Doc and Merle. We don't try to copy the old masters who really worked out these blues tunes . . . I don't think I ever heard anybody that could do an actual copy of Blind Lemon Jefferson's music anyway. . . ."

And no matter how diversified the music or the audience, Doc remains a country boy. Being a country boy may mean putting at least one old hymn on your album, no matter what, and plugging your latest recording on the concert stage, no matter how august the stage's reputation—and Doc does those things (although he can couch a commercial in such a congenial nap of good-old-boy rambling rap that it's almost a soothing experience)—but being a country boy can also mean you hold strong opinions about who and what you are and who and what you are not.

That's the second most important thing I can tell you about Doc Watson.

Listening to him play is almost wholly an emotional experience. Aside from random mutterings such as, "No—what I just heard was impossible on a guitar; he couldn't have done that," few listeners have the energy to both listen to him and mess around with a technical analysis of what's going on. Tone quality is even more important an identifying mark than speed, and the "hot runs" he uses for ornamentation have the effect of hitting everyone in the audience in the chest at the same time, forcing out an involuntary "Hoo!" Doc's playing doesn't make people sad, but it often makes them cry.

That's the most important thing I can tell you about Doc Watson.



Larry Klein

THE NEWEST AUDIO PRODUCTS

Associate Technical Editor Ralph Hodges shares his impressions of the Consumer Electronics Show

JUNE is the month of brides, honeysuckle, potential temperature inversions, and, for a fortunate few, departures for cooler climates. For many others it is also the time of the summer Consumer Electronics Show in Chicago's gargantuan McCormick Place exhibition center. If you find it strange reading about goings-on in June when Labor Day is already a fading memory, be assured that this seeming retrospective has been carefully scheduled to reach you at about the time—if everything has gone right—that the new audio products first announced in June will be appearing on the shelves of your local hi-fi retailer. This is because the industry has spent the remainder of the summer not so much in merchandising (advertising and distributing) the new equipment displayed at the show as in actually building or even redesigning it on the basis of feedback from the dealers who came to see it.

The Consumer Electronics Show (CES) is a "trade-only" event held under the auspices of the EIA (Electronics Industries Association). Originally an organization that included practically every manufacturer of electronic consumer goods *except* the high-fidelity people, the EIA in the past few years has seen an increasing participation by the hi-fi industry. Although the audio press is included in

the "trade" category, from the manufacturer's point of view the really important show attendees are the audio store owners and managers throughout the nation who converge on Chicago to place orders for the products they hope to sell from autumn on.

Not too long ago, most of the products shown at the CES were small electrical appliances such as clock radios, TV sets, and portable and console record players. Last June, however, we found an enormous number of receivers, amplifiers, tape decks, speaker systems, blank tape in all formats, and even microphones and semi-professional recording consoles and mixers—vast assemblages of sophisticated electronic goods that indicate a virtual consumer obsession with high-quality sound recording and reproduction. In June, many of the products existed only as one-of-a-kind prototypes, and quite a few were completely inoperative wood-and-plastic shells with glued-on knobs. After these are actually built, debugged, and otherwise brought to completion, it will still take some luck and marketing dexterity for all of them to become available in time for the Christmas buying season. But, assuming they will, this is what the eager audiophile will encounter on his shopping tours during these late months of 1973. *(Continued overleaf)*

Receivers

If you are in the market for a receiver, the market welcomes you. Audio manufacturers seem to be convinced that most of next year's equipment purchasers will be receiver-oriented, and they've done their technical best to quiet any possible misgivings there may be about two/four-channel versatility or obsolescence. This means that CD-4 has joined SQ and variously named versions of the so-called Regular Matrix as built-in features in many of the new four-channel receivers (see accompanying box). Pioneer's units will probably be the first available, hotly pursued by those from Akai, Fisher, Harman/Kardon, JVC, Kenwood, Onkyo (with *automatic* switching to the CD-4 mode), and Technics (by Panasonic), among a number of others. These are hardly isolated phenomena; almost all these manufacturers have equipped several of their models with CD-4.

Other options are more open-ended: Kenwood, like Marantz, provides an inconspicuous slot in several of its

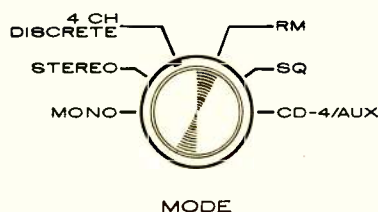
receiver models into which a four-channel adapter module—SQ, CD-4, or some future variant—can be plugged to become an integral part of the unit, under the direct control of front-panel selectors and knobs. On the other hand, Dolby B-Type noise-reduction circuits have been incorporated into Akai (stereo Model AA-910D) and Marantz receivers (in Marantz's case there are two Dolby circuits built into four of the new four-channel receivers). Technics has two four-channel models (the SA-8000X and SA-6700X) that offer a choice between a four-channel oscilloscope display and no CD-4, or CD-4 and no oscilloscope. Others who showed units with four-channel readouts of one kind or another are Kenwood, Marantz, Akai (meters), and Pioneer, which has developed an ingenious X-shaped illuminated display that uses filament coils of gradually increasing wire thickness.

Where does all this "discrete" CD-4 activity leave matrix SQ? Well, alive, healthy, and living almost everywhere. In its full-logic form, however, SQ was available at showtime only in the Lafayette LR-4000 receiver, several Sony add-on decoders, and the upcoming Sherwood

THE MODE SELECTOR (CIRCA 1973)

AN article in the September, 1958 issue of this magazine (which was then titled *HIFI & MUSIC REVIEW*) took special note of one of the earliest examples of a modern stereo mode selector, a knob that graced the front panel of the H. H. Scott Model 130 stereo preamplifier—described as being a unit of "so much flexibility that it defies adequate editorial treatment." According to the reviewer, the Scott STEREO SELECTOR not only performed with competence the five novel functions its legends specified, but it also activated a rectangular array of "Christmas-tree" panel lights that came on in various combinations to indicate STEREO, REVERSE STEREO, MONAURAL, etc.

- **Mono:** Just what it says it is.
- **Stereo:** And so is this.
- **Discrete:** This switch position is for use with any true four-channel program source—that is, any external source with four *separate* outputs to be plugged into the receiver. The present four-channel "discrete" formats are: (1) open-reel tapes, (2) Q-8 tape cartridges, and (3) the outputs of an external CD-4 disc demodulator. However, an external "matrix" decoder could also be connected to the DISCRETE input jacks.
- **RM:** "Regular Matrix," usually signifying a built-in decoder that conforms—at least approximately—to the basic Sansui or Dynaquad decoding parameters. Any suitably encoded recording can be played with the switch in this position. This stop will also create a four-channel *effect* (ranging from insignificant to surprisingly good, depending on the program material) with normal two-channel stereo material. The RM designation is not universal. Some manufacturers prefer to use just the word MATRIX or some exotic quasi-



technical coinage that contains the word. Marantz and Technics have variable adjustments (called "dimension" or "acoustic-field" controls) that work in conjunction with this position to alter the matrix parameters somewhat, redistributing the total available amount of speaker-to-speaker separation here and there between the four channels. This feature is especially useful in obtaining the best enhancement of two-channel material. And one gets the impression from carefully worded statements in the literature that some of these adjustments will provide something very close to correct SQ decoding.

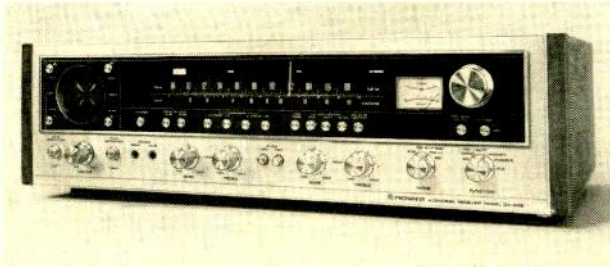
- **SQ:** With few exceptions, the SQ decoders built into four-channel re-

No doubt such intricacy was heady stuff for 1958's fledgling stereophiles, but it is child's play in comparison with the rotary command posts on present-day four-channel receivers. The drawing below shows a few of the switch positions that are routinely being provided on this new breed, and the accompanying capsule glossary attempts to probe some of the mysteries of their intended purposes. (On any particular model these switching functions could just as well be carried out by pushbuttons instead of knobs, of course, and some of the positions—especially CD-4—are as likely to appear on the input selector as on the mode switch.)

ceivers are fairly elementary, and most of them lack any form of "logic" assistance, although there may be a separate pushbutton that increases the front-to-rear separation (essentially by sacrificing a little left-to-right separation). When considering an SQ unit, it is important to know whether it has *no* logic, *semi-* or *front-back* logic, or *full* logic. The difference is significant, since only full-logic SQ units can approach the inter-channel separation of the CD-4 system.

- **CD-4/Aux:** the "aux" part of this legend is a tip-off that this particular receiver does not actually contain built-in CD-4 facilities, although an external CD-4 demodulator could be plugged into the rear-panel jacks that are activated by this switch position (as could any other high-level four-channel program source, of course). The only sure guarantee of built-in CD-4 is the presence—somewhere on the receiver—of the left and right SEPARATION controls required to adjust the levels of the various signals picked up from a CD-4 disc.

—R.H.



With built-in SQ, RM, and CD-4 circuits, the Pioneer QX-949 is typical of the new "do everything" four-channel receivers.

S-7244, which is slated to be the first receiver to incorporate full-logic SQ in the new three-IC (integrated-circuit) configuration.

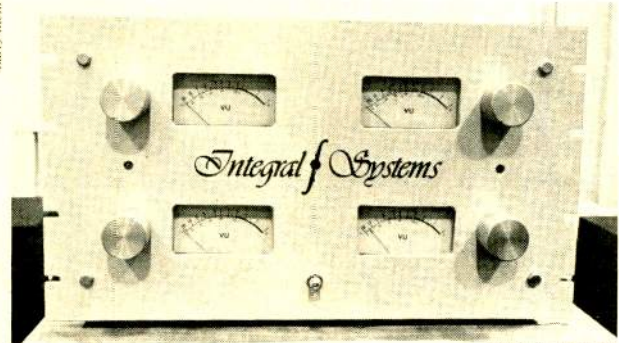
The serious matrix-system alternative to SQ has for some time been Sansui's QS system, which basically conforms to—and was something of a model for—the Japanese RM (Regular Matrix) standard for encoding and decoding. QS appears in the form of RM, Dynaquad, and various unnamed matrix circuits that employ its basic parameters or something very close to them. However, in Sansui's new QRX series of four-channel receivers, which is led by the Model QRX-6500 and the elaborate QRX-5500, it achieves its highest point of sophistication to date. The "X" prefix stands for "Variomatrix," a separation-enhancement technique that works on a psychoacoustic principle that might be called "directionality masking." A professional Variomatrix decoder was demonstrated—and impressively—in the U.S. as early as autumn of last year. With the new Sansui receivers it makes its debut as a consumer product.

The subject of discrete four-channel FM may be moot just now, since the necessary FCC approval does not appear to be forthcoming for any such system in the near future. But that fact has not deterred its advocates. In one much-visited booth at the show was Lou Dorren, inventor of what many believe to be the most feasible four-channel FM technique, busily quadracasting via short-range transmitter to whatever nearby receivers were capable of picking up his signal. Panasonic was supplying the "black boxes" necessary to receive and decode the broadcasts, and these became fairly popular items during the show. Also unveiled by Panasonic was the first integrated-circuit CD-4 demodulator to be seen by western eyes: it contained two of what are said to be the largest IC's (they were designed by Dorren) ever manufactured for a consumer application of this kind.

Before we leave (temporarily) the subject of four channel, we should discuss the situation with four-channel amplifiers and preamplifiers—a situation which is, unfortunately for the quadraphile, relatively bleak. Aside from the previously seen Kenwood P-2000X prototype—bigger than the biggest breadbox and undoubtedly a real budget-buster—there were no new four-channel preamplifiers in evidence at the show. The eagerly awaited Phase Linear 4000 preamplifier has some four-channel features (specifically, a special logic-assisted SQ decoder, an "ambiance-extractor" circuit for synthesizing four channels from two, and a joystick balance control), but it is basically a two-channel device. The two channels you do get are rather remarkable, however, and include some cleverly designed dynamic-range expanders and a playback noise-reduction system that will, according to the evidence of my own ears, decrease or totally eliminate

the noise on *any* program material whatsoever without affecting its musical content. Integral Systems' 20X preamplifier (scheduled availability is early 1974) will also have some four-channel features, as well as a newly developed record-playback noise-reduction processor

Larry Klein



One-of-a-kind laboratory prototypes only a few months ago, the giant four-channel power amps are now going into production.

that works on the compression-expansion principle. And, like Kenwood and BGW, they are also offering a *big* (250 watts times four in this case) four-channel power amplifier that is also capable of stereo operation. Marantz, meanwhile, leads in four-channel *integrated* amplifiers, with two just-announced additional models and a four-channel "adapter"—a control center to be added, together with a stereo power amplifier, to an existing two-channel system.

Tape

One by one, the three-head stereo cassette decks that have been waiting tantalizingly in the wings are making their bows. Sony brought one to Chicago from Japan—strictly a prototype at the moment, but certainly the basis for an actual product in the not-too-distant future—and Nakamichi has prepared a handsome \$690 version of their Model 1000, to be called the Model 700. The machine attracting the most attention, however, was the Teac 850X, which has all the features of an open-reel, three-motor solenoid-controlled Dolbyized deck—except that there is a cassette loading bay where the reels would ordinarily be.

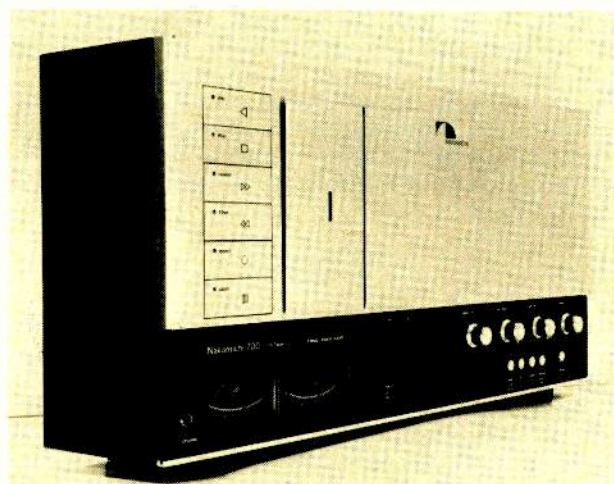
Back in four-channel land, JVC showed the Model 4CD-1680 cassette deck which, in accord with the Philips licensing requirements, lays down a total of eight thread-thin tracks (four in one direction, four in the other) on the tape and processes them all with four built-in channels of the ANRS noise-reduction system. (JVC's four-channel *three-head* cassette deck, if it ever appears, will truly be a marvel.) For those who want ANRS without the cassette deck, JVC now offers the NR-1020 two-channel add-on adapter. And for these who want neither, Wollensak (3M) has come out with the Model 8075 eight-track recorder deck (two-channel) with built-in Dolby circuits that can also be used to decode external Dolbyized sources.

Elsewhere, Technics displayed an in-depth line of stereo cassette machines, some with remote control and one with a direct-drive capstan. And BASF announced a cassette deck of their own, the Model 8200, with both Dolby and DNL (the Philips noise-reduction system), plus automatic chromium-dioxide bias/equalization switching acti-

vated by slots on the back edge of the cassettes. (As of the moment, only a few brands of cassettes have such coded slots.)

Teac also showed the Model 7300 open-reel deck, a three-motor, 10½-inch-reel machine with an entirely new direct-capstan-drive transport design that incorporates some unique, carefully thought-out operating features. Dual-capstan tape-drive systems are also to be found in the elaborate open-reel machines available from Sony as well as the larger units from Dokorder, which employ retracting pinch rollers to simplify tape threading. Dokorder will also offer a selection of head options, prealigned and accurately interchangeable in a matter of seconds with only a screwdriver. Dokorder's most expensive new unit is the Studio-9 (\$949.95), which takes 10½-inch reels and has its electronics housed separately from the transport section rather like a cantilevered second-story.

On-location recording enthusiasts will welcome several new ways of handling taping sessions requiring a truly portable, battery-powered machine. The Stellavox SQ-7 is a four-channel open-reel recorder with fully profession-



The three-head cassette decks are coming. This Nakamichi unit, Model 700, is as impressive in its form as in its functions.

al specifications, and with an enormous list of available options to boot. Although not quite a pocket portable, it measures only 10½ x 8¾ x 5¼ inches and weighs 12 lbs—without its 10½-inch reel assemblies in place, of course. In the cassette format there is the Sony TC-152 SD, a carry-around recorder closely resembling a small cassette deck and equipped with a built-in monitor speaker, bias and equalization for high-performance tapes, and Dolby circuits.

Turntables

Answering the needs of an apparent consumer trend toward manual turntables are the new Dual 701, the Technics SL-1200 (little brother to the SL-1100A), the Pioneer PL-51, and the JVC VL-5. The first three of these have electronically controlled, low-speed direct-drive motor systems, and several feature special low-capacitance connecting cables for possible CD-4 use. Also available is an updating of the Thorens TD-160—with an added "C" suffix.

Into any of these units you might plug a Shibata-stylus-equipped phono cartridge such as the JVC 4MD-40X (developed in cooperation with Shure) or Audio-Technica AT12S (both \$50), the Pickering UV15/2400Q or Stanton 780/4DQ (both \$125), or the Micro/Acoustics QDC-1. The last three of these have domestically manufactured styli specially shaped for playing CD-4 discs. The Micro/Acoustics model utilizes a unique solid-state transducing element said to avoid the losses and induc-



Whatever your aesthetics and budget, the industry has a turntable for you. This is the Model SL-1200 manual from Technics.

tive effects associated with conventional magnetic cartridges; it is optionally available with elliptical or spherical styli as well. Also, a ceramic cartridge made by Tetrad is said to have CD-4 capability; it will be available in a new, low-cost CD-4 record changer made by Glenburn/McDonald.

The warm reception accorded the Garrard Zero 100 automatic turntable has prompted the design of a successor—the Zero 100C—with a refined cueing system and a record counter, as well as a new, less expensive version—the Zero 92—with mechanical anti-skating instead of the magnetic system used on the Zero 100. Several other new models in the Garrard line have taken on some of the appearance of the Zero series, although their tone arms are conventional. Most of the other new turntables—by such manufacturers as BSR, Elac/Miracord, and PE—had been introduced before Show time, but BSR displayed several new complete record-playing systems (automatic turntable plus phono cartridge), including one (Model 260/X) said to be the least expensive package of its kind to include a magnetic cartridge.

Speakers

Whatever is the deep, implacable urge that drives men to create new speaker systems, it has apparently reached epidemic proportions this year. New speakers were everywhere. There is, for example, an entire new line from Sansui, the SP series, using elaborate combinations

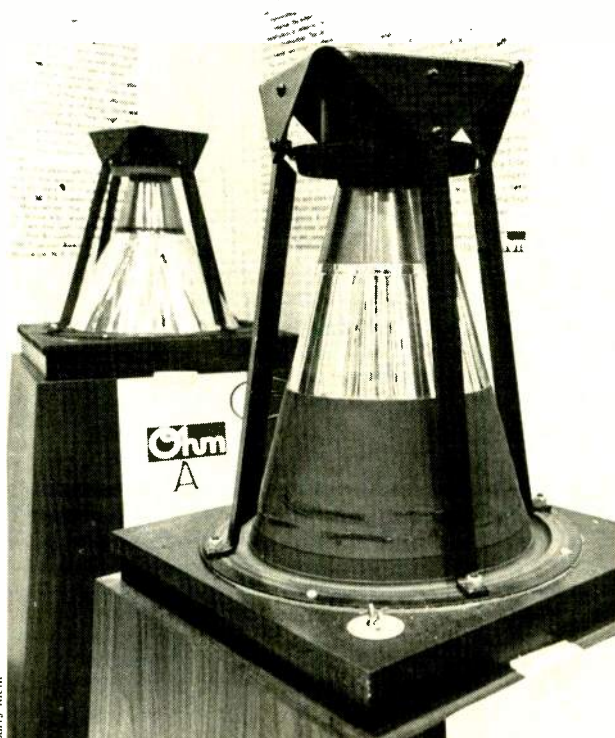
of mid- and high-frequency horns (with acoustic lenses) and cones (with metallic dust caps) in dual-ducted-port cabinets. Another line comes from an entirely new (to consumers, at least) company, Solar Audio Products, whose Ultralinear speaker systems employ sealed or ported enclosures, foam or fabric grilles, and even—on three models—circuit breakers to protect their innards from amplifier excesses. And enough new models to make up an entire line were displayed by Marantz and Superscope, who led off this year with the floor-standing Marantz Imperials 8 and 9. The Imperial 8 has a rotatable mid-range/tweeter array that lets you set up stereo pairs (or four-channel quartets) for complementary dispersion characteristics.

The loudest spots in the McCormick Place Show were in the center of the aisle separating the RTR and Ohm exhibits, and upstairs at the Cerwin-Vega booth. RTR's principal consumer offerings were some good-size column systems with 10-inch woofers and various other cone drivers on each of three vertical sides, but they let loose occasionally with the 25-inch woofer that is kept on hand for custom applications. Cerwin-Vega, whose high-efficiency systems are an audible presence wherever they appear, has just developed a new mid- and high-frequency driver, the Magnastat, that resembles an electrostatic speaker but actually employs a conductor-carrying flat-film diaphragm immersed in a strong magnetic field. And the Model F from Ohm Acoustics uses a 12-inch, higher-efficiency version of the unique Walsh driver that powers the Ohm A; the price—about \$350—is considerably more attractive.

Infinity Systems also likes the Walsh "wave transmission line" principle, and designer Arnold Nudell—by special arrangement with Ohm—was able to build a Walsh tweeter into his Infinity Monitor, a tall system with a dome mid-range and cone woofer. The new tweeter will reach lesser models in the Infinity line as the designs are perfected.

KLH has a new speaker, the Model 28, which, in hori-

The large new full-range "Walsh" driver used in the Ohm Model F speaker and, behind it, its precursor, the even larger Model A.



Larry Klein

zontal cross-section, is a triangle with truncated tips. There is a woofer and a tweeter on each of the three sides, behind panels of sculpted acoustic foam. The system's radiation characteristics are therefore multi-directional, with two-thirds of the output destined to become reflected sound.

It took a trek to a hotel in the center of Chicago to hear ESS's full-range Heil system, but it was worth it. Like the Heil high-frequency driver, the new woofer generates its output through an air-squeezing action, but this time the squeezing elements are driven through mechanical linkages by a more-or-less conventional magnet/voice-coil assembly. In the handmade prototype, the woofer in its housing resembled a perforated plastic cylinder lodged in the center of a large open-back baffle. Half the cylinder's radiation appeared at the front of the baffle, half at the rear. It is safe to say that one seldom—if ever—hears that much clean, very low-frequency energy emitted from an open-back baffle of such limited dimensions. ESS hopes to have the system on the market by the end of the year, along with an under-\$200 version of the amt-1.

At any moment, British Industries will be unveiling its new Venturi speaker systems, a series of three models (offering the choice of an 8, 10, or 12-inch woofer) using a new type of enclosure described as an "acoustic transformer." Specially designed wide-dispersion horn drivers are also employed, as well as dome super-tweeters reserved for the range of frequencies between 15,000 and 23,000 Hz!

Three well-established manufacturers presented new floor-standing speakers, handsomely finished on five sides: the Jensen Model 15, large and powerful-looking, with five drivers altogether; the slenderer Altec Stonehenge I, a two-way system resplendent in Afrosia teak with protruding grille; and a \$100 version of the EPI Microtower, slim and willowy by comparison, with small woofers and 1-inch dome tweeters distributed around the four sides of its top. And Janszen introduced its largest system yet, the Z-824, with two 12-inch woofers and eight 4 x 4-inch outwardly angled electrostatic elements shared by two outwardly angled mounting panels. (Janszen also showed the Jecklin Float electrostatic headphones with their strikingly styled U-shaped head bracket.) Applied Physics Laboratory was also on hand with a new multi-directional design, the APL-9, patterned on the successful APL-16, and JBL displayed a repackaging of its Prima driver components in a striking natural-oak enclosure.

Acoustic Research and Advent, two companies with a very large share of the speaker market, have been working on small systems this year. The now-venerable AR-4x has become the AR-4xa, with a new 1½-inch tweeter, and the just-introduced AR-8, especially intended for rock music, has a rear-panel switch that alters the system's normal response to produce what is termed a "brighter, harder sound." Advent's latest, which hadn't been given a name by Show time but which will be smaller and less expensive than the Smaller Advent, has a plastic-foam laminate enclosure. Woofer size is the same as for the Advent Smaller Speaker, but a bit of the deepest bass has been given up to increase electroacoustic efficiency. At a projected price between \$50 and \$60, the speaker is obviously intended for low-cost systems.

The Pritchard Loudspeaker from ADC has a three-section frontal area, with a central 12-inch woofer and outwardly angled 1½ and ¾-inch tweeters at either end.

By adjusting the levels of the two types of tweeters separately or in combination, a four-position switch provides several frequency contours—including depressed mid-range—to suit different acoustical situations.

Crown International now offers two all-dynamic systems to complement its Auralinear line of electrostatic/dynamic hybrids. And Hegeman Labs has built a larger version of the Model 1, again employing a two-way configuration with the drivers coaxially mounted at an upward-facing angle. Both the woofer and tweeter cones are of drawn-aluminum construction.

Audioanalyst, a fairly new speaker manufacturer, has three well-made systems of more-or-less conventional design, and the "Pyramedia"—a \$575 model built to the proportions if not quite the actual dimensions of the pyramid of Cheops—that is anything but. Avid is another new company, offering two- and three-way designs with exceptionally simple, clean styling and interchangeable grille panels. It is the contention of the Equasound people that the drivers in speaker systems must be adequately spaced apart to produce a sonic sensation of openness, and they have pursued this hypothesis in designing the Equasound 11a, a 3½-foot column with the tweeter at the top, woofer at the bottom, and the mid-range precisely in the middle.

The enclosures of the AFS (Acoustic Fiber Sound) speaker systems may be made, literally, of corrugated cardboard, but inside they are seriously designed and good-sounding products incorporating up to three-way driver configurations in the Nirvana "audiophile" series. Optional finishes, which are irrepressibly colorful, include Naugahyde op-art graphics and synthetic "fun furs." And there were more—many more—too numerous (or too humorous) to mention.

A Stereo Sampling

Does anyone remember two-channel stereo? A few manufacturers evidently do, among them Luxman, a new line to be distributed in the U.S. by Audio-Technica, which is offering a number of tuners and integrated amplifiers with impeccable specifications and vigorous styling, plus at least one receiver model. And certainly Crown International does, with its new successor to the popular DC-300, the 300A, and *mono* power amplifiers now achieving outputs up to 2,000 watts!

Simply from an aesthetic point of view, the Yamaha

Harman-Kardon's svelte-looking Model 900+ is one of the company's three new four-channel receivers with built-in CD-4.



CR-1000 two-channel receiver would have to be rated as beautiful as any equipment seen at the McCormick Place Show. Its understated white-on-silver color scheme suggests a European influence, while the crisp (visually and tactilely), elaborate control layout of knobs, sliders, and switches projects a down-to-business attitude to perfection—sorry our picture didn't turn out well. And the fact that it is also a powerful, uncompromising unit with several novel operating features doesn't hurt a bit. (A close second place in the beauty contest goes to Harman-Kardon, for the rainbow tuning dials and beveled cabinets on its three CD-4 four-channel receivers.) Superscope's new budget electronics are well represented in two channels as well as four, and they beckon you with tuning dials illuminated in a hard-to-forget shade of magneta.

Higher up in the price scale are a tuner from Marantz (the Model 115B) and three new tuners from Kenwood, all of them featuring a "double-switching demodulator" circuit that acts to cancel crosstalk introduced during FM multiplex decoding. Soundcraftmen's ten-band audio equalizer is now available as a stereo preamplifier, incorporating gain and equalization circuits for a magnetic phono cartridge along with the necessary input switching. And for those in pursuit of ultimates, the Dynaco Stereo 400 power amplifier, at last generally available, costs \$449 in basic kit form and \$524 with front-panel meters.

The latest in stereo headphones is the Technics EAH-80A, an electrostatic model with electret diaphragms that don't require the high polarizing voltages of the similar designs, and the Koss "Travler" (*sic*) headset that collapses clamshell fashion (after removal from the head, of course) into a pocket-size package that can be toted anywhere you might expect to find a jack to plug it into.

Afterthoughts

So much for the highlights of this summer's CES. Are there any general conclusions to be drawn? Well, it appears that audio manufacturers have once again been reasonably successful in meeting three of their four main objectives: (1) they have kept the theory and practice of sound reproduction moving ahead toward (we trust) well-conceived ends; (2) they have mastered and put to use the applicable outgrowths of rapidly advancing electronic technology—and in many cases have managed to keep up with each other in doing so; and (3) in a time of difficult economic conditions they have beaten back costs to the point where we can still (usually) afford the equipment.

The fourth objective involves you, the consumer. Word is out that you're back from wherever it was that you spent or misspent your summer, and that you are looking for more up-to-date sonic satisfactions to sustain you through the rigors of the months ahead. The audio industry therefore extends its invitation to visit your nearby dealer, where much of the equipment described above—and more—will be on display and in demonstration. Our behind-the-scenes vantage point at the Consumer Electronics Show has supplied us with many reasons to be sure you will find sound engineering, good workmanship, and the reasoned approach of designers who know what they're up to (along with novel features, mere frills, and the inevitable frivolities). The manufacturers clearly expect this to be a banner audio year; perhaps you will find it so as well.



SURF MUSIC

Get ready—
here comes
another wave!

By GREG SHAW

ONE of the leading rock magazines recently ran a cover story on “the surf-music revival,” calling attention to pop music’s apparent swing back to the sound and the spirit rock-and-roll had in 1963-1964, that special kind of celebration of youth and fun expressed through carefully produced three-minute singles. The article made a strong case for its claim, and further evidence has been coming in since. When even a top MOR group such as the Carpenters sees fit to include a whole side of songs like *Fun Fun Fun* and *Dead Man’s Curve* in their latest album, something is undeniably going on. And most of it, along with a few seldom-explored aspects of what has come to be called “the youth culture,” can be traced back to a few tremendously influential musicians.

Hawthorne, California, is located about ten miles southwest of central Los Angeles. It is a place indistinguishable from its adjacent municipalities—Lawndale, Gardena, El Segundo, and Compton—a place of wide, endless boulevards, tall palm trees, clear blue skies, fresh sea air, and signs everywhere pointing the way to nearby Manhattan Beach. It is also the home of the Beach Boys, who, like all their Hawthorne schoolmates, *have* spent a lot of time at the beach. Surf music, you see, wasn’t just another arbitrary record-industry gimmick like some of the derivative fads that followed it (ski and skateboard

music, for instance). It was a music that grew up around what seemed, in the innocent vastness of southern California, at least, to be the way an entire generation was going. Before the fad-following hodsads showed up, attracted by surf music, a well-defined beach culture already existed among the high school and college kids of Orange County and West Los Angeles (as well as other spots up and down the coast) who had grown up on sun, surf, and beach parties.

Sharing the beaches with the natives was another group later to be known as Original Surfers and upon whom some light was shed in Tom Wolfe’s *The Pump House Gang*. As the legend goes, the Originals were a noble breed of bronzed outlaws who roamed the coasts of California, Hawaii, Australia, and Africa, as they had in some numbers since the mid-Fifties, in search of more challenging waves. From all accounts they really were an exceptional bunch, in some ways more avant-garde than the beatniks of their day, with their heavy use of psychedelic drugs, their underground comics (disguised as surfing magazines), and the Far Eastern mysticism any old surfer will tell you was at the center of their fascination with the sea. They may also have played some part in instilling the ideals of responsibility-free, pleasure-oriented living in the kids they encountered on the beaches, ideals which

were to preoccupy youth throughout the Sixties. But this was marginal at best: the cult of pleasure as a way of life was more likely a direct outgrowth of the times and of the socio-economic conditions that prevailed in southern California.

The surf having always been there, and a youth culture having been developing throughout the Fifties all over the country, it was probably the post-Sputnik boom in the aerospace industry, with its resulting increase in population and affluence in the region, that catalyzed the factors that produced the surf culture. It was almost surreal: newly uprooted families living on land that had been pasture but a few months before, in prefab communities fresh off the drawing board, where the only thing you could count on was a new shopping center or housing tract springing up every time you turned your back. In these surroundings, there was nothing to keep the children of affluence from creating their own society based on the mobility their parents couldn't wait to give them and the leisure time they couldn't avoid. It all added up to a real culture, one in which status was determined by style, dress, prowess at the beach, and skill at customizing and racing cars. It had no history, but it soon had its myths, myths that were not long in being put to song—and being augmented and enlarged by song as well.

WHATEVER the first “surf record” was, it would be as hard to pin down as the first rock-and-roll record. It might be said that surf music got under way in 1961 with *Barbara Ann* by the Regents, *Moon Dawg* by the Gamblers, and Dick Dale's first hits, but in fact it dates back at least to 1959—probably even earlier. Surf music was nearly all instrumental, blending the insistent energy of Johnny and the Hurricanes, Link Wray, and the other white instrumental rock groups that were setting one of 1959's biggest musical trends with the fluidly improvisational guitar sound of Freddy King and other black blues instrumentalists. All over the country in 1959 and 1960, local bands were playing instrumental rock, as opposed to the rockabilly of a few years earlier and the new studio-rock they couldn't duplicate. In California, many of these bands found residence in beach houses and dance halls, in areas near the beach where kids gathered in the summer.

Dick Dale was the first big name in surf music. In the course of two years at the Rendezvous Ballroom in Balboa, he built up a large following and popularized a dance called the Stomp (later the Surfer Stomp). Dale was a singer as well as a guitarist, but it was for such instrumentals as *Let's Go Trippin'*, *Deltone Rock*, and *Misirlou* that he became legendary. As Dale's sound came to be identi-

fied with surfing, other groups up and down the coast began putting out similar records, their titles taken from the surfing vocabulary, their sound the heavy tom-tom beat and lead rhythm guitar that were taken to symbolize the speed and power of an actual surfboard ride. In 1961 and 1962, local record labels sprang up by the dozens—Downey (Rumblers, Chantays), Northridge (Surfaris, Charades), Aertaun (Tornados), Union (Markets, Continentals), and so on—and fed these derivative instrumentals to the beach kids under the label of “surf music.”

But, except for Dick Dale's, no surf music came out on major labels before the Beach Boys proved it could be more commercial than anyone had dreamed. They did it by blending together—probably not too consciously—elements of all the disparate styles they'd heard in records they liked, and they had the good taste to prefer the kind of records that approached a sort of summation of teenage consciousness. By distilling the essence from these, the Beach Boys emerged as perhaps the ultimate in teenage rock-and-roll groups.

Influenced by various Fours (Freshmen, Preps, Seasons), they added to the standard surf instrumentation a thick vocal sound laden with harmonies, falsetto singing, and constant background vocals. And their voices, rather than aping Little Richard and James Brown (as singers in white bands were wont to do in those days) or the New York doo-woppers, preserved a wholesome, clean-cut, high-school-cocky tone that identified them even more closely with their audience. The final touch was provided by Brian Wilson, whose obsession with the records of Phil Spector led him to place greater emphasis on production and pure *sound* than just about anybody else who was recording in 1963.

In retrospect, the records that started it all don't sound all that hot. *Surfin'*, *Luau*, and even *Surfin' Safari* are primitive and amateurish. But to ears accustomed to endless guitar reworkings of 1952 Joe Houston riffs, they must have seemed fantastic. *Surfin'*, the Beach Boys' first release, was obviously based on such records as Jan & Dean's 1959 *Baby Talk*. But the remarkable thing about *Surfin'*, as opposed to anything that had come before, was what it implied about its audience. Instead of trying to suggest the sensation of riding a wave, as all previous surf music had done, the Beach Boys were singing about how “Surfin' is the only life, the only way for me. . . .” Waking up, checking the surf reports, getting into a car to pick up a girl and drive to the beach—this is what the Beach Boys sang about, and this is what life *was* for the young people of southern California. They saw a reflection of their



Capital Records

The Beach Boys as they were: a rare period photograph from the early days of surf music. Will we ever see their like again?

own lives they'd never seen before. It was *their* music, the one missing element in the whole developing teen culture, and it was also the source of that incredibly self-confident and eventually arrogant self-image that California teens disseminated and fashioned into the sand castles of folk-rock and flower-power—before it all came crashing down of its own not very heavy weight in 1969. The implications of surf music were far-reaching indeed.

By their third release, the Beach Boys had refined the basics of their sound. The Chuck Berry-influenced *Surfin' U.S.A.* was a Top-Five nationwide hit. Surf music Beach-Boys-style was loved all over the world because, as has been said of Chuck Berry's storytelling songs and all the other enduring classics of popular music, its message and appeal were universal, not tied to any particular provincial scene. The surf and the beach were just convenient images—myths if you will—around which an attitude toward life on the part of California youth crystallized. The affluence and the restlessness that produced the attitude were spreading east, and, because (with certain regional exceptions) there were no other youth-culture myths that could match it, surf music was quickly adopted by American youth as a whole.

Although they were themselves surfing enthusiasts, the Beach Boys were smart enough to know their music didn't depend on the sport. The B side

of *Surfin' Safari* was 409, their first car song. There had been hot-rod songs before, of course, and teenage boys just naturally have a strong interest in cars—in the age we live in, the psychological needs behind an adolescent boy's obsession with cars can't be denied. The Beach Boys knew that, and they pulled cars into the larger mythology they were constructing by applying car themes to music already established as "surf" and writing songs about racing, winning, having the best car around, attracting girls as a result—and need I go on? The opportunities for reinforcing the adolescent ego were multiplied, and hot-rod music (since highways were more common than beaches between the coasts) had far greater potential for nationwide relevance.

In terms of giving form to the teenage myths of their time, the Beach Boys were in a sense the Sixties equivalent of Chuck Berry. But there were significant differences between the two. Berry's music provided the same celebration of cars and freedom, but it also had a strong undercurrent of ironic contempt that, unlike his constant use of sexual innuendo, was not merely a product of his personality. Fun was always something *aspired* to, awaited with itching anticipation, while the forces of oppression—school (as in *School Days*), work (as in *Too Much Monkey Business*), or parents—stood in the way. To Berry (who probably wrote more car songs than Brian Wilson) and to teenagers of the Fifties, your

own car was the means of escape from all these “botherations.” True, they were hard to get because they cost money, but, given the high value the young placed on their independence, they were also burning necessities. The Beach Boys, on the other hand, were as carefree and casual about their cars as they were about their clothes. As Ian Hoare pointed out in *Let It Rock*:

Chuck Berry sang about an intensely involved way of life prompted by a craving for excitement, and he did it from a detached viewpoint; the Beach Boys sang about a detached life-style from the middle of it. There are no problems in Beach Boys records. There’s no aggression, no urgency. There’s no need to struggle, it’s all readily available. Cars don’t matter, have no transcendent meaning, because they’re as common as dirt. You hardly even have to grow up to get one. While Chuck Berry sang about heading for the promised land, the Beach Boys were already there. Their surfing songs provided the perfect image for the teenage California life-style—riding the waves, cool, aloof, passive.

By 1964, hot-rod music had almost completely supplanted surf music, and in the end there were many more outstanding car records than surf records. The Beach Boys had been joined by Jan & Dean (who were inspired to rekindle their career when they heard *Surfin’ Safari*, according to Dean), Bruce Johnston and Terry Melcher, Gary Usher, Roger Christian and Steve Barri, and P. F. Sloan. Together these young men were responsible for nearly every surf/hot-rod record that came out of southern California. Inspired by the sound Brian Wilson and the Beach Boys had pioneered, but working now in various combinations and singing on each other’s records, they were so prolific that most of their output had to be released under fictitious names—genuine surf/hot-rod vocal groups like the Surfaris were rare.

At its peak, hot-rod music had a fantastic image-reinforcing influence on youth culture, coming out of every transistor, car, and bedside radio, drumming into impressionable skulls the ideas of freedom, mobility, invincibility, and the inalienable right to have a good time *all* the time. An entire generation was coming to terms with its identity—not that, in these rather generous terms, it was hard to accept! Across the country, California became the symbol of teenage Utopia—as, for all intents, it was.

It wasn’t even necessary to live within a thousand miles of a beach in order to get what you needed from surf music. There were surf groups in Colorado (one of the best, in fact—the Astronauts), Michigan (the Rivas, who wrote *California Sun*), Minnesota (the Trashmen, among others), and just about everywhere else. Oddly enough, some of the

best groups, on a par with California’s finest, hailed from the Midwest. The Trashmen in particular stand out, not so much for their novelty hit *Surfin’ Bird* as for the flip side of that single, *King of the Surf*, and an amazing anthem called *Brand New Generation* (“Lookin’ for a lot of room”) which really caught the spirit of the whole thing in one pounding masterpiece.

THAT was the kind of world the Beach Boys and surf music opened up for American youth, but as it began to spread they were already exploring new territory: they first abandoned the rather strictly defined subject matter of surf music in favor of the more accessible form of car songs, and by their peak years of 1965-1966 they were down to the basics—simply being young, alive, and free. Songs like *Dance, Dance, Dance*, *Girl Don’t Tell Me*, *Help Me*, *Rhonda*, *California Girls*, *Barbara Ann*, and *Wouldn’t It Be Nice*, classics all, probably represent the zenith of the teenage spirit in music.

During this period the other members of the surf/hot-rod music clique were unable to keep up with the Beach Boys. Jan & Dean were doing folk and flower parodies when a tragic accident put Jan out of commission. Bruce and Terry peaked with the monumental *Summer Means Fun*, Bruce going on to join the Beach Boys. Gary Usher went into producing airy studio filigree totally lacking in substance and spirit. Barri and Sloan, in residence at Dunhill Records, had a new sound, folk-rock (the

When the history of 20th-century pop is written, a lot of things, including surf music, will be seen to trace back to Chuck Berry.



© Chess/Janus Records

Mamas & the Papas, Scott McKenzie, the Turtles, the Byrds, etc.), that was busily developing the generational consciousness set loose by surf music and getting set to become the next big trend.

What happened after that was perhaps inevitable. A youth culture conditioned to think of itself as such by hearing surf records began taking itself seriously—too seriously, in fact, demanding ponderously portentous statements from its music to the point where the whole thing fell apart. The Beach Boys, though not immune to the allures of health food, transcendental meditation, and the vapid intellectualism of, say, a Van Dyke Parks, managed to retain through it all their feeling for nature, and, though their late-Sixties records were as lacking in youth consciousness as youth itself was, their music was always about the most *real* to be found.

An unexpected sort of nostalgia surfaced in 1968 when the Beach Boys returned to the Top Twenty with *Do It Again*, a song that spoke eloquently enough about lost youth, but with the added implication that an era barely four years ended might already be worth revisiting. Then, in the summer of 1972, the Beach Boys made a determined effort to “do it again” with a song called *Marcella*, the best summer song in years and one that just barely escaped being a national hit. It sounded strangely out of place amidst the work of Leon Russell, Neil Young, James Taylor, Grand Funk, and their ilk (who even that recently still dominated rock), and not even the most hopeful listener could force him-

Does anyone at all remember it was P. F. Sloan who wrote Eve of Destruction, a monster hit for Barry McGuire way back in 1965?



ABC/Dunhill Records

self to believe in the return of simple fun to music on the basis of just one song.

But things slowly began to snowball, resulting in a refreshing trend that, while still quite minor in mass terms, speaks strongly for the continued relevance of mid-Sixties surf-inspired pop music. The world, it seems, is beginning to feel the way it did when the Beach Boys were making their mark—summer once again means fun, and not, as the Stooges said for so many in 1969, “another year with nothing to do.” What the Beach Boys unleashed was not merely a product of its time, but an inescapable byproduct of any world in which teenagers are growing up aware of themselves as teenagers, and it has taken the arrival of the first fresh teenage generation since the Sixties demoralization to prove it.

