

# Stereo Review

NOVEMBER 1974 • 75 CENTS





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speed while a record is playing. Both of these sophisticated units are even equipped with a strobe light directed at the strobe marks for easy viewing. Pioneer's engineers really think of everything.

Electronic speed adjustment for each speed



**Automatic features without automatic drawbacks**

If you prefer to let your tonearm and turntable do all the work, consider Pioneer's all new PL-A45D. With it you can play your records without ever touching the tonearm. Unlike other single play automatics which depend upon complicated mechanical

linkages to provide the necessary tonearm cycling motion, the PL-A45D uses a separate precision gear motor just to move the tonearm in accordance with your instructions. Its other 4-pole synchronous

motor is free to drive only the 12-inch aluminum alloy die-cast platter without interruption or change of torque and speed.



Automatic operation—manual precision

**Superb S-Shaped tonearms for better tracking**

The tonearm of every Pioneer turntable system is the "S-shaped" design, for optimum groove tracking. All are statically balanced and all use adjustable counterweights with direct read-out of tracking force. All have adjustable anti-skate control and oil-damped cueing for the gentlest application of stylus tip to record groove. Lightweight plug-in cartridge shells insure positive electrical contact and optimum stylus position and angle for lower distortion and reduced record wear.



S-shaped tonearm for ideal tracking

**The tradition of unexcelled performance**

Still, all of these features and refinements alone do not guarantee the performance specifications of Pioneer's new turntables. Each tonearm and turntable platter combination is shock mounted in its specially designed natural grain cabinet (with hinged dust cover). Precision machining of all rotational parts of each unit, plus a program of continuous quality control insure that each Pioneer turntable will meet or exceed its published specifications — a time honored tradition with all Pioneer components.

**Manual turntables— choice of the professionals**

Engineers, experts and enthusiasts agree: to get the best performance, you need a manual turntable. And to get the best manual turntable, you need a Pioneer. Every Pioneer manual turntable offers a level of precision and performance unparalleled in its price range. And every one is a total system — complete with dust cover and base — and designed for years of professional trouble-free sound reproduction.

**Turntable that's right for you.**

PL-12D	PL-A45D	PL-51A	PL-71
Belt	Belt	Direct	Direct
synch.	4-pole synch.	DC Servo	DC Servo
	—	±2%	±2%
an 47dB	More than 47dB	More than 55dB	More than 60dB
(VRMS)	0.1% (VRMS)	0.06% (VRMS)	0.05% (VRMS)
al. "S"	Static Bal. "S"	Static Bal. "S"	Static Bal. "S"
16"	8 1/16"	8 1/16"	8 3/4"
"	12"	12 1/4"	12 1/4"
3 oz.	2 lbs. 3 oz.	3 lbs. 1 oz.	3 lbs. 8 oz.
\$95	\$169.95	\$249.95	\$299.95



**For the  
best performance,  
get a manual  
turntable.**



# For the best manual turntable get a Pioneer.

The manual turntable is rapidly becoming the first choice of hi-fi enthusiasts everywhere. The reason why is quite simple. Today's enthusiasts are more knowledgeable, more sophisticated and more involved with their music. And only the manual turntable can provide the involvement and performance they demand.

At Pioneer, this trend comes as no surprise. We have long recognized the superiority of the manual turntable. And long recognized a simple fact: a record changer in no way improves performance. It can detract from it.

As a result, we now offer the finest and most complete line of manual turntables available. Manual turntables that are designed with the needs of today's hi-fi enthusiast in mind. Turntables that are engineered for precision response.

When you get right down to it, good record playing equipment really has only two requirements: uniform rotation of a turntable, and accurate tracing of a record groove by a tonearm and its cartridge.

Pioneer's engineers have long recognized that these requirements are best met by single-play turntables and precision engineered tonearms. Our five new belt-drive and direct-drive turntable systems mean you needn't settle for the higher wow

and flutter and the poorer signal-to-noise ratios (rumble) of record changers. Whether you've budgeted \$100 or \$300 for this vital element of your high fidelity system, there's a Pioneer turntable that outperforms any record changer in its price class.

## Consider the performance advantages

Belt-drive, featured in Pioneer's PL-10, PL-12D and PL-A45D, means smoother, more uniform platter rotation than can be achieved with typical idler-wheel/pulley arrangements normally found in record changers. Even changers equipped with synchronous motors transmit vibration to the turntable platter. This is picked up as low-frequency rumble by the tonearm and cartridge. By driving the platter with a precision-finished belt, vibration is effectively absorbed before it can be translated to audible rumble.



Belt-drive for rumble-free rotation



Direct-drive motor reduces friction

Pioneer's direct-drive models, PL-5 and PL-71 go even a step further in achieving noise-free, precision platter rotation. The DC electronically controlled servo motors used in these models rotate at exactly the required 33 $\frac{1}{3}$  or 45 rpm platter speed. Their shafts are directly connected to the center of the turntable, with no intermediate pulleys or other speed reduction devices. This means no extra friction-producing bearing surfaces.