SOME facts: the latest Beach Boys hit, in the spring of 1973, was *Goin' to California*, which sought once again to mythologize California and the lure of the beach. Dean Torrance (of Jan & Dean) has joined up with hot-rod record wizards Bruce Johnston and Terry Melcher, first to recut some old Jan & Dean songs as the Legendary Masked Surfers, and now to record, as a group called California, music they say will be light and fun, evoking the old spirit of California sun and surf, but contemporary in sound. The group was recently signed to a major record label. Johnny Rivers is turning out hits for the first time since his discotheque days, his latest album containing songs (like *Hang On Sloopy* and *I'll Feel a Whole Lot Better*) that could have been done in 1965 but sound current enough that millions are buying the records. And Brian Wilson, who once recorded his wife and her sister (as the Honeys) at the height of his Spector worship, is recording them again, as American Spring; their new single *Shyin' Away* is a mixture of all the great old things that have been missing from rock for too long.

Other records just coming out point the way to a less serious era in rock-and-roll, an era in which we will allow ourselves to accept the pleasure urge within and let it come out through the music the way it once did. Teen culture may never again seem as strong or as fresh as it was in the early Sixties, or rock-and-roll music as vital as the Beach Boys' best songs, but it's all too much a part of growing up not to roll around again, to produce another big wave to ride through another endless summer.

Greg Shaw, founder/editor of the authoritative fanzine *Who Put the Bomp*, is perhaps rock journalism's foremost historian. His work appears regularly in *Rolling Stone*, *Creem*, and *Crawdaddy*.



KYUNG-WHA CHUNG

Whence comes the stamina that permits an under-size violinist to play a hundred-concert season on an over-size Stradivarius?

By ROBERT S. CLARK

THE Orient, for centuries a place of untempered musical scales and exotic instruments, later a source of cheap imitations of Western goods, has now begun to compete seriously with the West in the high quality of certain of its products. Surprisingly, these products include classical violinists. And prominent among them is the pretty, talented, twenty-five-year-old Korean Kyung-Wha Chung, who has recently made a triumphal progress through the musical capitals of the world. I arranged to meet Miss Chung one afternoon at her fortieth-floor Manhattan apartment, and it is hard to say what struck me most forcibly when she opened the door to admit me: her beautiful porcelain-smooth Oriental features, her diminutive size and exquisite delicacy, or the fact that she was dressed in chic Western clothes (a sheer red and white print shirt and brown flared pants). As we talked during the afternoon, it became clear that there is nothing of the inscrutable East or alien tradition about Miss Chung; by virtue of upbringing, education, and perhaps necessity, she is a citizen of the world.

She was in New York to play a solo recital and had scheduled an ambitious program that was to include Beethoven's heroic "Kreutzer" Sonata. Thinking of her small size, I asked whether she didn't find this piece rather strenuous exercise. She was quick to respond, and only an occasional omission of "the" or "a" marred her otherwise fluent and idiomatic English. "Oh, the 'Kreutzer' is physically demanding, but it is so for every violinist, male or female, because so much of it requires a big tone. It is a stormy piece, for both the piano and the violin, a kind of struggle between the two instruments. I try to meet its demands fully. I don't ask my pianist to play more softly so that I do not have to produce so much tone." But, I persisted, what about when she is pitted against a full orchestra? "No, I don't have to fight—most of the time. There are balance problems in concerto playing no matter who the soloist, but a good conductor understands them. With the best conductors—Solti, Kempe, Previn, Maazel—I don't have to mention such things at all. Kondrashin and Rozhdestvensky—their sense of balance is incredible. The Russian conductors with whom I've played generally demand proper balances and tonal quality and get it. Some conductors, of course, don't understand so well, or are less alert to what I am trying to do interpretively." Does she feel she must speak up in such cases? "Oh, yes! I've done it when I thought it necessary—for the sake of the music!"

Her confidence in her musical understanding is implicitly supported by the experience she has packed into just a few years of performing—her repertoire includes the concertos and concerto-style works of Mozart, Tchaikovsky, Brahms, Lalo, Chausson, Bruch, Sarasate, Wieniawski, Sibelius, Walton, Stravinsky, and Bartók—and by the reception audiences and fellow musicians have given her wherever she has appeared. After her European de-

but of May of 1970, playing the Tchaikovsky Concerto with the London Symphony under André Previn, she was immediately re-engaged for the following season and invited to accompany the orchestra on an eleven-concert Far Eastern tour: she was also booked for thirty concerts over the next year and a half with orchestras in London and elsewhere in Britain, and signed to an exclusive recording contract by British Decca, the parent company of London Records. Similarly, when she made an unscheduled appearance as a substitute at the Berlin Festival in 1971, her mastery in the difficult Stravinsky Concerto won her a five-minute standing ovation, immediate engagement for the 1972 Festival, and an invitation from Lorin Maazel, who conducted the Stravinsky, to appear with him in Cleveland and London. And so it has gone, from month to month, over the past few seasons. Often Miss Chung has hopped so quickly from one appearance to another that she has not had time for the routine tasks of a working fiddler. "Not long ago I played a concert in Rotterdam with my bow in very bad repair: I had broken a great many hairs, and had no time to replace them. After the concert a group of Japanese people came backstage to congratulate me. I noticed one of them staring at my bow. Finally he asked me, 'Is this unusual bow the secret of your beautiful playing?'"

A superficial reading of Miss Chung's series of triumphs might lead one to think that she is like a well-oiled machine gliding inexorably along the shining rails of success. There is more to her than that: she reveals a capacity for reflection that is unusual for a person her age. "It is tremendously exciting to have your career burgeon as mine has, but sometimes I don't like seeing my whole life spelled out on a schedule. The public can be cruel, too: when you are unwell, or if for any reason you do not play your best, the public makes no allowances. I don't want my audiences to feel cheated, and I don't want to cheat myself. A performer must constantly demand perfection from himself, but it takes much time and work even to approach that level. I don't think I will ever, ever, ever be totally satisfied with my performances—happy with some of them, perhaps, but not satisfied. I would be frightened if I *did* feel satisfied. A musician is always climbing a ladder: there is always another step."

HER ties to her family, both personal and musical, are strong. When she is in New York she is constantly with her sister Myung-Wha and her brother Myung-Whun, both of whom are also professional musicians and live near her apartment; this past season she played the Brahms Double Concerto in London with Myung-Wha as cellist, and was soloist in the Brahms Violin Concerto with Myung-Whun leading the Seoul Philharmonic in Korea. Her parents, who own a mushroom plantation and canning factory near Seoul, often catch up with her at one of her scheduled stops so that the family can share special

occasions (recently several of the Chungs gathered in Rotterdam for the sixtieth birthday of Kyung-Wha's father). Her family and her Korean heritage, she believes, are sources of special strength for her. "Perhaps because of our country's tragic recent history, Korean children have a strong desire to achieve something, to prove themselves to the world. When I came to the United States, I was obsessed with the desire to succeed, partly because I was Korean—I wanted it *for* Korea."

BORN in Seoul in 1948, Kyung-Wha is the youngest daughter in a family thoroughly steeped in Western music. Her uncle was conductor of the Korean National Symphony, and of her six brothers and sisters all but one studied music. After a brief fling with the piano, Kyung-Wha settled down to the violin at age six, and three years afterward appeared as soloist with the Seoul Philharmonic. By the time she was twelve she was giving chamber-music concerts throughout Korea, and was sent by the government on a concert tour of Japan. Meanwhile, her older sisters and brothers had begun emigrating in pairs to the United States, and in 1961 Kyung-Wha joined her older sister Myung-So in New York, where the latter was studying the flute at the Juilliard School of Music. There Ivan Galamian, musical godfather of a couple of generations of professionals, heard the young violinist and offered to give her lessons. Later he saw to it that she got a Juilliard scholarship, and she studied with him for more than six years. In 1967 she entered the Edgar M. Leventritt International Competition, perhaps the most prestigious of contests for aspiring instrumentalists, and shared its first prize with Pinchas Zukerman. At that point her career started its upward spiral.

"When I first began to study with Galamian, I was frightened of him—of course, I was frightened of everybody then. He was like a god to me, and I took everything he said as a command. I think it is necessary to believe completely in your teacher. Many students have told me recently that Galamian is too old to teach them properly—or they have some other objection to him. It makes me furious—the *nerve* of these children!

"He can pick out what a student needs in order to develop playing facility. His principal focus is the bowing arm. He never lets you give up until he gets what he wants—what *you* need. If you are having difficulty, and say to him, 'Why doesn't such and such a passage work?', he can watch you for a few moments and tell precisely what you are doing wrong. Before I studied with him I was undisciplined: in Korea I had always just played naturally, as it came to me. During those years, from the time I was thirteen on, he disciplined my technique and helped me build a well-balanced repertoire, from concertos to chamber works.

"He was like a father to me—infinite patient." She paused and shifted in her chair, as if her ceaselessly active mind needed a moment to change gears. "I would be impossible as a teacher. I tend to get carried away, and I make enemies. Instead of stopping and considering, I will blurt out to a conductor, 'That's too loud!' or 'Why did you do that?' One conductor was so offended he became abusive, and I almost walked out on him—no, I won't say who. But surely they must make allowances for *me*! Conductors are so egocentric. But it is necessary, I suppose, that they be so." It had occurred to me for no particular reason that Miss Chung herself might have what it takes to be a conductor. "Conducting can be very frus-

trating, but also might be satisfying—if I were a man. Perhaps deep down I feel that it should be a man who is on the podium. It is not an easy task. Many times I have seen members of the orchestra trying to 'get' the conductor." If the conductor were a woman, would she be subject to the same treatment? "I don't think so, not if she had the necessary leadership and knowledge."

I asked Miss Chung to show me the instrument she uses in concert, the "Harrison" Stradivarius, so called for Richard Harrison, a London lawyer and amateur violinist who owned the instrument in the late nineteenth century. Made in 1693, it is considered a fine example of Stradivarius' experimentation with the "long-pattern" violin, and, as that phrase implies, is larger than ordinary. Miss Chung bought it in New York in 1968. "It's agony for me that it is so big," she said, as she stretched her arm out to cradle the instrument, and it was easy to see what she meant. "But I tried other Stradivariuses and was disappointed in the sound. I liked the sound of this one very much, even though the tone was a bit uneven when I bought it because it had not been played for so long." It has been frequently played since Miss Chung acquired it: by the 1971-1972 season her schedule contained eighty-five performances, and in 1972-1973 over one hundred. Now she hopes to cut back to between sixty and seventy appearances a year. "I have no complaints about my career so far. But my aim is to live up to my gifts. I want some time to add to my repertoire and to experiment. This summer I wanted to relax, and I spent some time in Korea with my family, trying to get some exercise other than just that of my bowing arm."

I POINTED out that her recordings released here to date—the Tchaikovsky and Sibelius Concertos (London CS 6710) and the Bruch Concerto and *Scottish Fantasy* (CS 6795), with the Stravinsky and Walton Concertos (CS 6819) scheduled for fall release—hardly scratch the surface of her repertoire. If she is successful in cutting down the number of her appearances, will she spend more time in the recording studio? "I think one recording a year is enough," she said firmly. "I want to avoid recording too much, because whatever piece I choose, I'll play it better in a year—at least I hope I will! There are plans—Lalo's *Symphonie Espagnole*, Chausson's *Poème*, the Mendelssohn. I hope to record some chamber music eventually: Schubert's sonatinas, Beethoven, Mozart. . . . I think Mozart's music is supreme; it lacks nothing. It is the most dramatic music of all, and it should be played that way. Its expressive range is wide. Those who say Mozart should not be played so freely are entirely wrong.

"Oh,"—another shift of gears—"I want to tell you about recording the Walton. He wrote his concerto for Jascha Heifetz, you know. I really had to struggle with parts of it. Sir William was at the recording sessions, but I didn't know it at first. I kept hearing the men in the orchestra—the London Symphony—saying, 'Willie is here, Willie is here.' Finally I had to ask, 'Who is Willie?' I was terribly embarrassed when I was told, and I went over to him to ask if he had any suggestions. He was very generous in his compliments for my playing, and I was overwhelmed. We spoke for a few moments, and then I said to him, 'Sir William, pardon me, but may I ask you why you made the last movement so difficult to play?' 'My dear,' he said, and put his arm around my shoulder like a kind uncle, 'it's all that damned Heifetz's fault.'"

STEREO REVIEW'S SELECTION OF RECORDINGS OF SPECIAL MERIT BEST OF THE MONTH



CLASSICAL

THE CASE FOR BIEDERMEIER ROMANTICISM

Spohr and Kalkbrenner are persuasive advocates in a Turnabout recording of their chamber works

“SPOHR and Beethoven at classical Monday pops. . . .” I can never hear Ludwig Spohr’s music without thinking of Gilbert’s immortal line from *The Mikado*. True, he was describing a form of punishment (to fit some crime or other), but, at any rate, it suggests that, in late nineteenth-century England, at least, one Ludwig was still right up there with the other.

We still know and understand surprisingly little about the early nineteenth century. For example, those we now take to be the two greatest figures of the period—the composers we associate with the transition from Classicism to Romanticism—had little direct influence on the immediate evolution of music: Schubert because he was very little known, and Beethoven because he was much too difficult and crotchety. The really influential figures were the Italians, the Englishman-in-Russia John Field, and, among the Germans, Weber, Hummel, Kalkbrenner, Spohr, and a few almost-forgotten opera composers. It seems almost inconceivable that German Romanticism evolved from the music of this motley collection of (as they sound to us) late-Classical or “Empire” composers, but such was indeed the case. And, with the exception of the ever-popular Weber, no composer of the times was more admired than the now-neglected Spohr.

Spohr had everything: creative talent, consummate skill, taste, artistry, a great deal of

originality, and worldly success (as violinist, composer, and conductor) besides. A recording of his C Minor Quintet for piano and winds just released by Turnabout represents him very well. One can hear the whole dynasty of Romantic music from Mendelssohn to Schumann to Brahms—even to Strauss and Rachmaninoff—prefigured in it. What sweetness! What melancholy! What mastery! What graceful musings! What a wonderful last-movement tune! Small wonder no one could resist the blandishments of this music in its own time; it is hard even now, particularly in this scrumptious performance by a first-class pianist and wind ensemble. The Spohr C Minor Quintet lives on!

The case of Friedrich Kalkbrenner, whose Grand

Quintet is also on the Turnabout disc, is even stranger. One of the most highly regarded musicians of the first decades of the century—Chopin considered studying with him—he had a striking and highly refined performing and composing technique which won him enormous success in the new public music-making environment. But a great reaction soon set in; unlike Spohr, whose reputation never quite faded entirely, Kalkbrenner came to be regarded as the prototype of the empty virtuoso. It is hard to see now what all the fuss was about. The A Minor Quintet is a suave, elegant, and tasteful chamber piece with just the right combination of sentiment and good man-



LUDWIG SPOHR (1784–1859)
Engraving by J. Lier after Bodmer

ners. It has no depth—but then neither does the Spohr. Perhaps Spohr knew the secret of *suggesting* profundity without really taxing the listener; Kalkbrenner appealed in a simpler manner to the sentiments of the cultured bourgeoisie. The Germans call the art of this period Biedermeier (after an imaginary poet of contrived simplicity whose “works” were trumped up to amuse the readers of a German literary journal), and this designation for a comfortable, middle-class, late-Classical, early-Romantic, sentimental, tasteful art fits this music perfectly.

Let me urge the excellence and the persuasiveness of these performances and recordings. How a group of New York musicians of the Seventies could be so sensitive to the Biedermeier sensibilities of Central Europe in the 1820's is beyond me, but there it is. These performances have just the right combination of style, sparkling skill, and sentimental poetry, and the sonic quality is excellent.

Eric Salzman

SPOHR: *Quintet in A Minor*. KALKBRENNER: *Grand Quintet in C Minor*. Mary Louise Boehm (piano); John Wion (flute); Arthur Bloom (clarinet); Howard Howard (horn); Donald MacCourt (bassoon); Fred Sherry (cello); Jeffrey Levine (bass). TURNABOUT TV S 34506 \$2.98.

A VERY IMPORTANT “TROUT”

*Schubert's Quintet is a revelatory experience
in a new performance with old instruments*

IT IS not often that one hears a piece of the standard repertoire, with which one has abundant personal familiarity, performed in such a way as to change all one's ideas of how that work is supposed to sound. When I say that that was precisely my reaction to the new BASF recording of Schubert's most popular, and most recorded, chamber work, the “Trout” Quintet, the reader may get the idea that I consider this release to be one of the most important records of the year. And so I do. I also consider it to be one of the most beautiful records of chamber music I have ever heard.

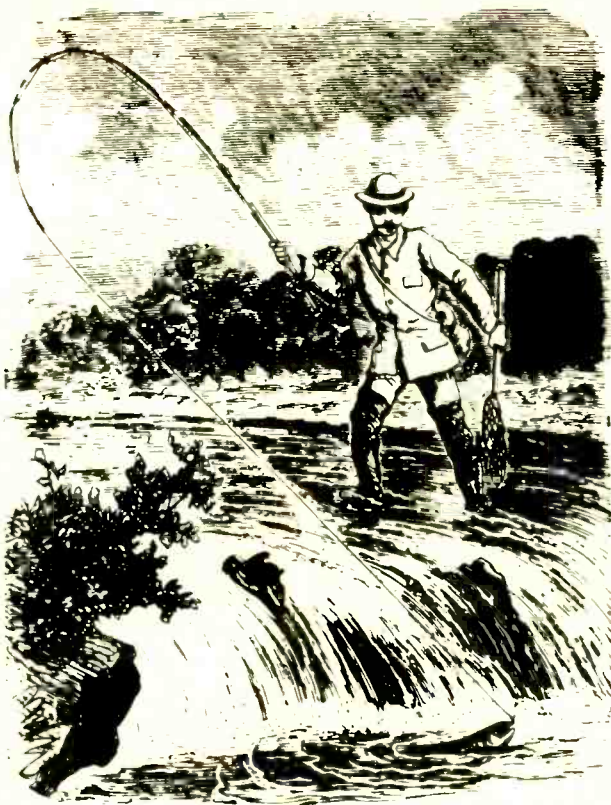
Obviously, to rate such superlatives, there must be something distinctly unusual about this performance, something that goes beyond the bounds of musicianship and technique, vital as they are. That something lies in the instruments used by the very

capable performers (Jörg Demus and members of the Collegium Aureum): a piano by Conrad Graf (nineteenth-century Viennese) and violin, viola, and cello by, respectively, Guarneri del Gesù, Gasparo da Salò, and Giuseppe Gagliano, all with catgut strings. The bass, presumably, is modern, but it is made to blend beautifully into the ensemble. The sound that this ensemble produces is, quite literally, a revelation. You hear everything, all the time. Nothing is covered, nothing is clouded over. The lightness of the bass strings of the piano allows the cello and bass parts to sound without exaggerating their dynamic level, and the clarity and projection of the keyboard instrument, in all registers, at all dynamics, is a joy. The strings, for their part, have, along with an attractive, faintly nasal tone, a richness and subtlety (owing to the gut strings) that tell the ear that *forte* is not simply the same as *piano* only louder, but is a different thing altogether.

In general, I am not sold on the idea of period instruments in the performance of nineteenth-century repertoire. I would have some reservations about the Graf piano as a medium for solo keyboard works and probably for concertos as well, reservations I might rationalize in a dozen ways, among which would be the fact that I am so used to the sound of a modern piano that the (now) peculiar tonal values of the Graf and its different balance of registers would be more a distraction from the music than an aid to it. But chamber music, I confess, is something else entirely. One simply cannot, using modern instruments, achieve the blend *and* the clarity that are heard on this record.

Apart from the musical revelation of the instruments themselves, Demus and the members of the Collegium Aureum phrase the music, both the “Trout” and the exquisite Nocturne in E-flat, which is the filler, as well or better than anyone else I've heard. Their performance is a bit on the Classic side, and phrases are not drawn out to the unutterably expressive lengths they are in some Viennese and some Russian performances of Schubert. Somehow, with the old instruments, they don't have to be, for the depth of expression comes through without exaggeration.

The recording is good enough—without being at all of “demonstration” quality—though there is a certain amount of recording noise. The jacket annotations are something of a mess (“violincello,” bad translations from the German—which is of indifferent content to begin with, confusion of movements between the Quintet and the Nocturne, etc.), and I suppose we are lucky not to have a pickled trout on the cover. But it all goes to show how insignificant such trappings are. Great music-making is worth



anything, including whatever we may have to put up with to hear it. *James Goodfriend*

SCHUBERT: *Quintet in A Major, Op. 114, "Trout," D. 667; Nocturne in E-flat Major for Piano, Violin, and Cello, Op. 148, D. 897.* Jörg Demus (piano); Franzjosef Maier (violin); Heinz-Otto Graf (viola); Rudolf Mandalka (cello); Paul Breuer (bass). BASF KHB 20314 \$5.98.

THE HARMONIC WHIM OF ANTONIO VIVALDI

The twelve concertos are brilliantly realized by the Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields

AMONG the hundreds of concertos by Antonio Vivaldi, few can be considered more important, both historically and musically, than the set of twelve published around 1712 (as Opus 3) under the fanciful title *L'Estro Armonico* (*The Harmonic Whim*). Both *I Musici* and the Festival Strings Lucerne have recorded the work complete during the last few years for European companies, but the only currently available American-label release is the decade-old version on Vanguard, a worthy interpretation by Mario Rossi and the Chamber Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera, which now shows its age not only sonically but stylistically as well. It is therefore gratifying to be able to report that these thin ranks are now swelled by a vividly recorded

new set from Argo featuring the Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, and that it contains some of the most stimulating and excitingly played Vivaldi to be found in the catalog.

Vivaldi's Opus 3 is a mixture in which three types of concertos can be found: four for four violins (sometimes with an additional cello obbligato), four for two violins (sometimes again with cello obbligato, making the work a classical concerto grosso), and a final four for solo violin—all of these accompanied by strings and continuo. When the twelve concertos were first published, they made a tremendous impression, and even today there are individual concertos, such as the Eleventh in D Minor, which rank among the best known (and most often recorded) Vivaldi. The Sixth Concerto, in A Minor, is another almost overly familiar work, for it is one of those pieces budding violinists are often given to learn. And further, whenever two virtuoso fiddlers get together with an orchestra, if it is not the Bach D Minor Double Concerto that is programmed, then it is usually the Vivaldi Op. 3, No. 8, in A Minor.

One of the Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields' first recordings (L'Oiseau-Lyre SOL 276), around 1964, was that same Tenth Concerto from Op. 3. I remember being bowled over by the fiery vitality of the performance and hoped that at some point the group would get around to the entire set. Happily, this realization matches in every way the freshness of the earlier recording. As might have been expected with this group, instrumental virtuosity is very much to the fore; the attacks are razor sharp, the inflection in fast movements markedly pointed, and the dynamics in both fast and slow movements carefully gauged but quite spontaneous in expression. The individual soloists, taken from within the ensemble, are splendid, and the continuo forces most effectively varied between harpsichord (on occasion there are two of them), organ, theorbo (bass lute), bassoon, and cello. Stylistically, these performances are first-rate, but perhaps above all else it is the group's expression of Italianate vitality that stamps this Op. 3 as such a splendid achievement. The reproduction is extremely transparent.

Igor Kipnis

VIVALDI: *Twelve Concertos, Op. 3 ("L'Estro Armonico").* Alan Loveday, Iona Brown, Carmel Kaine, Roy Gillard, and Ronald Thomas (violins); Kenneth Heath (cello); Christopher Hogwood and Colin Tilney (harpsichords and organ); Robert Spencer (theorbo); The Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, Neville Martinier cond. Argo ZRG 733-4 two discs \$11.90.

(Continued overleaf)

JOHN ENTWHISTLE INVENTS "ROCK CABARET"

A purported elegy for Fifties rock-and-roll turns out to have a fine satirical edge

THOUGH the Rolling Stones have now replaced the Beatles as targets of teen hysteria, media adulation, and critical huffery-puffery, I think the logical inheritors of the Fab Four's mantle ought to have been the Who, who still retain both their talent and their Jolly Roger ways. Behind every recording by the Who is the same slug-it-out, working-band attitude the Beatles had when they were doing forced labor in the Hamburg clubs. The Beatles' "Sergeant Pepper" and the Who's "Tommy" were the two most important rock albums of the Sixties, the results of raw power filtered through a somewhat variable sophistication. "Sergeant Pepper" is intermittently successful phonographic musical theater; "Tommy" is a creditable attempt at a modern folk opera. Both are the products of intelligent, intuitive creators, but though talent and good intentions abound, neither is completely successful.

All of which is a rather sidewise approach to a new album that has caused me to ruminate on what happens to the various parts when whole groups break up or separate temporarily. John Entwistle, the bassist with the Who, has just produced an album, called "Rigor Mortis Sets In," that is all the evidence we need to prove him a brilliant comedic talent, a satirist of the first order, and an individual comfortably on his own. Unlike the other group members—Roger Daltrey, Peter Townshend, and Keith Moon, who are either in eclipse or recovering from critical wounds following unsuccessful solo releases—he apparently does not need the Who; he is a distinct and separate talent.

This is interesting, because it departs from the usual pattern. John, Paul, George, and Ringo have separately proved themselves either silly or redundant, no matter what the sales of their solo recorded efforts are. The success of the Beatles reissue albums and the fervently hopeful rumors of reconciliation and regrouping both testify to the failure of the individual talents; only the group can provide the checks and balances they need. Again, it would be very dangerous, I think, for Mick Jagger to separate himself from the Stones, and probably disastrous for anyone else in the group.

But then here comes Entwistle to show it needn't always be so. This is his third solo album,



JOHN ENTWHISTLE: a brilliant comedic talent

and it purports to be an elegy for the simple, direct rock-and-roll of the Fifties. And on three songs it is: *Mr. Bass Man* and *Hound Dog* are respectful and respectable covers of the originals, and *Lucille* is a cover, not of the original Little Richard classic, but of the Everly Brothers version. Ah! but those seven other cuts! While preserving and recreating perfectly the primal thump of Fifties rock, Entwistle has overlaid it, through his lyrics, with a dark and ribald humor. Without actually using any of the handy Anglo-Saxon expletives, he somehow manages to convey all their spirit; no man who has just stubbed his toe or learned his bank has failed or his girl departed could hope to express himself better. *Do the Dangle*, for example, is the ultimate gutting of all those Fifties/Sixties "dance" songs, and more sophisticated than any of them; *Roller Skate Kate* gives a final heave-ho to such "teen death" songs as *Tell Laura I Love Her*; and *Peg Leg Peggy* skewers all those ditties praising some teen kewpie-doll's smooching technique.

I think what Entwistle has invented here is a new form—rock cabaret. Practiced on this high level, it might easily prove more viable than the "concept" album of the Beatles and the rock opera of the Who. It is the best album I've heard this year, and I wish listening to it might be made—for some people, at least—mandatory.

Joel Vance

JOHN ENTWHISTLE: *Rigor Mortis Sets In*. John Entwistle (bass, vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *Gimme That Rock 'n' Roll*; *Do the Dangle*; *Made in Japan*; *Roller Skate Kate*; *Peg Leg Peggy*; *Big Black Cadillac*; *My Wife*; *Lucille*; *Hound Dog*; *Mr. Bass Man*. TRACK MCA-321 \$4.98, © MCAT 321 \$6.98, © MCAC 321 \$6.98.



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POPULAR DISCS AND TAPES

Reviewed by CHRIS ALBERTSON • NOEL COPPAGE • PAUL KRESH • PETER REILLY • JOEL VANCE

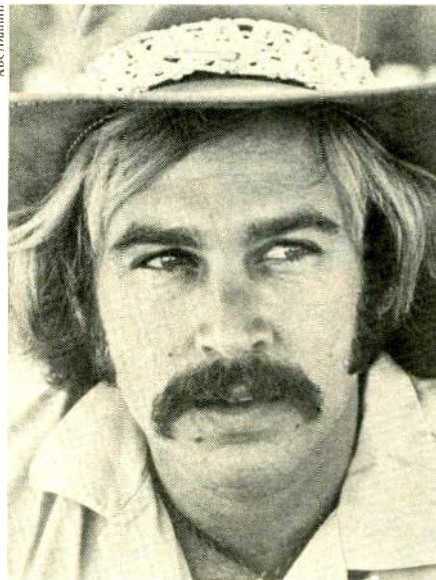
ARGENT: *In Deep*. Argent (vocals and instrumentals). *God Gave Rock and Roll to You; It's Only Money (Parts 1 and 2); Losing Hold; Be Glad; Christmas for the Free; Candles on the River; Rosie*. EPIC KE 32195 \$5.95. Ⓟ EA 32195 \$6.98, Ⓒ ET 32195 \$6.98.

Performance: **Flopping toward style**
Recording: **Mostly good**

Argent is one of those twin-lead keyboard-guitar rock outfits that tend to go to tedious lengths to establish that they don't sound just like Traffic. Argent does have a certain roughness about it, and something else. Perhaps the key to listening for that something else is to figure out how to listen to lead singer Russ Ballard. There's something delicate about his vocals, having to do with his having somewhat better control than he would have you believe. The whole band is like that—but I must admit I like it best when the control is almost obvious, as when Rod Argent's mello-tron pierces through a clangorous but organized mess of chording in *Losing Hold*. Much of the album is tedious: albums whose ultimate resource is a lightning-fingered organist usually are. I think in this case some lyrics that had something—anything—to say would have helped. But Argent is thinking out there—at least about the arrangements. *N.C.*

BLUE RIDGE RANGERS. Blue Ridge Rangers (vocals and instrumentals). *Blue Ridge Mountain Blues; Somewhere Listening (for*

My Name); You're the Reason; Jambalaya; She Thinks I Still Care; California Blues (Blue Yodel #4); Workin' on a Building; I Ain't Never; and four others. FANTASY 9415



JIMMY BUFFETT
Exactly the right edge of put-on

\$4.98. Ⓟ M 8160 9415 \$6.98. Ⓒ M 5160 9415 \$6.98.

Performance: **Too much too soon**
Recording: **Very good**

The credits tell you only who arranged and produced, but the "secret" has been out for some time now—the Blue Ridge Rangers are, in fact, a studio creation of ex-Creedence John Fogerty, who plays and sings all the parts himself. The album itself is one of the weirdest collections of old songs imaginable: encountering the old, forgotten hymn *Somewhere Listening (for My Name)* and the presumed lost secular-spiritual classic *Workin' on a Building* on the same record is enough to think about. There is also a formless, or omnidirectional, quality about the band, with woodwinds and such introduced here and there. The sense I make of it is that Fogerty

has steered as many songs as possible toward blues or bouncy interpretations. His reasoning becomes clear when you realize how totally befuddled he is when trying to sing "straight" country songs: such numbers as *You're the Reason, Please Help Me I'm Falling, She Thinks I Still Care*, and Merle Hag-gard's *Today I Started Loving You Again* are all magnificently stubborn in their refusal to budge from the middle of the pasture. Fogerty drops the buzz from his voice and casts about desperately in one secondhand approach after another, ending it all with a resigned, weak copy of Hag's style on Hag's song. Those disasters dominate the album, which is really too bad; *Workin' on a Building*, done in a rocking gospel style that Fogerty handles very well, is an extremely strong piece. The essential flaw, I guess, is that the production involved too much hard work and not enough hard thought. But what do you expect from a one-man band? *N.C.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

JIMMY BUFFETT: *A White Sport Coat and a Pink Crustacean*. Jimmy Buffett (vocals); orchestra. *Railroad Lady; He Went to Paris; My Lovely Lady; Why Don't We Get Drunk*; and seven others. DUNHILL DSX 50150 \$5.98. Ⓟ M 8023 50150 \$6.98.

Performance: **A delight**
Recording: **Excellent**

This is a disarming and delightful surprise (and *get* that album title!). Jimmy Buffett writes songs that are always funny and often sharply satiric and that perceive life in the Seventies from an original and obliquely truthful point of view. The adopted style is pseudo-c-&-w. But hear him drawl through a very strongly felt song, such as *Death of an Unpopular Poet*, or the sad slapstick of *Cuban Crime of Passion*, and you realize that his performances have exactly the right edge of put-on for his unique kind of talent. Sample from *They Don't Dance Like Carmen No More*: "She and old Cougie, my what a pair/ Doin' the Rhumba as no one else dared/ Slidin' and glidin' 'cross Hollywood floors/ But they don't dance like Carmen no more." Sounds like more camp about the Carmen

Explanation of symbols:

- Ⓡ = reel-to-reel stereo tape
- Ⓢ = eight-track stereo cartridge
- Ⓒ = stereo cassette
- Ⓛ = quadrasonic disc
- Ⓡ = reel-to-reel quadrasonic tape
- Ⓢ = eight-track quadrasonic tape
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Monophonic recordings are indicated by the symbol Ⓜ

The first listing is the one reviewed; other formats, if available, follow it.

Miranda nostalgia craze, doesn't it? But in Buffett's performance it becomes part of a wistfully absurd eulogy by "an old man" who genuinely mourns the little Brazilian comedienne.

In sum, this is a low-key but very accomplished album that will appeal to anyone who likes to laugh and think at the same time. Which means, of course, that it has about as much chance of survival in the current marketplace as a blonde ingenue overnight guest at a Transylvanian castle. It deserves better.

P.R.

JOHN CALE: *Paris 1919*. John Cale (vocals); orchestra, John Cale arr. *Child's Christmas in Wales*; *Hanky Panky Nohow*; *The Endless Plain of Fortune*; *Andalucia*; and five others. REPRISE MS 2131 \$5.98.

Performance: **Deep but lumpy**
Recording: **Voluptuous**

You probably *would* know, from looking at his picture on the cover, that he was famous long ago for playing the electric viola in the Velvet Underground: John Cale, dressed in a white suit and looking as supercilious as Tom Wolfe in other ways too, gazes out at ya from a fuzzy, indefinite setting. Perhaps that look reflects some acknowledgment that Lou Reed is toiling just as effectively as Cale these days to prove who was the real brains of the VU—Cale *is* (slowly) being recognized as one of the few who probe the avant-garde area for musical rather than marketing ideas.

Here, however, he seems to have set us up and then pulled the punch that would have knocked us out—in what you might call a soft lunge (backwards) to make his music more "accessible." The lyrics are fine, satisfying as they go by and even better when you come back to them in a mood to ponder. But the melodies, ranging from catchy to humdrum, seem arbitrarily fitted to the verses, and Cale seems to have used essentially the same dense arrangement for everything. There are a few startling elements, to be sure, but they are add-ons. Each poem—the lyrics are generally that good—deserved its own approach. Cale's *vocal* treatments do vary, as much as melody and beat will let them, but Cale is not as gifted as a vocalist as he is in most other ways.

When everything does seem to fit, as in the opener, *Child's Christmas in Wales* (Cale was born there), it is absolutely sumptuous. And I must admit it is the kind of album that keeps nagging at me to play it again, even though I know I'll be frustrated a time or two if I do.

N.C.

CANNED HEAT: *The New Age*. Canned Heat (vocals and instrumentals). *Keep It Clean*; *Harley Davidson Blues*; *Don't Deceive Me*; *You Can Run, but You Sure Can't Hide*; *Framed*; *Election Blues*; and three others. UNITED ARTISTS UA LA049-F \$5.98, © C 049 \$7.95.

Performance: **Okay**
Recording: **Very good**

Canned Heat has been floundering for the last few years; certainly they have never equaled the excitement of their albums from the late Sixties. They recently tried grafting themselves onto the bodies and legends of John Lee Hooker and Little Richard by having those stellar gentlemen appear on their albums. On this disc they try to pick up the torch from the late Clara Ward and her gospel singers, but they fall flat again.

During its peak, Canned Heat was at best a faithful purveyor of riffs, figures, and assumed attitudes that had been matrixed many years before by Hooker and others. The eunuch vocal on *Goin' Up the Country* was a travesty, but, combined with the flute solo, somehow it worked. Most of their music was like that. I liked their records, but in 1970 I saw them work a Philadelphia club and was dreadfully disappointed: they sounded like every cheesy band that plays four sets of forty minutes apiece, ten songs a set, all taken from the current charts. Many things could have been to blame: an off night, poor sound setup, a doped roadie, contempt for the club, bad acoustics, short money, or having to pay for their own drinks. But it was still disappointing. I wondered then how much of their appeal was skillful engineering and production in the studio, and I fear I have had the answer



RAY CHARLES

A fine reissue, soulful and humorous

with their last few albums, especially since the death of guitarist Al Wilson robbed them of what creative force they had.

There is one track on this current effort that is virtually grounds for a suit: the title *Rock and Roll Music* comes from Chuck Berry, and the tune is borrowed from Lloyd Price's *Lawdy Miss Clawdy*. (My God, what has happened to all those people who made us so happy only five years ago? I would go into details but I want to leave enough room for the ads.) Suffice it to say that Canned Heat, living off their past reputation and sounding as they do now—their version of *Framed* is indistinguishable from, and not as much fun as, Bill Haley's version recorded three years ago—have some nerve calling this album "The New Age." It is a sorry scene.

J. V.

RAY CHARLES: *Genius Live in Concert*. Ray Charles (piano and vocals); Ray Charles Orchestra; the Raelets. *Margie*; *Makin' Whoopee*; *Hallelujah I Love Her So*; *What'd I Say*; and six others. BLUESWAY BLS 6053 \$4.98.

Performance: **Soul of '64**
Recording: **Slightly bruised**

Recorded in Los Angeles at the Shrine Civic Auditorium nine years ago, this is a reissue of an album which originally appeared on the ABC Paramount label. Unlike some reissues, it is an experience worth repeating.

Swing a Little Taste, a bouncy instrumental

by trombonist Julian Priester, kicks things off. The band is fine, and tenor saxophonist David Newman—then in his tenth year with Charles—contributes a good solo. But the highlight is Charles' swinging piano. Like Nat King Cole before him, Ray Charles is an excellent pianist whose piano playing has been overshadowed by vocal abilities that have been found more salable. It would be nice if we could enjoy both sides of his talent through equal exposure, but at least he still works from the keyboard, and I suppose we should be thankful for the occasional taste of his piano.

The rest of the varied repertoire has Charles singing in his highly influential, soulful style, bending *Margie* into remarkably listenable shape (no minor feat), romping through crowd-pleasers in games of tag with the Raelets, and *Makin' Whoopee* as he oozes his cool humor over a mellow piano in a six-minute track that for me is worth all the others put together.

Poor recording balance mars this set somewhat, occasionally all but drowning out Charles' voice (especially on the two tracks featuring the Raelets). And then there is the *Finale*, an embarrassing bit of nonsense that is inconsistent with the rest of the album. These flaws notwithstanding, I recommend this reissue. It contains more genuine soul (or feeling, if you will) than James Brown can ever hope to get in the little toe of his good foot.

DALTREY. Roger Daltrey (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *One Man Band*; *The Way of the World*; *You Are Yourself*; *Thinking*; *You and Me*; and five others. MCA TRACK MCA 328 \$4.98, © MCAT 328 \$6.98, © MCAC 328 \$6.98.

Performance: **Rehearsal**
Recording: **Good**

Roger Daltrey is the lead singer of the Who; as such he is sometimes overshadowed by the direction and composing talents of Peter Dinklage. Daltrey is the perfect messenger for Townshend's ideas, and despite a limited vocal range he is a fine singer in his own right. He is quoted, in the press material that accompanies this album, to the effect that he considers making the album a good experience. That is probably so; having spent time around musicians in record sessions when they go for a note they always wanted to make. I believe I can hear his excitement about the experience at the moment he sings it. But in the end this is an "exercise" album, a rehearsal for an album he is capable of but hasn't made yet.

The fault lies entirely with the songs. They were written by Dave Courtney and Leo Sayer, who were introduced to Daltrey by the producer Adam Faith, a late-Fifties/early-sixties British rock star who made some good records. Courtney and Sayer have managed to get in every cliché possible; we are long past due to mark it down that rock songwriters can also be hacks, and if they do not write moon/June stuff they write the equivalent in contemporary terms. Really, there is little difference between their *When the Music Stops*, wherein the string backing section stops (not once, which would have been all right, but *every time* the lyric line comes up), and vaudevillian Henry Burr's 1917 rendition of *Just Before the Battle, Mother*, in which he paused to let a cornet play *Taps* when he got to the line, "Hark, I hear the bugle trilling."

If Daltrey didn't know that the material on this album was far beneath his capabilities, that is all right, for he has declared that he knows his capabilities better *since* making it—and the tunes do put him through his paces. Daltrey certainly has talent; if he can find competent songsmiths for his next solo record he will probably kill everybody with the result. But not here. J.V.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

JOHN DENVER: *Farewell Andromeda*. John Denver (vocals, guitar); Dick Kniss (bass); Herb Lovelle (drums); Toots Thielemans (harmonica); Eric Weissberg (steel guitar, electric guitar); other musicians. *I'd Rather Be a Cowboy; Berkeley Woman; Please, Daddy; Angels from Montgomery; River of Love; Rocky Mountain Suite; Whisky Basin Blues; Sweet Misery; Zachary and Jennifer; We Don't Live Here No More; Farewell Andromeda*. RCA APL1 0101 \$5.98, © APS1 0101 \$6.98, © APK1 0101 \$6.98.

Performance: **Quality**
Recording: **Excellent**

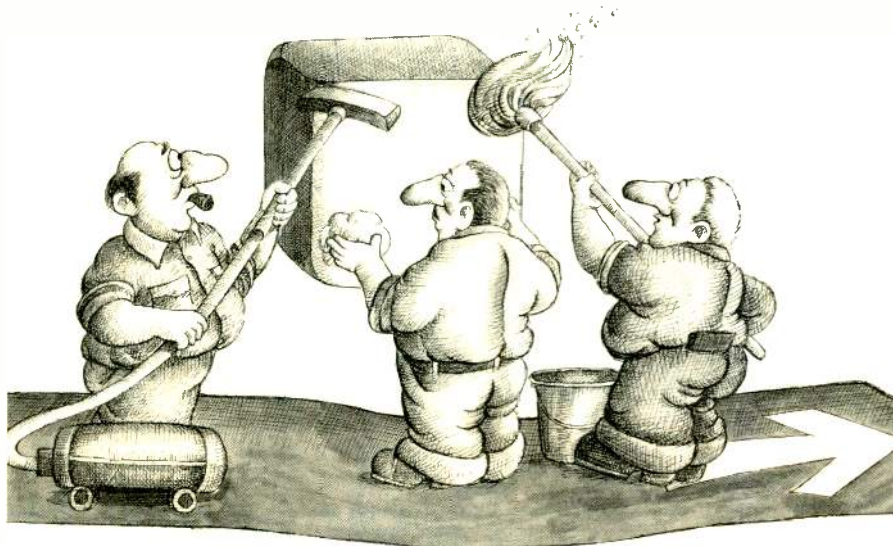
"Farewell Andromeda" is yet another strong effort by John Denver. Although it rocks harder on occasion than any other Denver album, it is essentially a cowboy-for-our-times record, cued by the opening selection. The impression it makes, compared to the jangly, treble-boosted "Rocky Mountain High," is that it's more natural sounding, somehow. That says something for Denver's sense of relevance, since "Rocky Mountain High" didn't sound "unnatural" last year. The first side serves up only one weak song—Bryan Bowers' *Berkeley Woman*—among four very strong ones; the second side tails off toward the end, but not before hitting a peak worthy of Denver's Rocky Mountain muse.

Through it all, there's a certain reserve in Denver's vocals that suits most of the material almost perfectly. Guitarist Mike Taylor is missing; I don't know why. Toots Thielemans, whose harp probably is responsible for the genesis of that extraordinary howling sound that sometimes backs Denver, is back doing the marvelous things he did in the "Aerie" album. Denver handles the acoustic guitar work himself, and fairly well too—but I noticed something: in *River of Love* the picking is turned over to John Somers, who wrote the song, and his guitar (which here doesn't do anything fancy) has a nicer tone than Denver's—a lot nicer, if you ask me. To help you program my prejudices into dealing with this, I should add that Somers' guitar, after going through the recording process and my particular speakers, sounds like a Martin.

The album's peak referred to earlier (and here we get into mangling metaphors) occurs for me in *Whisky Basin Blues*, certainly one of the best-constructed of Denver's own songs, and one of the best parlays of material, vocals, instrumentals, and recording techniques I've heard in a long time. The essential, catalytic element in its production was Dick Kniss' bass. Somehow he managed to fashion a bass line that sounds just as sardonic as the attitude taken by the lyrics. *Rocky Mountain Suite* is the, uh, foothill to that peak on side two; it has preachy words, but its melody fits those mountains like a growth of pinion. The John Prine (1971) song *Angels from Montgomery* shows Denver (and most other people) a thing or two about writing song lyrics, and it's

(Continued on page 102)

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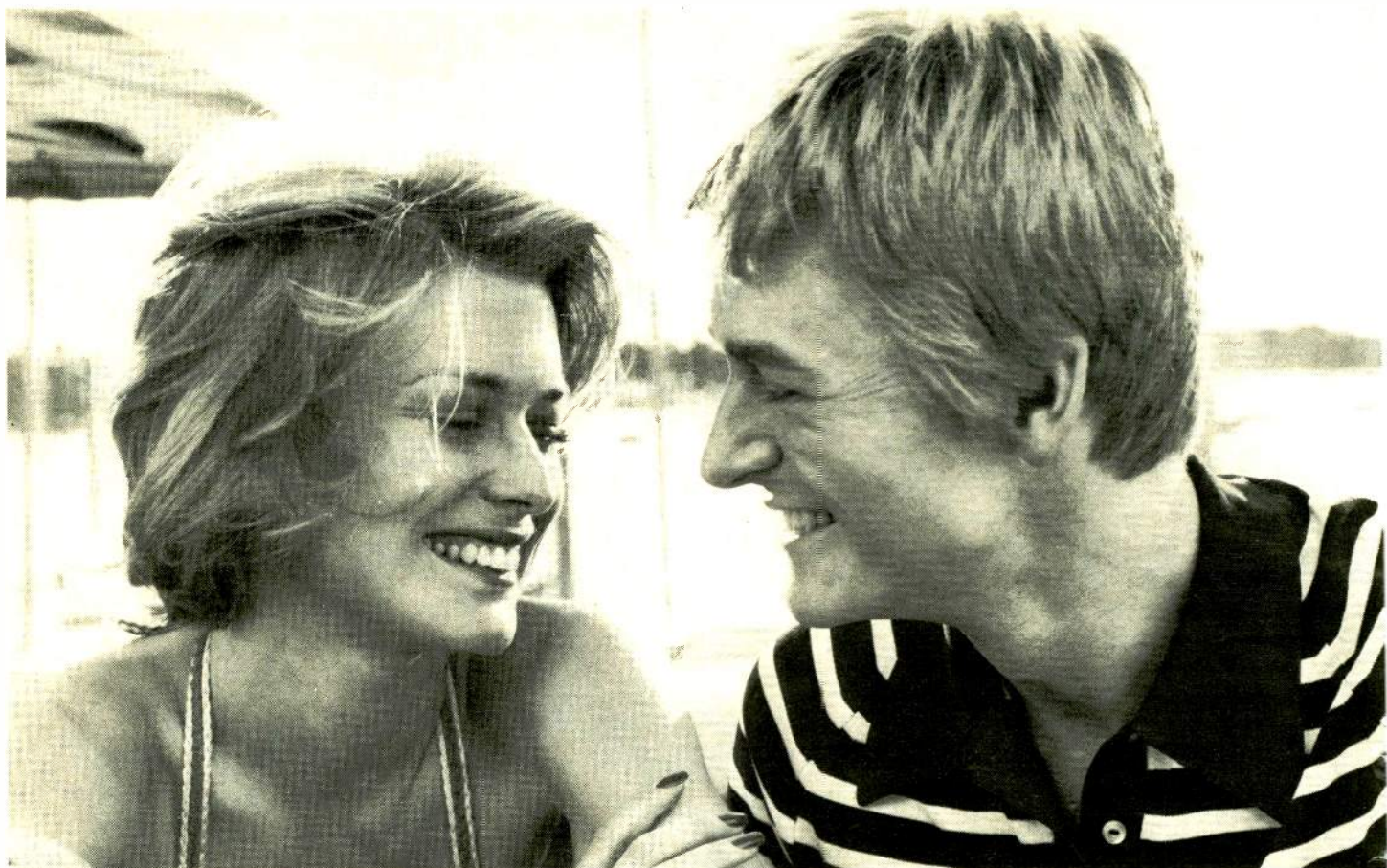
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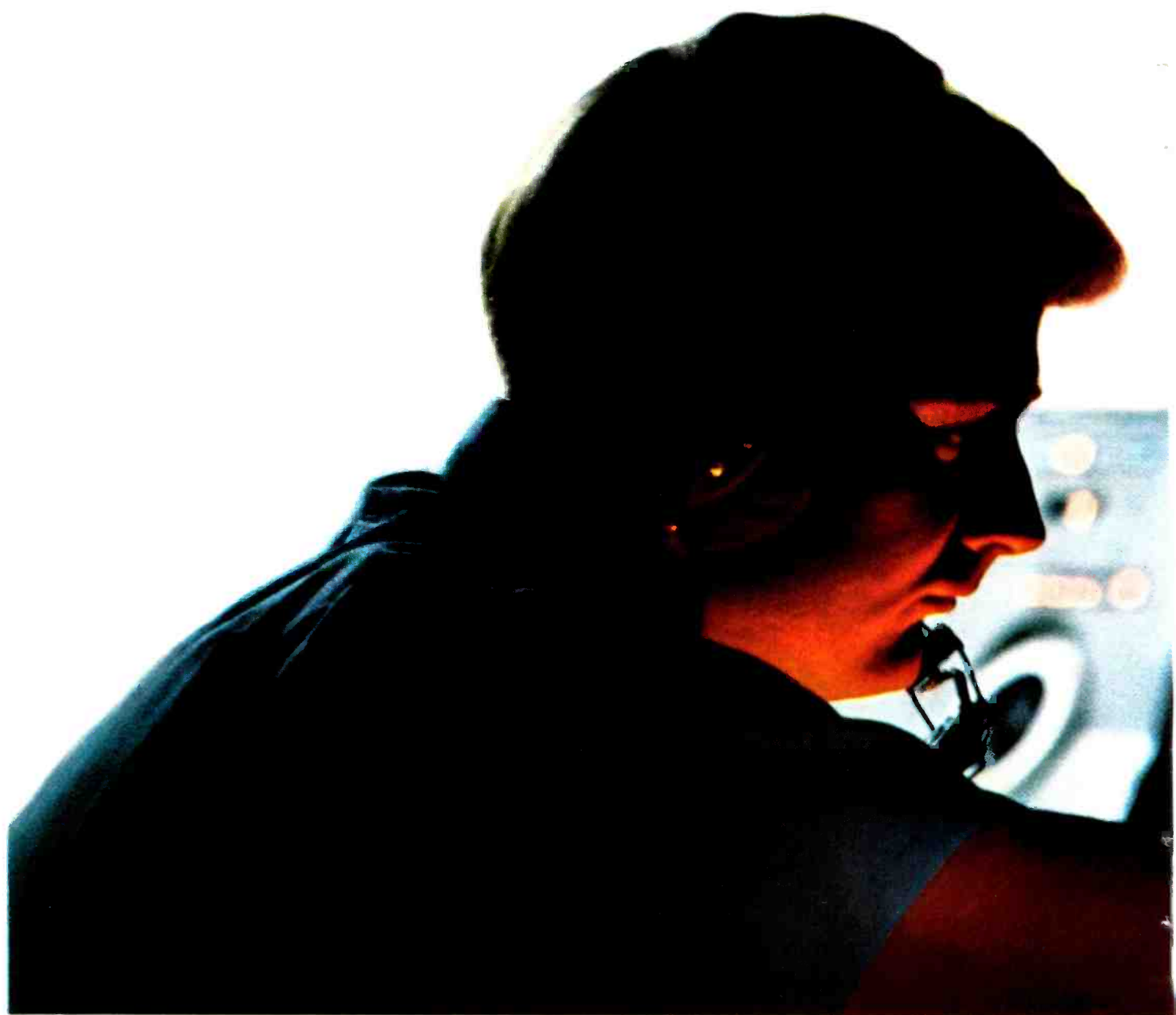
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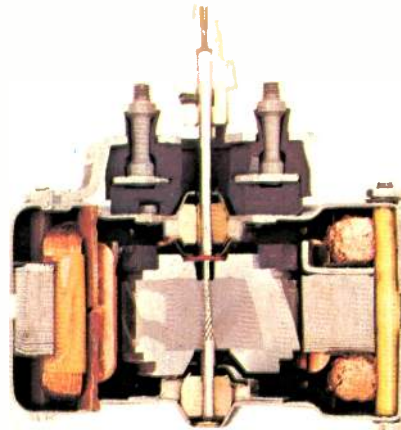
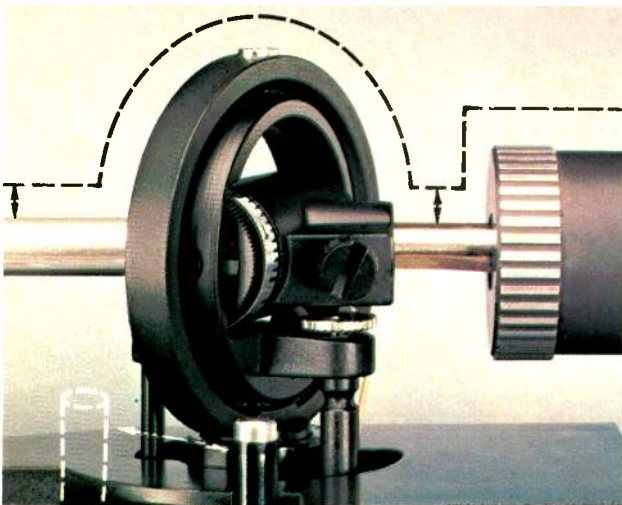
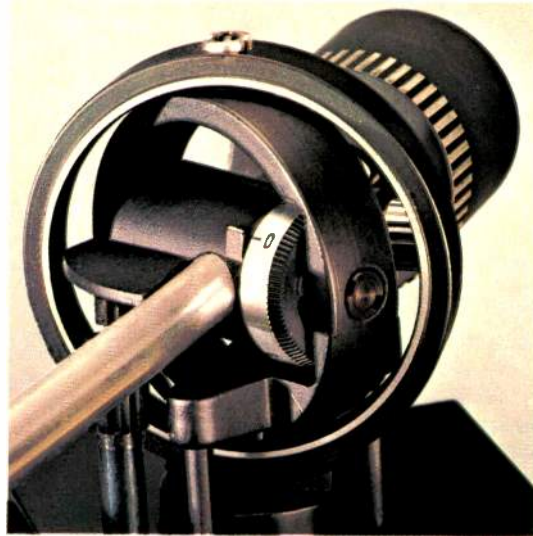
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effectively done here, with a build-up of instrumentation that turns everything loose in the last chorus. *Please, Daddy* ("don't get drunk this Christmas") by Bill Danoff and Taffy Nivert performs its task of preventing ivory-tower-building with charming snideness. I'd say the album, in all, is not quite as strong as "Aerie," but the flavor of it is probably Denver's most accurate representation of himself to date. N.C.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

THE EAGLES: *Desperado*. The Eagles (vocals and instrumentals). *Doolin-Dalton; Twenty-one; Out of Control; Tequila Sunrise; Desperado; Certain Kind of Fool; Outlaw Man; Saturday Night; Bitter Creek; Doolin-Dalton (reprise); Desperado (reprise)*. ASYLUM SD 5068 \$5.98, Ⓟ TP 5068 \$6.98, © CS 5068 \$6.98.

Performance: **Adult western**
Recording: **Very good**

This is the best of the cowboy rock bands, hands down and no contest. It is the only one that doesn't run marginally competent steel-guitar playing into the ground, and the only one—unless you count Clean Living in the category, which would be stretching it a bit—whose vocals couldn't be improved upon by most anybody's cousin. The Eagles (naturally enough, with their Byrds-Burritos connections) amount, first, to a solid rock band. They build upon that with simple, intelligent acoustic guitar duets and sparing, wise use of such instruments as banjo and harmonica. The steel guitar also is used sparingly. The songs here aren't as catchy as those in their previous album—nothing here quite cuts it in a head-on comparison with *Take It Easy*—but this is a casually organized theme album, as the title suggests, and the songs go together well and are consistently good. It almost seems as if, having won acceptance, the Eagles have now chosen a course of slow, steady growth so as to avoid losing sight of their primary and continuing obligation to be tuneful and entertaining. That sort of approach is as rare these days as . . . well, as eagles. N.C.

JOHN ENTWHISTLE: *Rigor Mortis Sets In* (see Best of the Month, page 90)

FACES: *Ooh La La*. Faces (vocals and instrumentals). *Silicone Grown; Cindy Incidentally; Flags and Banners; My Fault; Borstal Boys; Fly in the Ointment; If I'm on the Late Side; Glad and Sorry; Just Another Honky; Ooh La La*. WARNER BROS. BS 2665 \$5.98, Ⓟ M8 2665 \$6.98, © M5 2665 \$6.98.

Performance: **Professional**
Recording: **Fuzzy at times**

Faces, that pleasingly sleazy, boozy, and thumping band, which is also one aspect of vocalist Rod Stewart's artistic schizophrenia, returns here with what is not a killer album but a solid one.

Riffs, figures, and runs that would seem offensively pedantic from almost any other band are rendered by Faces with a calm authenticity. Their material has a waspish cleverness that is also authentic. Without really hating women they take a very ungentle view of them—*Silicone Grown* is the example here, where *Stay with Me* was the sneer from their previous album. (It is giggly to think of all the college girls who are faithful women's lib novitiates fingerpopping to this album. But should

they have qualms, there is always the resident Marxist graduate student to explain that this is to be expected from working-class lads who haven't been purified by Mao's thought. Ah, youth!) Anyway, Faces is more than a standard band; they play honest, straightforward, blues-derived rock, and their opinions, as stated in their songs, are refreshingly frank and a welcome relief from the blowsy one-world stuff we get from most groups.

Stewart may or may not deserve the reputation he has, but he is certainly very good and *Maggie May* is indeed a classic of sorts. On his solo albums he is gentler and more introspective; on the Faces albums he bops and struts and hooaws. He has his cake and eats it too—an achievement anyone, especially a musician, can only envy.

After his last solo album Stewart was criticized for seeming to rest on his laurels, and it



FACES
Honest, blues-derived rock

does appear that Faces are doing the same thing with this LP. But the rock audience and the music industry make extreme and sometimes unsatisfiable demands on major popular artists. If Faces are sitting this album out they probably, for reasons of health and sanity, have a right to. Commercially it won't make any difference; I am sure this album will, as they say, tear up the charts. All to the good. The royalties may pay for the ulcers. J.V.

FLO & EDDIE: *Flo & Eddie*. Mark Volman and Howard Kaylan (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *Afterglow; Days; You're a Lady; Just Another Town; Carlos and De Bull; If We Only Had the Time*; and four others. REPRIS MS 2141 \$5.98, Ⓟ M8 2141 \$6.98, © M5 2141 \$6.98.

Performance: **Juvenile**
Recording: **Good**

When Mark Volman and Howard Kaylan sang with the Turtles they sometimes did some fine work in Top-40 mid-Sixties pop-rock. But then they joined Zappa's Mothers and got a dose of hip that penicillin can't cure. Their music—this is their second album as themselves, as Flo and Eddie—is dreadfully cute, combining watery pop-rock (below the Turtles' standard) and juvenile humor masquerading as Dada affronts to de ole Establishment. I am reminded of Marlon Brando, who announced, prior to filming his potboiling, self-indulgent *One-Eyed Jacks*, that he

intended to "make a frontal assault on the temple of clichés."

The best work on the album is on Ray Davies' fine tune *Days*. But Volman and Kaylan do no more than give it a minimum of service, such as a hotel band might give *Yesterday*. Warner Brothers Records has long been known to have a sense of humor; perhaps the issuing of Volman/Kaylan albums is a joke—and Mark and Howie haven't been let in on it. J.V.

FOCUS: *Focus 3*. Thijs van Leer (vocals, organ, piano, alto flute, piccolo, harpsichord); Jan Akkerman (guitars); Bert Buiter (bass); Pierre van der Linden (drums). *Round Goes the Gossip; Love Remembered; Sylvia; Carnival Fugue; Focus III; Anonymous; Elspeth of Nottingham; House of the King*. SIRE SAS 3901 two discs \$9.98, Ⓟ Z 8147 3901 \$9.95, © Z 5147 3901 \$9.95.

Performance: **Fluent**
Recording: **Excellent**

Focus is Dutch, and ostensibly the group plays rock. Actually they combine English folk-rock (which they discipline) and American cool jazz (which they play as well as Americans—sometimes better). That they are Dutch may be the *x* factor. One part of their style could be compared to Jethro Tull, but I think they kick the ball around better than Tull does, less excessively and a lot more tastefully. I also hear echoes of mid-period Manfred Mann and early Procol Harum.

Round Goes the Gossip is an adaptation of a portion of Virgil's *Aeneid* set to music and sung in Latin. *Focus III* has a passage that is lifted bodily from Petula Clark's mid-Sixties hit *Don't Sleep in the Subway* (!). The rest of the music is very pleasant, and the skill of the musicians is admirable; they strike a balance between being eclectic and esoteric. J.V.

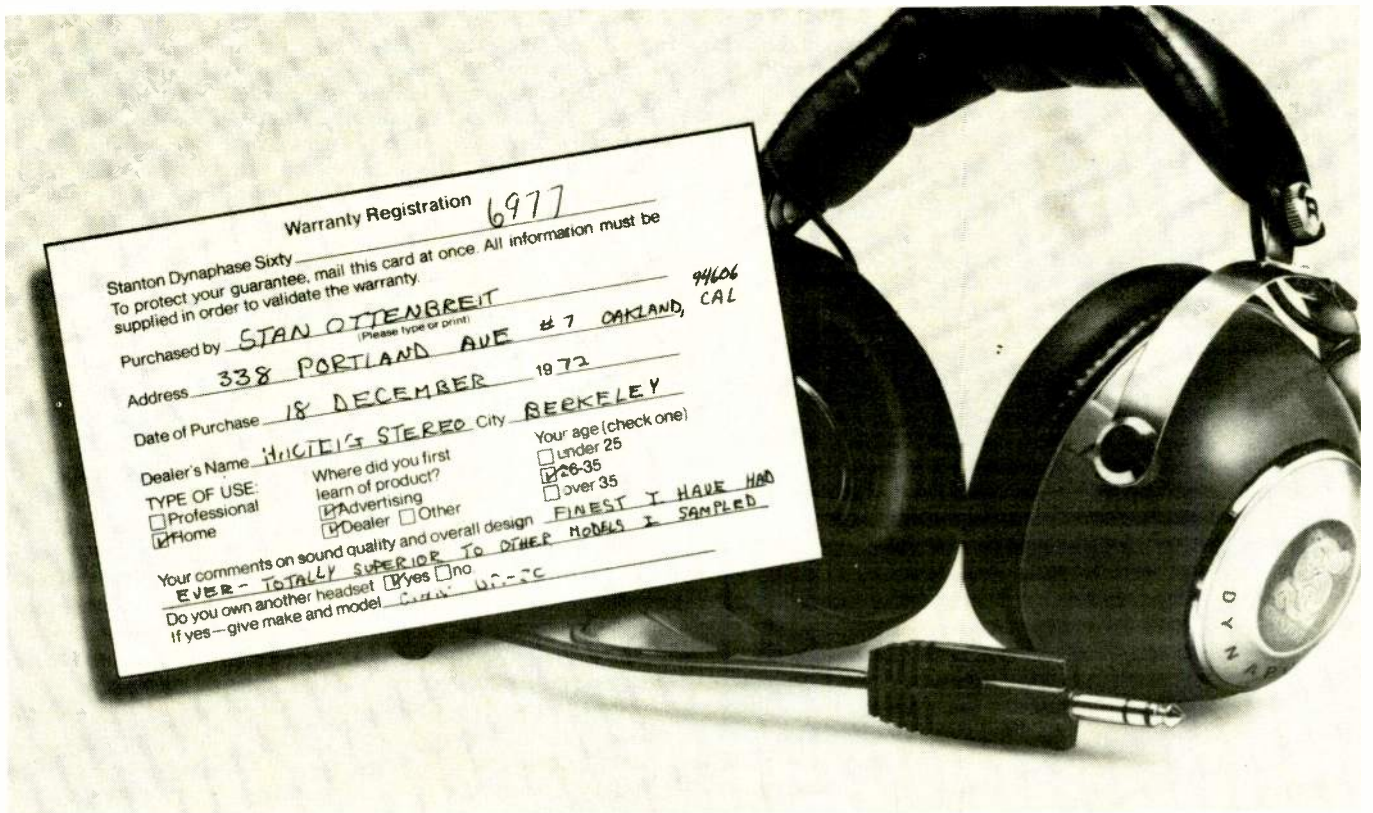
GALLAGHER AND LYLE: *Willie and the Lapdog*. Benny Gallagher and Graham Lyle (vocals and instrumentals); other musicians. *Willie; Home; Give a Boy a Break; Sittin' Down Music; Dan; Thoughts from a Station*; and six others. A & M SP 4384 \$5.98.

Performance: **Impressive**
Recording: **Excellent**

It would be flattering to think that Benny Gallagher and Graham Lyle were trying to soften me up by sometimes playing two or three harmonicas in the same song, having divined my affection for the little instrument, but somehow I doubt that's the case. They make a couple of arrangements sparkle, all the same, by lacing bass and lead harps together, with what sounds like a tremolo harmonica (their use in recordings is extremely rare) chording along in the background. All this—and the lead harp isn't even particularly well played.

Other instruments are, however, and the jangling, well-paced accompaniments are ideal for the rambling, obliquely told story of a man's memories of events, friends, and music in a lifetime he is still judging with stout Scottish harshness. Gallagher and Lyle, formerly with McGuinness Flint, must have had William Saroyan's inevitability-of-death thesis in mind when they put all this together; in fact, it "reads" a little like his early stories. Most of the songs have one or more slip-ups, but the whole is impressive, and I bet you can't hear *Give a Boy a Break* without tapping a toe.

(Continued on page 104)



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second straight album in which the production has clicked, and it's a fine one.

Some risks were taken. The title tune, for example, is a fairly simple ballad, or was before Nash dressed it to the teeth with electric guitars, strings, voices, and one of those *Hey Jude* never-endings—but all this stuff works. I suspect, still, that it works mainly because he sings so beautifully, and I'm sure that's the case with *Salt Annie Ginger Tree*, a lesser song outfitted with similar hellzapoppins. But, heck, what are singers for? The other songs are adequate-to-good and make use of some more fancy rhythm ideas, and if nothing else quite matches the title cut, neither is anything else an outright disappointment. If you hear as many grunts, snorts, snarls, and rasps in the name of singing as I do every month, you delight in finding material this good matched up with a voice this good. N.C.

ANTHONY NEWLEY: *Ain't It Funny*. Anthony Newley (vocals); instrumental accom-

ing up with the moral, "The world belongs to the fool who dares to dream." Most reassuring. *The People Tree* has a nice, relaxed, easy-going swing that should make it appeal in particular to children, but strictly for adults is *What Did You Do in the Great War, Daddy?* ("Did you shoot anyone? Did you have any fun?"), which poses a series of embarrassing, searching questions not untinged with bitter irony. The same tone pervades *I Do Not Love You*, a lover's lament that is touching despite its vapid content, for here the man who made his reputation on *What Kind of Fool Am I?* is on solid, familiar, self-abasing ground. There really is no reason for Mr. Newley to sell himself short as a "middle-aged, Silent Majority, Geritol rock 'n' roll star." There's life in the old boy yet. P.K.

PACHECO: *Tres de Cafe y Dos de Azucar*. Pete "El Conde" Rodríguez (vocals); Johnny Pacheco Orchestra (instrumentals). *Primoroso Cantar; Cositas Buenas; Ponle Punto; La*

Strand; Beauty Queen; The Bogus Man; Grey Lagoons; and four others. WARNER BROS. BS 2696 \$5.98.

Performance: **Twaddle**
Recording: **Good**

Roxy Music has improved as a band since its last album, but I still find the whole thing to be a put-on, like an Andy Warhol silk-screen of a Brillo box. The lead singer is deliberately mannered, and the songs and production are of a type that would impress group-therapy alpha-nuts on a rainy Sunday.

There is something nastily exploitive about this band, something contemptuous and hostile. I suppose it is an example of what is called "glitter-rock," which started out to mean a performer or band deliberately trying to recall or satirize the vaudevillian qualities of Fifties rock, but which soon came to mean the portrayal of amorality or sexual deviation. There are those who admire what they see as "communication" between the performers—who flaunt their warped views through "theatrical" stage shows—and the audience, which is supposed to be getting a "realistic" look at life that allows them to live with their own sexual shakiness.

To say that Roxy Music or Alice Cooper is performing a public service is to say that movie producers who grind out black exploitation films with pushers and pimps as heroes are contributing to black pride and racial harmony. They're both in it for the money. But this is something to be realized with a bit of maturity and common sense—something that the audience Roxy Music is playing to is not likely to possess. It therefore becomes a simple case of child abuse. J.V.

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paniment. *Overchewer; The People Tree; Ain't It Funny; Me Without You; The Good Old Bad Old Days;* and five others. MGM MV 5096 \$5.98, © M 8135 5096 \$6.98.

Performance: **Cry, clown, cry**
Recording: **Good**

Can an old piper play a new tune? Must he do the bugaloo, eat organic food, and "listen to Ravi Shankar in the nude"? These are some of the questions Anthony Newley poses in his world-famous Cockney accent during the long opening number of his latest album, consigning himself irrevocably to the wrong side of the generation gap. Somehow I rather wish he hadn't brought the whole matter up. That cry of the heart which has been Mr. Newley's trademark as a belter of sentimental ballads over the years has come to sound increasingly cranky and infantile, but this time around he has no reason to write his talent off so self-pityingly. The songs from *The Good Old Bad Old Days*, of which there are three on display here, are not all that bad. I call your attention in particular to a wild extravaganza of a number called *Easy for You Captain Candy*, who, in his "T-shirt made of stars" and his solid gold super-sneakers, roams the skies bestowing candy kisses "sweeter than a Hershey bar" on anybody in sight and flinging moon-dust into the eyes of unwary lovers. In the end, Captain Candy gets his, being told off in no uncertain terms: "You're just a thief, Captain Candy, with your candy kisses. Get off our teeth!" It's a dentist's delight. Then there's *The Fool Who Dared to Dream*, a dissertation on the virtues of stargazing, wind-

Gloria Eres Tu; Los Diabolitos; and five others. FANIA SLP 00436 \$4.98.

Performance: **Solid**
Recording: **Good**

Johnny Pacheco is one of the founding fathers of contemporary Latin music and co-owner of one of its leading labels, Fania. He is a notable flutist and bandleader, and his bands are consistently well-drilled and popular—as is his long-time vocalist Pete "El Conde" Rodríguez (not to be confused with the bandleader Pete Rodríguez who helped popularize the boogaloo).

This time Pacheco confines himself to producing, letting the band and El Conde be the stars. Most notable among several first-class musicians here (they should be listed on future albums) is Charlie Rodríguez—no relation to either Pete—who plays the *tres*, a Latin instrument that in sound is somewhere between the twelve-string guitar and a lute (I hadn't heard it before and have never seen it). Rodríguez tosses off passages on it with care-free abandon; it is a little like listening to Django Reinhardt and Wes Montgomery at the same time.

The tunes in the album, a collection of guaguancos, boleros, and merengues with fine arrangements, are all played impeccably, and El Conde's vocals are beautiful. There is a great deal to be said for consistency of excellence in music, and Pacheco says it more often than most—in any musical style. J.V.

ROXY MUSIC: *For Your Pleasure*. Roxy Music (vocals and instrumentals). *Do the*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

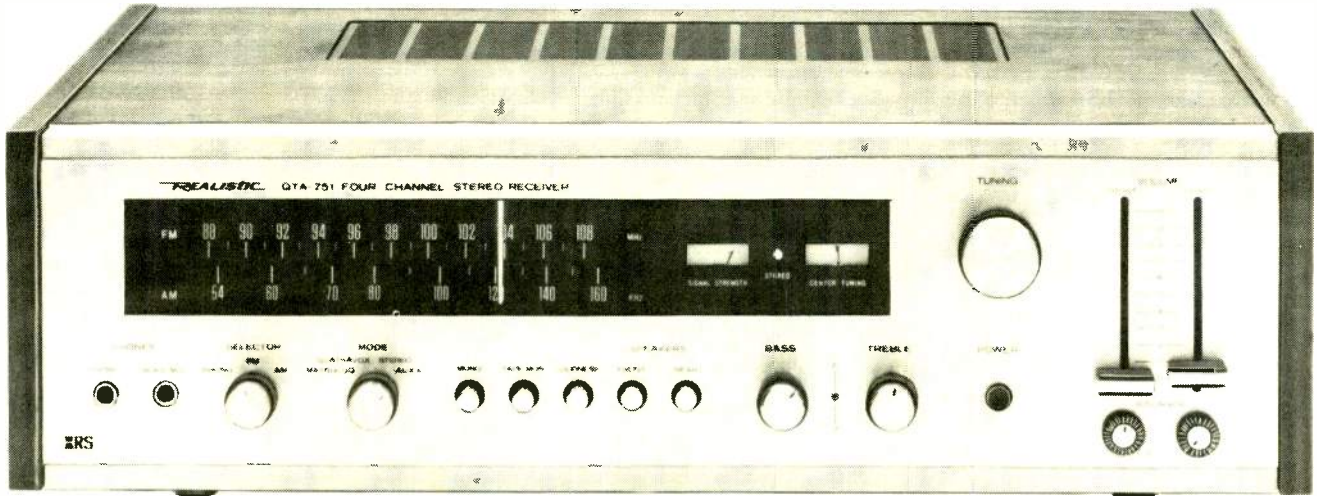
SAVOY BROWN: *Jack the Toad*. Savoy Brown (vocals and instrumentals). *Ride On Babe; Hold Your Fire; Endless Sleep; Casting My Spell; Just Cos' You Got the Blues Don't Mean You Gotta Sing; Jack the Toad;* and three others. PARROT XPAS 71059 \$5.98, © M 79059 \$6.95, © M 79859 \$6.95, © M 79659 \$6.95.

Performance: **Excellent**
Recording: **Very good**

There have been some changes in personnel and an abrupt about-face in attitude for Savoy Brown; this is not the same band that made the loud and hackneyed *Hellbound Train*. Here, Savoy's relaxed and commendable purpose is to play rock-and-roll as a public service. They are playing for and not to the audience. The music is lean and clean, the writing witty, and the performances professional and friendly. The title tune, a reference to Jack Bruce and the Cream tune *Toad* (and/or to *Theme for an Imaginary Western?*) is especially charming, and they have my full support for the sentiments expressed in *Just Cos' You Got the Blues Don't Mean You Gotta Sing*—which is something I wish all white blues groups would take to heart. Savoy Brown has also, believe it or not, made something solid out of that hammy old Fifties weeper, *Endless Sleep*. With a fine sense of the ridiculous they have taken up the challenge of doing the tune straight and tough. I'd like to buy them a drink. J.V.

PAUL SIMON: *There Goes Rhymin' Simon*. Paul Simon (vocals, guitar); David Hood
(Continued on page 112)

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(bass); Barry Beckett (piano); Pete Carr (guitar); various other musicians. *Kodachrome; Tenderness; Take Me to the Mardi Gras; Something So Right; One Man's Ceiling Is Another Man's Floor; American Tune; Was a Sunny Day; Learn How To Fall; St. Judy's Comet; Loves Me like a Rock*. COLUMBIA KC 32280 \$5.98, Ⓞ CA 32280 \$6.98, Ⓞ CT 32280 \$6.98.

Performance: **Excellent**
Recording: **Excellent**

In his second sans-Garfunkel album, Paul Simon attempts to cut a figure that transcends the genre from which he drew so much sustenance and energy—and I guess in fact he is such a figure. *Something So Right*, by most standards, is your familiar old-time easy-listening tune, except the words are worth attending to. *Was a Sunny Day* is his tightest-yet exploitation of Latin rhythms, much subtler and funnier than *Me and Julio*—which, on reflection, really was a dog, now wasn't it? *Take Me to the Mardi Gras* has two electric guitars perking in a vaguely reggae-influenced backing rhythm—Simon is always right up to date, but tastefully so, for the most part—and then this slaphappy little song hits a stylized Dixieland outburst at the end. The album is an excursion, almost, one of those classy rides on fine examples of this and that. The consistently Simon-of-old thing about it is the lyrics: Simon is the kind of troubadour the urban kid ideally makes—and he may be even better than Carole King at fitting ordinary words and rhythms of speech into meter and melody—he certainly seems to have more ideas he wants to explore than King, or most anyone else, does. This album is much more relaxed, much less self-centered than the last one, but it is deficient in spontaneity, excitement, *strain*—something that could not fight its way through the slick production. I don't know how it could sound so cut-and-dried, having been recorded in four different locations (New York, London, Muscle Shoals, and Jackson, Miss.), but although the arrangements are clean and sensible, they are oddly predictable as the needle moves on into them.

Correcting that would have made a very good album a great album, probably. It is likely the songs are good enough. *American Tune* (recorded in London) certainly is, and the production of it is no problem. It has a lovely, twisting melody, a particularly nice bass line by Bob Crenshaw, and thoughtful, indefinite-but-not-paralyzed lyrics. It doesn't happen in that tune, but generally the good sense of the album is at war with the fires within, and I guess I'm glad that good sense prevails (last time, you'll recall, passion won out), but I would be happier still if the contest had been a bit closer. N.C.

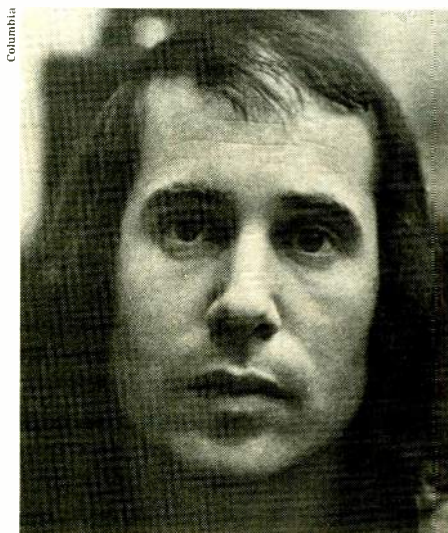
SLY AND THE FAMILY STONE: *Fresh*. Sly and the Family Stone (vocals and instrumentals). *In Time; If You Want Me to Stay; Let Me Have It All; Thankful n' Thoughtful; Skin I'm In; Que Sera Sera*; and five others. EPIC KE 32134 \$5.98, Ⓞ EA 32134 \$6.98, Ⓞ ET 32134 \$6.98.

Performance: **Monotonous**
Recording: **Good**

"Fresh" is apparently a convalescent statement from Sly Stone; if his lyrics can be taken as autobiographical—and they usually can—he went through some rough times physically and emotionally, and at one point was pretty near checking out. The music in this long-

awaited album indicates he is still a little shaky but is regaining confidence. The story in "Fresh"—though an oft-told one—is interesting and important, because Sly Stone is a master of popular music, besides being a great stage personality; as a lyricist he is consciously writing a kind of *Leaves of Grass*, and his humanity, savvy, and common sense are major assets in a rock scene that has become dangerously overblown and self-congratulatory. His finest compositions—*Sing a Simple Song, Stand!*, and the wonderful *Everybody Is a Star* have confirmed him as a superior talent. He is also that rare bird—a *bandmaster*: the orchestra is his instrument.

But the trouble with "Fresh" is that Sly has not yet fully recovered from the problems that so nearly finished him. Almost all the tunes are taken at a medium, sometimes plodding tempo, and the attention to detail in his ar-



PAUL SIMON

A wealth of ideas from an urban troubadour

rangements—one of Sly's most satisfying qualities—is missing here. The full sound of his band, which he always used the recording studio to promote, has been cramped and reduced; it seems to have been too conscious of the studio atmosphere, that he was about to make a record, that it was all going to be put on tape for public inspection. A confident artist doesn't get that kind of stage fright.

It is important that Sly Stone recover his full powers. He is going on tour again, after having been in seclusion for almost two years; perhaps contact with an audience will buoy him up further and refresh him. Let's hope so, for this man is valuable. J.V.

SPOOKY TOOTH: *You Broke My Heart So I Busted Your Jaw*. Spooky Tooth (vocals and instrumentals). *Cotton Growing Man; Old As I Was Born; This Time Around; Holy Water*; and four others. A & M SP 4385 \$5.98.

Performance: **Reliable**
Recording: **Good**

I am mightily impressed with Gary Wright and have been for some time. As organist, composer, arranger, producer, and vocalist he has done good things for himself and other people, notably Spooky Tooth, reconstituted and assembled for this new album.

There are songs here that are competent, which is to be expected, really, since there are many rock musicians around today who are professionally fluent (without necessarily be-

ing exciting). But there is more to this album than that. The two most interesting pieces are semi-religious songs, *Holy Water* and *Times Have Changed*, which seem to be arriving at a personal spiritual statement that is entirely divorced from the faddish Jesus kick. *Moriah*, by contrast, is an English ghost-story evocation (complete with tornado sound effects) of a female spirit that in its frenzy would cheerfully lay waste to the old house on the hill and the inhabitants therein. Along with all this is the wonderfully goofy title of the album, the disciplined musicianship, and Wright's determining presence. This is a solid album, and one that ought to be kept. I look forward to the next outing. J.V.

STEPHEN STILLS AND MANASSAS: *Down the Road*. Stephen Stills (vocals, guitars, bass, keyboards); Chris Hillman (vocals, mandolin, guitar, bass); Dallas Taylor (drums); Joe Lala (percussion, vocals); Fuzzy Samuel (bass, vocals); Paul Harris (keyboards); Al Perkins (banjo, steel guitar, guitar); other musicians. *Isn't It About Time; Lies; Pensamiento; So Many Times; Business on the Street; Down the Road; City Junkies*; and three others. ATLANTIC SD 7250 \$5.98, Ⓞ TP 7250 \$6.98, Ⓞ CS 7250 \$6.98

Performance: **Very good**
Recording: **Very good**

Manassas is a good band, but not very stylish; Stephen Stills is a stylish vocalist, but not a very good one. They go together well, and this album is thoroughly pleasant, except for one thing. Someone had the bad judgment, once again, to print the lyrics—mostly by Stills—on the sleeve. It throws you off, knowing exactly what is being said in a Stills song. For, although what Stills' lyrics say is a lot more conservative these days, they are still stridently, evangelistically sophomoric in the way they say it. You don't have to pay that much attention to them, though, if you can manage to ignore the album sleeve and just listen to the songs.

By keeping the lyrics out of critical focus, you could say that Stills has written some good songs through the years, and is still doing it. More proof is offered here that his teaming up with Chris Hillman and company was a good move; Manassas may never quite sound like the same band twice, but it hangs around the same general area, which is a good environment for Stills' material. The album is tuneful, fairly clean, and wide-ranging if not eclectic. Spanish flavor and a Spanish-language chorus are used particularly effectively in the Stills-Joe Lala tune *Guaguanco de Vero*, and that seems to fit just fine on the same side as a banjo-propelled essay (*Do You Remember the Americans*) on how truck drivers and others have changed through the years. Stills and his group show some signs of maturity, some signs of aging—even as you and I. N.C.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

THE SWEET. Brian Connolly (vocals); Andy Scott (guitar); Steve Priest (bass); Mick Tucker (drums). *Little Willy; Wig Wam Bam; Blockbuster; Hellraiser*; and six others. BELL 1125 \$5.98.

Performance: **Excellent**
Recording: **Excellent**

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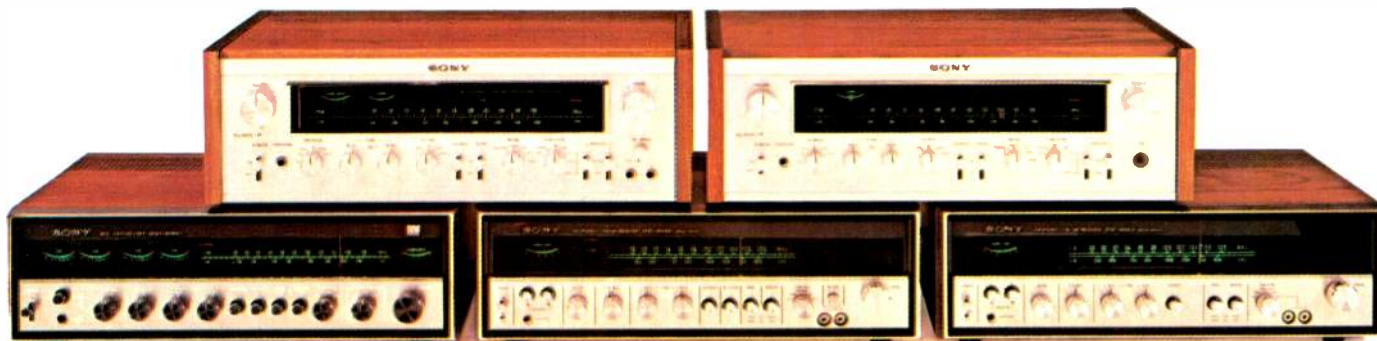
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THE story of rock in the Sixties has been nothing more than a series of cultural cross-pollinations. The best and the worst pop music of the last decade have been equally bastardized: black American r-&b gave birth to the Beatles, the Rolling Stones, and the Yardbirds when British youth of the early Sixties found something besides American Dixieland "trad" jazz to plagiarize and eventually claim as their own. By the time they had mastered, modified, and mutated what they'd stolen, young white American bands were imitating *this* mutated black music note for note. Thus we had the phenomenon of a young white Chicago band called the Shadows of Knight recording songs composed by black Chicago blues masters like Muddy Waters in arrangements copped from white British units like the Yardbirds. The most extreme examples of such cultural inversion occurred when blacks themselves began imitating the white imitators of their own musical forebears: Mick Jagger always wanted to be Slim Harpo, but if you listened to any of the albums by a group named Love, it was clear that Arthur Lee, a young black man from Los Angeles, was working very hard at singing exactly like Jagger!

An even more fascinating development has taken place in the field of commercial soul music, where black record companies like Motown have been absorbing and marketing revamped and repackaged versions of white "underground" music from 1967 and the era of "flower power." And so it is that we find a group like the Temptations recording a song called *Psychedelic Shack*, complete with shrieking wah-wah guitars. This song, and hundreds of others like it, contained all the ersatz musical distortions, as well as the peace-and-love lyrics, of a genre that had been passé for at least two years. Perhaps the most significant thing about this latest metamorphosis was that the original genre was itself a bastard form, totally artificial, synthetic, and technology-oriented from its inception. The roots of psychedelic music were in no real *musical* tradition but in sheer accident: one day some white guitarists got their wires crossed and heard a new kind of song in the feedback from their amps, and a new style of rock was born. It was easy to play—often, indeed, it seemed that the gadgetry was playing the musician, instead of vice versa—so it caught on fast, blazed through every struggling teenage band for a year or so, and then died out as quickly as it erupted when young musicians found it was a dead end and turned to subtler—or at least softer—sounds.

Or so it seemed. While the black production companies have been integrating elements of psychedelia into AM-radio hits, a solid core of white bands has appeared—or remained—which are still "underground" in the classic Sixties-cliché sense. A few are American: before they polished up their act, Alice Cooper specialized in weird progressions, queasy abstractions, atonal skitterings, and song titles like *Ten Minutes Before the Worm*. But the last bastions of psychedelia are now to be found in England and Germany, where the influence of the British band Pink Floyd has been both pervasive and profound. Pink Floyd were the progenitors of "space-rock," which meant that their material, when not leaning heavily on the

standard Spanish-Oriental scales that everybody from Sandy Bull to the Grateful Dead has dragged out when they wanted to induce a mystic reverie in their audience, tended to meander off in random atonalities and "eerie" effects reminiscent of science fiction movie soundtracks. They had song titles like *Interstellar Overdrive*, *Set the Controls for the Heart of the Sun*, and (getting really Dada) *Take Up My Stethoscope and Walk*. They were quite capable of writing pop fare like *See Emily Play*—although even that was just a little *misterioso*—but they supposedly took a lot of acid (one member is said to have wiggled out irrevocably), and by the time they got to their double-record classic "Ummagumma" they were recording leaky faucets and birds chirping in the night.

HAWKWIND and AMON DUUL II

Space Rock in Blind Alleys

Reviewed by
Lester Bangs



Hawkwind is Pink Floyd's most prominent English heir. Like the Floyd, they are obsessed with intergalactic fantasy, and their three nearly identical albums are the closest thing rock has yet produced to *Star Trek*. The packaging is always elaborate, including psychedelic-mosaic posters right out of the golden era of Haight Street, drawings that look like they sprang from Marvel comic books, and plenty of mystic-stellar verbiage. The text on the back of "Doremi Fasel Latido" advertises the album as "a collection of ritualistic space chants, battle hymns, and stellar songs of praise as used by the family clan of Hawkwind on their epic journey to the fabled land of Thorasin. The saga tells of how, back in Mentet 1972, during the terrible age of the machine logic god, Eye See Eye, the lords of the Hawk having fought a desperate but losing guerilla battle against the Bad Vibe squads for several years, called together all their musicians. . . ."