Because of the unique technology embodied in these new, direct-drive models it's possible to control their speed electronically. This is more precise than any mechanical drive system. Both our PL-5 and PL-71 offer individual pitch control for both 33 $\frac{1}{3}$  and 45 rpm speeds. Their turntable platters are edge-fitted with strobeoscopic marks, so you can adjust precisely.

## Choose the Pioneer

Model	PL-10	PL-71
Drive system	Belt	Belt
Drive motor	4-pole synchron.	4-pole synchron.
Speed control	—	—
S/N (Rumble)	More than 47dB	More than 47dB
Wow & Flutter	0.1% (WRMS)	0.1% (WRMS)
Tonearm Type	Static Bal. "S"	Static Bal. "S"
Tonearm Length	8 $\frac{1}{2}$ "	8 $\frac{1}{2}$ "
Turntable Diameter	12"	12"
Turntable Weight	2 lbs. 3 oz.	2 lbs. 3 oz.
Price:	\$99.95	\$119.95



 **PIONEER**  
when you want something better

U.S. Pioneer Electronics Corp., 75 Oxford Drive, Moonachie, New Jersey 07074  
West: 13300 S. Estrella, Los Angeles 90248/Midwest: 1500 Greenleaf, Elk Grove Village, Ill. 60007/Canada: S.H. Parker Co.

# BELT DRIVE ISN'T NEW. MULTIPLE PLAY ISN'T NEW. A TURNTABLE THAT COMBINES BOTH IS NEW. READ ALL ABOUT IT.



Back in monophonic times, turntable motors drove platters through a series of wheels called "idlers".

Many automatics and changers still use this system. In those days, records and playback systems were still relatively unsophisticated, so the distortions an idler drive system created didn't matter much.

Today, however, distortion is a critical problem. With recordings of increased dynamic range, wow, flutter and rumble must be reduced to inconsequential levels.

A belt-drive system is light years ahead of idler drive in that department.

And here the belt is driven by a unique motor found only in B-I-C turntables. It is a 300 RPM, 24-pole motor and it is inherently freer from noise and vibration than the 1800 RPM units with from 2 to 16 poles, which are standard in even the best of the conventional automatics.

### The advantage of Programmed Multiple Play

The 980 and 960 are not record changers.

They are belt-drive Programmed Turntables which are engineered to play as many as 6 records at a time.

They have a 2-point record support system which is far less complicated and far more reliable than any umbrella spindle we've ever seen.

But an even more important advantage is this.

An automatic record handling system like the one on a B-I-C turntable can handle a single record, or 6 at a time, perfectly. No false drops. No bouncing and skating a diamond stylus across the grooves. It eliminates human error, and human error is what damages the sidewalls of your record grooves forever.

### The simplicity factor

The 980 and 960 have the visibly lower profile of single-play manual instruments. They've been engineered to be simple machines, so they have fewer parts and fewer potential problems.

They abound in innovations. In the tone arm, the cartridge shell, the program panel, the entire system.

We can send you more detailed information if you write to Dept. 11C, British Industries Co., Westbury, L.I. 11590; or better yet, see them at your local audio specialist.



Copyright 1974 B-I-C is a trademark of British Industries Co., Westbury, New York 11590. A division of Avnet Inc.

This is the 980 with solid state speed control and strobe.

About \$200. The 960 is identical except for these two features. About \$150.

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FORMERLY HI FI/STEREO REVIEW

# Stereo Review

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# The first speaker under \$110 of a live rock concert without

## The new Fisher ST-445.

You know how it feels. When you're sitting up front at a live rock concert and Led Zep, the Who, or the Stones are pumping out a couple of kilowatts through a monster sound system a few feet away.

Sound so loud you can feel it in your gut. Inhale it. Almost taste it. Sound so strong that you absorb it and it absorbs you.

That's power.

That's the kind of sound you'd like to have at home. But until now any speaker that could do it was either six feet tall or weighed 400 lbs. or cost \$300 or more.

No more.

There's a new speaker. The Fisher ST-445.

It can sit on any bookshelf.

Without ripping the

shelf off the wall. It can handle sound peaks of 90 watts and put out sound pressure levels of over 100 dB. And it has incredibly low distortion to boot.

That's pure power.

How'd we do it and how come no one else did? Maybe we're just smarter. Maybe because we're the largest manufacturer of high fidelity speakers in the world, we know more than anybody else.

**We go low and loud.**

We know how to take a good 10-inch acoustic suspension woofer that puts out a lot of bass from a small space and make it even better. We suspend the speaker cone with soft butyl rubber. So it can move *really* far to pump out the notes. For lots of volume and distinct transient response.

And we use a special magnet and voice coil assembly that hangs in there no matter how far the cone moves. It never gets lost or loses control. It never sounds dull or muddy.





# that can reproduce the volume distorting or falling apart.

## **In the middle.**

Instead of a conventional midrange driver, the ST-445 uses an unusual unit mounted in a heavily damped sealed chamber to isolate it from any interference from the rear of the woofer. The diaphragm is light in weight and the magnet unusually heavy for extremely precise transient response. This driver gives you very broad dispersion, sending out sound waves to every corner of your room, and has smooth frequency response and can handle lots of power with low distortion.