That nonsense is so irresistible that it's a shame the music itself is as boring as it inevitably had to be. Hawkwind pounds out endless whirring metal ragas and wrings everything but melody out of their synthesizers; the whole is even more monotonous than Pink Floyd. It may sound pretty imposing if you've ingested the right combination of chemicals before you listen, but I don't want to go back to an underdeveloped country

like Thorasin myself, so I gave my copy of the album to a friend to read *The Silver Surfer* by.

Germany has probably given birth to more psychedelic space-rock bands in the Seventies than any other country in the world. They too derive from Pink Floyd and, to a lesser extent, Frank Zappa. They all have names like Guru Guru and the Can, and they're mostly unintelligible. That unintelligibility, furthermore, shouldn't be taken as some sort of challenge from the sonic vanguard, because even a cursory listening reveals that most of the musicians are utterly inept; aside from tinkering with studio effects, machine sounds, and more ragas, they haven't the slightest idea what they're doing.

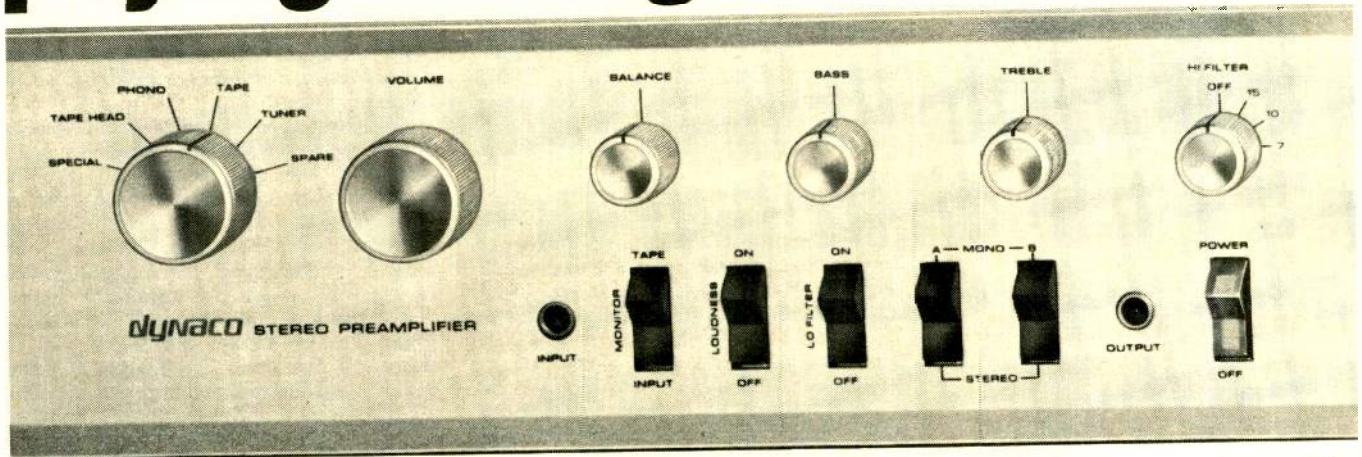
Amon Duul originated as a musical commune that released an album called "Psychedelic Underground," notable mainly for the fact that every song on it had the word "Sandoz" in the title. Internal bickering caused the commune to split into two bands: Amon Duul I released one more album, a certifiable atrocity spotlighting the seventeen-minute epic *Love Is Peace*, and Amon Duul II went on to make a series of records that placed them in the forefront of the German rock avant-garde. They couldn't play very well, but it's not every day an album comes along with a title like "Phallus Dei," and they compensated for their technical limitations by progressive overdubbing. "Dance of the Lemmings," their second double album and first U.S. release, was so thick that you could barely make out who was playing what or where *Dehypnotized Toothpaste* ended and *A Short Stop at the Transylvanian Brain Surgery* began. It was all so excessive and eccentric that, like Hawkwind, it was almost irresistible.

Unfortunately, the next album revealed Amon Duul II to have forsaken their classic mulch of errant squiggles for a rather banal brand of Zappa-influenced jazz-rock. The textures were not nearly as thick, with the result that when you actually got to hear the distinct solos you realized that you never wanted to anyway, and the vocals, always Amon Duul's weakest point, were truly wretched. "Wolf City," their latest, is more of the same, and will hold no interest for anybody but connoisseurs of the deservedly arcane. Germany may yet produce, if not a truly diabolical Nordic Alice Cooper, a rock band that will at least match the brilliance of Denmark's incredible Savage Rose. But the artifice of Amon Duul II is as muddled and amateurish as Hawkwind's is dated, and, like a lot of other old stuff hanging around nowadays, both bands are really more symptomatic of the inanities of the Sixties than those of the Seventies.

HAWKWIND: *Doremi Fasel Latido*. Hawkwind (vocals and instrumentals). *Brainstorm*; *Space*; *Down Through the Night*; *One Change*; *Lord of Light*; *Time We Left*; *The Watcher*. UNITED ARTISTS UAG 29364.

AMON DUUL II: *Wolf City*. Amon Duul II (vocals and instrumentals). *Surrounded by the Stars*; *Jail-House Frog*; *Green-Bubble-Raincoated Man*; *Wolf City*; *Wie der Wind am Ende einer Strasse*; *Deutsch Nepal*; *Sleepwalker's Timeless Bridge*. UNITED ARTISTS UAG 29406.

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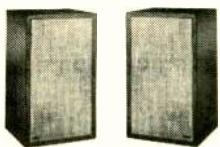


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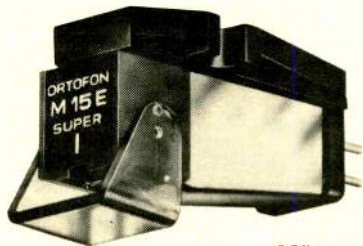
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the least of whom, I suspect, is Capitol's Bhaskar Menon) are currently engaged in a little game called Waiting for the Next Big Thing. The Big Thing in question, of course, is the Seventies equivalent of Elvis or the Beatles, a superstar phenomenon that will transform the face of pop music.

My own feeling is that none of the acts now aspiring to NBT status have the requisite smarts and are, instead, merely Holders of the Fort. Bowie has already decided that he's the new Marlene Dietrich. Slade keeps remaking the same single (and getting a little more shrill with each attempt), and Auntie Alice is more than content to throw it all away. So who's left? Well, I won't bore you with my theories about how the stars of the Seventies will be named John, Paul, George, and Ringo (and when they tour here in '74 I plan to say I told you so), but the latest contenders are the Sweet, and I don't think they've got the smarts either.

What they do have, however, is a tremendous flair for crafting catchy pop-rock singles, and they're probably better and more consistent at it than anybody practicing the art at the moment, with the exception of the Move-LO-Wizzard axis. They work to a formula like Slade, certainly, but they have a wider range of influences (on this album you can hear traces of the Who, boogie bands like Canned Heat and Savoy Brown, Humble Pie, Deep Purple and all the Heavy Metal kids, and even moldy old Fifties novelty stuff like *Running Bear*), which keeps them from repeating themselves too often or becoming, like Slade, obsessive about their need to be Teenage Flag-wavers. It all makes for an interesting fusion: progressive bubblegum, perhaps. The Next Big Thing? Dubious. A first-rate rock-and-roll album? Unquestionably.

Steve Simels

T. REX: *Tanx*. T. Rex (vocals and instrumentals). *Tenement Lady*; *Rapids*; *Mister Mister*; *Broken Hearted Blues*; *Shock Rock*; *Country Honey*; *Born to Boogie*; and six others. WARNER BROS. 0598 \$5.98, Ⓞ M8 2132 \$6.98, Ⓞ M5 2132 \$6.98.

Performance: **Smug**
Recording: **Good**

Friends, there really is no excuse for T. Rex. Master Marc Bolan and his percussionist (what's his name again? Tonto?) fail on every count. Since they achieved their initial success with England's microoppers—helping, in the process, several hundred thousand young ladies to pass through the confusions and agonies of puberty—they have made the same album over and over again. It consists of endless boogie progressions, with Master Bolan singing through a filter-mike (or does he have holes in his cheeks and a permanent cold?).

There is no excuse for T. Rex, for other teenybop idols have gone on to better things. Grand Funk Railroad has improved measurably in the last year; Tommy James and the Shondells went from schlock to interesting pop-rock as a result of James' producing and engineering talent; even the Monkees—once they began to play on their own records—made some good music, and Michael Nesmith has certainly proved himself in his solo career. But there is nothing, despite Ringo's admiration, to be said for T. Rex. Of course, there is nothing dangerous about them either; the kids may as well swoon over huggy-kissy Mark as, say, Donny Osmond. But O what a

bore and how very, very stale. All that vinyl down the drain.
J.V.

URIAH HEEP: *Uriah Heep Live*. Uriah Heep (vocals and instrumentals). *Sunrise*; *Sweet Lorraine*; *Traveller in Time*; *Easy Livin'*; *July Morning*; *Tears in My Eyes*; and six others. MERCURY SRM 2 7503 \$7.98, Ⓞ MCT8 2 7503 \$9.98, Ⓞ MCT4 2 7503 \$9.98.

Performance: **Hard-working**
Recording: **Good**

The wheel turneth. The spoken introduction goes: "And now . . . England's own . . . Uriah Heep!" Odd to think that there was a time when England dominated the whole scene and American groups couldn't get arrested over there. Nothing good or bad about that, just noticing. . . .

The Heep band is competent at what it does, dispensing high-energy blandness, complete with vague and hackneyed lyrics, to a rapturous audience. I begrudge no band its popularity—I have some experience of what bands go through and hope for. But Uriah Heep is an example of what a learned friend of mine has pointed out: rock, after Woodstock, was no longer a musical but a social event. This is perhaps the reason why so many bad live albums have been issued in recent years. The rock audience gets the same feeling that radio audiences used to get thirty years ago from remote ballroom broadcasts by the Benny Goodman band or "Manhattan Merry-Go-Round" ("The latest hits of the day, sung so clearly you can understand every word!").

Heep is a pastiche of electronic gimcracks (Moog synthesizer), rattle-bang drums, and a guitar that is not so much played as it is amplified. The record company has wisely reprinted pro and con reviews on the dust jackets of the records; the final effect is, to quote Danny and the Juniors, "We don't care what the people say/Rock and roll is here to stay." Yes, it surely is, and we can expect much more music of this type, just as we have had a Godawful amount of competent jazz albums released for the last fifteen years, long after the form had exhausted itself. The difference these days is that the record industry is a two-billion-dollar-a-year behemoth which has learned valuable lessons about merchandising in the last half-decade; it understands what the audience wants, as much as an industry can, and dispenses it forthwith.

In the words of Bob and Ray: "This is your bed, you made it, now lie in it." In the words of somebody: "They say this is the Age of the Common Man. Who the hell wants a common man?" Or, for that matter, a band like Uriah Heep?
J.V.

DOC AND MERLE WATSON: *Then and Now*. Doc Watson (vocals, guitar, harmonica); Merle Watson (guitar, banjo); Norman Blake (dobro); Vassar Clements (fiddle); Joe Allan (bass); other musicians. *Bonaparte's Retreat*; *Milkcow Blues*; *Bottle of Wine*; *Match Box Blues*; *If I Needed You*; *Frankie and Johnny*; and five others. POPPY PP LA022-F \$5.98.

Performance: **Samoooth**
Recording: **Very good**

You wouldn't call this a country record, just a good pickin' record with a light touch and easygoing ways. Doc Watson's mellow vocals, rhythmic flat-picking, and old-time-
(Continued on page 120)

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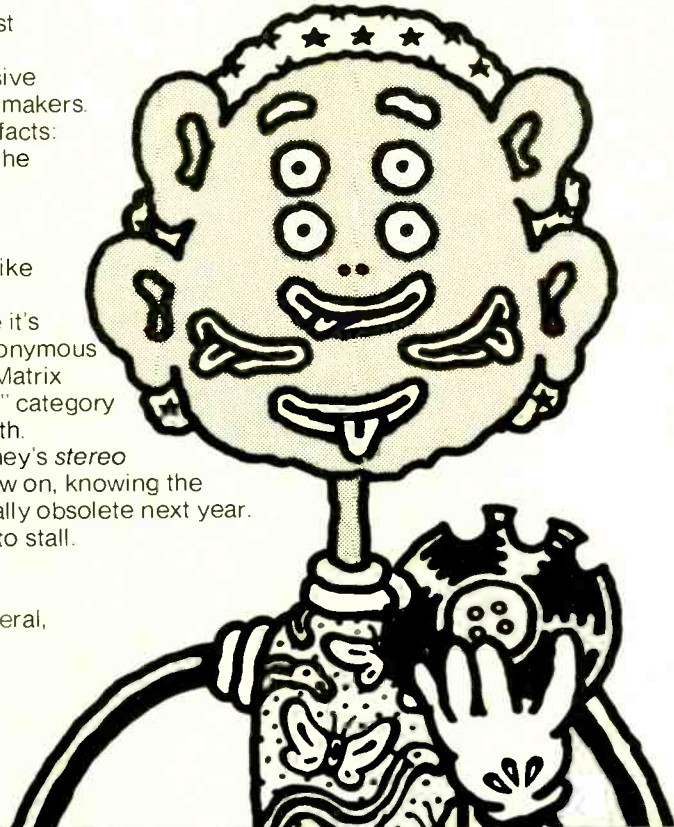
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country harmonica are tested on a wide assortment of materials and found sympathetic to just about everything. Merle's smooth but varied accompaniment—and lead—work on a second acoustic guitar is just where it should be, too, right there when you want it—and in spite of having at hand such lick-hitters as Norman Blake and Vassar Clements, producer Jack Clements has resisted the temptation to allow the backgrounds to become overcrowded.

On the other hand, some of the material is shopworn, and Doc and Merle never really lay into a flat-picking speed trip as they do in their concerts. It's true they somehow manage to revive even *Bonaparte's Retreat* (I always thought that song and the Pee Wee King band deserved each other), but there are a couple of tributes to old-time religion whose inanities are not to be denied. As for the laid-back atmosphere, I don't know; it may be that the idea here was to generate a soft breeze and not blow anybody's hat off—and comple-

is *Ain't Nothing to Me*, whose tempo forces Winter to settle down and work with it, and whose flavor demands that he come up with some interpretation different from that of all the other songs. *Too Much Seconal* has a promising complement of instruments, with Johnny dubbing slide guitar and mandolin alongside Jeremy Steig's flute in the foreground—but that only provides a greater opportunity for careless cuteness, and Steig hops to it with even greater gusto than Winter does. Winter's speed and control (on guitar) are extremely impressive, but discipline and imagination are far more important than things like speed and control. Neither discipline nor imagination makes much of a show here. N.C.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

WISHBONE ASH: *Wishbone Four*. Ted Turner (guitars, vocals); Andy Powell (guitars, vocals); Martin Turner (bass, vocals); Steve

Upton (drums). *So Many Things to Say; Ballad of the Beacon; No Easy Road; Everybody Needs a Friend; Doctor; Sorrel; Sing Out the Song; Rock 'n' Roll Widow*. MCA 327 \$5.98, © MCAT 327 \$6.98, © MCAC 327 \$6.98.

Performance: **Yessongs**. Yes (vocals and instrumentals). *Siberian Khatru; Heart of the Sunrise; Perpetual Change; And You & I; Mood for a Day; Excerpts from "The Six Wives of Henry VIII"*; and eight others. ATLANTIC SD 3 100 three discs \$11.97, © TP3 100 \$12.97, © CS 3 100 \$12.97.

Performance: **Museum magnificence**
Recording: **Very good**

Yes is a holdover from the pre-Watergate era when people really did believe that rock—not rock-and-roll, but "progressive" rock—could save souls, and when rock musicians could speak of art without getting tongue hopelessly imbedded in cheek. It all seems so stylized now, this pomp and circumstance of Yes music, like being in a foreign country and watching people in strange costume perform rituals with beautiful but incomprehensible icons—very impressive, but it doesn't seem to have much to do with life back in Peoria. Well, rock has a way of coming back every few years, and perhaps Yes can hold on as curators until that old tingle of relevance is felt again.

This three-volume album, meanwhile, catches Yes on tour, and, since they do just about everything on stage that they do in the studio, this isn't exactly a bargain for those who already have a couple of Yes albums. It is beautifully packaged, though, with another fine spate of fantasy landscape illustrations by Roger Dean, and the production has the heavy curtains of sound that waft out of Rick Wakeman's million-dollars-worth of keyboards strung across at just the right depth. And Jon Anderson's vocals (as usual, cast about one key higher than he would seem most comfortable with) are back in the middle of things, where Yes seems to like them.

You've got to be your own editor with an album like this. Sitting down and listening to it straight through is like reading too much Buckminster Fuller the first thing after you get up in the morning. Yes is loaded with talent but becomes so engrossed in making sure nobody misses that point that I react as I would if the hypnotist paused to point out the exquisite carving on the gold watch he was swinging before my eyes. If you can lend yourself to the seriousness of it all for a minute, you can say Yes takes a Brucknerian approach: a big—nay, prodigious—deal is made of a very ordinary rock chord progression; melodies are broken up into thematic fragments that will show up again somewhere later; and the (usually urgent) tone of the lyrics is considerably more important than the wording.

Yes *has* added to the textures of rock, and when the band finally gets around to hitting the listener emotionally it probably is because all the elements somehow get translated into textural riches. That doesn't happen as often as it should here, but it *does* happen. N.C.

WISHBONE ASH:
*Fusing the best of folk and rock
into music that equals
the Beatles at their best*



ment other Doc and Merle performances that do—or it may be, simply, that studio musicians can't keep up with this incredible duo when they really get cracking. That would be no reflection on the studio cats.

In any case, I doubt that there's another country singer (Charley Pride is a possible but not probable exception) who could do such twelve-measure pieces as *Milkcow Blues* or Blind Lemon Jefferson's *Match Box Blues* and not make either the song or the singer sound sold down the river. The great integrity of Doc and Merle is what does it. For you, it means that here, as usual, you'll get more than your money's worth. N.C.

JOHNNY WINTER: *Still Alive and Well*. Johnny Winter (vocals, guitar, slide guitar, mandolin); Randy Jo Hobbs (bass); Rich Derringer (guitars); Jeremy Steig (flute); Richard Hughes (drums); other musicians. *Rock Me Baby; Can't You Feel It; Cheap Tequila; All Tore Down; Rock & Roll; Silver Train*; and four others. COLUMBIA KC 32188 \$5.98, © CA 32188 \$6.98, © CT 32188 \$6.98.

Performance: **Insensitive**
Recording: **Very good**

This album caught Johnny Winter still alive and fast, at least, but still not terribly sensitive to the blues form he's fooling around with. His singing sounds like Johnny Rivers recycled, and his guitar attack is just that—attack, attack, attack, Alvin-Lee-style with the treble turned down a bit. The most successful cut here, I think (certainly the most notable one),

Upton (drums). *So Many Things to Say; Ballad of the Beacon; No Easy Road; Everybody Needs a Friend; Doctor; Sorrel; Sing Out the Song; Rock 'n' Roll Widow*. MCA 327 \$5.98, © MCAT 327 \$6.98, © MCAC 327 \$6.98.

Performance: **Walloping**
Recording: **Good**

Wishbone Ash's fourth album, I am happy to report to those breathlessly waiting, is one of the most satisfying rock albums to be made in years—and years and years. The tandem guitar work of Messrs. Andy Powell and Martin Turner is by turns entrancing and exciting, and the material is well above average both melodically and lyrically. The band has, in short, outdone even itself this time around, fusing the best of folk and rock into something that equals the Beatles at their best. I would go even further and say that instrumentally, at least, they surpass them. For all his competence, knowledge, taste, and delicacy, George Harrison (like Eddie Lang, the daddy of jazz guitar) seldom *swung*—Harrison's chase choruses with Clapton on the studio and live versions of *While My Guitar Gently Weeps*, for example, are fine, studied pieces, but they lack the freedom of mutual exchange and the lazy confidence that Powell and Martin demonstrate all through this album.

As writers, the members of Wishbone Ash are able to present songs about situations, people, places, and feelings much as the Beatles did: little scenarios acted out in a semieerie light in a manner I can only describe as a kind of recalled shell-shock—they write the

JAZZ



RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

LOUIS ARMSTRONG: *The Great Soloists 1925-1932*. Louis Armstrong (trumpet and vocals); various big bands; Armstrong's Hot Five; Clarence Williams' Blue Five. *That Rhythm Man; Just a Gigolo; He Likes It Slow; Cake Walking Babies*; and eight others. BIOGRAPH (M) BLP C5 \$5.98 (available from Biograph Records, P.O. Box 109, Canaan, N.Y. 12029).

Performance: **Genius on fire**
Recording: **Generally good**

Louis Armstrong was undoubtedly the greatest creative jazz musician this country has ever produced—so great, in fact, that a fair comparison with other performers of his or any other day is impossible.

This collection from Columbia's vault of Okeh masters treats us to Armstrong in his mid-twenties to early thirties, when he dazzled the world with the fire of his horn and introduced the art of jazz singing. Eight of the tracks feature Armstrong fronting various big bands in recordings made in New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles between 1929 and 1932. They represent a new concept in jazz for that time: the star soloist. The arrangements sound dated now, but Armstrong's vocals and brilliant, logical trumpet solos are timeless.

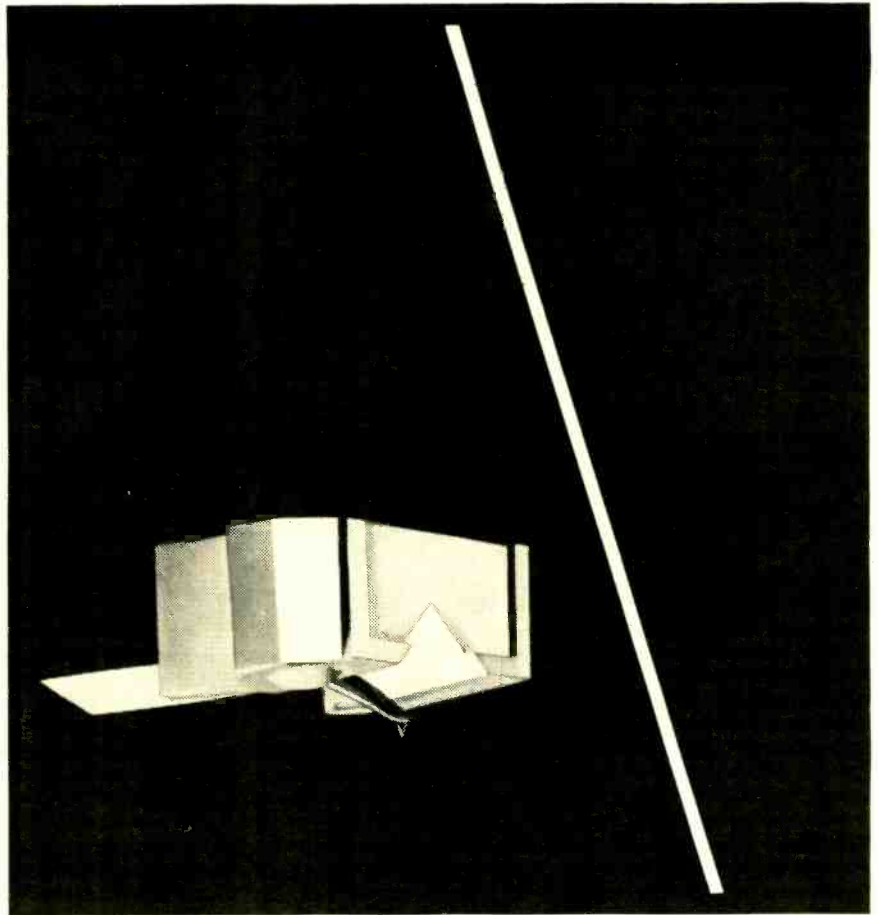
The remaining four tracks present Armstrong in a different context, with smaller groups, accompanying Eva Taylor and Victoria Spivey (two not so interesting singers) and the husband-and-wife vaudeville team of Butterbeans and Susie. Here again, it is Armstrong who makes these sides survive: his solo on Spivey's *How Do They Do It That Way* is so beautiful that it alone makes this album worth having.

I wish the selections had been programmed chronologically, and for \$5.98 I feel one could expect at least seven selections per side, but this album is made of such outstanding stuff that such complaints are minor. C.A.

CLIFFORD BROWN—MAX ROACH QUINTET: *Daahoud*. Clifford Brown (trumpet); Harold Land (tenor saxophone); Richie Powell (piano); George Morrow (bass); Max Roach (drums). *Daahoud; I Don't Stand a Ghost of a Chance with You; Joyspring; I Get a Kick Out of You; These Foolish Things Remind Me of You; Mildama*. MAINSTREAM (M) MRL 386 \$5.98, (B) M 8386 \$6.98, (C) M 5386 \$6.98.

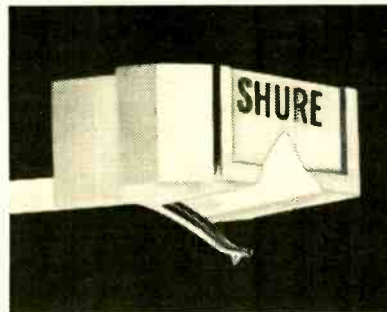
Performance: **Excellent**
Recording: **Good mono**

In his notes for this album, Nat Hentoff tells the interesting story of a 1953 tape made privately by Messrs. Brown and Roach, a tape, so the story goes, which led to Bob Shad's signing this group up for a series of EmArcy recordings. We are told that it is this tape—



The three dollar bill.

The stylus shown above is phony. It's represented as a replacement stylus for a Shure cartridge, and although it looks somewhat authentic, it is, in fact, a shoddy imitation. It can fool the eye, but the critical ear? Never! The fact is that the Shure Quality Control Specialists have examined many of these imposters and found them, at best, to be woefully lacking in uniform performance—and



at worst, to be outright failures that simply do not perform even to minimal trackability specifications. Remember that the performance of your Shure cartridge depends upon its patented stylus, so insist on the real thing. Look for the name SHURE on the stylus grip (as shown in the photo, left) and the words, "This Stereo Dynetic® Stylus is precision manufactured by Shure Brothers Inc." on the box.

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In Canada: A. C. Simmonds & Sons Ltd.



remembered twenty years later by Shad, and preserved by Roach—that makes up this album. But those EmArcy recordings by the Clifford Brown-Max Roach Quintet were simply too memorable for some of us not to recognize them: at least two of the tracks here are identical to pieces that have appeared before, and the rest appear to be alternate takes.

Be that as it may, this is a valuable half-hour segment of jazz history, containing some of the late Clifford Brown's most spirited performances. I remember Clifford in November 1953, sparking an all-night jam session at my Storyville Club in Copenhagen. He was a member of Lionel Hampton's band, and he and fellow trumpet players Art Farmer and Quincy Jones joined Jimmy Cleveland, Anthony Ortega, Gigi Gryce, Monk Montgomery, Hamp, and a few local musicians for a six-hour impromptu session. I still have the tapes I made that night, and I still marvel at the brilliance of Brown, of whom I had never heard before. An automobile crash killed Clifford Brown just two years afterwards. There are those who believe he never fully developed what he had in store for us, but what he did leave—on recordings and in fading memories—continues to influence players today.

These recordings have—as all genuine art has—withstood the test of time. It would seem that many young people are turning to jazz for the first time these days (don't expect it to "come back," though), and this album is one I would recommend they listen to; it has the youthful fire of Clifford Brown's playing, two of his lyrical compositions (*Daahoud* and *Joyspring*), the extraordinary teamwork that Brown and Max Roach always exhibited, the often overlooked talent of tenor saxophonist Harold Land, and the infrequently recorded piano of Bud Powell's brother Richie, who also was killed in the accident with Brown.

Now let's hope Mercury will discover some of its unreleased tapes with Clifford Brown—perhaps that 1954 California jam session with Max and Dinah Washington. C.A.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

DUKE ELLINGTON: *The Great Paris Concert.* Duke Ellington and His Orchestra. *Rockin' in Rhythm; The Star-Crossed Lovers; Concerto for Cootie; Suite Thursday; The Eighth Veil; Cop Out;* and eleven others. ATLANTIC SD 2304 two discs \$6.98, © 8T 2304 \$7.98, © CS 2304 \$7.98.

Performance: **Superlative**
Recording: **Excellent**

There are not enough superlatives in the English language to do this album justice. Here are nearly one and a half hours of the great Duke Ellington orchestra as it sounded on three February nights ten years ago at the Olympia Theatre in Paris, and it is recorded better than most remotes of the Seventies (ten selections from these concerts were previously released on Reprise as "Duke Ellington's Greatest Hits").

Playing to an appreciative audience, Duke and his men are in top form; the repertoire is a mixture of the old and the then new, but in Duke's book the old never gathers moss. *Rockin' in Rhythm*, for example, has had countless facelifts since 1929 when it was written, but the version that opens this set sounds as unhackneyed as tomorrow's Ellington output.

The astonishing fact is that Duke's band is

virtually as old as the history of recorded jazz, and the lineage of his musicians is unbroken: Harry Carney joined in 1926, Johnny Hodges in 1928, Cootie Williams in 1929, Lawrence Brown in 1932, Ray Nance in 1940, etc. Even more astonishing is their ability to sound as fresh as they do.

In his excellent notes to this album, Stanley Dance refers to the Paris concerts as historic, but, when you think about it, any appearance by the Ellington orchestra is historic—the man and his music have endured because art endures, and this is as fine an example of Ellington's art as you're likely to hear. C.A.

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET: *On Stage.* Benny Goodman (clarinet); Zoot Sims (tenor saxophone); Bill McGuffie (piano); Peter Appleyard (vibraphone); Bucky Pizzarelli (guitar); Harold Gaylor (bass); Mousie Alexander (drums). *A Smooth One; Oh Lady Be Good; Jitterbug Waltz; Memories of You;* and twenty others. LONDON BP 44182/83 two discs \$7.98.

Performance: **Chamber swing lives**
Recording: **Excellent**

Benny Goodman was never really the "King of Swing," but he was certainly one of its crown princes. This album, recorded in concert in Copenhagen not too long ago, proves that Goodman—now sixty-four—can still swing as well as ever. It also shows that even when he tackles old material for the umpteenth time, he does so without resorting to the old ideas just because they proved successful in the past.

There is a wealth of good music here; it is, not surprisingly, in the best Goodman tradition, but that can never be a detriment. Peter Appleyard's vibraphone is of the Lionel Hampton school, which is fitting; Bill McGuffie approaches neither Teddy Wilson nor Count Basie in style or caliber, but his piano is pleasant and unobtrusive; Harold Gaylor and Mousie Alexander hold their own in the rhythm department. Bucky Pizzarelli's accompaniment to Goodman on George Gershwin's *Soon*, and Appleyard's featured number, *Fascinating Rhythm*, are worth noting, as is all the work of Zoot Sims, whose full tenor really comes to the fore on *Somebody Loves Me, Too Close for Comfort*, and Fats Waller's delightful *Jitterbug Waltz*.

Unfortunately, my reviewer's copy is marred by some technical flaws in the pressing, causing it to distort and skip during some of the high clarinet passages. I hope London has caught and corrected this because Benny Goodman "On Stage" is otherwise excellently recorded, and it is a good album that deserves to be heard. C.A.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

JAY McSHANN: *The Man from Muskogee.* Jay McShann (piano and vocal); Claude Williams (violin and guitar); Don Thompson (bass); Paul Gunther (drums). *Yardbird Suite; Smooth Sailing; Hootie Blues; I'll Catch the Sun;* and seven others. SACKVILLE 3005 \$5.00 (available by mail from Sackville, 893 Yonge St., Toronto 5, Ontario, Canada).

Performance: **Vibrant**
Recording: **Excellent**

This is one of the most delightful albums I have heard in a long time. Recorded during a Toronto appearance in the summer of 1972, it features Charlie Parker's former boss Jay

McShann and three worthy cohorts playing a repertoire that stretches from Duke Ellington's *Things Ain't What They Used to Be* to Charlie Parker's *Yardbird Suite* to Rod McKuen's *I'll Catch the Sun*.

Like Count Basie, whose style he approximates (or could it be the other way around?), McShann is capable of generating tremendous swing through a miserly expenditure of notes in the treble, but he can also exhibit the two-fisted drive of a Harlem strider. Complementing his leader's dexterity is violinist Claude Williams, who at sixty-five is probably the finest jazz violinist of the old school (Stuff Smith, Eddie South, et al.) still active. (Williams' forty-three-year-old solos on such Andy Kirk sides as *Loose Ankles* and *Messa Stomp* have remained fresh in my memory since I first heard them in the late Forties.)

It is not often that I play an album five consecutive times in one afternoon, but this one merited such repetition and gave me an appetite for some of the recordings McShann has made in Europe in recent years. I hope someone will release them here; if they are half as good as this one, someone should. C.A.

JAMES MOODY: *Never Again!* James Moody (tenor saxophone); Mickey Tucker (organ); Roland Wilson (Fender bass); Eddie Gladden (drums). *Never Again; Secret Love; St. Thomas;* and three others. MUSE 5001 \$5.98 (available by mail from Muse, 160 West 71st St., New York, N.Y. 10024).

Performance: **Tough and tender Moody**
Recording: **Very good**

James Moody sent me scouring Copenhagen shops for his records when I first heard him in person during his European stay twenty years ago, and he is even better now. Several moods of Moody are represented in this set; he is at his lyrical best on the title track and *This One's for You*, he cooks up a tempest on Sonny Rollins' *St. Thomas*, and he is delightfully liberated on Eddie Harris' *Freedom Jazz Dance*. The rhythm section, whose members are new to me, is excellent, particularly organist Mickey Tucker, but I must confess that I have grown weary of tenor-organ quartets. Surely we outgrew this warhorse combination a long time ago.

I suggest you treat your ears to this album, and I hope planners of future James Moody sessions treat us to his robust tenor in a setting that is at least half as imaginative as his playing. C.A.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

HORACE SILVER: *In Pursuit of the 27th Man.* Horace Silver (piano); Randy Brecker (trumpet and flugelhorn); Mike Brecker (tenor saxophone); David Freidman (vibraphone); Bob Cranshaw (electric bass); Mickey Roker (drums). *Kathy; Liberated Brother; Strange Vibes;* and four others. BLUE NOTE BN LA054 F \$5.98.

Performance: **Golden Silver**
Recording: **Very good**

Horace Silver got into a different bag two or three albums ago, but now he's back, and I, for one, am glad to see him return to the kind of sound he always did so well. The Sister Sadie-Filthy McNasty sound of the old quintet prevails on three selections that feature the horns of Randy and Mike Brecker; of these I found Silver's own *Nothin' Can Stop Me Now* particularly pleasing to the ear (perhaps

because it pushed to the forefront of my memory nights of digging the group with Blue Mitchell and Junior Cook). All is not the Silver of old, however. The addition of vibes on the remaining tracks carries him off the beaten path while still allowing him to be his old self, inventive, swinging, funky, and melodic. The players here are all fine, and so is the album—this is Blue Note as Blue Note used to be when it was independent. C.A.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

SARAH VAUGHAN: *Feelin' Good*. Sarah Vaughan (vocals); orchestra: Peter Matz, Michel Legrand, Jack Elliott and Allyn Ferguson arr. and cond. *And the Feeling's Good; Just a Little Lovin'; Alone Again (Naturally); Rainy Days and Mondays; Deep in the Night; Run to Me; Easy Evil; Promise Me; Take a Love Song; Greatest Show on Earth; When You Think of It*. MAINSTREAM MRL 379 \$5.98, © M 8379 \$6.98, © M 5379 \$6.98.

Performance: **Divine**
Recording: **Lush**

I remember covering a Randall's Island Jazz Festival a few years ago. Dionne Warwick, accompanied by a twenty-two-piece band and a backup vocal group, turned what was to have been the evening's entree into something worse than a collapsed soufflé; making a grand, singing entrance from behind the bandstand, she was thrown off by a misguided spotlight, and emerged from the shadows a minute too late and in the wrong key. She was less than fair for the rest of the evening.

The following night, Sarah Vaughan appeared on the same stage with a trio. The piano, which had been left outdoors overnight, was out of tune—some of the keys weren't working at all—and the lighting man was still asleep. But, unlike Miss Warwick, Sarah took disaster by the horns, made up a song about the worst piano she had ever heard, gave a performance that transcended a producer's insensitivities, and, in the process, demonstrated the reasons for her longevity as a star.

This is Miss Vaughan's third album for Mainstream, and she is still the pro she always was. Like the two earlier albums, this one contains songs drawn from current pop output, and the divine Sarah, her voice now deeper, more mature, handles them with her usual sensitivity and understanding of lyrical content. Listening to her moving rendition of *Deep in the Night*, the song Linda Hopkins introduced in the Broadway musical *Inner City*, and the way she exhibits her characteristic and tasteful vocal acrobatics on *Easy Evil*, I find it hard to understand how Sarah Vaughan could have gone five years without recording—what did we miss during that time? Well, at least she is back now, and all three albums so far are just fine. She has a different sound from the old trio days with Roy Haynes (though those recordings have lost none of their original appeal), she has a better sound than that of the intervening Mercury "Mancini Songbook"/"Viva"/"Vaughan and Violins" days (though they were not altogether unprepossessing), but she is still the same old "Sassy," who was never less than very good. C.A.

TEDDY WILSON: *With Billie in Mind*. Teddy Wilson (piano). *What a Little Moonlight Can Do; Sugar; Miss Brown to You; Them There*

Eyes; I'll Never Be the Same; I Wished on the Moon; and eight others. CHIAROSCURO CR 111 \$5.98 (available by mail from Chiaroscuro, 173 Christopher St., New York, N.Y. 10014).

Performance: **Fourteen gems**
Recording: **A bit soggy**

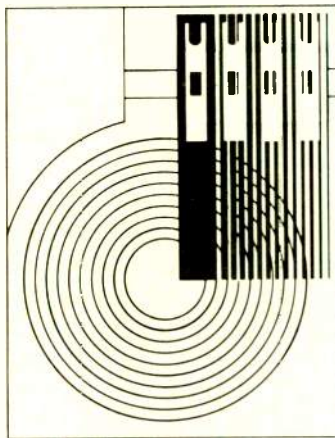
The Swing Era produced numerous outstanding pianists with highly individual approaches to the instrument as well as to the music, and Teddy Wilson ranks very high among them.

Between 1935 and 1942 John Hammond merged Wilson with Billie Holiday for an extraordinary series of all-star sessions which produced Miss Holiday's finest recorded performances. The chemistry between the two artists was so right that, with the possible

exception of Bessie Smith and James P. Johnson, there has never been a singer/pianist relationship to match it. Their close association is, of course, the *raison d'être* for this delightful album. Breezing lightly—as he has always done—through fourteen selections from Billie's repertoire (twelve of which he recorded with her), Wilson gives each his personal stamp of excellence.

There are no musical flaws here, but one might wish the recording had been more crisp and that better care had been taken in the mastering of side one, where a slight distortion is detectable on two tracks. Don't let that deter you from adding this to your collection, however. C.A.

(Continued on page 126)



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record in any other way, results in wear and distortion.

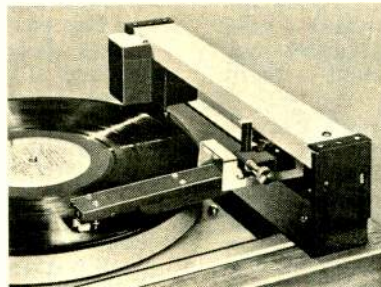
With a conventional pivoted arm system, the revolving groove "pulls" the stylus toward the center of the record. This is called, "skating force."

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The major product to come out of that process was the Advent 201 cassette deck.

The 201, one of the most highly and explicitly praised products in the history of audio products, has been on the market for two years now. It has literally dozens of competitors claiming equivalent or better performance.

But we believe it to be not only as good in every way as more recent and far more expensive cassette machines, but to be as satisfying for the most critical home-recording purposes as any tape machine of any kind. Here are some questions and answers to help define that satisfaction:

Why Is The 201 Such A Simple Machine?

Because we wanted it not just to be capable of making excellent recordings but to make it easy for the listener to obtain its full performance time after time, recording after recording. Most tape recorders of all kinds and all prices don't make it easy for the user to get best results every time or at all, and many are made needlessly complex to operate because of too many marginal "features" that were assumed necessary to make them attractive (or competitive with other machines) in an audio showroom.

It's important to point out, we think, that Advent products are designed with far more thought to satisfying people after they buy than to what might tempt them to buy in the first place. The 201 has no knob or slider or gauge or indicator light that isn't a useful feature rather than a sales feature. But everything conducive to highest-quality recordings and long-term enjoyment is there.

Why Does The Machine Look So Different From Most Others?

Because it is different, and far more rugged and reliable than most. It has evolved from a transport that has been in heavy and hard use for years in schools, libraries, and other audio-visual applications, and it is likely to last and maintain its mechanical performance far longer than most cassette machines on the market. It also provides facilities such as automatic shut-off and complete mechanical disengagement at the end of a cassette or in the event of a jammed cassette—with the

latter preventing tape spillage that makes an otherwise salvageable cassette a hopeless snarl of tape. And it enables you to shuttle from one mode of tape motion to another without having to press the Stop button in between. As a trade for our configuration, you have to hold onto the Rewind-Forward lever while you use it, but its action is so fast that we have had vanishingly few complaints from customers about it.

Why Does The 201 Have A Single VU Meter Instead of Two?

Because that proved, after consideration of all possible approaches, to be best—combining precision and simplicity. One of the troubles with using two VU meters in home recording is that they tend to lead the user to adjust them to read the same on both channels. In reality, though, the material on the two channels is usually different, and the meters *shouldn't* read equally. Two meters also produce a tendency to correct for overload or under-recording by adjusting only the channel whose meter showed too high or low a level. But if the channels were balanced properly in the first place, this puts them out of balance.

The 201's single VU meter, unique in cassette equipment, scans both stereo channels and instantaneously registers the louder peak on either at a given moment. The listener first uses the meter, which can also be switched to read either channel individually, to set channel balance with a pair of Input Level controls. Once balance is set, the meter is set to scan both channels, and final recording level is set or changed with a single Master Level Control that operates on both channels—

leaving the balance undisturbed. This sequence provides far more accurate level-setting than is possible with the overwhelming majority of tape machines of all kinds.

Not only does the 201's meter read instantaneous peaks (by far the most accurate indicator of possible overload), but its action is compensated to indicate the exact point of tape saturation at all frequencies. On rock music in particular, overload is most likely to occur and be heard at high frequencies, and most level-indicators on tape recorders of all kinds don't register full high-frequency content.

We know of no metering system more advanced or effective than the 201's. Most not only aren't as accurate, but tend to mislead the user.

Has The 201 Been Changed?

Yes and no. We have made Volkswagen-style changes as we have gone along, including the change of our original meter for better indication of high frequencies, but the changes were mainly in the direction of making use of the machine still easier and more precise. They would be hard to hear on most musical material, and we made them mainly because it seemed the responsible thing for a manufacturer to do.

Why Is The 201 Fairly Small?

Because its design consciously avoids needless gadgetry that might make it bigger, and also avoids what you might call "packaging air" in order to make a product look like there's more in it. We don't think we have the right to make something that takes up far more of your living space than it has to (or whose chrome shines in the dark) to get you to buy it.

Why Does It Cost Less Than Machines Claiming Equivalent Performance?

Again, because needless gadgetry is *not* there. And because we made the lucky decision to manufacture it in this country, avoiding the price rises that have resulted on imported products because of the fluctuation of the dollar *vs.* foreign currencies.

Why Did We Pick These Questions?

Because every manufacturer attempts to direct your attention in advertising. We want to direct it toward the realities that we feel genuinely determine whether something is enjoyable or not, because what we see on other products — including the confusing variety of super-expensive cassette

machines now being publicized — tells us that we give far more attention to those realities than most other manufacturers.

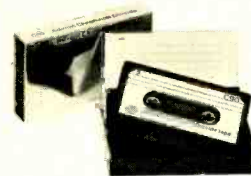
Ours isn't the only good cassette machine in the world, but there is none likely to satisfy you more in the long run.

If you would like more information on the 201, including its reviews and a list of Advent dealers where you can hear it, please send us the coupon. Thank you.

About Advent Chromium-Dioxide Cassettes:

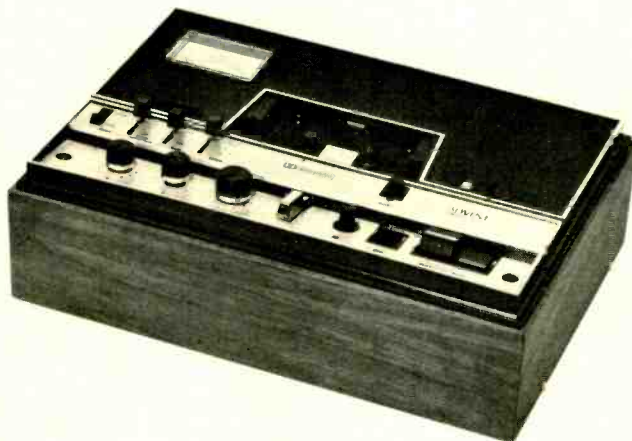
While we were developing the first high-performance cassette equipment, we became convinced that DuPont's chromium-dioxide tape formulation was crucial for optimum recordings, and began to put it in cassettes and market it on our own. Advent Chromium-Dioxide tapes are made to live up to the quality of the tape they enclose. If one ever jams, we will either replace it or, if you prefer, do our best to transfer a valued recording to another cassette.

Advent Chromium-Dioxide tapes cost no more than other premium-grade cassettes. We think you will find them a bargain.



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The Advent 201

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THEATER • FILMS

GODSPELL (Stephen Schwartz). Original-soundtrack recording. Victor Garber, Robin Lamont, Katie Hanley, Joanne Jonas, other performers; orchestra. BELL 1118 \$6.98, © M 1118 \$6.98, © M 81118 \$6.98, © M 51118 \$6.98.

Performance: **Slick**
Recording: **Overdone**

Being against *Godspell*, I fear, is like running over the mother of quintuplets—not exactly popular. The show, and now the film, of which this is the soundtrack, have proved wildly successful with the public. The message is quite simple: we can all be saved by a lot of carefully young people, in carefully colorful clothes, in carefully colorful settings (dancing about on the top of skyscrapers or sloshing around the fountain in Central Park), as they din into us a contrived score, swamped in hip religiosity, by Stephen Schwartz. I can just see Aunt Grace and Uncle Chester leaving the movie house radiant in the thought that “All those young people want just what we want.”

The album is as slick as an appearance by Marjoe, and will probably be just as successful in its mendacious way. The cast performs (what else?) nobly, and Stephen Schwartz's words and music are given more than their due by a thundering production that only seems to emphasize the basic commerciality of it all. *P.R.*

IRENE (Harry Tierney and Joseph McCarthy). Broadway cast recording. Debbie Reynolds, Patsy Kelly, George S. Irving, others (vocals); orchestra, Jack Lee cond. COLUMBIA KS 32266 \$6.98, © SA 32266 \$7.98, © ST 32266 \$7.98.

IRENE (Harry Tierney and Joseph McCarthy). Original-cast recording. Edith Day, Winnie Collins, Robert Hale, others (vocals); orchestra, G. W. Byne and Frank Tours cond. MONMOUTH-EVERGREEN MES 7057 \$6.98.

Performances: **1973—Reynolds wrapped 1920—Day-glow**
Recordings: **1973—overdone 1920—dated**

The Broadway “revival” musical *Irene* is, as Beatrice Lillie often accused her tainted friend Maude of being, “rotten to the core”—rotten with the nostalgia that has apparently crept into the very timber of our musical theater. *Irene* is perfectly timed to come along at just the wrong moment—isn't almost everybody as sick of this commercialized nostalgia foolishness as I am? Not that I really have anything against nostalgia or nostalgia buffs (though I wouldn't want my sister to marry one), but it is dispiriting to see the entire Broadway scene given over to an orgy of revivals that emphasize camp over intrinsic worth. *Irene* was a charming show in its time, as the Monmouth-Evergreen original-cast recording

of the 1920 production demonstrates. Edith Day has the alum-lipped diction that Jeanette MacDonald later adopted as her own (“Sweet-harrt, Sweet-harrt . . . will yooorremberr the daay . . .”), and the combination of Winnie Collins, Margaret Campbell, and Robert Hale in something like *We're Getting Away with It* is both enormously likable and suitably flakey. The album was recorded in London in 1920, and though it may have cooled sonically, it still manages to give a nice, warm feel of post-Edwardian West End theater-going. A very, very faded valentine, in short, but pleasant to listen to nonetheless, because each performer is doing his best with contemporary material that did, for its time, communicate—and, in the right hands, still can.

On Broadway in 1973, however, *Irene* is a tarted-up old relic, loud to both eye and ear. It stars Debbie Reynolds, a performer of almost alarming good nature. She still retains all the bounce of one of those super-rubber balls, and she is still doing her tomboy act into both our middle ages. Her version of *Irene* is quite like the characters she plays in her films—cute, gutsy little girl who *makes* it. But she might just as well be Tammy, or Gidget, or any other Little Miss Dreadful as she wrinkles her teeny tiny nose and smiles her gosh-I'm-just-as-nice-as-you-thought-I'd-be smile. And this celluloid anachronism, this wizened “youth,” is where Broadway is at today.

The plot of *Irene* is one of those Cinderella-gets-her-fella fairy tales that the American musical happily thrived on up to about the time of the Depression—which this speeded-up, hyped-up version might just bring back. Certainly it is a great little gloom spreader when Miss Reynolds trumpets *Alice Blue Gown* as if it were a Sousa march or sings *I'm Always Chasing Rainbows* in a bawl that sounds more like the tirade of an angry actress berating her agent than the wispy but touching piece of pop-classical kitsch it is. Trapped with Miss Reynolds in this sunken soufflé are two really fine troupers—Patsy Kelly and George S. Irving—and the thrice-welcome high point of the album is their *You Made Me Love You* duet. For just a moment *Irene* again becomes a sweet and disarming show—but the moment passes.

Sad to say, the options for those lovers of Broadway musicals still able to pay \$15 per ticket have narrowed down either to seeing one of these tinselly revivals featuring a tottering covey of ex-film stars or being assaulted by a high but sour intelligence such as Stephen Sondheim, the Strindberg of musical comedy. There used to be, as I nostalgically recall, a bright, golden, melodic haze over Broadway. Nevermore, apparently. But whether it is a Sondheim who feels—and makes us feel—bad, or a million-dollar, camped-up monstrosity with a star who can't be heard beyond the second row without a body mike, we are getting what we deserve. Where were we, for example, when Al Carmines tried to make Broadway with *Promenade*? Why do we continue to neglect a man who writes music as naturally as most of us breathe? Why do we feel safer with wisecracks than with tender sentiment? Why do producers pass up fresh talent in favor of fading Stars? And why do they choose either those who can't sing or those who can—and then give them no music with which to prove it?

If the American musical is to survive, then at least the money and energy wasted on such

parasitical sideshows as *Irene* must be rechanneled. Spread *Irene*'s budget around among ten promising young composers and you will have at least five separate evenings of theatrical pleasure in which something more than the appearance of the Star will be greeted with applause. And free Al Carmines. *P.R.*

KEEP THE DREAM ALIVE. Wilson Pickett, Flip Wilson, José Feliciano, the Main Ingredient, Linda Hopkins, the Jimmy Castor Bunch, the Friends of Distinction (performers); orchestra. RCA VPSX 6093 two discs \$7.98, © P8S 5155 \$9.95, © PK 5155 \$9.95.

Performance: **Spotty**
Recording: **Good**

It was a nice corporate gesture on RCA's part to sponsor a concert in Atlanta last January for the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Social Change. A portion of the royalties from the resultant album will go to the Center, and RCA has already advanced \$50,000 against those royalties to Mrs. King for the Center's work.

But, as with many benefits, there are decided lulls in the entertainment value of the album. Oddly enough, José Feliciano is among them. The talent roster, with the exception of Flip Wilson, are all RCA contractees, and the quality varies from undistinguished (the Main Ingredient) to terrific (Wilson Pickett). One of the high points is the appearance of that no-account Geraldine Jones in an encounter with Atlanta's Mayor Sam Massell. She can only stay a moment 'cause Killer is so jealous that he keeps callin' the hotel every five minutes. She had a lot of trouble gettin' there, too: they had such a complete body search for potential skyjackers at the airport that she decided to go through it four times. The dialogue gets a lot raunchier, and Flip Wilson has never been funnier. Wilson Pickett finishes off the event, in his usual great style, with *Don't Let the Green Grass Fool You*.

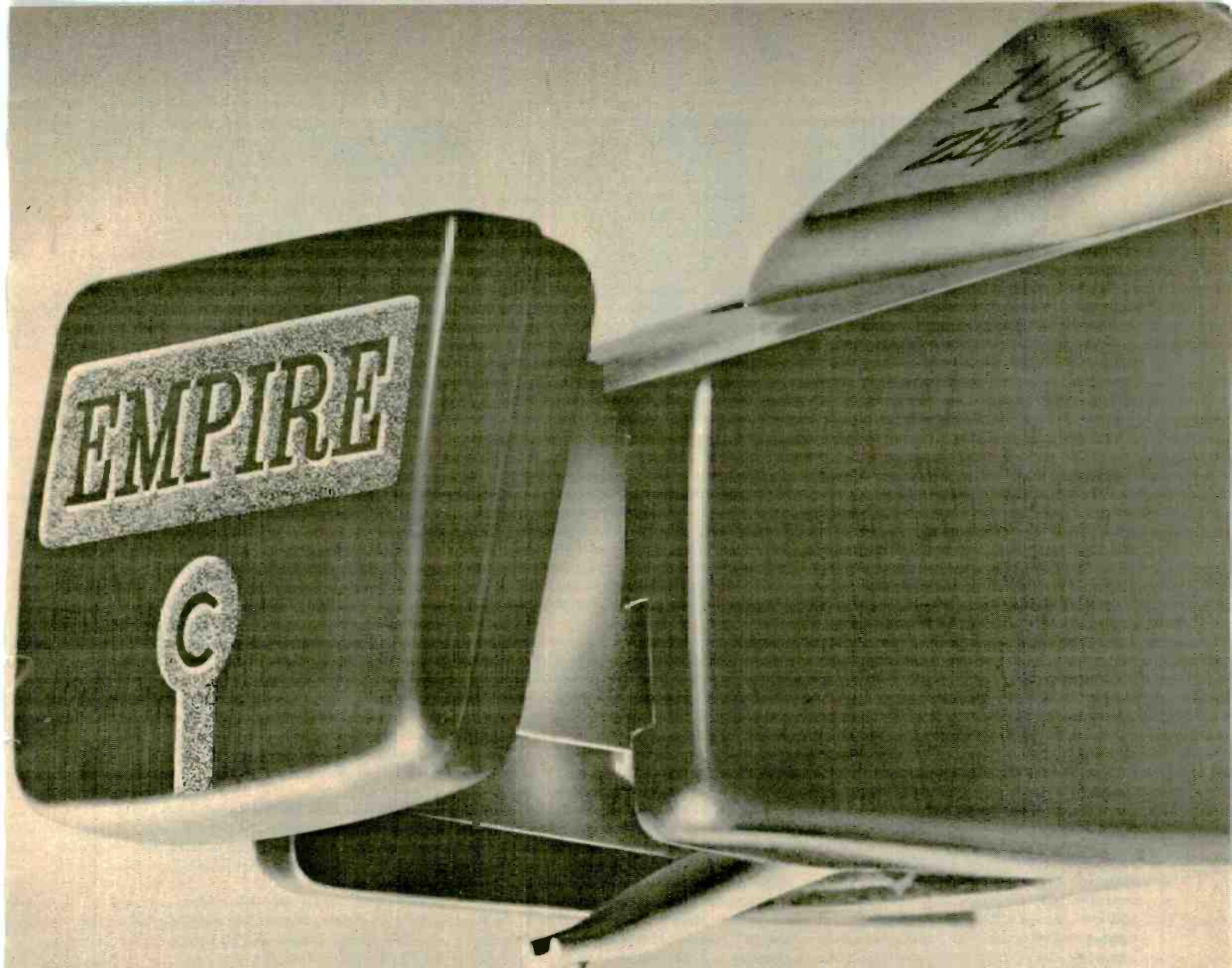
In all, this is a bumpy evening of entertainment, but a thoughtful tribute to an authentic American hero. *P.R.*

LORELEI (Jule Styne—Comden and Green). Carol Channing, Peter Palmer, Tamara Long, and others (vocals); orchestra, Milton Rosenstock cond. MGM/VERVE MV 5097 OC \$6.98, © C 8135 5097 \$7.98.

Performance: **Well traveled**
Recording: **Good**

In the Twenties, Anita Loos, piqued at H. L. Mencken's attention to another woman, wrote a short comic novel about an archetypal smart-dumb blonde named Lorelei Lee. Aside from being a genuine folk heroine, Miss Loos' creation stands as a shining example, even a half century later, that the wages of a woman scorned just keep rolling in. Lorelei's most famous incarnation has been Carol Channing, who really understands her: the shrewd eyes, the baby talk, the ability to put on whoever she is considering putting out for, and enormous sly wit. But regardless of her born-to-play-the-role qualities, Channing is working her material threadbare here. If you want to hear what it really was like back in the Fifties when Channing first played Lorelei, then listen to the original-cast album of *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* on Columbia. It has a zest that this one lacks. Perhaps Channing has been playing the role too long. (For our time, I'd choose Sally Struthers.) In any event, this is a

(Continued on page 130)



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FUN WITH FIEDLER: SIX DISCS, SIX DECADES

Reviewed by PETER REILLY

“WHAT’S so bad about feeling good?” is one of the more tiresome counter-culture clichés. But, cliché-like, it has a morsel of truth in it, so it will probably be with us for a little more than a little while is a series of recordings by the Boston Pops, under the wildly extroverted leadership of Arthur Fiedler, that sell and sell and sell. The reason for their continued success can be discovered from six recent RCA releases: the Pops and the exuberant Mr. Fiedler *do* make you feel good, whether stalking through *Jalousie* with the rose-in-the-teeth fervor of a silent movie vamp about to implant the fatal kiss or whomping into *We’ve Only Just Begun* as if it were Strauss’ *Death and Transfiguration*.

The Pops performances have always had the likability and the immense good spirits of a Back Bay dowager out on a spree—Margaret Rutherford, tiara askew, after six pink gins. That the orchestra is that magnificent jewel the Boston Symphony only emphasizes the cheerful lack of stuffiness or condescension toward the public. And, most important, the Pops, through broadcasts and recordings, have probably given more people their first introduction to “good” music than any comparable source in America—they make accessible, in its lightest and most attractive form, the great symphonic heritage left us by the nineteenth century. That they play *Popcorn* and *Amazing Grace* in this same tradition does have something of the absurd about it, but then again I can’t imagine any composer’s not being just a trifle flattered at having that incredibly beautiful orchestra perform one of his works. I remember once talking with a very famous “in” pop composer after we had listened to the sensational-sounding first release of L’Orchestre de Paris, a showpiece album that included that chestnut of chestnuts, Chabrier’s *España*. “You know” he said,

“when I was about ten years old I was in love with that piece. Good old Fiedler and the Pops.” I remember from my own childhood playing and replaying their old 78-rpm version of *The Continental* (by Con Conrad and Herb Magidson, surely names to conjure with) until it was decided around the house that either I or the record would have to go.

Beecham used to call this kind of repertoire “Lollipops.” Ormandy, it sometimes seems, devotes most of the playing time of the great Philadelphia Orchestra to it, and Kostelanetz, using every possible studio facility, fashioned a recorded sound for it that was unique in its time. But always it seems that the Pops gives the most real pleasure, whether they are playing Strauss or Lennon.

This omnibus “Greatest Hits” release is perhaps too much of a good thing, at least for me. After listening to all six records I felt like a weight watcher who had made a midnight raid on a chocolate factory. The arrangements are stupendously uniform and uniformly stupendous. When you finally reach “Greatest Hits of the ’70s,” in quadraphonic sound, you feel like a force-fed Strasbourg goose—which is to say, not all that comfortable. (The last album is the only new recording here, by the way; the Pops now records for Polydor.) There is no one particular album in this release that I can single out for recommendation. Your best guide may be to ask yourself whether you are a child of the Twenties, Thirties, Forties, and so on, and choose accordingly. With the exception of the Seventies album, which is flashily and beautifully engineered, they all *sound* pretty much alike. But then if you are a fan that doesn’t matter.

We live in a time when instant put-downs pass for wisdom, invective for wit, and a one-to-one listening relationship with the recording artist is more important than the artist’s ability. Fiedler and the Pops seem

to me to be a wholesome throwback to the time when exuberance wasn’t questioned, when you didn’t have to worry that a July 4th firecracker might just be the sound of a gun firing, when a good time wasn’t something that you had to feel guilty about. To scan the covers of these albums is a clue: they are completely hokey, stagey, and prop-filled. I’m sure Fiedler posed for all the photographs in one rushed day. But look at the expression on his face. Good God! The man seems to be having *fun!*

GREATEST HITS OF THE ’20s. *Wonderful One; Star Dust; Strike Up the Band;* and five others. RCA ARL1 0041 \$5.98, © ARS1 0041 \$6.98.

GREATEST HITS OF THE ’30s. *Deep Purple; Jalousie; Through the Years; Smoke Gets in Your Eyes;* and eight others. RCA ARL1 0042 \$5.98, © ARS1 0042 \$6.98.

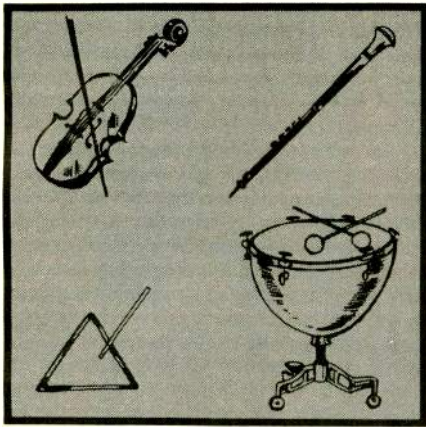
GREATEST HITS OF THE ’40s. *Laura; Tenderly; Sabre Dance; Don’t Fence Me In;* and seven others. RCA ARL1 0043 \$5.98, © ARS1 0043 \$6.98.

GREATEST HITS OF THE ’50s. *Blue Tango; Tonight; Mack the Knife; Hernandez’s Hideaway;* and eight others. RCA ARL1 0044 \$5.98, © ARS1 0044 \$6.98.

GREATEST HITS OF THE ’60s. *Aquarius; Hey Jude; Yesterday; I Left My Heart in San Francisco;* and nine others. RCA ARL1 0045 \$5.98, © ARS1 0045 \$6.98, © ARK1 0045 \$6.98.

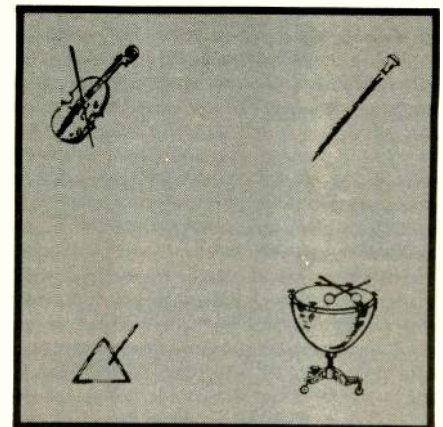
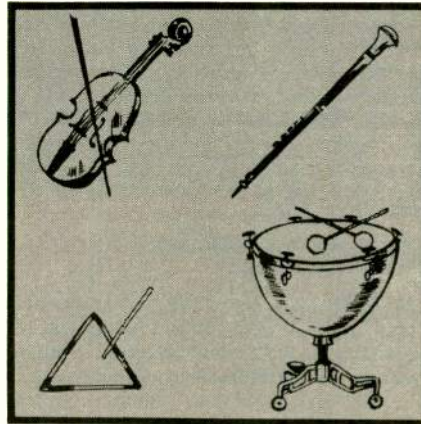
GREATEST HITS OF THE ’70s. *Amazing Grace; Everything Is Beautiful; Play Me; Help Me Make It Through the Night;* and six others. RCA □ ARD1 0035 \$5.98, □ ART1 0035 \$7.98, © ARS1 0035 \$6.98, © ARK1 0035 \$6.98.





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ators of the SQ system intended. And that is why CBS, the developer of the SQ system and the producer of the largest number of SQ encoded records, highly recommends the Lafayette LR-4000 and Full Logic decoders to monitor SQ material.

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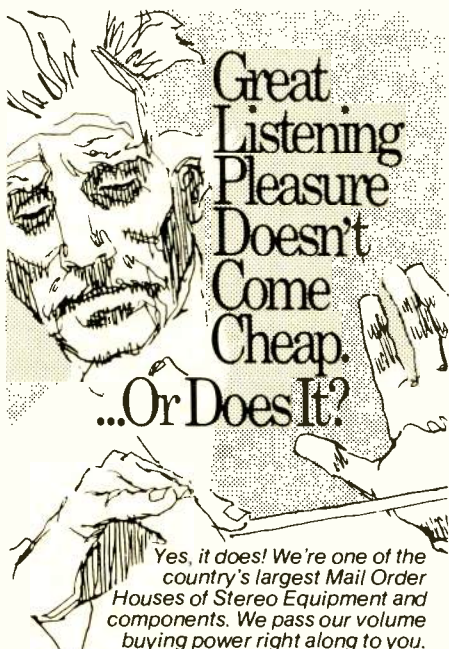
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tired recording. Jule Styne has added a couple of new numbers, *Lorelei* and *Paris, Paris*, which are pure zircon. There are a prologue and an epilogue in which Lorelei flashbacks into her Twenties heyday, and the inevitable *Diamonds Are a Girl's Best Friend*, which Channing performs in an energetically somnambulist way. Her supporting cast is more like a truss than an aid. Miss Channing is touring the show for a year before bringing it into New York. Smart move. P.R.

THE NEW MOON (Sigmund Romberg-Oscar Hammerstein II). Selections from original-cast recordings and two orchestral medleys. Evelyn Laye, Sigmund Romberg, Gene Gerrard, Dolores Farris, Ben Williams, Howett Worster, and Frank Forest (vocals); chorus; London Theatre Orchestra, Sigmund Romberg cond.; Drury Lane Theatre Orchestra, Herman Finck cond. MONMOUTH-EVERGREEN MES 7051 \$5.98.

Performance: **Still shining**
Recording: **Cloudy**

They had to close down *The New Moon* three weeks after it opened in Philadelphia on December 22, 1927, but composer Sigmund Romberg and librettist Oscar Hammerstein II refused to give up on their musical about love and rebellion in eighteenth-century New Orleans. Once their hits *Show Boat* (words by Hammerstein) and *Rosalie* (music by Romberg and George Gershwin) were safely launched on Broadway, they tackled the project again, changing the plot and writing such hit songs as *Softly, As in a Morning Sunrise*, *Wanting You*, and *Lover, Come Back to Me* with frightening facility. And so, on September 19, 1928, their *New Moon* rose again—this time in the glory of success. April 4, 1929 saw the British opening at the Drury Lane in London, where some quick-witted chaps had the presence of mind to make records of many of the songs and get the composer to prepare a two-part medley of its tunes which he then recorded himself with the London Theatre Orchestra. The story of *The New Moon* can no more be succinctly synopsised than any other decent operetta, dealing as it does with a French aristocrat named Robert Misson who leads a revolt against the French oppressors of New Orleans and sails with his "stouthearted men" to the Caribbean Isle of Pines where "they shall see a new moon rise on a nation—not one of discontented revolutionaries, but of men with ideals!"—all the while setting his heart on Marianne, a girl above his station but ready to sail with him anywhere.

Evelyn Laye, who played the role of Marianne in the 1929 London production, here sounds as sweet and coquettish as only a Romberg heroine can be in *One Kiss*, *Wanting You*, and *Lover, Come Back to Me*; Ben Williams sings *Marianne*, and Howett Worster leads the chorus in *Stouthearted Men*. Several non-hits from the show are also thrown in, including *The Girl on the Prow*, a cute one called *Try Her Out at Dances*, and a dubious item called *Paree*. The technical quality of the recording is simply terrible, but the beautiful tunes take hold of you anyhow. As for the "medleys" led by the composer, they help pass the time—but painfully. Of little pleasure to the senses, this pallid *New Moon* is a valuable curio from the archives and a must for all nostalgists specializing in the Twenties. P.K.

SPOKEN WORD



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ROBERT KLEIN: *Child of the 50's*; Robert Klein (comedian). *Civil Defense*; *Public Schools*; *School Lunch*; *The Sex Impulse*; *Fabulous 50's*; *Substitute School Teacher*; *Starting Your Car*; *FM Disc Jockey*; *New York City Animals*; *All Night Groceries*; *The Panhandler*; *The Foreigner*; and twelve others. BRUT 6001 \$5.98.

Performance: **Fast, fearless, funny**
Recording: **Very good**

Robert Klein, in case you need to be reminded, is the fellow who does those deodorant commercials for Brut where he says that it wouldn't be right for athletes to smell good while comedians stink. Now the Brut people have gone into the record business and issued their first album with Mr. Klein as the star, and it should be said right off that as a comedian, certainly, Robert Klein doesn't stink. In fact, he's uncommonly entertaining as he looks back on his schooldays as a "child of the 50's" to recall civil defense drills ("No talking during nuclear holocaust"), the Yankee bean soup served in school lunchrooms (so terrible that India rejected it even in the face of starvation), the sex fantasies of a fourteen-year-old, and the way his fellow inmates of De Witt Clinton High School in the Bronx would approach girls ("Gimme a cigarette").

Yet Klein's honesty takes him across the border of respectability time and again into the kind of topics and vocabulary still confined in much of America to the locker room—with the result that the company has had to issue two versions of this program. A second record ("special radio station copy edited for airplay") was included in the package for review. In it, most of the blue language and off-color references have been carefully excised (although the caricatures of radio commercials are courageously left in) and the banding reordered for quick reference to enable bits of this and that to be broadcast at the programmer's will. In the course of both discs, Mr. Klein offers Fifties-style rock-and-roll songs in which only the words are altered to protect the middle class—and these words, handwritten on lined yellow classroom composition pages, are provided with the album. Also included is a huge full-color poster of our hero in his student days, in sweatshirt and black chinos and surrounded by hundreds of mid-century artifacts: a "My Little Margie" comic book, a transistor radio, boxing gloves, 45-rpm pop hits of the period, baseball cards, much-thumbed copies of *Playboy* and *Peyton Place*, an old Humphrey Bogart photograph, a Monopoly game. . . . P.K.



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BACH: *The Well-Tempered Clavier, Book I.* Wanda Landowska (harpsichord). RCA VCM 6203 three discs \$11.95.

BACH: *The Well-Tempered Clavier, Book II.* Wanda Landowska (harpsichord). RCA VCM 6204 three discs \$11.95.

Performance: **Immortal**
Recording: **Good old mono**

I had a very purist sort of classical training, and I remember very well the first time I ever heard Landowska play some of the Forty-Eight—probably these very recordings. Frankly, I was horrified. Wanda Landowska, the apostle of Bachian Baroque purity? All those ritards, tempo changes, grandly rolled chords, and ornaments just seemed willful if not luridly melodramatic.

Well, I was wrong. Baroque music—yes, Bach—was meant to be played like this. Well, maybe not in every exact detail, but listening to playing like this, who's going to quibble? Ah, the power, the mastery, the authority. Contrary to what I thought in my purist days, Landowska is never merely willful, and her interpretive wisdom comes very much from inside the music. Her scholarship was not exactly negligible, and it seems remarkable—considering her reputation—that the very notion of articulated, expressive performance of Bach in particular and Baroque harpsichord music in general has had to be recaptured all over again by such performers as Igor Kipnis.

The biggest criticism I can offer has to do

with Landowska's instrument, a high-powered modern harpsichord capable of contrasts and colors that were really not possible on the instruments of Bach's day. And Landowska, of course, made full use of the capa-

RCA Records



WANDA LANDOWSKA
Immortal performances of Bach's Forty-Eight

bilities of her harpsichord; the modern player would want to depend more on the fingers than on mechanical richness and variety of effects. Nevertheless, Landowska uses her harpsichord—that-never-was to make some very powerful statements, and it is almost pointless to argue now about its historical authenticity. Above all, Landowska had the almost uncanny ability to clarify the most complex counterpoint in a medium that almost seems to defy the clear projection of lines. And it wasn't only the instrument either; Landowska's genius was exactly in her ability to articulate and phrase, and anyone who wishes to study these difficult and essential arts—with respect to any kind of music—should study these performances.

There are other reasons for owning these recordings. Although excellent modern versions exist, none have quite the heroic/tragic qualities that these have. For a century and a

half, the Bach Forty-Eight have had the status of a supreme monument of a kind we are no longer quite so sensitive to: they are the Parthenon, the Sistine Chapel of music, and all that. Landowska's view is, in that sense, Romantic; she was a survivor of a heroic age that liked to regard Bach as a founding father. This sense of the music comes through very strongly, and it is pretty impressive. They don't make 'em like that any more.

The other point is that Landowska, even when making a "definitive" recording, was acutely sensitive to the value of this music as an act of performance. In her accompanying notes she constantly speaks of the "overwhelming" effect of an entry or the particular effect of a moment's detail. This awareness of the meaning of the performance situation, of the moment as well as the big picture, is important to performing of this kind, and Landowska was a grand exponent of this art. It is the sort of thing that tends to resist the permanent recorded form. And yet these recordings, made late in her life, constitute a remarkable legacy. The harpsichord sound is—except for the occasional effect of wavering tone (due to what?)—quite good. The reissue of these recordings in their entirety is very welcome and they are quite entitled to the label "Immortal Performances." That's *exactly* what they are. E.S.

BEETHOVEN: *Organ Music: Suite for Mechanical Organ (WoO 33), Nos. 1-3; Trio in E Minor; Prelude in F Minor (WoO 55); Fugue in C Major; Prelude in Every Key, Op. 39, No. 1; Fugue Cycle in D Minor on Themes of J. S. Bach.* Wilhelm Krumbach (organ). MUSICAL HERITAGE SOCIETY MHS 1517 \$2.99 (plus 65¢ handling charge, from Musical Heritage Society, Inc., 1991 Broadway, New York, N. Y. 10023).

Performance: **Commendable**
Recording: **Very good**

Beethoven's involvement with the organ occurred mainly in his early, student days, beginning with his training under the Bonn court organist, Van den Eeden, and his successor Neefe. In 1784 he was even appointed second court organist. Neefe also introduced him to Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier*, which made a

Explanation of symbols:

- Ⓜ = reel-to-reel stereo tape
- Ⓢ = eight-track stereo cartridge
- Ⓒ = stereo cassette
- = quadraphonic disc
- Ⓜ = reel-to-reel quadraphonic tape
- Ⓢ = eight-track quadraphonic tape
- Ⓒ = quadraphonic cassette

Monophonic recordings are indicated by the symbol Ⓜ

The first listing is the one reviewed; other formats, if available, follow it.

profound impression on the young Beethoven. In 1793, in Vienna and under the guidance of another Bach enthusiast, Johann Albrechtsberger, Beethoven worked on contrapuntal exercises: imitative writing, two-, three-, and four-voice fugues, double and triple counterpoint, and canons, totaling some one hundred and sixty pages.

This emphasis on counterpoint with Bach as a backbone is made readily apparent by the majority of pieces in this interesting and curious recording, especially in such pieces as the Trio in E Minor and the Fugue Cycle, both written for Albrechtsberger and not intended for any specific instruments although perfectly adaptable for organ performance. Some idea of Beethoven's early prowess as an improviser may also be gleaned from the Prelude, Op. 39, No. 1, in which the young composer modulates through all twelve major keys. Perhaps the most individual work in this collection is the Suite for Mechanical Organ, written for the same Count Deym who commissioned Mozart to write for his mechanical clock collection. In the three movements contained here (incidentally, what happened to the other two, which conclude the suite?), one begins to recognize the style that is contemporary with, say, the Op. 20 Septet. Most of these pieces are little known, although there have been a few previous recordings: for example, the mechanical organ pieces in a wind transcription by the Soni Ventorum Quintet (Oryx 721), and an orchestration of twelve of Beethoven's fugue exercises by Alexander Broth (Select CC-15.038), a particularly fascinating Canadian recording.

The organ used for this recording is the one in the Church at Schleiden, a König organ built about the time Beethoven was born. It has an impressive, full sound in spite of its just under thirty stops, and the performances by Wilhelm Krumbach are sturdy, sober, and reliable—though not, perhaps, the last word in imaginativeness. The jacket's claim that this is Beethoven's complete organ music is not accurate: missing are the two-voice Fugue in D (WoO 31, 1783) which may have been a trial piece for his Bonn post as deputy organist; another D Major fugue (1825); the second of the Op. 39 Preludes (both were published for either piano or organ); and a 1793 *Fuge Cromatica* in A Minor, which curiously was included in the original German issue of this disc but for some unknown reason left out here. In any case, if this is not quite the most valuable recent contribution to the Beethoven discography, it does at least make it possible to examine an unusual facet of the composer's output. I.K.

BERNSTEIN: *West Side Story: Symphonic Dances. Facsimile. Fancy Free. On the Town: Ballet Music. Candide: Overture. Mass: Two Meditations.* New York Philharmonic and Kennedy Center Theater Orchestra, Leonard Bernstein cond. COLUMBIA MG 32174 two discs \$6.98, © MGT 32174 \$6.98.

Performance: **Marvelous**
Recording: **Excellent**

BERNSTEIN: *Candide: Overture. West Side Story: Medley. Fancy Free: Three Dances. Wonderful Town: Medley.* Boston Pops, Arthur Fiedler cond. *West Side Story: Symphonic Dances—Somewhere.* Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy cond. *On the Town: New York, New York.* Robert Shaw Chorale and Orchestra, Robert Shaw cond. *Mass: A Simple Song; Pax—Communion.* Sherrill Milnes

(baritone); New Philharmonia Orchestra and Chorus, Marcus Dods cond. RCA ARL1 0108 \$5.98, © ARS1 0108 \$6.95.

Performance: **Diverting**
Recording: **Good**

Recently we have been treated to sensational recordings of the music of Leonard Bernstein on records by Eric Rogers in London and Seiji Ozawa in San Francisco. Their approaches to the Symphonic Dances from *West Side Story* are zingy and scintillating, and played with the kind of headlong brute energy implicit in the score. Bernstein himself brings something else to this—the wink of his own wit and a kind of mellow, caressing gentleness with his own tunes that makes them not merely galvanizing in terms of musical voltage but touching and even moving at moments. All the material on this Columbia two-record set



SHERRILL MILNES
Noble excerpts from Bernstein's Mass

(a cassette version is also available) has been issued by Columbia in different combinations before, but spreading it out this way, along with Joan Brown's succinctly informative liner notes, is indeed happy programming.

In some ways Bernstein's best score for the stage was his first—the ballet *Fancy Free*. Here it is complete, exactly as the composer wrote it and as he intended it to sound; all that is missing this time is the Billie Holiday song *Big Stuff* that serves as prelude to the ballet, and maybe someday that can be put back. Also on hand is the sizzling ballet music for the Broadway musical *On the Town* that evolved out of *Fancy Free*—a score worthy of the symphonic treatment it gets here, fast and furious but never merely harsh or inappropriately grim. *Facsimile*, once repudiated by Bernstein as a “neurotic” exercise, has considerable charm in a more subdued idiom. As a “choreographic essay” it reveals its composer's inventive hand in surprising twists and turns. The overture to *Candide* is here too, headlong, hearty, and graceful as ever, a classic prelude to a musical that, alas, fell victim to the skills of too many cooks. Finally (on the records—the order of events on the cassette is a bit different) we find Mr. Bernstein wading into avant-garde waters with two interludes from his oversized, undisciplined, and cumbersome but undeniably fascinating *Mass*. One section is based on a

“sequence by Beethoven,” and both, which are played for the *Mass* during minutes of silent prayer, explore the possibilities of electronic effects and tonal rows not a natural part of this composer's vocabulary. But there is much that is marvelous in this glittering package. A blindfold test, by the way, of records against Dolbyized cassette proved that it's just about impossible to tell them apart.

The RCA disc, called “Bernstein's Greatest Hits,” is a potpourri of bits and snippets from the archives, bursting with energy and beautifully assembled and dubbed by engineer Bernard Keville. Mr. Fiedler charges through the *Candide* overture at perhaps too fast a clip but leads his ensemble winningly through medleys that convey the big-city spirit of the Fifties in *West Side Story*, the Forties in three dances from *Fancy Free*, and the Thirties in an especially witty arrangement of nuggets from the score of *Wonderful Town*. Ormandy's string section shimmers away in a too-gorgeous interpretation of *Somewhere* from the suite of Symphonic Dances for *West Side Story*, and the Robert Shaw Chorale and Orchestra sound fussy and almost churchy in an elaborate version of the opening number from *On the Town*. Sherrill Milnes turning *Maria* into an operatic aria evoked in me the usual discomfort I feel when opera singers tackle musical comedy songs, but the highlight of the whole record unquestionably is his tender and unaffected singing of *A Simple Song*, which opens the Bernstein *Mass*. The program concludes in an idiom distinct from its generally theatrical spirit with the hushed and contemplative ten-minute *Pax—Communion*, also from the *Mass*, performed with nobility by Mr. Milnes and the New Philharmonia Orchestra and Chorus under the restrained direction of Marcus Dods.

On the jacket of the RCA disc are excerpts of a breathless interview with Mr. Bernstein by Charles B. Yulish, during which the composer tells how his interest in music began when his Aunt Clara left her upright piano at his parents' house in Boston, that he's already made “millions of notes” for the Norton Lectures he is to deliver at Harvard, and that his interests “always seem to outgrow the time available for them.” Small wonder, when you see how diverse those interests are. P.K.

BRAHMS: *Piano Sonata No. 1, in C Major, Op. 1; Variations on a Theme of Handel, Op. 24.* Malcolm Frager (piano). BASF KBB 21393 \$5.98.

Performance: **Unconvincing**
Recording: **Crystalline/dryish**

Malcolm Frager is really so fine a musician, and has made so few recordings, that I was predisposed to welcome this release and feel almost churlish in acknowledging disappointment. Repeated hearings of it, however, bring only less pleasure. The Handel Variations simply do not hold together well here. The approach is tentative, the dynamics seem manufactured, and the overall impression is that of a series of Mendelssohn pieces played as exercises. The dry character of the sound, which might be appropriate in piano recordings of Bach, underscores the characterlessness of the performance.

The sound of the sonata is conspicuously more alive, and so is the performance, but the array of superior versions of both works is formidable: Julius Katchen's recording of the sonata seems to be unbeatable (and an Arrau

(Continued on page 136)

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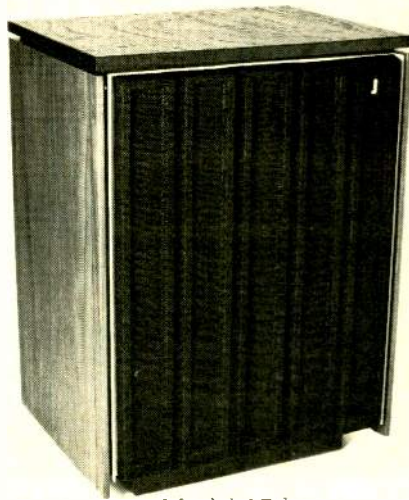
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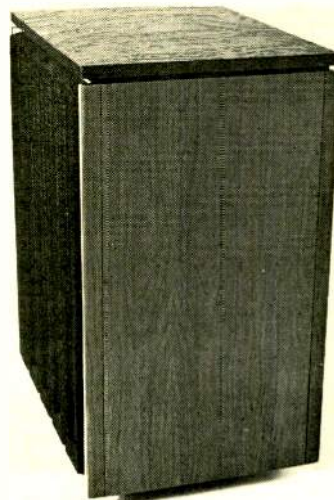


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recording of it is on the way). As for the Handel Variations, Katchen, Walter Klien, and the brilliant Agustín Anievas all give first-rate performances on budget labels, and Deutsche Grammophon has recently given us Barenboim's account of the work coupled with two otherwise unavailable sets of Brahms piano variations. R.F.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

BRIDGE: Quartets, Nos. 3 and 4. Allegri String Quartet. ARGO ZRG 714 \$5.98.

Performance: **Superb**
Recording: **Excellent**

In this country the name Frank Bridge, if recognized at all, does not identify a composer as much as it does the man who taught Benjamin Britten, who gave the name further circulation by writing, early in his career, the *Variations on a Theme of Frank Bridge* for string orchestra. Indeed, the few recordings of Bridge's own music to be released here up to now have all involved Britten himself, as either conductor or pianist, and none of the material in them could have prepared one for the depth or intensity of these two splendid quartets. These are major works in terms of the entire quartet repertoire.

Bridge (1879-1941) was thirty-five when World War I began; that event, after which hardly anything remained as it had been before, changed his creative outlook radically, transforming him from a relatively conventional lyrical composer into the powerful creative force capable of producing such profound, individual, and directly communicative works as these, which appeared in 1926 and 1937, respectively. Obviously Bridge, who was an expert violist and especially admired for his craftsmanship in writing for strings, was acquainted with the music of Berg and Webern, and yet there is nothing that might be called derivative in either of these quartets. The dissonances are mild enough to today's listeners, just giving an edge of urgency to music which is too serious for posturing, too filled with meaning in its own (musical) right to be concerned with "messages." There is little respite from seriousness in either work (the *quasi minuetto* of No. 4 comes closest to anything like relaxation), but there is a richness in their very austerity.

The exalted performances by the Allegri Quartet, both impassioned and rock-firm, are everything such a creator-craftsman as Bridge could have wanted. This is one of the most compelling chamber-music releases from any source in many, many months, and makes listeners everywhere still further indebted to the British Council, which made it possible. R.F.

BRUCKNER: Symphony No. 4, in E-flat Major ("Romantic"). Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Daniel Barenboim cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 336 \$6.98.

Performance: **Very good**
Recording: **Superlative**

This recording is a big step up from Barenboim's recent London recording of the Bruckner "Great" Mass but it is still an "almost": a very fine performance that falls a little short. The string playing is just rough enough to rate a demerit, especially set against the magnificent Chicago brass and wind. Also, the first movement seems to me to lack just a bit of spaciousness and, as if to compensate, the finale is just a bit too broad.

Nevertheless, this is a strong, often impressive reading, and it is superbly recorded by the German engineers. I have already mentioned the Chicago brass and wind; their playing is beyond superlatives, and Barenboim works with them to produce some of the most thrilling climaxes on record. E.S.

BRUCKNER: Symphony No. 4, in E-flat Major, "Romantic" (see The Basic Repertoire, page 61)

CHOPIN: Chopiniana (arr. Glazounov and Keller). Orchestra of the Bolshoi Theater, Algis Žuraitis cond. MELODIYA/ANGEL SR 40231 \$5.98.

Performance: **Day-Glo Chopin**
Recording: **Excellent**

The ballet that Diaghilev launched upon a willing world in 1909 as *Les Sylphides* started



JOHN FESPERMAN
Understanding and respect for Couperin

out in quite another form back in 1894, when Alexander Glazounov, whose own ballets were his most popular works, arranged a few Chopin pieces for a benefit in St. Petersburg. Later the score was expanded into Michel Fokine's *Chopiniana*, a ballet that spurned the familiar forest setting for ballroom scenes, a Polish wedding, and an "apocryphal incident" from Chopin's own life. Still later, the pieces orchestrated by Glazounov were supplemented by more waltzes, mazurkas, nocturnes, and preludes with instrumentation by Maurice Keller. Since then, such conductors as Malcolm Sargent have also tinkered with the score, rearranging and assembling their own suites.

Here we have the whole thing, including a final tarantella in which the Polish composer speaks in an Italian musical accent to curious effect. What is even more curious is the way Žuraitis and the Bolshoi Orchestra interpret the score. This is Chopin without twilight or moonlight—not the dreamy accompaniment to diaphanous dancers to which we are accustomed, but a brisk, resounding interpretation that seems more suitable for performance at high noon in a wheat field. Yet this version, with an opening "Military" Polonaise more embattled than any I ever heard, with a *Grande Valse* spinning almost dizzily in its tracks, with heady mazurkas and waltzes blazing with ballroom brilliance, is infectious

in its way, excellently played and beautifully recorded. If you'd like to hear *Chopiniana* stripped of the haze that usually suffuses it and drenched in daylight hues, this version is worth acquiring. Otherwise, better stick to Karajan, Maag, Ormandy, or even Fiedler, all of whom tend to keep matters in more crepuscular perspective. P.K.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

COUPERIN: Messe pour les Paroisses. John Fesperman (organ). CAMBRIDGE CRS 2504 \$5.98.

Performance: **Excellent**
Recording: **Excellent**

François Couperin became the organist of St. Gervais in 1685 when he was seventeen, and five years later he published two organ Masses. The first one was *Messe à l'Usage Ordinaire des Paroisses pour les Fêtes Solennelles* (Mass for Parish Services), comprising twenty-one sections. Thematically based on plainchant, the pieces were intended to be used in alternation with the choir, as was the Kyrie, or to fill gaps in the liturgy, as was the more extended Offertory. Most of them are miniature, their moods ranging from grandiose to ethereal to gay, and all are invariably rococo in spirit. Couperin was very explicit in his titles (for example, *Dialogue sur La Trompette et le Cromhorne*) as to the registration he wanted, and John Fesperman, performing on a fine modern instrument with tracker action in the Old West Church of Boston, follows the composer's suggestions accurately. He plays the Mass with commendable stylistic understanding and obvious respect for the functional character of the music. Moreover, the sound of the organ itself, a 1971 instrument built by Charles Fisk, is startlingly good.

Perhaps a bit less vividly recorded (the present disc could not be better in this respect) is another version of this Mass together with the Mass for Convent Services—in other words, Couperin's total organ output—on Victrola VICS 6018, a two-disc set. It is performed by Michel Chapuis on the even more colorful organ of Saint-Maximin with some marvelous reed stops. Chapuis is as stylish as Fesperman but tends to use *notes inégales* (rhythmic alteration of notes) more lavishly, and his tempos are quicker. But both performances are attractive. I.K.

DELIUS: Sonata for Cello and Piano; Five Pieces for Piano; Three Preludes. PROKOFIEV: Sonata for Cello and Piano, Op. 119. George Isaac (cello); Martin Jones (piano). ARGO ZRG 727 \$5.98.

Performance: **Conscientious**
Recording: **Fair to good**

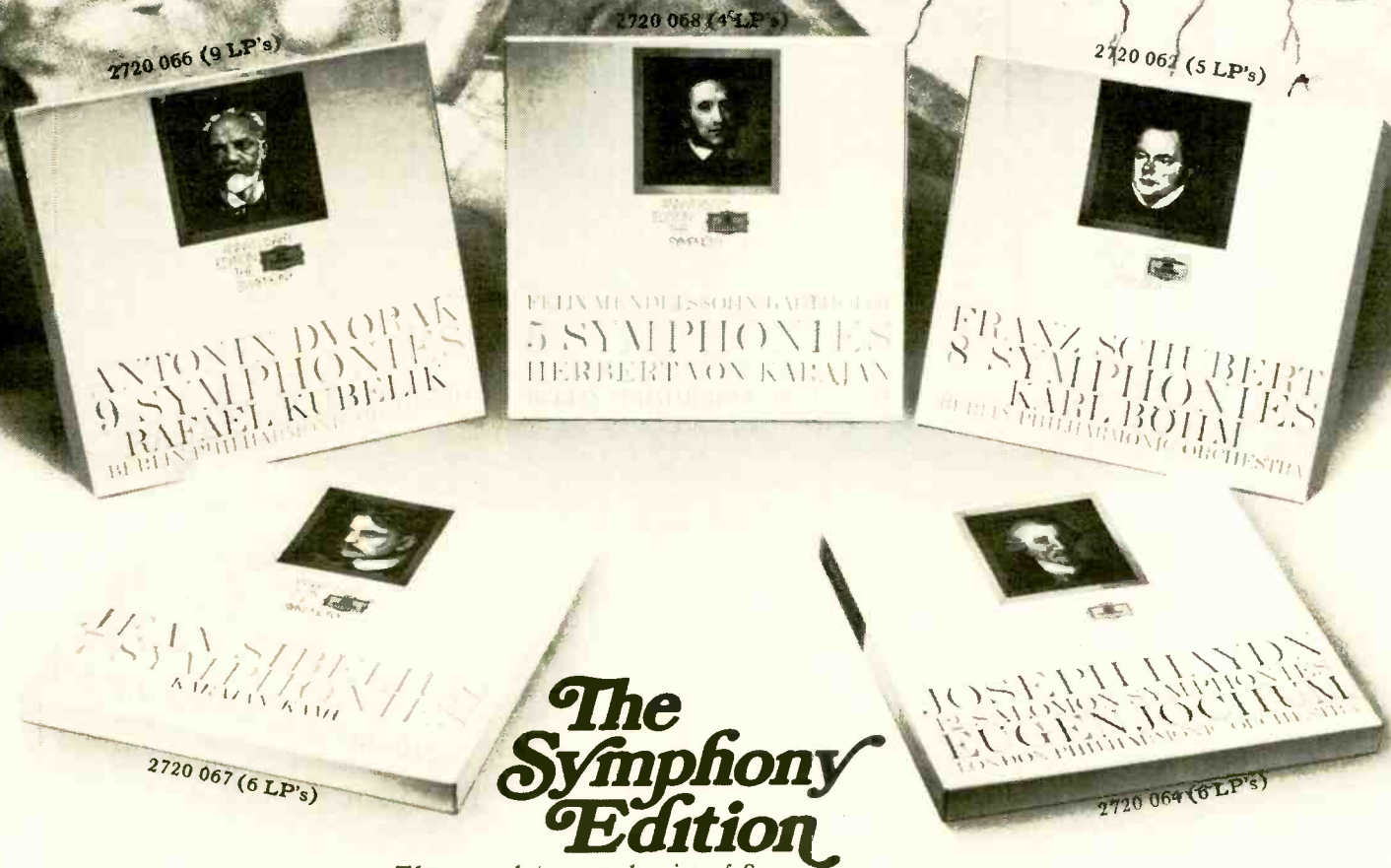
The Frederick Delius Cello Sonata (1917) is a prime example of his most highly developed musical speech—a seamless one-movement span of melodic extension and subtle metamorphosis, with no pretensions whatever to the polyphonic give-and-take associated with the classic chamber music manner. The pianist's role here is almost wholly that of harmonic support through chords and figuration, while the cello is the true prima donna, singing all the way with hardly a bar of pause or interruption. And the piece works superbly.

I wish I could say that this recorded performance worked as well as the music. I find lots of careful attention to phrasing and an effort

(Continued on page 138)

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to achieve the big line demanded by Delius, but there is little of the lyrical intensity, inherent in the music, that might emerge under the fingers of a cellist with more of a performing "personality"—Jacqueline Du Pré, for instance. The recording is partly at fault, I think, for the cello is decidedly in the background relative to the piano. Of the Delius piano pieces, all relatively slight affairs, the most memorable item for me is the plaintive waltz, the second of the Five Pieces for Piano. Martin Jones' performances are neatly turned and well recorded.

The Prokofiev Sonata (1949) fares better than anything else on the record, thanks to better cello-piano balance. Evidently Messrs. Isaac and Jones feel more at home in this essentially traditional but beautifully fashioned three-movement work; the performance here has both vitality and nuance. But the Piatigorsky/Firkusny version of this sonata is still available (paired with the Chopin cello sonata on RCA LSC 2875), so buying the Argo disc would best appear to be based on a desire for first stereo version of the Delius. *D.H.*

DOWLAND: *Lute Songs and Dances.* *Wilt thou, unkind, thus reave me; Go crystal tears; Awake, sweet love; Come again; Think'st thou then by thy feigning; Come away, come sweet love; Rest awhile you cruel cares; Come, heavy sleep; Can she excuse my wrongs?; The Round Battle Galliard; Tarleton's Resurrection; Air; Lady Hammond's Alemaine; Go from my window; The Shoemaker's Wife.* Hayden Blanchard (tenor); Frederick Noad (lute); Ruth Adams (gamba). ORION ORS 72102 \$5.98.

Performance: **Commendable**
Recording: **Very good**

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

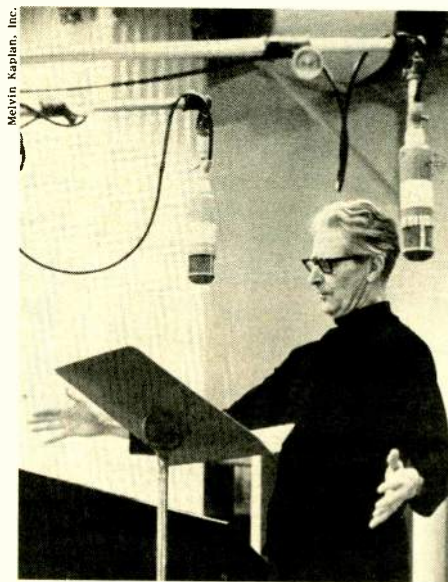
DOWLAND: *Songs and Dances.* *Come away, sweet love; Weep you no more; White as lilies; Awake, sweet love; Stay, time, awhile; What if I never speed; Fine knacks for ladies; Come again; Sorrow, stay; Now O now; When Phoebus first did Daphne love; Almain, Say love if ever thou did'st find; Mr. Henry Noel's Galliard; Almain, Think'st thou then by thy feigning; Fortune my foe; Farewell, unkind; The Frog Galliard; Galliard, Can she excuse my wrongs; Robin is to the greenwood gone; Orlando sleepeth; Mistress Winter's Jump; Mrs. White's Nothing.* Hugues Cuénod (tenor); Joel Cohen (lute); Christiane Jaccotet (virginals). TURNABOUT TV-S 34510 \$2.98.

Performance: **Captivating**
Recording: **Excellent**

One might never guess from listening to this Turnabout release that Hugues Cuénod was nearly seventy when it was recorded (1971). His was never what one might term a great voice, but it is a light, serviceable one and he uses it with uncommon skill, paying particular attention to words and characterization. From this standpoint, Cuénod is one of the most remarkable specialist performers of our time. The Turnabout selection of Dowland, England's greatest composer of lute ayres, is an excellent one, and Cuénod does it justice. He is well assisted by his partners, Joel Cohen and Christiane Jaccotet. Strictly speaking, adding a keyboard instrument to either ayres or dances for lute is slightly gratuitous, but the combination of lute and virginals in a handful of these pieces is aurally most attractive. I certainly can find nothing to complain about

in this release *except* the lack of contents listings on anything but the record labels and the total lack of information about who performs in what pieces. The sonics are very satisfactory, but no texts are provided.

The Orion anthology contains only fifteen Dowland ayres and dances for lute as opposed to Turnabout's twenty-two, but Hayden Blanchard does sing all the verses to these strophic songs, which is unusual in Elizabethan song collections. Again, the choice of repertoire is excellent, and the material is generally well performed. Blanchard has a pleasant voice, and his diction is superior to that of most singers. However, in comparison with Cuénod or, say, with Peter Pears, both masters at eliciting all the affect from these ayres, Blanchard is somewhat lacking in color and inflection. Everything tends to sound a bit the same, and the music wants more flexibility



HUGHES CUÉNOD
A master sings Dowland ayres

in pacing. Primarily, Blanchard does not make some of these songs sound as exquisite as they can be made to sound. The instrumental contributions are discreet, the lute solos being effectively rendered if not as dynamically as, for example, Julian Bream's. The sonics are good, and a text sheet (with a rather confused layout) has been provided. *I.K.*

DVOŘÁK: *Two Minuets, Op. 28; Dumka, Op. 35; Theme and Variations, Op. 36; Scottish Dances, Op. 41; Two Furiantes, Op. 42.* Radoslav Kvapil (piano). SUPRAPHON 1110862 \$5.98.

Performance: **To the manner born**
Recording: **Good**

DVOŘÁK: *Suite in A Major, Op. 98; Humoresques, Op. 101.* Radoslav Kvapil (piano). GENESIS GS 1025 \$5.98.

Performance: **Idiomatic**
Recording: **Generally good**

What with Gerald Robbins' recording of the *Poetic Tone Pictures*, Op. 85 (on Genesis), Rudolf Firkusny's recording of the *Silhouettes*, Op. 8 (on Candide), and the two packages under consideration here, we now have available recordings of virtually all of Dvořák's solo piano music. But, in my opinion, Dvořák's solo piano works are far less impor-

tant than Smetana's in substance and style, and I hope, now that we have all this Dvořák, Radoslav Kvapil will turn his attention—and his finely honed skill—toward completing the series of Smetana's superb Czech dances and polkas that he began for Musical Heritage Society (MHS 1373).

This is not to say that none of these Dvořák pieces are effective. The Theme and Variations, by far the most substantial work on the Supraphon disc, is a good example of Dvořák in his "Classicalizing" vein, with the most personal expression being achieved in the processional of Variation No. 4. The dance pieces are delightful, with some of the most piquant moments to be found in the so-called Scottish Dances.

The two collections of late, short pieces on the Genesis disc are for all practical purposes products of Dvořák's American sojourn. The Suite in A Major I find a rather uninspired potboiler, but the *Humoresques* (whimsies?) are carefully thought through, wonderfully varied in content, and beautifully written—something more than chips off the workbench. The cryptic ending of the ballad-like No. 8 is particularly original and effective.

Though both these recordings are from Supraphon master tapes, the processing of the Czech disc from the excellently recorded original is the better of the two. My review copy of the Genesis disc was marred by an off-center side one. *D.H.*

HANDEL: *Athalia (excerpts).* *Tyrants would in impious throngs . . . ; Your sacred songs awhile forbear . . . ; Softest sounds no more can ease me; My Josabeth! The grateful time appears . . . ; Through the land so lovely blooming . . . ; Tis my intention, lovely youth . . . ; What sacred horrors shake my breast! . . . ; Yes, proud apostate, thou shalt fall.* . . . Rita Shane (soprano), Athalia; Arleen Auger (soprano), Josabeth; Beverly Wolff (mezzo-soprano), Joad; Patricia Guthrie (soprano), Joas; Raymond Michalski (bass), Abner; Vienna Academy Chamber Chorus; Martin Isepp (harpichord); Vienna Volksooper Orchestra, Stephen Simon cond. RCA ARL1 0083 \$5.98.

Performance: **Commendable**
Recording: **Good except for pressing**

Both Winton Dean and Paul Henry Lang, Handel scholars, characterize *Athalia* as the first great English oratorio. It dates from 1733 and was in all likelihood written for performance at Oxford before its first London presentation two years later, where it is possible that the work may have been actually acted out (Handel left some very interesting stage directions). The plot, derived from Racine's *Athalie*, depicts the downfall of the title-role Queen of Judah, a tyrant to whom Handel gives the musical trappings and personality of an extraordinarily imposing figure. Others in the cast are less colorfully drawn: Joad, the high priest, and his wife, Josabeth; Abner, the commander-in-chief; and Joas, the adopted son of Joad and Josabeth and in reality the heir to the throne. The chorus plays an important part, commenting on the action, bemoaning the oppressiveness of Athalia's reign, and rejoicing in the best *Hallelujah* tradition (there is one chorus, in fact, that contains a germ of one of the fugues in the famous *Messiah* chorus). Musically, Handel does some fine things, at least to judge from this very full disc of highlights. One senses considerable dramatic unity through the inclusion of some

whole scenes rather than isolated arias, although, of course, the oratorio contains many more moments of drama than could be included in a set of excerpts. Each principal is allowed to reveal his or her character through one or two arias at least, and enough choruses (mostly shorter ones, it's true) have been retained to indicate the direction Handel was going with this important element.

Stephen Simon directs the proceedings with commendable understanding; it's not an especially subtle rendition, either vocally or instrumentally, but it does present the music without exaggeration and with a good semblance of style. The singers, especially Rita Shane and Arleen Auger, are convincing in their roles, and the chorus, though not very English sounding, does its work with vigor. The recorded sound is very good, but RCA's little notice on the jacket—"This lightweight record also virtually eliminates warpage . . ."—was hardly borne out by my pressing; not only was it warped, but the vertical movement of the needle caused all kinds of nonmusical groove noises. If you can find an unwarped copy, try this intriguing set of excerpts from an oratorio that, as far as I know, has never before been recorded. *I.K.*

HANSON: *Symphony No. 6.* Music for Westchester Symphony Orchestra; Siegfried Landau cond. **THOMSON:** *Louisiana Story, Suite.* Westphalian Symphony Orchestra, Recklinghausen, Siegfried Landau cond. **TURNABOUT TV-S 34534 \$2.98.**

Performance: **Adequate to good**
Recording: **Generally good**

Both of the pieces under consideration here represent two different aspects of the Romantic manner in twentieth-century American music. Howard Hanson's Sixth Symphony is unabashedly rhetorical in a full-blown late-Romantic style redolent of Scandinavian music of the post-Grieg era (Hanson is of American-Swedish ancestry). Like Hanson's Fourth and Fifth symphonies, it is concise in form and controlled in expression, as well as highly individual in certain of its harmonic aspects, most notably in the masterly use of passing dissonance.

The Music for Westchester Symphony Orchestra under Siegfried Landau's baton gives a thoroughly committed performance, achieving a climax of splendid cumulative power built around the symphony's germinal motive. Unhappily, I have been spoiled by hearing the earlier Hanson symphonies played by the Boston Symphony in its glorious days under Koussevitzky, not to mention having supervised recordings with the Eastman Rochester Symphony Orchestra under Hanson himself in the 1950's for Mercury. With all the best will in the world, the Westchester ensemble simply lacks the string power to get out of Hanson's latest symphony everything that he wrote into it.

I sat in on part of the original "scoring" sessions for Robert Flaherty's superb documentary film, *Louisiana Story*, in 1948, and I promptly acquired the fine recording of the concert suite done by Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra issued not long afterward. I have been living with that recording ever since, hoping year after year for a first-rate stereo recording of the same sequence—Pastoral, Chorale, Passacaglia, and Fugue—which I find to be of far more absorbing interest than the more-often-recorded set of Acadian Songs and Dances. The move-



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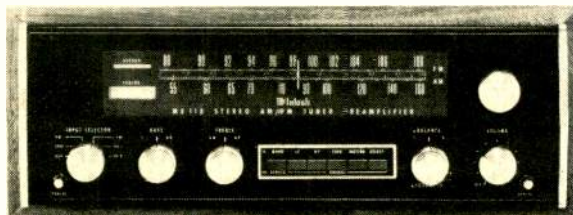
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ments of the suite combine, it seems to me, the very finest aspects of Thomson's romantic poetic sensibility and his disciplined classical bent growing out of his days as organist at the Cambridge, Mass., King's Chapel.

As with Hanson's symphonies, so with Thomson's elegant film scores—you need the Philadelphia Orchestra or its equivalent to do the music justice. I think Landau could have carried the assignment off with his Music for Westchester group; but the *Louisiana Story* music needs more finesse, sense of style, and tonal body than the Westphalian players bring to it. The recorded performance I would describe as just about passable—but Virgil Thomson deserves better than that. If you want to know what his film music really should sound like in recorded performance,

lend an ear to Stokowski's Vanguard discs of suites from Thomson's other two major documentary film scores, *The River* and *The Plow That Broke the Plains*. D. H.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

HAYDN: *String Quartets, Op. 20: No. 1, in E-flat Major; No. 2, in C Major; No. 3, in G Minor; No. 4, in D Major; No. 5, in F Minor; No. 6, in A Major.* Lenox Quartet, DESTO DC 7152/34 three discs \$17.24.

Performance: **A joy**
Recording: **Excellent**

"There was no one near me to confuse or torment me, thus I was obliged to be original." So Haydn summed up the hows and whys

of his creative development to his early biographer, Georg August Griesinger. And there is no better testimony to the truth of this observation than the six Opus 20 string quartets Haydn composed in his fortieth year amid the grandeur and isolation of Esterháza Castle in Hungary. H. Robbins Landon views these quartets as Haydn's reply to criticism that had appeared in a Hamburg journal to the effect that his music was too flippant and generally free-and-easy. Indeed, these are marvelous combinations of the spontaneously lyrical and the brilliantly learned, the first truly mature of all Haydn's quartets. The fugal finales of Nos. 2, 5, and 6 are striking in their integration of fugal texture with the sonata principle, a device that was to reach its apogee in the finale of Mozart's *Jupiter* Symphony. As for spontaneity and lyricism, the magnificent slow movement of Quartet No. 1 and the quasi-operatic adagio of No. 2 stand out especially. Haydn's inexhaustible capacity for humor and surprise is very much evident in the minute movements and the lighter finales; I don't think Beethoven could have written his Eighth Symphony without a thorough familiarity with the finale of No. 4.

I could go on enumerating the wonderful things in these quartets. But the notes of the late Sir Donald Tovey, included in the Desto album (as reprinted from *Cobbett's Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music*, not from the *Essays in Musical Analysis!*), are really comprehensive. And the music speaks gloriously for itself in the warm and lively performances of the Lenox Quartet—one of about a dozen top-flight chamber ensembles gracing the American scene these days. Except for a barely audible violin "scrape" in the final pages of No. 4, the Lenox performances are altogether satisfying from every standpoint—individual technique, organic ensemble, and exquisite sensibility of tempo, phrasing, and dynamics. The recording, furthermore, is endowed with just the right combination of warm room tone and instrumental presence to make this album sheer listening pleasure.

With this, its first excursion into the Classical realm, the heretofore contemporary-oriented Desto label has scored a resounding success. I do wish, however, that their program notes were a little more generous with such vital statistics as key signatures and movements. D.H.

HENZE: *Concerto No. 2, for Piano and Orchestra.* Christoph Eschenbach (piano); London Philharmonic Orchestra, Hans Werner Henze cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 056 \$6.98.

Performance: **Composer-directed**
Recording: **Excellent**

Here is another mammoth *Meisterwerk* from the prolific and indefatigable Hans Werner Henze. This is a fifty-minute hour for piano and orchestra that only a Henze-lover could absorb at a sitting. In contrast to DG's usual thoroughness in such matters, there is little or no concrete information about the work in the liner notes, but this is, one suspects, not a recent piece. It has a very strong Bergian/expressionist bias but without the incredible vision and concision that the old expressionists always brought to their music. A long, slow, sad, fifteen-minute first movement is followed by a somewhat raucous vivace of about equal length. By the end of all this, it seems almost superfluous to have to get up and turn over the record, but there are



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still another twenty minutes to go and it must be done. Actually, taken in isolation, there is much beautiful music in this work—particularly in the mourning, keening slow sections which develop a considerable intensity; they could almost stand as pieces by themselves. As it is, this is a lot of piano concerto to listen to all at once.

The performance, under the composer's supervision, appears to be first-class and the same can be said for the recording. *E.S.*

KALKBRENNER: *Grand Quintet in C Minor* (see Best of the Month, page 87)

MESSIAEN: *Poèmes pour Mi; Chants de Terre et de Ciel*. Noelle Barker (soprano); Robert Sherlaw Johnson (piano). ARGO ZRG 699 \$5.98.

Performance: **Cultivated**
Recording: **Clear**

This one escapes me almost completely. The two song cycles, written in the 1930's, are dedicated to the composer's first wife. Texts and music—both by Messiaen—are a celebration of human love and marriage in spiritual terms. There is Messiaen's usual component of mystical Christianity, expressed in terms of chanted and florid vocal lines and juicy piano harmonies and arpeggios. In spite of the obvious derivations from Scriabin and Debussy, this is certainly highly original stuff. But its spiritual elevation smacks a little too much of the salon. And the rather cultivated and very English performance—all the French is delivered in a strong cross-Channel accent—does little to dispel this impression. The second set—*Songs of Earth and Heaven*—builds tremendously to a state of exaltation. At least it strives in that direction, but you never really lose a sneaking suspicion that this is *soirée* spirituality: lovely harmonies, you know, a bit clanky now and then, but that Messiaen fellow is the religious type. A little mysticism is, after all, always quite fashionable.

I sound as if I'm putting down Messiaen and these earnest performers. In fact, I don't doubt their sincerity and skill. It's just that my notions of spiritual exaltation are a good distance removed from the kind of singing, the post-Romantic personal anguish and search, and the good bourgeois song tradition out of which this music and these performances grow. (I am, by the way, almost as unsympathetic to the related tradition in the visual arts, of which Odilon Redon would be the outstanding example.)

Messiaen fans—they are apparently legion in England if not so numerous here—will feel differently. Noelle Barker is an intelligent singer and has good pitch sense. The performances perhaps lack that ecstatic, dancing quality that Messiaen, in a good medieval tradition, sometimes uses to vary the more introspective or upward-reaching quality of most of his meditations. Otherwise, these are good performances reasonably well recorded with an ear for clarity. Complete French and English texts are supplied. *E.S.*

MILHAUD: *La Création du Monde* (see WEILL)

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

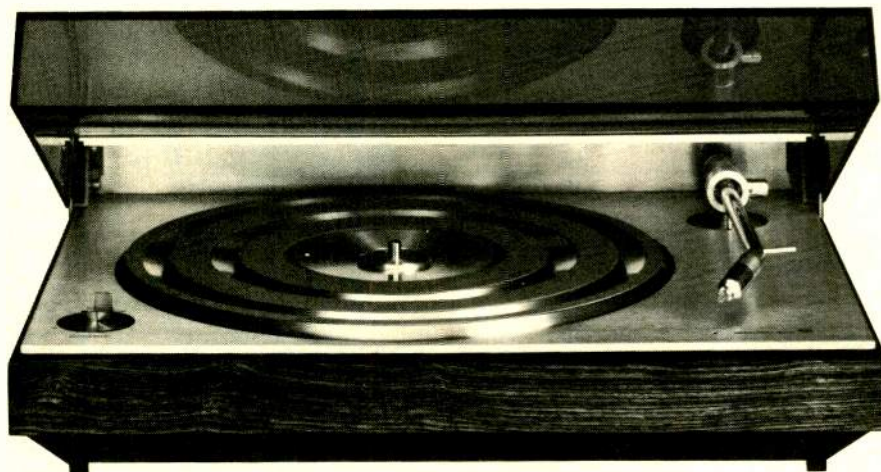
MONTEVERDI: *Sacred Concertos. Exsulta filia (Motet). Selva Morale et Spirituale: Beatus vir; Audi caelum; Laudate Dominum omnes gentes; Salve Regina; Gloria in excel-*

sis Deo. Dorothy Dorow and Birgit Nordin (sopranos); Nigel Rogers and Ian Partridge (tenors); Christopher Keyte and Friedhelm Hessenbruch (basses); Thomas Brandis and Peter Brem (solo violins); Colin Tilney (harpsichord); Werner Kauffmann (positiv organ); Eugen M. Dombois (lute); Michael Schäffer (chitarraone); Helga Storck (harp); Klaus Storck (cello); Hans Koch (bass); other instrumentalists; Monteverdi Choir of Hamburg, Jürgen Jürgens cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON ARCHIVE 2533137 \$6.98.

Performance: **Admirable**
Recording: **Excellent**

A year or so ago, Archive released a Monteverdi album called "Virtuoso Madrigals," a title that seemed to be taking a Madison Ave-

nue approach to selling what might be considered rather esoteric fare—that is, until one actually heard the music, at which point one realized that these *were* virtuoso madrigals in the demands the extremely florid writing made on the singers. I respectfully submit that the present album, which is principally from Monteverdi's important 1641 sacred collection, *Selva Morale et Spirituale*, also deserves to have "Virtuoso" added to its title. Do you doubt me? Listen to *Exsulta filia* with Ian Partridge or "*Audi caelum*" with Nigel Rogers as the principal tenor and Partridge as the echo tenor (a marvelous effect that Monteverdi used often). Sacred music or not, here is all the customary Monteverdi word painting—watch for the melting descending chromatics in "*Laudate Dominum*"—the same affecting



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techniques as in the secular material. The music is superb, and the performances, beautifully recorded, could not be better. An eight-disc complete set of the *Selve Morale* with Michel Corboz directing is available from the Musical Heritage Society, but as a sampling this disc deserves the highest recommendation. Texts and translations, of course, are provided. I.K.

MOZART: Concerto No. 10, in E-flat, for Two Pianos (K. 365); Concerto No. 7, in F Major, for Three Pianos (K. 242). Arthur Gold and Robert Fizdale (pianos); Leonard Bernstein (piano in K. 242); New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein cond. COLUMBIA M 32173 \$5.98, © MT 32173 \$6.98.

Performance: **Could use more sparkle**
Recording: **Good enough**

The E-flat Concerto for Two Pianos from Mozart's last Salzburg years is a basic and well-loved staple of the fairly sparse Classic repertoire for two pianos and orchestra, though it is not quite in the same class with the Sinfonia Concertante for Violin, Viola, and Orchestra, composed in the same year. For my taste, it takes a fleet-winged, infinitely flowing performance to get K. 365 off the ground. Only in the final movement, where Gold and Fizdale bring to bear the full measure of rhythmic zest that has marked the best of their many past recorded performances, do I find that happening on this record. Elsewhere, as in the first movement, this reading makes pretty heavy going. Despite the addition of a third instrument to the keyboard freight, the rather uninspired (save for a lovely slow movement and charmingly written cadenza) F Major Concerto gets a livelier reading here. But this does not exactly make the package indispensable: I would advise checking out the budget-price Seraphim disc S60072 offering the same two works played by the Menuhins. D.H.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

MOZART: Serenade No. 7, in D Major (K. 250, "Haffner"). Pinchas Zuckerman (violin); English Chamber Orchestra, Pinchas Zuckerman cond. ANGEL S 36915 \$5.98.

Performance: **A-1**
Recording: **Excellent**

The music Mozart wrote in 1776 for the wedding of Elisabeth, the daughter of Salzburg merchant and burgo-master Sigmund Haffner, is the most elaborate of the works he entitled "serenades"—and a handsome work it is! There are no less than eight movements, beginning with a ceremonial introduction and a linked festive allegro followed by a miniature violin concerto in three movements, the last of which is the familiar and sparkling rondo. The four final movements include a singularly beguiling andante flanked by two sharply contrasted minuets. The finale, like the opening movement, begins with a slow introduction—a sort of benediction for the newlyweds?—then passes on to a suitably jubilant and wholly infectious conclusion. Unlike the Three-Piano Concerto in F Major composed in the same year (1776), there is no "formula" music here. All eight movements are top-drawer Mozart.

And Pinchas Zuckerman, doubling as violin soloist and conductor, comes through with a performance wholly worthy of the music—full of zest where called for, tenderness where

demanding, and intense musicality in the truest sense of the word. The recording is flawless. In short, this disc is unalloyed pleasure from beginning to end. D.H.

OFFENBACH: Le Papillon. London Symphony Orchestra, Richard Bonyngé cond. LONDON CS 6812 \$5.98.

Performance: **Heavy-winged yet magical**
Recording: **Excellent**

The anecdotes about Offenbach's only ballet *Le Papillon* are almost more interesting than the engaging score he wrote for it. He composed the ballet for Marie Taglioni, considered a hundred years ago the greatest choreographer in Europe. Taglioni had discovered an incredibly talented young dancer named Emma Livry, and came out of retire-



PINCHAS ZUCKERMAN
A zestful, tender, intense "Haffner"

ment to make the girl her protégée. The ballet was specifically tailored to the talents of Mlle. Livry, and when it opened at the Paris Opéra in 1860 (to the consternation of snobs in the music world who thought Offenbach ought to stay at the Opéra Comique where he belonged) she scored a sensation in it. In the role of a butterfly that steals a prince away from the wicked witch who wants to possess him, she was described by one critic as "skimming over the ground, the water and the flowers, apparently without touching them," of "rising like a feather" and "falling like a snowflake." Alas, poor Emma Livry! She stubbornly refused to let her diaphanous butterfly costume be fireproofed because the process would make her skirt look stiff and dingy; one night she brushed too close to a gas light on stage, was horribly burned, and died less than a year later.

With this one dancer is said to have died the great Romantic era of ballet, and the score of *Le Papillon* has seldom been heard in the past century. (The only part of it that did survive was the rather banal tune written for the *Valse de Rayons*, which caught on, in 1908, as the tune for apache dances, café orchestras, and hurdy-gurdies in Europe.) Yet the score is gossamer stuff, reminiscent at times of Mendelssohn's overture for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Brimming with movement and the play of melodies (some of which the economi-

cal composer used again elsewhere), it is one of the richest orchestrations Offenbach ever completed. It is performed here with exquisite attention to every detail and shift in atmosphere—though somewhat stolidly—under Richard Bonyngé's conscientious direction, and should find a welcome place in any ballet lover's record collection. Now if they would only revive the ballet itself—with fireproofed costumes, of course. P.K.

RECORDINGS OF SPECIAL MERIT

PENDERECKI: Fonogrammi for Flutes and Chamber Orchestra; Cello Concerto; De Natura Sonoris No. 2; Kanon for Orchestra and Tape. Siegfried Palm (cello); Polish Radio Symphony Orchestra, Krzysztof Penderecki cond. ANGEL S 36949 \$5.98.

PENDERECKI: Capriccio for Violin and Orchestra; Emanationen for Two String Orchestras; Partita for Harpsichord and Orchestra. Wanda Wilkomirska (violin); Felicja Blumental (harpsichord); Polish Radio Symphony Orchestra, Krzysztof Penderecki cond. ANGEL S 36950 \$5.98.

Performances: **Authoritative**
Recordings: **Good**

Although Angel has been thoughtful enough to offer these two "Penderecki Conducts Penderecki" collections separately, almost anyone interested in this material is likely to want both discs, since they not only represent the composer's phonographic debut as a conductor, but between them add a total of four otherwise unavailable titles, ranging from his earliest works to his latest, to the catalog.

Of the four works in the first album, only *De Natura Sonoris No. 2* has been recorded before (by Jorge Mester and the Louisville Orchestra on Louisville LS 722). Malcolm Rayment, in his Angel liner note, tells us the work is "decidedly serious," but I think it shows a subtle and refined sense of humor (and this has little to do with the scoring, which includes a musical saw, a bird-whistle, and a piece of train rail) and is one of Penderecki's more accessible instrumental works. The Cello Concerto was adapted (by the composer) only last year from a work written in 1967 for a five-stringed instrument called the *violino grande*, which combines the ranges of the violin and the viola. Both of the other works in the first album were composed about a dozen years ago. *Fonogrammi*, which has yet to be published, is for three flutes, strings, harpsichord, and percussion, and may have been Penderecki's first expression of his fascination with the sound of Slavonic bells. *Kanon*, scored for fifty-two strings, is not electronic music in the usual sense: the tape equipment is simply used to repeat earlier portions as the live performance proceeds—an effect not all that easy to distinguish from actual collisions of live sounds when it's *all* in the form of a recording.

The only previously unrecorded work in the second album is the Harpsichord Partita, the longest piece on either disc as well as the newest. It is in a single movement, the instrumentation approximating that of a concerto grosso in modern terms: the solo instruments include not only the harpsichord, but also a harp, a guitar, a bass guitar, and a double bass (all five instruments electronically amplified), and the orchestral section includes nine woodwinds, pairs of horns, trumpets, and trombones, a celesta, glockenspiel, triangle, (Continued on page 146)

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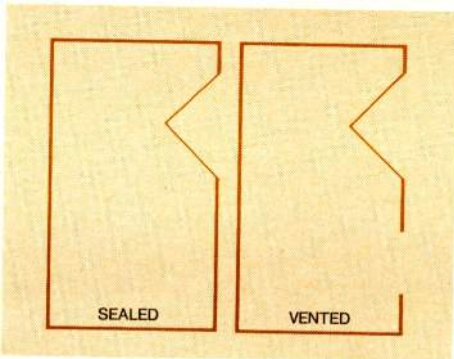
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Decisions, Decisions

Especially in the case of home high fidelity systems, designers have often selected the sealed acoustic suspension system as the basis for their efforts. Sealed system design is relatively simple and straight-forward; basically a single equation defines all one needs to know to come up with good low-frequency performance. The direct relationship of enclosure volume, low-



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By contrast, design of vented systems has been an enigma. The basic idea is very appealing: instead of containing half the woofer's output inside a sealed box, the vented enclosure makes that energy available for use in the listening room. With far more variables to juggle, a simple relationship (like that of the sealed system) did not fall into designers' laps, resulting in the notion that vented systems required an empirical cut-and-try design technique.

The vented advantage

As it turns out, vented systems have a similar interdependence of enclosure volume, low-frequency response and efficiency — a conclusion drawn from an elegant technical study by Australian researcher A. N. Thiele.² By relating system low-frequency response to electrical filter response, Thiele indicated many choices of system frequency response, and more importantly, exactly what changes to make in the loudspeaker and enclosure to produce the desired performance.

If this same analysis is applied to sealed systems, the inherent advantage of vented systems becomes obvious. Briefly summarized, a vented system may have:

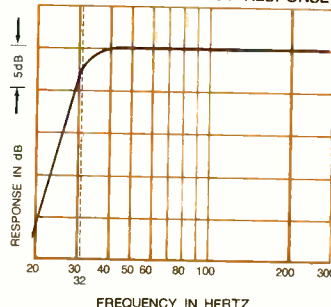
- 1/2 octave more bass, or;
- 4-1/2 dB more efficiency, or;
- an enclosure 1/3 the size.³

So much for the theory... now we must set specific design goals. We wished to design a system with response lower in frequency, greater midband efficiency, and smaller physical size than the best bookshelf acoustic suspension systems. To further increase the vented system advantage shown above, we selected a system response (Sixth Order Butterworth Class I) which employs an auxiliary circuit or equalizer.

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Most speaker frequency response specifications in print today are meaningless. They have little relationship to the measured or perceived performance of the product. However, low-frequency response can, in fact, be precisely defined and measured.

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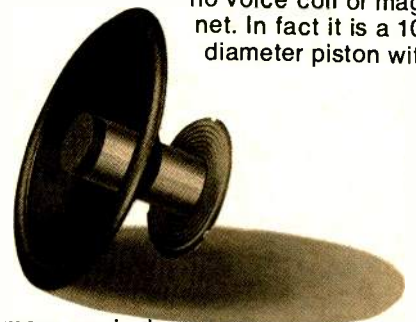


The low-frequency limit (3 dB down) of the Interface:A is 32 Hz, a nice round

number, musically speaking. Low C of a 16-foot organ stop is 32.7 Hz, three octaves below middle C. By comparison, the lowest note of a standard-tuned bass viol or bass guitar is 43 Hz.

How it is done

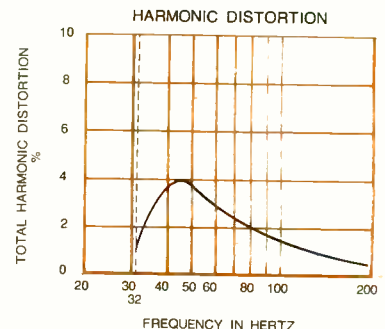
Tuning the 3/4 cubic foot enclosure of the Interface:A to 32 Hz requires more than just a hole in the box. The smallest usable hole would require a duct several feet long. The Interface:A uses a practical alternative (or vent equivalent) to properly tune the enclosure. It looks like a 12-inch woofer but it has no voice coil or magnet. In fact it is a 10" diameter piston with



a mass equivalent to the amount of air required to reach 32 Hz tuning of the enclosure. A "real" vent of this diameter would be 20 feet long, but please don't confuse this with resonant tube designs such as organ pipes.

A different shape distortion curve

Unlike a sealed system, the maximum "woofer" excursion in the Interface:A occurs in the area of 45-50 Hz. Instead of the constantly rising distortion curve characteristic of sealed systems, distortion actually diminishes as the low-frequency radiator becomes effective. Total harmonic distortion at 32 Hz with full power input is on the order of 1%,



a remarkably small amount by sealed system standards.

Equalization

Flat acoustic output requires only modest equalization: 3 dB at 50 Hz, rising to a maximum of 6 dB at 35 Hz. Below the usable response of the system, the equalizer rolls off sharply to eliminate undesirable low-frequency components (record warp or rumble, for instance) before they reach the power amplifiers. A high-frequency control on the equalizer permits adjustment of speaker response at the most logical place in the total system.

The equalizer contains two identical channels and is designed to be connected at the tape monitor jacks of integrated electronic components. It may also be connected between pre-amplifier and power amplifiers.

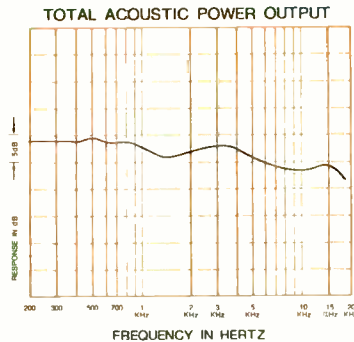
Uniform acoustic power output

Thus far we have been concentrating on the low-frequency design, and the advantages of vented systems over sealed systems. Even if we were designing a sealed system, however, we would pay close attention to uniform high-frequency performance. Much has been made of flat response measured directly in front of the speaker, but the character of the sound you hear in a typical listening room depends largely on the total power being radiated by the speaker: the sum of its output in all directions. What is desired is uniform *response* on-axis and uniform *dispersion* to provide uniform *total acoustic power output*.



Ideally, the radiating area of a speaker should decrease as frequency increases to maintain constant dispersion. The low-frequency design of the Interface:A helps in this respect. The vent equalizer, comparable to a 12-inch woofer, covers the lowest portion of the spectrum. Freed of this responsibility, the Interface:A's "real" woofer can be a smaller-than-typical 8-inch unit with uniform midrange dispersion.

The front tweeter begins operating at 1500 Hz. Its entire area is radiating through the foam and felt squares in front of it, because they are acoustically transparent in that frequency range. As frequency increases, the felt



material absorbs output from the tweeter, leaving only the hole in the center to radiate the highest frequencies.

Over approximately the top octave of the system, a tweeter mounted on the rear of the cabinet contributes output which helps maintain uniform acoustic power in the room. The rear tweeter should not be considered a "reflecting" speaker; placement of the cabinet with respect to the walls is not critical.

A goal of balance

Our goal was to create in Interface:A a well-balanced system of reasonable size, extended frequency response, excellent dispersion, useful efficiency, and wide dynamic range at a realistic price. How well the goal was achieved is a question only you can answer. And this judgement is best rendered after careful listening and comparison. For an up-to-date list of audio dealers who can demonstrate Interface:A, write to us today.



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1. An excellent example: H. Kloss, "Loudspeaker Design," AUDIO, March, 1971.
2. A.N. Thiele, "Loudspeakers In Vented Boxes," J. AUDIO ENG. SOC., May & June 1971.
3. R.H. Small, "Efficiency of Direct-radiator Loudspeaker Systems," J. AUDIO ENG. SOC., November, 1971.

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bells, cymbals, tam-tam, cowbell, and twenty-two strings. The effects achieved here are among the most imaginative Penderecki has yet created: it is a fascinating sequence of sound, and, even after numerous hearings, it wears extremely well.

Emanationen, composed in 1958, is the earliest piece here. Angel claims this is a first recording, but it is not: a performance by the Luxembourg Radio Orchestra under Alois Springer is part of a Penderecki collection on Candide CE 31071. The previous recording of the Violin Capriccio is a performance by Paul Zukofsky and the Buffalo Philharmonic under Lukas Foss on Nonesuch H 71201. The earlier performances are more than satisfactory, but the new Angels offer more than four new titles and the stamp of authority conferred by the participation of the composer. In the first place, all three of the soloists involved played the premieres of their respective pieces, which were in fact composed with them in mind. Secondly, the Polish Radio orchestra in Katowice is surely one of the best anywhere for this repertoire. And, finally, Penderecki is not merely a "composer-conductor," but a real conductor. Obviously these two well-recorded discs are basic to any collection of his orchestral music. R.F.

PROKOFIEV: *Sonata for Cello and Piano, Op. 119* (see DELIUS)

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

PUCCHINI: *La Bohème*. Mirella Freni (soprano), Mimi: Luciano Pavarotti (tenor), Rodolfo; Elizabeth Harwood (soprano), Musetta; Rolando Panerai (baritone), Marcello; Nicolai Ghiaurov (bass), Colline; Gianni Maffeo (baritone), Schaubard; Michel Sénéchal (tenor), Benoit; Gernot Pietsch (baritone), Alcindoro; others. Chorus of the Deutsche Oper, Berlin, and Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan cond. LONDON OSA 1299 two discs \$11.96.

Performance: **Excellent, with reservations**
Recording: **Excellent**

This new version of *La Bohème* is outstanding in so many ways, it is frustrating that my enthusiasm for it cannot be all-inclusive. However, let me begin with the praise. The set offers a perfect pair of lovers. It was the role of Mimi (in Angel S 3643, issued some eight years ago) that established Mirella Freni among the world's top lyric sopranos. Here, again, we can admire her characterization, which conveys heartbreak without histrionics. Hers is an unaffected artistry that nonetheless is enriched by poetic qualities, and her singing is always fresh-sounding, tonally even, and tellingly phrased. Luciano Pavarotti's Rodolfo is virtually impossible to improve upon: here are youth, freshness of sound and spirit, tenderness, and natural lyricism, all poured into gleaming sound. And, as if all this were not enough, his vocal acting is intelligent and resourceful.

There are other attractions. Veteran baritone Rolando Panerai is an assertive and vocally impressive Marcello. Nicolai Ghiaurov delivers a splendid "*Vecchia zimarra*," and the versatile French tenor Michel Sénéchal contributes good cameo portrayals as Benoit and Parpignol. The Schaubard and the Alcindoro are adequate. Elizabeth Harwood as Musetta does some lovely bits in the fourth act, but her big scene in Act 2 is quite disap-

pointing. For this, however, she may not be entirely responsible.

And this brings me to the conducting of Herbert von Karajan. He presents a lovingly paced, lyrical *La Bohème*, supporting the singers with luscious streams of sound, never seeking to cover them, yet revealing fine nuances in the orchestration with transparent clarity. This is the work of a superb craftsman who gets stunning results—but sometimes at the expense of the spontaneous magic which is at the core of this beautiful, simple love story. Take, for instance, Karajan's uncanny control of orchestral dynamics: some of his pianissimos are masterly, but what we admire is the virtuosity that imposes itself on self-effacing art. As for Karajan's tempos, they are expansive and at times damagingly slow. "*Mi chiamano Mimi*," for one, is too slowly paced, and Musetta is also forced into a rather



LUCIANO PAVAROTTI
Hard to imagine a better Rodolfo

somnolent Waltz. The entire second act, in fact, is weak, what with leaden pacing, a mannered Musetta, and downright messy brass playing in the introductory measures (how that managed to escape the recording producer—and noted perfectionist Karajan, for that matter—is beyond my understanding).

A minor but hardly negligible drawback is the odd Italian accent of the chorus of children in the Café Momus scene. Today's recording superstars are known to be able to get whatever they want from the companies privileged to record them. Karajan's preference for working with his Berlin Philharmonic is well known. Too bad that presenting a convincingly idiomatic performance of an Italian opera does not rank very high on the conductor's list of priorities.

Technically, the recording is exemplary, and I must repeat that I cannot praise the contributions of Mirella Freni and Luciano Pavarotti highly enough. Their singing will make many listeners overlook the set's shortcomings. For overall appeal, however, I still prefer the earlier London OSA 1208, with Renata Tebaldi and Carlo Bergonzi, conducted with irresistible Italianate directness by Tullio Serafin. G.J.

PUCCHINI: *Madama Butterfly*. Eleanor Steber (soprano), *Madama Butterfly*; Jean Madeira (contralto), Suzuki; Richard Tucker (tenor),

Pinkerton; Giuseppe Valdengo (baritone), Sharpless; Alessio de Paolis (tenor), Goro; George Cehanovsky (baritone), Prince Yamadori; Melchiorre Luise (bass), The Bonze; others. Chorus and Orchestra of the Metropolitan Opera. Max Rudolph cond. ODYSSEY M Y3 32107 three discs \$8.94.

Performance: **Good**
Recording: **Shows its age**

Here is a reissue that triggers a whole chain of recollections. It is a recording stemming from 1949, a year after the LP's birth, and it was the first *Madama Butterfly* conceived for the new medium. Our recording industry was growing toward gigantic heights then, and one of its twin pillars, Columbia Records, was embarking on an auspicious program of recording complete operas under the official aegis of the Metropolitan Opera.

Where are the snows of yesteryear? Our once flourishing and enterprising recording industry has long surrendered the leadership to Europe, and appears content at the present time to function mainly as a producer of re-packaged goods. Columbia Records and opera have become mutually exclusive entities. And, after our labor unions have successfully persuaded their members that modest incomes from recordings are *not* preferable to no incomes at all, all operatic recordings in the United States have become virtually unthinkable (DG's and Vanguard's are still isolated efforts).

These are the echoes reverberating around this faded souvenir. It is faded because, while there are considerable musical satisfactions here, sonically the set is no longer competitive. Eleanor Steber's *Butterfly* is a fine artistic effort, but it doesn't fully convey the heartbreak: we listen to her Cio-Cio-San with dry-eyed appreciation. It is a pleasure to re-discover the sweet, lyric voice of Richard Tucker expressing ardor without the over-emphatic ultra-Italian mannerisms that have disfigured his more recent singing. Giuseppe Valdengo is a perfectly satisfying Sharpless, Jean Madeira an able but somewhat heavy-sounding Suzuki. The comprimario contributions by the familiar Met luminaries of the period are, I am sorry to say, undistinguished. Max Rudolf paces the beginning of the opera in an uninvolved, phlegmatic manner, but with the entrance of *Butterfly* he seems to discover the poetry in the music, and the rest of the performance carries abundant lyricism and conviction. In sum: a good value for the cost, and, possibly, a nostalgic souvenir of *temps perdu*. G.J.

RAN: *O, the Chimneys* (see ROCHBERG)

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

RAVEL: *Une Barque sur l'Océan; Valses Nobles et Sentimentales; Le Tombeau de Couperin*. New York Philharmonic, Pierre Boulez cond. COLUMBIA M 32159 \$5.98. © MA 32159 \$6.98.

Performance: **Elegant**
Recording: **Excellent**

Maurice Ravel transcribed all three works under review here from piano originals dating from 1905, 1911, and 1917, respectively. The sea piece is, by all odds, the least familiar, but it is a wonderfully fascinating score. From that special Ravel brand of impressionism, Pierre Boulez turns to Ravel as cultivator of the stylized dance in miniature as in the *Val-*

ses and Tombeau. Whether dealing in the iridescent sonorities of *Une Barque sur l'Océan*, the feline grace and savagery of the bittersweet *Valses*, or the almost bird-bony textures of *Le Tombeau*. Boulez brings to every phrase, rhythm, and bit of dynamic contrast just the right weighting, balance, and tonal mix; one feels almost as though he has absorbed Ravel's soul.

The end result is truly bewitching as music and as sheer sonic experience, the latter due in no small measure to Columbia's outstanding job of recording. *D.H.*

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV: *Symphony No. 2, Op. 9 ("Antar"); Capriccio Espagnol, Op. 34.*
Moscow Radio Symphony Orchestra. Konstantin Ivanov cond. MELODIYA/ANGEL SR 40230 \$5.98.

Performance: **Broad-scale**
Recording: **Mostly effective**

In comparison with the mature mastery displayed in the *Capriccio Espagnol*, the *Russian Easter Overture*, and *Scheherazade*. Rimsky-Korsakov's youthful programmatic *Antar* Symphony is something of a preparatory essay. It does have its moments—in the sheer orchestral color of the first three movements, and in the surge of passionate lyricism in the finale—but one *does* tire of the constant recurrence of the motto theme evocative of the legendary hero.

Veteran Soviet conductor Konstantin Ivanov takes a decidedly broader view of the music than did Morton Gould in his Chicago Symphony performance for RCA, and I think the music gains in general effectiveness under Russian auspices. Gould's sharp tempo contrasts in the *Vengeance* movement are disconcerting, as is his quickstep tempo for the march movement that follows. Ivanov, on the other hand, not only interprets the music in a broad tempo and phrasing perspective, he also takes real care to bring out countermelodies and subsidiary figures that are brushed over in most performances of *Antar*. Whatever there is to be heard in the music, he clearly goes after, and to good effect. The recording, too, has a very broad and deep stereo perspective, a technique that sometimes obscures details of the bass line, but which is on the whole very effective.

I would guess that the *Capriccio Espagnol* recording was done at a different time and with a different microphone setup; the sonics are tighter and leaner here. The performance is a good one, if not the very last word in super-brilliance. The lyrical second movement comes off particularly well in Ivanov's highly poetic reading. *D.H.*

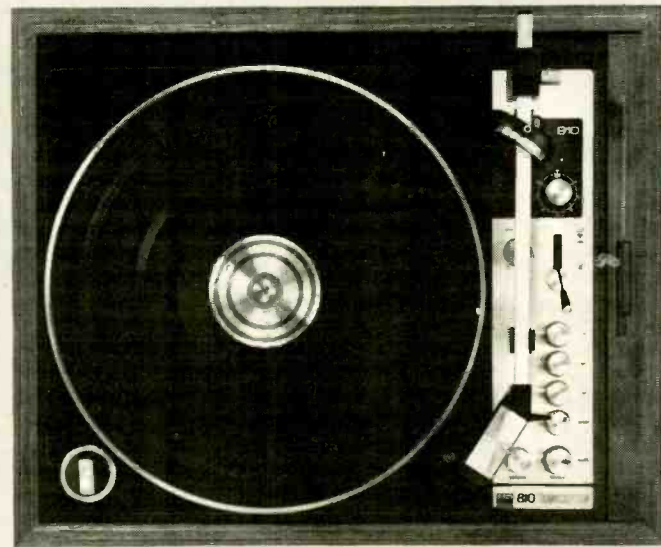
RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

ROCHBERG: *Tableaux*. Jan DeGaetani (soprano); Penn Contemporary Players, Richard Wernick cond. **RAN: *O, the Chimneys*.** Gloria Davy (soprano); Shulamit Ran (piano); Gordon Gottlieb (percussion); New York Philomusic Chamber Ensemble. A. Robert Johnson cond. TURNABOUT TV-S 34492 \$2.98.

Performance: **Excellent**
Recording: **Excellent Rochberg, good Ran**

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(Continued on page 152)

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PARLOR PLINKS: THE PIANO IN AMERICA

Reviewed by Eric Salzman

WELL, it was bound to happen. What with Scott Joplin and Stephen Foster on Nonesuch, with nineteenth-century-iana on every hand, with Institutes for Studies in American Music appearing at long last in our university music departments, with the continuing wave of camp and nostalgia and the general tendency of the times to take pop seriously, with the new interest in music and the arts as a social phenomenon, with the final running out of Germanism and purism as our dominant modes of taste, with the new hedonism ("enjoy, enjoy") and the new concern for American culture, and, not least, with the Bicentennial on the horizon, it was inevitable that someone would dig into the great treasury of parlor music so beloved of another generation.

Who said America had no culture in the nineteenth century? We had Whitman and Poe and Homer and Hawthorne and Gottschalk and Eakins and, yes, George Bristow—the first of a long line of distinguished composers from Brooklyn—and Anthony Philip Heinrich, "the Beethoven of America" or, as he modestly preferred, "the log house composer from Kentucky." And let us not neglect Charles D. Blake, author of variations on *Bonnie Sweet Bessie*, *the Maid o' Dundee*. Attacked on the grounds that his principal aim was to please the uncultivated taste, he was defended by a contemporary in these noble words: ". . . if (the reader) will write twelve hundred pieces successively, and please the public in all of them, he will be in a better position to judge the variety of qualities entering into the successful performance of such a task, than any one can possibly be merely by cold-blooded inspection." Arguments about American art of this sort tend to have a familiar ring.

Every American nineteenth-century family with middle-class pretensions—and, outside of the frontier, nearly every American family, even in those days, had middle-class

pretensions—owned a piano. The ingenious Yankee (and the transplanted German craftsman) found the piano ideal for tinkering with, and American pianos were already among the best in the world. Every proper young lady played just a bit, of course. Everyone was busy elevating everyone else's taste and trying to rub some of the crassness off our vulgar, mercantile, *non-veau riche* society, replacing it with a little of the luster of genteel culture.

The result was an awful lot (pun only slightly intended) of music of every kind, most of it long since forgotten. Even to sort out the pieces that Neely Bruce has put together in a new Vox collection—three records worth, just for Volume I!—takes some doing. The good and the bad, the brilliant, the mediocre, the amusing, the dull, the witty, the trite, the popular and the learned, the quaint and the cultured are here mixed in such profusion that one's first impression is that parlor music, too, was being industrialized, machine-made in classical models like so much Victorian furniture. But I am being a bit unfair: character and personality can be found here aplenty.

I agree with Mr. Bruce when he expresses admiration for Anthony Philip Heinrich, and of course Gottschalk is by now a recognized composer. The major contribution of this set, however, is not the revival of individual composers as such but the recapitulation of the taste of an era as represented by selections from two major and influential piano albums: *The Home Circle*, published in Boston in 1856, and *Folio of Music No. 2*, which appeared in Philadelphia some thirty-two years later. The former includes such (more or less anonymous) gems as *Money Musk*, *The Giraffe Waltz*, a polka based on Papageno's music from *The Magic Flute*, and *The Last Waltzes of a Maniac*. The much more sophisticated *Folio* includes two pieces by women composers: *Rosebud*

Quickstep by Mary (no last name) and *Mother Hubbard Polka* by one Caroline Lowthian. We also have here *Angels of Dawn*, *Reverie* by the Celebrated Composer, Pierre Latour, not to mention the *Message of Love Polka* and the *Pearl Waltz* by W. F. Sudds, who, judging by his music, must surely have been nicknamed Soapy.

Music from these albums takes up three of the six sides of Bruce's collection. The rest consists mostly of larger-scale concert pieces: variations and paraphrases on such as *The Old Folks at Home*, *Home! Sweet Home*, and *Nearer My God to Thee*, programmatic works (*The Storm*), and stylized dance pieces. Composers include the native-born, immigrants from Europe, and even strictly European salon composers whose works were reprinted here.

I enjoyed nearly all of this—you don't have your critical barbed wire up for this sort of music—but it is a fearful hodge-podge. Recordings (unlike concerts) probably should not be organized as mixed bags. There is a little of everything here, dating from a period of a half-century or more, and the net result is a confused picture: lots of flying keys, lots of naïve sentiment, lots of camp, but not as clear a picture of the positive values or meaning of some of this music as might otherwise have been conveyed. Nevertheless, for anyone willing to invest in this kind of set and interested in sorting it all out (or just letting it roll by), these recordings are both valuable and a lot of fun. All of this music is extremely well played technically and with a keen sense of its varied characters, its charm and picturesqueness, even its wit and sense of immediacy. The struggle between the popular and the genteel—still very much part of our cultural life!—is everywhere evident in these performances, but there is no anguished European introspection here. The recordings are quite adequate to the task at hand, and Mr. Bruce deserves a great deal of praise for his undertaking. I'll be watching for its sequels.

THE PIANO IN AMERICA: Volume I, Nineteenth Century Popular Concert and Parlor Music. Gottschalk: *The Banjo*; *Danse Ossianique*. Hoffman: *Ballade*. Miller: *The Girl I Left Behind Me*. Challoner: *The Old Folks at Home*, *Grande Paraphrase de Concert*. **The Home Circle (Boston, 1856):** *Money Musk*; *Papageno Polka*; *Chorus Jig*; *White Cockade*; *College Hornpipe*; *Banjo Polka*; *Miss McLeod's Reel*; *Home Quickstep*; *The Last Waltzes of a Maniac, Nos. 1 and 2*; *The Giraffe Waltz*; *Fredonia March*; *The Musical Snuff Box Waltzes, Nos. 1 and 2*; *Irish Washerwoman*; *Soldier's Joy*. **Folio of Music No. 2 (Philadelphia, 1888):** *Rosebud Quickstep*; *Bonnie Sweet Bessie*, *the Maid o' Dundee*; *Angels of Dawn*, *Reverie*; *March*; *Purity*; *Message of Love Polka*; *Pearl Waltz*; *Annie Laurie*; *Mother Hubbard Polka*; *Music on the Ocean*; *Mexican Serenade*; *The Storm*; *The Musical Box*; *La Reine des Fées*. **Valentine (arr.):** *Home! Sweet Home*. **Bristow:** *Andante et Polonaise*. **Heinrich:** *Marcia di Ballo*, *Rondo Fanfare*. **Strakosch:** *Musical Rockets*. **Ryder:** *Nearer My God to Thee*, *Fantasia*. **Viguerie:** *The Battle of Maringo*. **Reinecke:** *Peace at Even*. Neely Bruce (piano). Vox SVBX 5302 three discs \$9.95.

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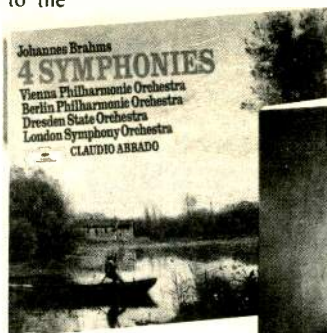
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sionists Named George. I really don't like this kind of labeling very much, but it is interesting that a very distinctive kind of music is coming from that part of the world, specifically from two outstanding composers, George Crumb and George Rochberg. At this point Crumb, as represented by such pieces as *Ancient Voices of Children* and *Black Angels*, is probably better known to the general public, but Rochberg has been equally ingenious and, if it matters, probably the more innovative of the two. At least he should get his due and a substantial audience for *Tableaux*, recorded here by an excellent Penn ensemble under the direction of Richard Wernick with the exquisite singing of Jan DeGaetani—perhaps not coincidentally the soloist on the Nonesuch recording of Crumb's *Ancient Voices*.

The *Tableaux* are based on texts taken from *The Silver Talons of Piero Kostrov*, a science-fiction story by Rochberg's son, Paul, who died tragically young a few years ago. The solo voice is surrounded by a singing-speaking chorus and an instrumental ensemble that creates the most evocative and fantastic of sound pictures. The emotional climate of *Tableaux* is the night of the human soul, a conjuring up and an exorcism of fear expressed in an almost mystical fashion. It is a striking and often beautiful work exceptionally well performed.

Shulamit Ran is an Israeli pianist who has studied here. Her settings for voice, piano, and chamber ensemble have texts by the German-Jewish poet Nelly Sachs. Terror and pain rather than fantasy and fear are the subjects here. The German texts, recited as well as sung (in excellent German) by Gloria Davy, are powerful and are skillfully set. The work, effective enough and well written, is close to the tradition of Central European expressionism. In spite of all the intensity, there is a slightly second-hand, "cultured" aspect to the expression of such strong emotions—as if the composer were speaking very personally, yet often using someone else's voice. The performance is excellent, but the recording is somewhat dry. *E.S.*

SCHUBERT: *Quintet in A Major, Op. 114; Nocturne in E-flat Major, Op. 148* (see *Best of the Month*, page 88)

SCHUBERT: *Schwanengesang*. Tom Krause (baritone); Irwin Gage (piano). LONDON OS 26328 \$5.98.

Performance: **Good**
Recording: **Excellent**

I find more to admire in this rare performance of Tom Krause as a recitalist than I have found in his numerous operatic recordings. The essential difference seems to be that in this more intimate communication he finds it easier to keep his voice under control, his tones firmly focused. For the basic sound of the voice is attractive in its dark-hued, warm sonority, and there is imagination and resourcefulness in its use. *Kriegers Ahnung* and *Aufenthalt*, both very demanding songs, are impressively projected, with firm and forceful utterance, well-graded dynamics, and nice mezza-voce effects. In *Strändchen*, alas, the tones are not firmly centered, and the uncertain intonation makes for a less than seductive effect. There is an extra Rellstab setting on the disc: *Herbst*, also dating from Schubert's last year (1828). It appears to have been lost when the publisher, Haslinger, compiled the material for this posthumous "cycle." The

song is a beauty, and its inclusion as a bonus was a happy idea.

Krause's work in the intense and more demanding Heine settings is also praiseworthy. *Der Atlas*, though, is not under perfect control, and the pitch tends to disappear in the overemphatic declamation. In *Ihr Bild*, the loss of love elicits no shattering tragedy (*à la* Hotter), but the singing is very fine. *Die Stadt* and *Der Doppelgänger* are also eloquently sung; the latter rises to an imposing climax, followed by an effective piano ending. Some of that brooding Heine mood overflows into the final song of the collection, *Die Taubenpost*, which is a setting by another poet (Seidl) in a different vein, and could use more lightness for its rollicking message.

Overall, though, this is a satisfying *Schwanengesang*, very well accompanied by Irwin Gage, and captured in rich and well-balanced sound. *G.J.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

SMETANA: *Dalibor*. Jindřich Jindřák (baritone), King Vladislav; Vilém Přibyl (tenor), Dalibor; Antonín Svobc (baritone), Budivoj; Jaroslav Horáček (bass), Benes; Zdeněk Švehla (tenor), Vítek; Naděžda Kniplová (soprano), Milada; Hana Svobodová-Jankú (soprano), Jitka; others. Prague National Theatre Chorus and Orchestra, Jaroslav Krombholc cond. GENESIS GS 1040/42 three discs \$17.94.

Performance: **Good and authentic**
Recording: **Good**

Human folly has always been a disconcertingly consistent element in the shaping of history, and this includes the history of music as well. Bedřich Smetana, now reverently (and justly) remembered as "the father of Czech music," was castigated in 1868 by nationalist zealots who found his opera *Dalibor* too "Wagnerian." Unquestionably, the influence of Wagner is apparent in the score, but so is that of Liszt, and others as well. Smetana was a musician of thorough training, fully aware of the aesthetic and stylistic currents of his time, and he was unwilling to rest on the ethnic laurels his irresistible comic opera, *The Bartered Bride*, had earned for him. What the short-sighted critics of his time failed to see was that none of these influences curbed Smetana's individuality. In any case, as the blinding layers of nationalism were lifted from critical attitudes, *Dalibor* assumed its rightful place among the treasures of Czech music. But, like other such treasures—Dvořák's *Rusalka*, to name one—it has not conquered the world outside its native boundaries (although there have been occasional performances in Germany and Austria).

Dalibor is based on a seventeenth-century historical episode romanticized as a conflict between individual freedom and autocratic repression. As a Romantic grand opera with all the proper trimmings, the work is wholly admirable, but as a historical document or a story of ideological confrontations, it ranks no higher than, say, *Il Trovatore*. The figure of Dalibor emerges as more of an obstinate rebel than a genuine patriot. Conversely, King Vladislav appears to be a fair-minded monarch, whose strong stand to protect his reign seems to be well motivated, at least from his own point of view.

The libretto, by the way, is clearly modeled on the story of *Fidelio*. Dalibor is held captive
(Continued on page 154)



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in a dungeon as the opera opens; Milada, the woman who loves him, descends to his cell in a boy's disguise, aided by a kindly basso jailer. There is no "namenlose Freude" in the end, however: Milada and Dalibor both perish when their plans for escape and revolution are thwarted. I don't know what contemporary observers made of it, but the background of Dalibor, as revealed in the libretto, points to a homosexual bent, and the "love episode" with Milada, while musically effective, is dramatically unconvincing.

Smetana's music is very beautiful throughout. The lyric episodes are soaring and passionate, particularly the scene in which Dalibor addresses himself, Achilles-like, to his slain armor-bearer, Vitek. There are lusty choruses, stirring martial passages, and finely

structured arias and ensembles, all expertly and colorfully orchestrated. The music is typically Czech, but Smetana, using national rhythms sparingly, refrains from underlining its ethnicity. And, while the arias and ensembles do stand out in the texture, the continuous dramatic flow is sustained from the beginning of an act to its end.

There are three singers of international eminence in the cast. In the exacting title role, Vilém Přibyl displays a ringing tenor voice of admirable qualities. His Florestan-like aria in the third act, with its effective horn obbligato, is but one of the impressive highlights, and it would be hard to improve upon his singing. Naděžda Kniplová has one of those fierce Slavic voices that are incompatible with firm intonation, but she gives every evidence of

being an exciting stage personality. In the second soprano role of Jitka, the village maiden, Hana Svobodová-Jankú is excellent. She is heard in the beautiful opening scene, which gives a brilliant start to the opera. The two baritones and the basso (another baritone, really) are quite good, and both chorus and orchestra are excellent. This is obviously an authoritative presentation.

The set comes in a simple but neat box with a Czech-English libretto. The translation is painful at times, but it is *there* and it is helpful. Though I have heard technically better recordings from Bohemia, the sound is entirely acceptable. As for the opera, forget the dramatic inconsistencies, and enjoy the passion, the color, and the skill of the music. G.J.

SOLER: Quintets for Harpsichord and Strings: No. 1, in C Major; No. 2, in F Major; No. 3, in G Major; No. 4, in A Minor; No. 5, in D Major; No. 6, in G Minor. Christiane Jaccottet (harpsichord); Montserrat Cervera, Andrée Wachsmuth (violins); André Vauquet (viola); Marçal Cervera (cello). Vox SVBX 5440 three discs \$9.95.

Performance: **Committed**

Recording: **Good**

A half-dozen Antonio Soler quintets at a crack, in a three-disc set, may look like a little more than anyone really needs, but (a) it is one of the ironies of the industry that works of lesser-known (or just plain lesser) masters are often served up *only* by the dozen or demi-dozen, and (b) all six of these are really so endearing that it would take a hard heart to resist the set, once exposed to it.

Soler, born at the end of 1729, took holy orders to get his lifetime job as organist and choirmaster at the monastery at the Escorial at the age of twenty-two, just two years after the death of Bach, and lived till 1783, by which time Mozart was well established. We really do not know just how much of the music of his time Soler was aware of, but we do know that he met Scarlatti a few years before the older man's death, and that in his own keyboard sonatas, which have begun to circulate on records during the last fifteen years or so, he signed himself "discepolo di Domenico Scarlatti." The allegro pastorale of the Third Quintet, in G Major, will remind many listeners of the Scarlatti sonata in the same key (L. 388, the one that begins the ballet *The Good-Humoured Ladies*), and there are many other such moments scattered through the sequence. There is also a delightfully Handelian minuet, with six variations, to end the Fourth Quintet, and two fairly remarkable sets of variations, both misleadingly labeled simply "rondo" by the composer, to end Nos. 5 and 6. The one in No. 5 is based on one of those infectiously silly little tunes that might be taken for Corrette or Boismortier; the one in No. 6 is a more elaborate set of twelve variations in which the spirit of Boccherini, if not quite Mozart, is suggested. (Boccherini comes to mind more than once among these works, but he did not go to Spain until well after Soler's death, and it is unlikely that Soler knew his music.)

There is no consistency of layout through the six works, which comprise from three to five movements each. Moreover, as in the delightful little concertos for two keyboard instruments, Soler indicated that an organ or harpsichord could be used in the quintets, and No. 6 has been offered in the past in a highly effective recording for organ and strings (with Marie-Claire Alain on an old Westminster).



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With either instrument, though, this is chamber music composed for far more equality among the respective performers than, say, the piano trios of Mozart or Haydn, which are in general keyboard sonatas with accompaniment; the strings have much more to do in these quintets, and everyone involved in this set seems to be having a really good time.

There is an earlier recording of these works, with harpsichordist Genoveva Gálvez and a Spanish foursome, in a three-disc set issued by the Musical Heritage Society about seven years ago. The new one from Vox—in which the first violinist and cellist are, as was Soler himself, Catalans, the inner strings members of the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, and the harpsichordist a well-known Lausanne musician (heard recently in the Frank Martin Concerto on Candide)—is more ingratiating by several degrees, in terms of both performance and recorded sound. *R.F.*

SPOHR: *Quintet in A Minor* (see Best of the Month, page 87)

SVIRIDOV: *Kursk Songs*. Marina Valkovskaya (mezzo-soprano); Anatoly Lagutkin (tenor); Motya Zlatopolsky (bass); RSFSR Russian Chorus; Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra. Kiril Kondrashin cond. *Music for Chamber Orchestra*. Moscow Chamber Orchestra, Rudolf Barshai cond. MELODIYA/ANGEL SR 40224 \$5.98.

Performance: **Very good**
Recording: **Very good**

The Kursk region, as I have just learned from the liner notes of this album, lies in western Russia, just north of the Ukrainian border. Georgy Sviridov (b. 1915) is a native of the region, and his orchestral song cycle *Kursk Songs* was inspired by traditional melodies. The songs, which tell a story of sorts, are woven together with impressive skill and colorful orchestration that calls to mind the imaginative folk settings of Kodály and Chteloube. This is a very attractive representative of the genre, and could easily become a popular favorite.

Sviridov's three-movement *Music for Chamber Orchestra* is scored for strings with piano and French horn. Its idiom is surprisingly conservative for the year in which it was written (1964), but its melodic ideas are attractive and the instrumental writing is imaginative, despite the long final movement that brings the work to a puzzlingly low-key conclusion. Both works are well performed. The singers in the *Kursk Songs* are fine, particularly the warm-toned mezzo. *G.J.*

TARTINI: *Twelve Sonatas for Violin and Cello*. Giovanni Guglielmo (violin); Antonio Pocaterra (cello). TELEFUNKEN SAWT 9592/93-B two discs \$11.96.

Performance: **Technically impressive**
Recording: **Good**

Giuseppe Tartini, one of the most important violinists of the late Baroque, wrote what may amount to as many as two hundred sonatas for one or more string instruments. The present twelve evidently were discovered in the Biblioteca Antoniana in Padua, the city where Tartini spent most of his working life, and were first published in 1970 in an edition by the violinist of this performance. Thus, these curious pieces, probably dating from 1740-1750, here receive their first recording. They are curious for a number of reasons, not least

for their ostensible lack of keyboard continuo, because of which they might be said to look ahead to the Classic era. The violin part, in addition to its melodic line, actually contains a good part of the harmony through the use of double and triple stops; the cello, of course, does play the continuo, but the emphasis throughout leans far more toward the top melody than toward the all-important (in the Baroque, particularly) bass line. Furthermore, Tartini in his later years seems more and more to have emphasized refinements, including maximized expression, in the melody.

The composer was a great virtuoso, and these violin sonatas (with bass), which is how they really ought to be described, are full of technical pitfalls. The ones in minor keys, Nos. 2, 6, 7, and 8, are strangely melancholic

with eerie effects. The sonatas range from three to five movements, often with programmatic implications (Tartini seems to have been fond of appending lines by Tasso or Petrarch to some movements, such as "The Cruel One will yield to the torments of this heart"). Number 7, which concludes with a technically demanding passacaglia, is the longest by far of the set, taking a whole side to itself. In spite of the difficulty of most of this music and an occasional reminiscence of the *Devil's Trill* style, one somehow does not get the impression that these are mere display pieces; rather, many of them seem almost introverted—more like Chopin ballades, say, than Liszt paraphrases. They are, on the whole, interesting pieces, though I would caution against listening to more than a few at a



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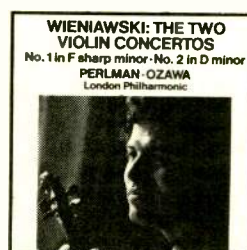
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time because of the similarities in style, certain characteristic cadential figures, and the sameness of scoring.

Regarding the performances, both players are obviously excellent instrumentalists. Guglielmo seldom makes one aware of the exceedingly difficult demands set by the composer. Yet, good as he is technically, I don't really believe he is especially *au courant* with Baroque style—or at least some aspects of it. Although he surely must be familiar with Tartini's instruction manual, *Treatise on Ornaments in Music*, Guglielmo seems to adopt far more of a nineteenth-century approach to these pieces (those seriously interested in the repertoire should see *Notes*, December 1971, pages 299-301, for a critique of the edition); it can be heard in a rather long-line concept of phrasing, in a tendency to play too many appoggiaturas as short rather than long, in trills that often start on the main note, in trills that are played fast throughout (rather than being modulated in tempo), and in an unvarying vibrato, if not a thick one. Tartini's book also stresses the possibility of embellishment, another item Guglielmo seems to have overlooked. Far better Tartini playing style can be heard in the work of Eduard Melkus on Archive 2533086, for example. Yet, Guglielmo's playing, deficient as it is in some stylistic matters, does convey enthusiasm and a kind of enjoyable vigor in the fast, dance-like movements. It will certainly be some time before repertoire such as this is duplicated in the catalog, so anyone interested in earlier violin techniques and forms ought to investigate the set. The sound throughout is very good except for an over-resonant, bathroom-like ambience. I.K.

THOMSON: *Louisiana Story, Suite* (see HANSON)

VARESE: *Arcana; Intégrales; Ionisation*. Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, Los Angeles Percussion Ensemble, Zubin Mehta cond. LONDON CS 6752 \$5.98.

Performance: **Spectacular variety**
Recording: **Excellent**

There has not been a lack of good Varèse recordings in recent years—each one perhaps a little better than the preceding, as if, after all these years, a body of knowledge and skill concerning the interpretation and recording of these massive, landmark works was finally beginning to accumulate. The sense of these new recordings is that Varèse has finally entered—for better or for worse—the mainstream of symphonic performance and recording. This music is, by now, a showcase for a virtuoso orchestra and conductor and an excellent subject for a brilliant contemporary recording.

I doubt that there is any particular need at this point to analyze the importance of Varèse's work and his continuing impact on the development of music. All of these pieces date from a few years in the between-the-wars period when modern music was still very new and very, very modern. *Intégrales*, written in 1924 and first presented at one of Varèse's famous New York concerts, is possibly the most innovative and thoroughly integrated (what other word can one use?) of all his works. *Ionisation*, dating from 1930-1931, is the famous all-percussion work, a watershed piece from which many post-World War II ideas developed. In between these two key compositions stands the wonderful and im-

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pressive *Arcana*, composed in 1927 and first performed by Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra. The quotation from Paracelsus that sits on the score gives an idea of Varèse's particular mixture of rationality and visionary intensity: "One star exists higher than all the rest. This is the apocalyptic star; the second star is that of the ascendant. The third is that of the elements and of these there are four. . . . Besides these there is still another star, imagination, which begets a new star and a new heaven."

This music is an impressive showcase for Mehta and the excellent Los Angeles musicians. Some might argue that the performances are as garish as the neon-light effects that flash "Zubin Mehta—Edgar Varèse" (in that order) all over the cover of this album. This would, I think, be unfair. There is an easy sense of power and clarity in these versions that in some respects surpasses most previous readings. Perhaps some tension has been sacrificed to brilliance, some subtlety to clarity. But I appreciate the essential naturalness of these performances, and I feel that the accessibility—the direct force and comprehensibility—will help the music make its way, particularly with the listener not yet in the know. I would like to hear Boulez do some of this music. In the meantime, this is an excellent recording and very much recommended.

E.S.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

VIVALDI: *Concerto in C Major for Flute, Oboe, Violin, Bassoon, and Continuo* (P. 82); *Concerto in D Major for Violin, Flute, and Continuo* (P. p. 6 # 5); *Concerto in D Minor for Flute, Violin, Bassoon, and Continuo* (P. p. 6 # 7); *Concerto in G Minor for Flute, Oboe, Violin, Bassoon, and Continuo* (P. 403); *Sonata No. 1, in B-flat Major, for Bassoon and Continuo, Op. 14, No. 1; Il Pastor Fido, Op. 13; Sonata No. 2, in C Major, for Oboe and Continuo*. Paris Baroque Ensemble: Jean-Pierre Rampal (flute); Pierre Pierlot (oboe); Robert Gendre (violin); Paul Hongne (bassoon); Robert Veyron-Lacroix (harpsichord). Musical Heritage Society MHS 1406 \$2.99 (plus 65¢ handling charge, from Musical Heritage Society, Inc., 1991 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023).

Performance: **Properly virtuosic**
Recording: **Excellent**

This scintillatingly played program of Vivaldi chamber works was first issued in this country in 1967 on Epic BC 1344. It is good to have it back, for the Paris Baroque Ensemble has a wonderful flair for this repertoire. The music bounces along with infectious verve, there are a couple of sonatas as well to vary the scoring, and the pieces themselves are fine examples of Vivaldi's chamber music. The recorded sound is, if anything, even richer in detail than that of the old Epic version.

I.K.

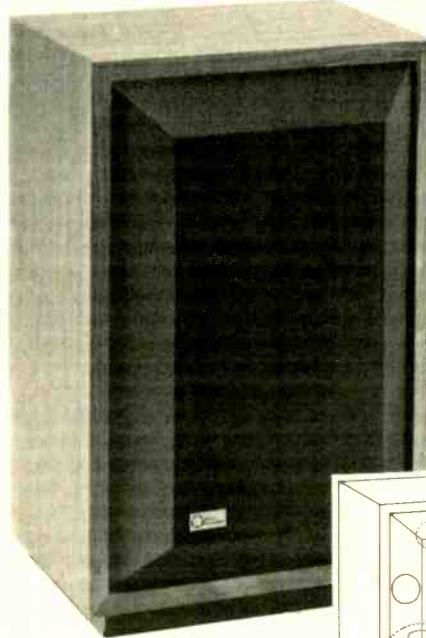
VIVALDI: *Twelve Concertos, Op. 3* (see Best of the Month, page 89)

WEILL: *Kleine Dreigroschenmusik*. MILHAUD: *La Création du Monde*. Contemporary Chamber Ensemble. Arthur Weisberg cond. NONESUCH H 71281 \$2.98.

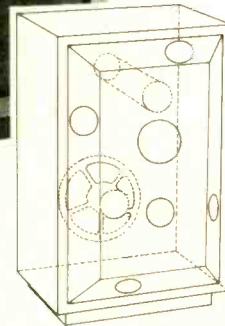
Performance: **Slick**
Recording: **Excellent**

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Penny Opera) at the request of Otto Klemperer a year or so after its Berlin premiere is surely one of the most fascinating instrumental works ever put together by a "serious" composer in the "popular" idiom of his time—even in the late Twenties, when so many jazz-influenced compositions were appearing. In this one even the scoring is for a "cabaret ensemble" instead of a symphonic one: pairs of flutes, saxophones, clarinets, bassoons, and trumpets, plus trombone, tuba, piano percussion, banjo, guitar, and bandoneon. Perhaps that is why it never turns up on concert programs, but there should be something like a half-dozen competitive recordings of it, and there just haven't been any. Since it goes without saying that anything Weisberg and his players undertake is superbly done, this release may be said to fill a genuine need, and to fill it handsomely.

For those with long memories, there may be a disappointment or two in Weisberg's approach, but the only other current version—by Leinsdorf and members of the Boston Symphony Orchestra (on RCA LSC 3121)—is thoroughly unsatisfactory, ruined by recklessly hurried tempos that only turn Mackie Messer into Mickey Mouse. Even Klemperer's own remake, with Philharmonia personnel (on the short-lived Angel S 35927), not only omitted one of the eight movements, but gave the impression the conductor had lost some of his interest, too, in his neglected godchild. The closest anyone has come so far to capturing the period flavor, as Klemperer did in his original Polydor 78's, was the performance conducted by Izler Solomon on an MGM mono LP (E-3095) which circulated in the mid-Fifties.

By now you probably suspect the faded sonics themselves of tending to enhance the atmospheric effect of the old MGM for me, but let me assure you that the sound is not all that dim, and that Solomon did have more feeling for this material than anyone else who has recorded it in the last forty years. His slight but unmistakable edge over Weisberg is illustrated most tellingly in the famous *Moritat*. The difference is a subtle one, not so much in the speeds themselves (Weisberg is just a mite too brisk in this section, though just about ideally paced in the other seven) as in what may be an overemphasis of the crispness and glitter Weisberg's players can produce so strikingly—which tends to obscure rather than illumine the peculiar charm (yes, charm!) of this music.

But I really have to reach that far to find cause for complaint, for, aside from the slight tendency toward undue haste in the *Moritat* and a slight self-consciousness over the jazzy idiom (which may be simply an amplification of Weill's own), there is no reason for anything but gratitude and gratification in the Weisberg recording, which would merit a recommendation even if there were nothing on the other side.

As it happens, of course, there is something on the other side, and the juxtaposition of these two works is by no means inappropriate. There are only a few current recordings of *La Création du Monde*, and, as in the case of the Weill, none of them, including the new one, can quite dispel persistent recollections of things past. In this case, that means first of all the 1951 Bernstein Columbia and secondly the 1962 Munch on RCA, both of which, again, were more redolent of that "period flavor" than Weisberg's otherwise expert but curiously cold performance.

Still, the collector is usually prepared to duplicate such a classic as *La Création* once or twice, and at the Nonesuch price it is hardly painful. In any event, the new disc is a "must" for the *Kleine Dreigroschenmusik*. R.F.

COLLECTIONS

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

BAROQUE MASTERPIECES FOR TRUMPET AND ORGAN. Greene: *Voluntary in D Major (Largo Andante)*. Boyce: *Voluntary No. 1, in D Major*. Prentzl: *Sonata in C Major for Trumpet, Bassoon, and Continuo*. Krebs: *Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme (two settings)*. Pezel: *Sonata in C Major for Trumpet, Bassoon, and Continuo*. Stanley: *Suite of Trumpet Voluntaries in D Major*. Purcell: *Voluntary for Organ in D Minor (Z. 718)*. Edward Tarr (trumpet); Bengt Eklund (trumpet, in Boyce and Stanley); Helmut Böcker (bassoon, in Prentzl and Pezel); George Kent (organ of the Village Church, Arosa, Switzerland). NONESUCH H 71279 \$2.98.

Performance: **Excellent**
Recording: **Excellent**

This unusual record for an unusual combination of instruments includes, surprisingly, only a few transcriptions: the English trumpet voluntaries by Maurice Greene, William Boyce, and John Stanley, all slightly younger contemporaries of Handel. These originally were intended for organ performance in imitation of the trumpet, using the organ's trumpet stop, but, as Edward Tarr demonstrates, they sound very effective arranged as suites with actual trumpets (the slow sections are played solo on the organ). The final Stanley Voluntary, incidentally, is the "trumpet tune" so familiar from trumpet and orchestra transcriptions. The two seventeenth-century multi-movement sonatas for trumpet, bassoon, and organ continuo can be considered real rarities: of their composers, Johann Christoph Pezel is better known for his brass tower music, but Prentzl is known only through the present work. All the foregoing are performed on modern trumpets, but in the two settings of the *Sleepers Awake* chorale by Johann Ludwig Krebs, a pupil of J. S. Bach, Tarr uses a reproduction of a slide trumpet, which combines the features of the regular trumpet with the possibilities of playing melodic lines in the lower register. Both settings, especially the grand second one, are very impressive. The entire program is very stylishly played, and I look forward to the fruits of Edward Tarr's continuing researches into the repertoire for his instrument. I.K.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

WALTER GIESEKING: Recordings, 1953-1956. Debussy: *Arabesques, Nos. 1 and 2; Masques: L'Isle Joyeuse; Suite Bergamasque*. Ravel: *Jeux d'Eau; Oiseaux Tristes (from Miroirs); Forlane (from Le Tombeau de Couperin)*. Grieg: *Butterfly, Little Bird, Op. 43, Nos. 1 and 4; Album Leaf, Melodie, Halling, Op. 47, Nos. 2-4; Bell Ringing, Op. 54, No. 6*. Walter Giesecking (piano). SERAPHIM ® 60210 \$2.98.

Performance: **Ideal**
Recording: **Good source**

This welcome reissue might well be entitled "The Late Art of Walter Giesecking." Re-

corded between 1953 and 1956, it is a splendid sampling of the work of one of the piano giants of his day, still in his prime (he died just short of his sixty-first birthday in 1956). The pieces included here derive from a variety of Angel records—a complete Debussy set, a virtually complete Ravel album, and two discs of Grieg *Lyric Pieces*—and the only disappointment is that *all* of this material has not yet been rereleased by Seraphim.

In many ways, Giesecking was the ideal post-Romantic interpreter: he had an extraordinary range of styles, a palette of tonal colors that made him perhaps the greatest Debussy exponent of his time, and he also had a sense of objectivity and lack of sentimentality that allowed the music to speak for itself. Thus, his Grieg miniatures, for example, are set forth with absolute simplicity, without rhetorical trimmings, but they do not lack warmth or fail to communicate. The haunting *Oiseaux Tristes* of Ravel is exquisite in its delicacy, refinement, and tonal shadings, and the aristocratic yet emotionally sensitive account of the *Forlane* from *Le Tombeau de Couperin* is a perfect example of Ravel neo-Classicism. Giesecking makes one listen, as though for the first time, even to such an overly familiar piece as *Clair de la Lune*. Seraphim's monophonic sound is very respectable for its source, and, if you do not already own Giesecking's performances of these composers, I urge you to try this disc. I.K.

SIDNEY HARTH: Recital. Fauré: Sonata in A Major, Op. 13. Ysaÿe: Sonata for Violin Solo, Op. 27, No. 3. Bloch: Nigun. Chopin-Milstein: Nocturne in C-sharp Minor. Sidney Harth (violin); Arthur Loesser (piano, in Fauré); Sonia Anschutz (piano). MUSICAL HERITAGE SOCIETY MHS 1531 \$2.98 (plus 75¢ handling charge from Musical Heritage Society, Inc., 1991 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023).

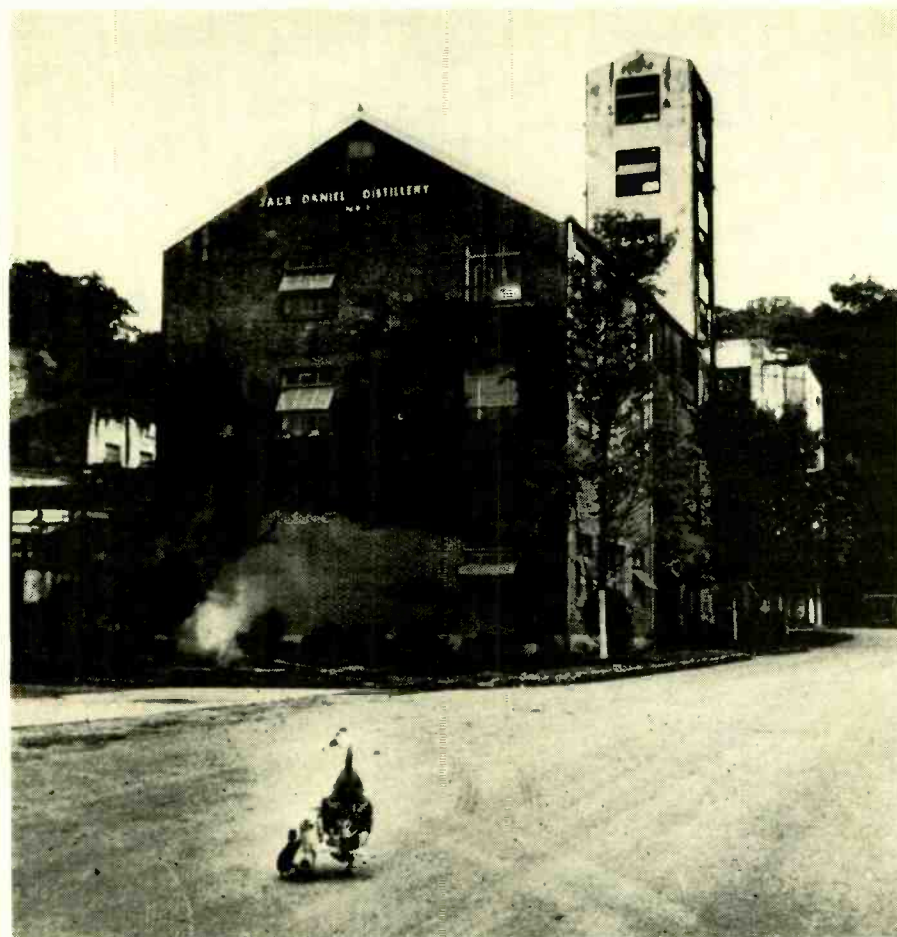
Performance: **Vigorous, full of character**
Recording: **All right**

This Fauré sonata performance is another of the noteworthy collaborations between the violinist Sidney Harth and the late pianist, writer, and apostle of forgotten music, Arthur Loesser. The Fauré sonata is a distinguished work; I don't warm up to the long, extended melodic first movement, but the last three sections are delightful. Harth's performance is vigorous and full of character rather than (as one expects with Fauré) refined. The recorded sound, from a number of years back, is dry but passable.

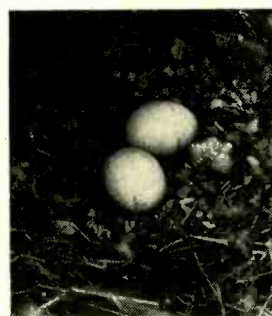
The surprise here is the Ysaÿe solo sonata—one of six remarkable works by a violinist who was an outstanding creative personality. These sonatas, like many of his other works, are far from the flimsy showpieces one expects from virtuosos who are also composers. Sonata No. 3 is a poetic ballade in a single highly expressive movement, very effectively played by Harth. The recorded sound here is decent.

The production of this album leaves something to be desired. There is no information about recording dates, and there are several obvious howlers. The Ysaÿe is labeled on the front as a sonata for violin and piano. The Bloch *Nigun* is described as one of three pictures of "Classical" life, a misprint for "Chasidic." And the Chopin arrangement is attributed to *both* Nathan Milstein and Joseph Szigeti. E.S.

(Continued overleaf)



JACK DANIEL'S DUCKS have found a quiet home in the Hollow. Every so often we see signs that they intend to stay.



The good supply of grain and water they've found in the Hollow keeps our ducks well-fed. They've also gotten used to our way of life. You see, we're still making whiskey the way Jack Daniel did. And that calls

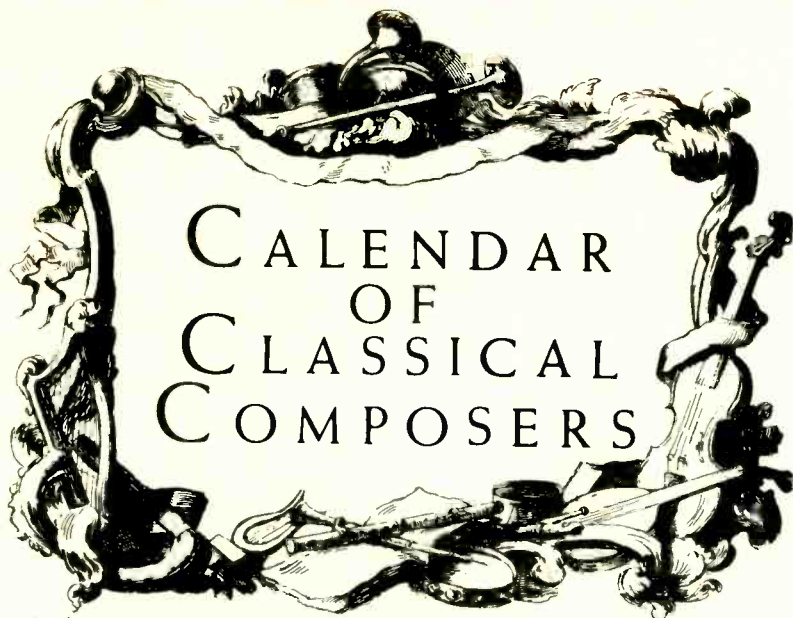
for charcoal mellowing, a process that takes too much time and patience for much bustling around. Things are so comfortable for them, we're not surprised our duck population is increasing.



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CALENDAR OF CLASSICAL COMPOSERS

BACK by popular demand and updated from its original (1966) printing, Music Editor James Goodfriend's *Calendar of Classical Composers* is a listing of the most important composers from the year 1400 to the present, grouped according to the stylistic periods—Renaissance, Baroque, Classic, Romantic, etc.—in which they worked. This 12 x 24-inch aid, guide, and complement to your music listening is printed in color on heavy, non-reflecting stock suitable, as they say, for framing. A key to the calendar, consisting of capsule accounts of the principal stylistic characteristics of each musical period, is included. The whole will be sent rolled in a mailing tube to prevent creases; we pay postage. All you do is send 25¢ to:

Calendar of Classical Composers
Stereo Review, 1 Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016

MASSES OF THE BAS CONGO. *Missa Koongo*. Mixed Chorus of Lemfu: instrumental accompaniment. Abbe Ignace Mbambu dir. *Missa N'Kaandu*. Mixed Chorus of N'Kaandu: instrumental accompaniment. Master Gustave dir. SERENUS SRS 12040 \$6.98.

Performance: **Uninhibited but exalted**
Recording: **Good location jobs**

The Mass as it is performed in the Congo is a compelling synthesis of traditional religious elements combined with congregational participation and a strong emphasis on rhythmic expression. The *Missa Luba* (Philips PCC 606) is the most powerful and arresting work in the genre to have achieved popularity thus far on records. The two Masses on this disc, released originally on the Belgian Philips label, were recorded in the region of Kisantu, in the Bas Congo, some one hundred miles from the capital (once known as Leopoldville and now called Kinshasa). The more impressive of the two is the *Missa Koongo*, taped on location in the Cathedral of Kisantu in 1970. Here the congregation alternates with the chorus and musicians in verses and refrains, following the melodic line of the service homophonically. But that is only the beginning of their participation. The women shout and scream for joy, gunshots boom out, the whole lending the proceedings a festive, holiday air.

The Mass structure is traditional enough—Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, Agnus Dei—but much of the singing and shouting is spontaneous, and when the musicians are allowed to improvise they come up with some heady percussive statements. In addition to the mixed chorus and the singing of the congregants, there is instrumental accompaniment on the *ngoma* (a large drum), two *ntambu* (small drums), *binsaka* (rattles), a kind of tomtom called a *moondo*, and *ngoongi* (small bells).

There is less emphasis on rhythm and a more reflective kind of expression in the *Missa N'Kaandu*, a form of Congolese Mass described as "for the use of the parishes." This one was recorded in the Chapel of the Centre Medico-Scolaire in Kisantu around the same time as the *Missa Koongo*. Not many screams here, and no guns. The percussion ensemble, although smaller, is similar to the one heard in the cathedral, but there is a marked dignity and simplicity to the chanting—almost Gregorian in feeling—that lends the long passages of unison singing a more contemplative kind of religious character. Still, the vocalizing is far from inhibited, and it is unmistakably African blood that flows through the musical arteries of this modest Mass. P.K.

RICHARD TUCKER AND ROBERT MERRILL. *At Carnegie Hall.* **Ponchielli:** *La Gioconda: Enzo Grimaldo, principe di Santa Fior.* **Meyerbeer:** *L'Africana: Adamastor, re dell'onde profonde.* **Mozart:** *Don Giovanni: Deh vieni alla finestra. Le Nozze di Figaro: Non più andrai. Concert Aria (K. 431): Misero! O sogno, o son desto.* **Verdi:** *I Vespri Siciliani: Giorno di pianto. La Forza del Destino: Invano, Alvaro; Solenne in quest'ora.* **Verdi:** *Otello: Credo; Si pel ciel. La Traviata: Di Provenza.* **Giordano:** *Andrea Chénier: Nemico della patria.* **Donizetti:** *L'Elisir d'Amore: Una furtiva lagrima.* **Leoncavallo:** *Zazà: Zazà, piccola zingara. Mattinata.* **Mascagni:** *Cavalleria Rusticana: Mamma, quel vino è generoso.* **Bizet:** *Les Pêcheurs de Perles: Au fond du temple saint.* **Goldfaden:**

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Secunda: Roshinkes mit Mandeln. Bock-Harnick: Fiddler on the Roof: If I Were a Rich Man. Richard Tucker (tenor); Robert Merrill (baritone); George Schick (piano). LONDON BP 26351/2 two discs \$11.96.

Performance: **Exuberant**
Recording: **Good**

Tenor Richard Tucker and baritone Robert Merrill joined forces in a Carnegie Hall appearance on January 7, 1973, for a well-promoted recital that may give new direction to the remaining years of their careers. This album contains all the music at that event, representing neither a controlled studio production nor the disciplined and (frequently) stiff atmosphere of a song recital. There is an air of joviality here, some ad-lib comments on the stage, introductions of celebrities in the audience, and evident warmhearted rapport across the footlights.

Twenty-eight years after their Metropolitan Opera debuts, both artists are in remarkable form. Richard Tucker is still capable of spinning a firmly sustained legato line. His intonation is pure and his admirable technique in good working order. Restraint is the quality, alas, which is his in dwindling supply: the mannerisms he employs on this occasion, far exceeding those he permits himself in the theater—the excessive and overemphatic fervor, the tearful catch in the voice, the all-out gasp on a final note—are lamentable in an otherwise distinguished artistic effort. Robert Merrill is the more disciplined performer of the two. Perhaps the top notes do not come as effortlessly to him as they once did, but the tones he produces are still miracles of richness and resonance. He sings much better, though, with a conductor; on this occasion, he phrases too freely and with some rhythmic unsteadiness.

The program includes some of the artists' solo specialties and the classic tenor-baritone duets—all delivered lustily and in an audience-pleasing fashion. There are a few surprises—Mozart among them. Richard Tucker's rendering of the difficult and fervent concert aria is not only very fine, but serves to emphasize that an artist of his musicality needs no artificial effects to make musical points. His baritone colleague does not seem to take to Mozart quite as readily, but with proper guidance from the pit he, too, would have supplied the needed discipline to go with the warm sound and relaxed quality of his singing.

This is then an account of a very special happening, faithfully preserved without *post facto* editing and beautification, complete with spirited, sonorous, but considerably less than note-perfect piano accompaniments. It honors two artists who have given much pleasure for more than two dozen years, who enjoy what they are doing immensely, and who are still doing it very well. *G.J.*

THIS MONTH'S COVER

The amusingly "translated" and updated Chinese scroll painting on the cover is by the talented Japanese graphic artist Shinichiro Tora. The ideograph mottoes at the top read: "May you live long, your years be plenteous, and your seasons felicitous," and "To be for one day entirely at leisure is to be for one day an Immortal." It is not known what music the quartet plays or what that VW is doing on the mountain road.—*Ed.*

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CHOOSING SIDES

By IRVING KOLODIN



A BAYREUTH "RING" ON DISCS

AFTER years of negotiation, experimentation, and some expostulation (not all the artists were equally agreeable), Philips has released a Bayreuth Festival performance of Richard Wagner's *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, complete on sixteen discs (Philips 6747037, \$104.70; see accompanying chart for casting). This set is one of the great phonographic documents of our time. It is a reminder for all who have visited Bayreuth of how the music depicting the depths of the Rhine resounds within the hallowed walls of the Festspielhaus; of the extended power the *Ride of the Valkyries* acquires from the oversized orchestra; of the colossal force the Forging Song possesses when the anvil Siegfried beats on is the mammoth one in vogue there; of the insuperable impact of the Vassals' greeting to Gunther when it flows from the many-throated *Männerchor* recruited from the whole of the German Federal Republic. And for those who have not been to Bayreuth, the lure of the sound as heard here will be a resonant supplement to the lure of the legend.

If this may impress some as an excellent instance of putting the architectural cart before the aesthetic horse, it is not really so. Whatever derives from Bayreuth is, in the nature of things, a composite of all the things the Bayreuth Festival means in the tradition of Wagnerian performance. The mere identification of the *Rheingold* and *Siegfried* recordings as deriving from the 1966 festival, the *Walküre* and *Götterdämmerung* sides as a product of the next year, relates them to only two *Ring* cycles of the many performed there since the theater reopened in 1951. But the subsurface associations are far more meaningful. The festival of 1966 was the last in which the late Wieland Wagner was an active participant: the summer of 1967 was shadowed by his battle against the ailment to which he succumbed in October of that year. Thus these performances represent a crossroads in Bayreuth's long history.

How much of each opera in this new version is a single, inclusive take of an act (or more), how much a patchwork from several performances, Philips isn't saying. Nor need they. The quietly forceful, steadily supportive effort of conductor Karl Böhm is such that the end product shows no joins, suffers no interruption of ongoing momentum.

For that matter, the sequence as a whole—though spread over two festivals—has an in-

ner unity, an over-arching purposefulness that cannot be found in any other recorded *Ring* now available. Superb as Georg Solti's *Ring* (London Records) is in electronic science and musical means, distinctive as Herbert von Karajan's (Deutsche Grammophon) is in its personal interpretive traits, or as Wilhelm Furtwängler's (Seraphim) is in its evocation of past glories, none match in dramatic impact or Wagnerian amplitude the cumulative perspective the Bayreuth performance provides. Here, indeed, is the authentic sonic ring of the *Ring*, the harvesting of two vintage years at a theater, built to Wagner's own specifications, whose hundredth anniversary will soon (1976) be celebrated.

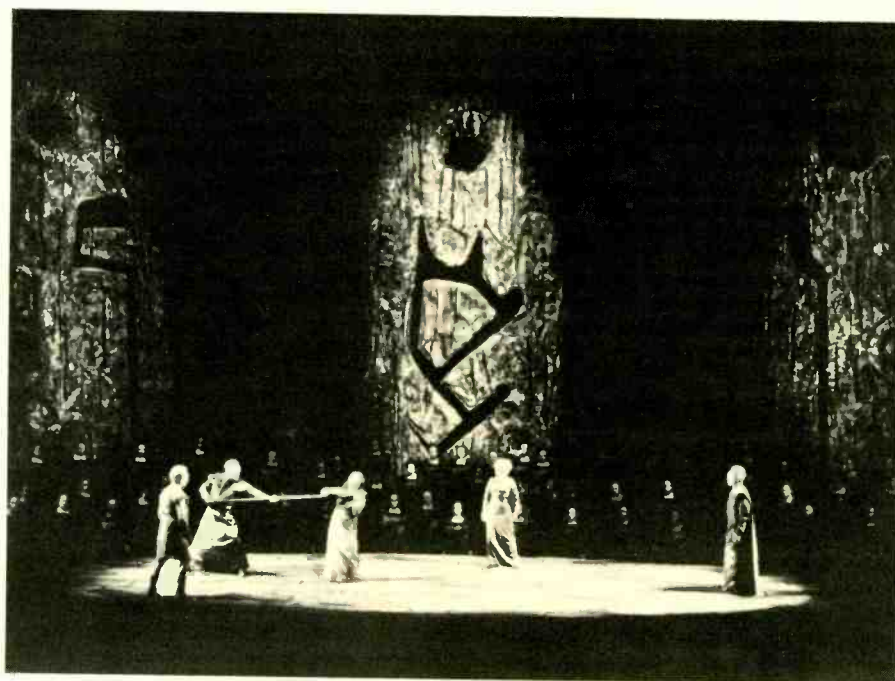
It is a truism that where there is an abundance of virtue there can be shortcomings which are the complementary defects of those virtues. Topping all possible virtues is the privilege of having a cycle in which all three Brünnhildes are sung "live" by Birgit Nilsson in her prime, a yield of vocal gold that must be put among the purest Wagnerian metal ever

mined. It is the single most compelling reason for anyone with the price to lay away these discs, like a precious Burgundy, for those cold winter nights to come when Nilsson's voice will be just a fond memory.

However, the shine and the glow that Nilsson casts are but dimly reflected in the Siegfrieds of Wolfgang Windgassen, who by 1967 was perilously close to the twilight of his long day as a reigning Wagnerian tenor. One learns, from the first listening, that the dry beginning of Windgassen's vocal effort will later be succeeded, as the measures and acts mount up, by a fresher of vocal power. But the waiting is more than a little disaffecting. Theo Adam is not my idea of a *godly* god, but his Wotans and Wanderer are steady, secure, and indisputably healthier in sound than the equivalents in any *Ring* of comparable audio fidelity.

Such inevitable weaknesses apart, the richness of the musical experience contained on these thirty-two sides is a living testimonial to the durability of the Bayreuth "idea," as the past and the future are molded into a present in which Wagner's spirit is a living presence. On the one hand, there is the ongoing participation of Martha Mödl, a fine Brünnhilde of the Fifties, willing to accept the lesser assignment of Waltraute in the 1967 *Götterdämmerung* and still able to give a formidable account of her artistry on the downswing of her career. On the other hand, there is the then rising, and now risen, Helga Dernesch learning her Wagnerian craft as a Rhinemaiden (Wellgunde) and a Valkyrie (Ortlinde) in 1966 and 1967, on the way to becoming a Brünnhilde of the Seventies. Should Miss Dernesch profit from Miss Mödl's example, she could still be a valued artist at Bayreuth in the 1990's.

FOR those who may be at a loss to choose among the abundance of riches in *Ring* recordings now available, I can offer a composite—or connoisseur's—*Ring* which would, indeed, be assembled by Choosing Sides. Some part of each of the four major complete versions now on the market would have its



Götterdämmerung at Bayreuth: the Oath Scene at the end of Act 2.

proper place in my *Ring of Rings*. This would, admittedly, sacrifice the point of view or the subtleties of purpose that prevail in each totality. But such a composite should also provide a perspective of artistry, across the decades, that many listeners would be loath to forgo.

My venture into Nibelungia would begin with the Solti *Rheingold*, not only for its pioneering audio attributes—can one who has heard the crash of Donner's air-clearing thunder as engineered by producer John Culshaw ever forget it?—but also for the rich mellowness of the Vienna Philharmonic's strings in the Rhine music, the plangent Fricka of Kirsten Flagstad, Gustav Neidlinger's Alberich at high noon, Paul Kuen (the best of recent Mimes) in his speciality, George London as an impressive Wotan, and Set Svanholm in his final foray as Loge. It would continue with the Philips *Walküre*, in which the peerless Brünnhilde of Nilsson is perpetuated in company—at last—with the greatest of today's Sieglindes, Leonie Rysanek. Her Sieglinde is a full-length portrait of a character whose living like has only been better drawn by the fabled Lotte Lehmann.

For *Siegfried* I would choose Karajan's DG recording of the late Sixties, as much for the excellence of the Berlin Philharmonic's playing (of a score which remains one of Wagner's least known) as for any single vocal value in a well-balanced cast. As finale, let us have Furtwängler's *Götterdämmerung*. If this is a choice that will outrage the audiophiles, it is still, for me, the version in which the gathering storm of disaster is most fully conveyed. Not only had Furtwängler lived through such a turmoil in his own life, he had endured to realize its artistic equivalent in a classic kind of Wagnerian conducting that has all but ceased to be.

IT is no problem to bypass the other, fifth *Ring*, which is available, at budget prices, on Westminster-ABC's Dunhill label (*Das Rheingold*, WGSO 8175-3, \$8.94; *Die Walküre*, WGSO 8176-5, \$14.90; *Siegfried*, WGSO 8177-5, \$14.90; *Götterdämmerung*, WGSO 8178-6 \$17.80). Some of the voices are good, and some of the artists are experienced. Unfortunately, the good voices do not belong to the experienced artists, and vice versa. The most recognizable names are those of Ruth Hesse, a Rhinemaiden and Valkyrie of the Philips *Ring*, who is the Fricka in the Westminster *Rheingold* and *Walküre*, and Fritz Uhl, a still capable Loge. After I had sampled some part of each segment, it was readily evident to me that the most restrictive element in the Dunhill *Ring* (which apparently derived from a broadcast project) is the conducting of Hans Swarowsky, too often timid, unassertive, and non-Wagnerian. But even he doesn't deserve the crassly offensive cover "art" that offers a pair of Volkswagen hub caps as breastplates for an otherwise nude, smirking model on the *Walküre* package, a crumbled cookie for *Götterdämmerung*, and so forth.

For those suspended on the horns of a Wagnerian price dilemma, my advice is: better excerpts from a good *Walküre* or *Götterdämmerung* than the whole of a poor one. But, if you crave a complete *Ring* no matter what, for the least money, let it be the Furtwängler on Seraphim, which one can live with and learn from, at an attractive price (\$53.98). And if you crave completeness, musicality, and modern sound, let your choice be the new Philips recording from Bayreuth.

CASTS FOR COMPLETE RING RECORDINGS (In order of release in the United States)

Conductor	Georg Solti	Herbert von Karajan	Wilhelm Furtwängler	Karl Böhm
Orchestra	Vienna Philharmonic	Berlin Philharmonic	Rome Symphony of RAI	Bayreuth Festival
Label	London Records	Deutsche Grammophon	Seraphim	Philips
Record number*	RING S	2709023, 2713002, 2713003, 2716001	IS 6100	6747037
Recording dates (approximate)	1958-1965	1966-1970	1953	1966-1967
Alberich in <i>Rheingold</i> in <i>Siegfried</i> in <i>Götterdämmerung</i>	Gustav Neidlinger " " " "	Zoltán Kelemen " " " "	Gustav Neidlinger Alois Pernerstorfer " "	Gustav Neidlinger " " " "
Brünnhilde in <i>Walküre</i> in <i>Siegfried</i> in <i>Götterdämmerung</i>	Birgit Nilsson " " " "	Régine Crespin Helga Dernesch " "	Martha Mödl " " " "	Birgit Nilsson " " " "
Donner	Eberhard Wächter	Robert Kerns	Alfred Poell	Gerd Nienstedt
Erda in <i>Rheingold</i> in <i>Siegfried</i>	Jean Madeira Marga Höffgen	Oralia Domínguez " "	Ruth Siewert Margarete Klose	Vera Soukupova " "
Fafner in <i>Rheingold</i> in <i>Siegfried</i>	Kurt Böhme " " " "	Karl Ridderbusch " " " "	Gottlob Frick Josef Greindl Josef Greindl	Kurt Böhme " " Martti Talvela
Fasolt	Walter Kreppel	Martti Talvela		
Flosshilde in <i>Rheingold</i> in <i>Götterdämmerung</i>	Ira Malaniuk Maureen Guy	Anna Reynolds " "	Hilde Rössl-Majdan " "	Ruth Hesse Sieglinde Wagner Anja Silja
Freia	Claire Watson	Simone Mangelsdorff	Elisabeth Grümmer	
Fricka in <i>Rheingold</i> in <i>Walküre</i>	Kirsten Flagstad Christa Ludwig	Josephine Veasey " "	Ira Malaniuk Elsa Cavelti	Annelies Burmeister " "
Froh	Waldemar Kmentt	Donald Grobe	Lorenz Fehenberger	Hermin Esser
Gerhilde	Vera Schlosser	Liselotte Rebmann	Gerda Scheyerer	Daniza Mastilovic
Grimgerde	Marilyn Tyler	Cvetka Ahlin	Elsa Cavelti	Elisabeth Schärtel
Gunther	Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau	Thomas Stewart	Alfred Poell	Thomas Stewart
Gutrune	Claire Watson	Gundula Janowitz	Sena Jurinac	Ludmilla Dvorakova
Hagen	Gottlob Frick	Karl Ridderbusch	Josef Greindl	Josef Greindl
Helmwige	Berit Lindholm	Daniza Mastilovic	Judith Hellwig	Liane Synek
Hunding	Gottlob Frick	Martti Talvela	Gottlob Frick	Gerd Nienstedt
Loge	Set Svanholm	Gerhard Stolze	Wolfgang Windgassen	Wolfgang Windgassen
Mime in <i>Rheingold</i> in <i>Siegfried</i>	Paul Kuen Gerhard Stolze	Erwin Wohlfahrt Gerhard Stolze	Julius Patzak " "	Erwin Wohlfahrt " "
Norns I II III	Helen Watts Grace Hoffman Anita Valkki	Lili Chookasian Christa Ludwig Catarina Ligendza	Margarete Klose Hilde Rössl-Majdan Sena Jurinac	Marga Höffgen Anja Silja Annelies Burmeister
Ortlinde	Helga Dernesch	Carlotta Ordassy	Magda Gabory	Helga Dernesch
Rossweiße	Claudia Hellmann	Helga Jenckel	Ira Malaniuk	Ruth Hesse
Schwertleite	Helen Watts	Lilo Brockhaus	Hilde Rössl-Majdan	Ursula Boese
Siegfried in <i>Siegfried</i> in <i>Götterdämmerung</i>	Wolfgang Windgassen " " " "	Jess Thomas Helge Brilioth Gundula Janowitz	Ludwig Suthaus " " " "	Wolfgang Windgassen " " " "
Sieglinde	Régine Crespin	Gundula Janowitz	Hilde Konetzni	Leonie Rysanek
Sigmund	James King	Jon Vickers	Wolfgang Windgassen	James King
Siegrune	Vera Little	Barbro Ericson	Olga Bennings	Annelies Burmeister
Waldvogel	Joan Sutherland	Catherine Gayer	Rita Streich	Erika Köth
Waltraute in <i>Walküre</i> in <i>Götterdämmerung</i>	Brigitte Fassbaender Christa Ludwig	Ingrid Steger Christa Ludwig	Dagmar Schmedes Margarete Klose	Gertraud Hopf Martha Mödl
Wanderer	Hans Hotter	Thomas Stewart	Ferdinand Frantz	Theo Adam
Wellgunde in <i>Rheingold</i> in <i>Götterdämmerung</i>	Hetty Plümacher Gwyneth Jones	Edda Moser Liselotte Rebmann	Magda Gabory " "	Helga Dernesch " "
Woglinde in <i>Rheingold</i> in <i>Götterdämmerung</i>	Oda Balsborg Lucia Popp	Helen Donath Edda Moser	Sena Jurinac " "	Dorothea Siebert " "
Wotan in <i>Rheingold</i>	George London	Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau	Ferdinand Frantz	Theo Adam
in <i>Walküre</i>	Hans Hotter	Thomas Stewart	" "	" "

* The London *Ring*, in addition to being available as a boxed set, is also available separately on disc, reel-to-reel tape, and tape cassettes, respectively, as follows: *Rheingold*, 1309, R90006, D31006; *Walküre*, 1509, Y90122, P31122; *Siegfried*, 1508, Y90062, P31062; *Götterdämmerung*, 1604, U90098, P31098. The Deutsche Grammophon *Ring* is available reel-to-reel as follows: *Rheingold*, G9228; *Walküre*, 1-9233; *Siegfried*, Y9238; *Götterdämmerung*, 6001. The Seraphim *Ring* will be made available as separate operas starting next February. Philips has no plans at present for tape release, but the operas will be available separately on disc (in the usual order) as 6747.046, 6747.047, 6747.048, and 6747.049.

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TAPE HORIZONS

By CRAIG STARK



THE SIGNAL-TO-NOISE GAME

AT ANY tolerable listening level, the noise (hum, hiss, etc.) generated by most modern amplifiers is inaudible. Unfortunately, this is not true of tape recorders. A subtle hiss all too often creeps in, drawing a kind of sonic veil between you and the music. To determine which recorders are least subject to this fault, you look to their *signal-to-noise ratio* specifications, commonly abbreviated "S/N." In theory, the higher this number (expressed in decibels, or dB) the better, for more signal and less noise means a quieter background. In practice, however, differences in measurement methods frequently make straightforward comparisons impossible. Checking one of my own recorders, for example, I find that its S/N could easily be expressed as 47, 55, or even 62 dB.

A machine's inherent noise level is usually determined by "recording" a section of blank tape with no input signal at all, then measuring the playback output from that section on a sensitive meter to determine how much "background" noise is present. Since such meters respond equally to all frequencies in the audio spectrum, this is called an "unweighted" noise measurement. However, for the low levels at which noise exists, the human ear does not register all frequencies equally; it responds most to noise in the 2,000 to 5,000-Hz range, and sharply discriminates against hum and other low-frequency signals. Thus, a more meaningful gauge of *audible* noise is provided by a "weighted" measurement, using a special filter whose frequency response approximates that of human hearing at low loudness levels. As a rule of thumb, when comparing audiophile recorders, a weighted S/N specification should be approximately 7 dB higher than an unweighted figure.

The numerator, or "signal," part of the ratio clearly depends on how high a record level is used, but so, too, does the distortion produced during recording. An unrealistically good S/N can be achieved simply by recording at an abnormally high distortion level—such as, say, 5 per cent. This would inflate, by a couple of decibels, the signal-to-noise ratio obtained by using the normal industry reference point of 3 per cent total harmonic distortion. Often, however, you just can't tell which distortion level was used.

The home recordist, of course, has to use his VU indicators as a guide to maximum record level without "excessive" distortion. This leads some manufacturers to specify S/N with reference to "0 VU." That would be ideal if everyone agreed on the same distortion level for a 0-VU reading, but they don't. Typically, VU meters are set to read 0 at a level 6 to 8 dB below the 3 per cent distortion point. This level produces about 1 per cent distortion of a 400-Hz tone. Some machines allow 10 to 12 dB leeway, however, while others give even less than 6 to 8 dB, with the result that poor machines often look as good in respect to S/N as better ones at 0 VU.

To sum up, unless *full* data are given, you can't compare recorders using S/N numbers alone. You're best advised to make sample recordings and trust your ears; after all, they're what you have to live with!

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WHICH SPEAKER WOULD YOU CHOOSE LAST?

Sure, Sylvania isn't the name that pops right into your head when you think of audio speakers. But choosing us last for that reason could be your first mistake.

Your second mistake would be not listening to us before you buy one of those other speakers. After all, the Sylvania AS125 speakers received rave reviews in a top stereo magazine.

And when you hear the new Sylvania AS225, as shown below, you'll really wonder why you didn't think of us sooner.

There are four speakers inside the AS225 walnut-veneer cabinet. The 12-inch woofer has a powerful 20 oz. Alnico magnet, a 2½-inch voice coil for greater cone control, and a massive woofer cone for greater rigidity. The result is outstanding transient response.

Our low mid-range cone contains a 10 oz. barium ferrite magnet structure. Mechanical decoupling at the 2000Hz crossover point cuts down on distortion and power waste.

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SYLVANIA

Hemispherical design provides our 1½-inch dome mid-range with exceptional dispersion.

And the extra-thin mylar construction of the 1-inch dome tweeter means a low moving mass and a high frequency response a full octave above the normal limits of human hearing.

Sound good on paper? It'll sound even better when you go to your Sylvania dealer and hear it.

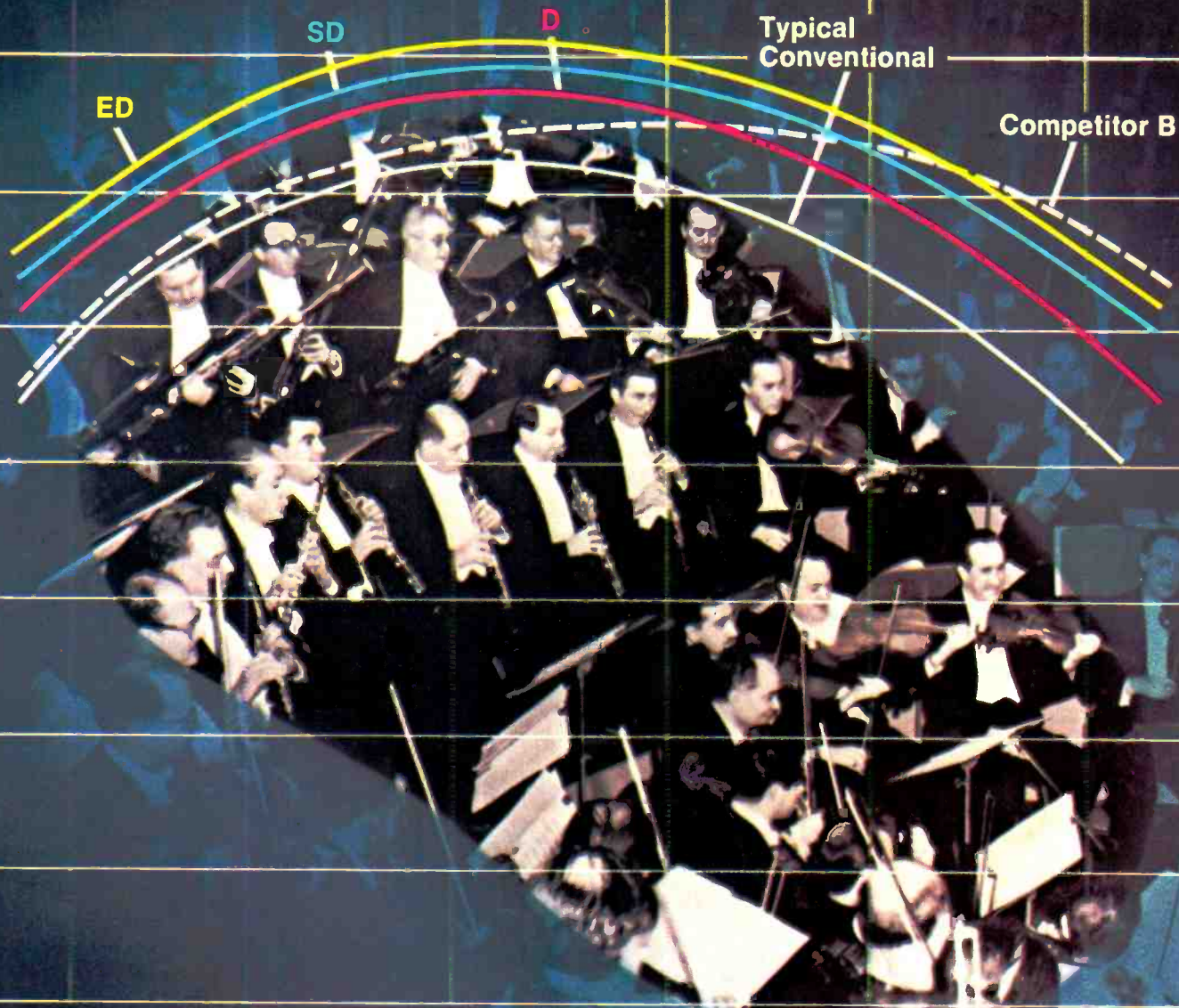
And you'll like the sound of the price, too.

Which just goes to show that while Sylvania might not be your first choice, it might be your best choice.



Sylvania Entertainment Products Group, Batavia, N.Y.

GTE SYLVANIA



capture all the sounds of life on TDK's high-MOL cassettes

MOL stands for maximum output level. It is a tape's most important measurable characteristic — the ability to faithfully reproduce the richness, fullness and warmth of the original performance. Only your own critical ear can be a better judge of a tape's overall hi-fi performance capabilities.

A tape with high MOL lets you capture the subtle overtones, transient phenomena and important harmonics of "real-life" sound. High MOL provides high saturation levels which means you can record at higher inputs and handle the loudest and softest passages without audible distortion or hiss. Because TDK cassettes have the highest MOL values of any cassettes on the market today, you can capture the total experience of beautiful music

and all the other sounds of real life.

TDK's EXTRA DYNAMIC (ED), SUPER DYNAMIC (SD) DYNAMIC (D) cassettes also offer the best-balanced characteristics of any cassettes (see facing page.) Add complete compatibility with any recorder, plus fully-guaranteed mechanical reliability, and you've got the world's finest cassettes — TDK.

Enter TDK's dynamic new world of cassettes, for a totally new and different experience in sound reproduction quality. TDK's DYNAMIC-series ED, SD and D cassettes, plus the BRILLIANT-series KROM(KR) chromium-dioxide cassettes are available at quality sound shops and other fine stores everywhere.

the new dynamic world of

TDK

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



TDK's circle of tape performance

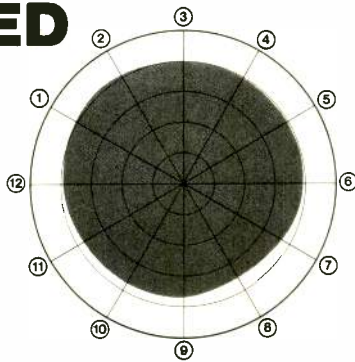
....a whole new way to evaluate tape

A tape's ability to provide "real-life" sound reproduction depends not only on its MOL (maximum output level) values and the familiar frequency response characteristics, but also on the value and proper balance of a number of other properties. TDK has arranged the twelve most important tape characteristics on their exclusive CIRCLE of TAPE PERFORMANCE diagrams, shown below. Each of the radii represents one of the twelve factors, and the outer circle represents the ideal, well-balanced character-

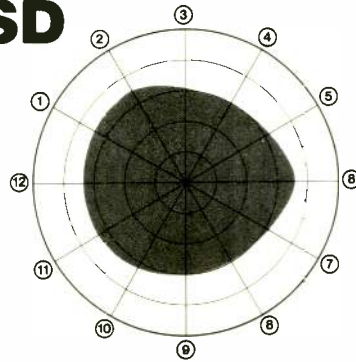
istics of a "perfect" tape. The closer the characteristics of any cassette tape approach those of the ideal (the larger and more regular the pattern), the better the sound reproduction capabilities of the cassette. The goal is to reach the outer circle.

Compare TDK's well-balanced characteristics with those of the two leading so-called "hi-fi" competitive cassettes and a typical conventional tape. Judge for yourself which provides the best characteristics for true high fidelity performance.

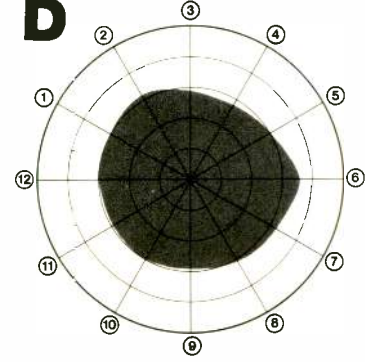
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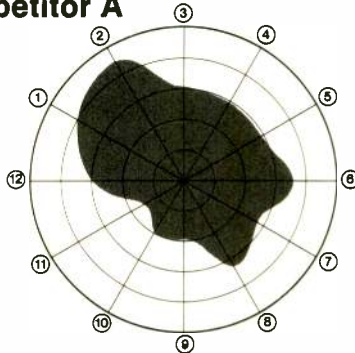
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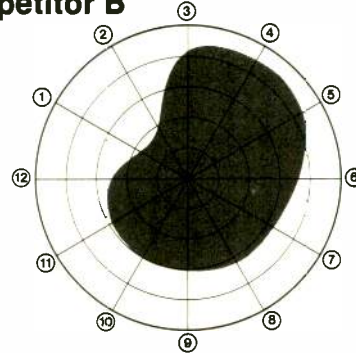
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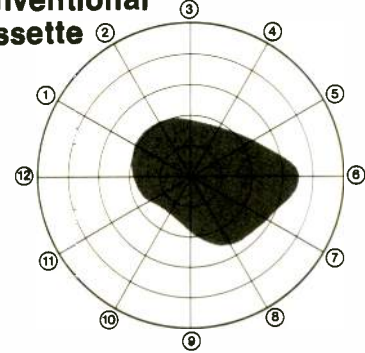
Competitor A



Competitor B



Typical Conventional Cassette



1-MOL @ 333Hz
2-Sensitivity @ 333Hz
3-Sensitivity @ 8kHz

4-Sensitivity @ 12.5kHz
5-MOL @ 8kHz
6-Erasability

7-Bias Noise
8-Print-Through
9-Modulation Noise

10-Output Uniformity
11-Uniformity of Sensitivity
12-Bias Range

EXTRA DYNAMIC

for the discriminating audiophile, an entirely new dimension in cassette recording fidelity. Vastly superior to any other cassette, with unmatched performance on any deck. 45, 60 and 90-minute lengths.

What is MOL?

MOL (maximum output level) is the output level obtained from an input signal of a given frequency which causes 5% distortion (average audible level) in the output. MOL varies with signal frequency.

What Does the MOL Diagram (facing page) Show?

The large closed-loop area on the facing page represents

SUPER DYNAMIC

turned the cassette into a true high-fidelity medium. Outstandingly clear, crisp, delicate reproduction of the complex characteristics of "real-life" sound. 45, 60, 90 and 120-minute lengths.

DYNAMIC

excellent hi-fidelity at moderate prices, with well-balanced performance characteristics superior to most "premium" cassettes. 45, 60, 90, 120 and 180-minute lengths — the world's only 3-hour cassette.

a typical sound energy plot of high fidelity music; the curved lines represent the MOL characteristics of various cassettes. As long as the MOL curve is above the sound energy plot, no audible distortion occurs. Separation between the MOL curves and the energy plot is necessary to permit recording, without distortion, the occasional bursts of high-energy sound which periodically occur in musical passages.

first came the word...



And then there was music.
And then came Sony tape recorders
to capture the words and music
with perfect fidelity. Right from the
start, Sony has always been first with
the best, the newest and the broadest

selection of tape recording equip-
ment in the world. Sony tape
recorders, Sony accessories, Sony
microphones, Sony recording tape.
We could go on and on and on.
We are. **SONY**. Ask anyone.

A Product from **SUPERSCOPE**.



If your favorite rock group
was recorded live,
listen to it live.



©Koss Corporation

Nothing can raise the hair on the back of your neck like a live rock concert. And nothing comes as close to matching the vibrant excitement of live rock like a pair of Koss HV-1 High Velocity Stereophones.

Because the new Koss HV-1 isn't just another lightweight, hear-thru Stereophone. It's a revolutionary new design concept that vents the back sound waves thru the rear of the cup without raising the resonance or inhibiting

transient response. So you not only hear every sound as it was played and every word as it was sung, but you can also hear the telephone ring or your wife ask you a question.

But it's the HV-1's unique engineering that makes it a Stereophone you have to hear to believe. By developing a unique ceramic magnet and by



reducing the mass of the moving diaphragm assemblies, Koss engineers were able to achieve an unusual fidelity and extremely wide-range frequency response unmatched by any other lightweight Stereophone. All the delicate overtones which add to the faithfulness of the reproduction are retained. And the low-range frequency response is extended, clean and unmuddied.

All in all, the HV-1 is a lightweight Stereophone no rock lover will ever take lightly. Ask your Audio Specialist for a live demonstration. And write for our free full-color catalog, c/o Virginia Lamm. At \$39.95, the price of the HV-1 is light, too.

Koss HV-1 Stereophone



 **KOSS stereophones**
from the people who invented Stereophones.

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