## **Up high.**

The ST-445 uses a Mylar dome tweeter. It has an effective piston diameter of only 1" to give you frequency response up as far as 20,000 Hz, both directly in front of the speaker and, most important, at wide angles to each side up and above.

## **Sorting the sounds.**

Many multiple-driver speaker systems use electronic crossover networks to direct the various musical frequencies to the drivers designed to reproduce them. Our crossover network does all that, and does it very smoothly; and uses oversize capacitors and coils to easily handle the high power levels you will want to feed into it. A three-position level control lets you tailor the high frequency balance to match your room and your ears.

## **We have others.**

We think the ST-445 is a lot of speaker for under \$110. But if you want even more speaker for even more sound, be sure to listen to the ST-465, at less than \$200. It's similar to the 445 but has a larger woofer and a Fisher-invented flare-dome mid range.

If you're watching your dollars, you'll probably

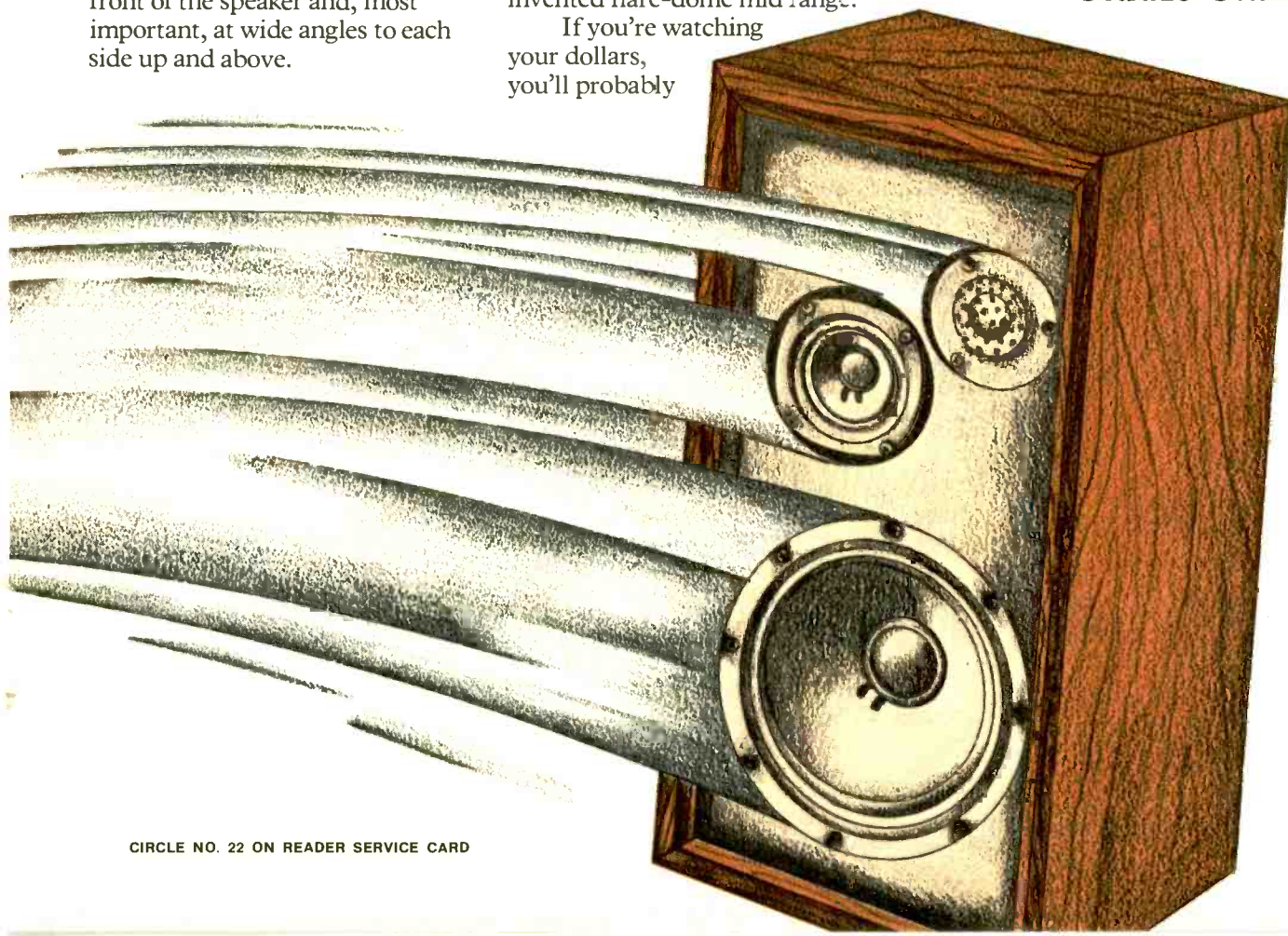


find that our ST-425 2-way system has unusually good sound for less than \$90.

For more information, write: Fisher Radio, Dept. SR-11, 11-40 45th Road, Long Island City, N.Y. 11101.

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## EDITORIALLY SPEAKING

By WILLIAM ANDERSON

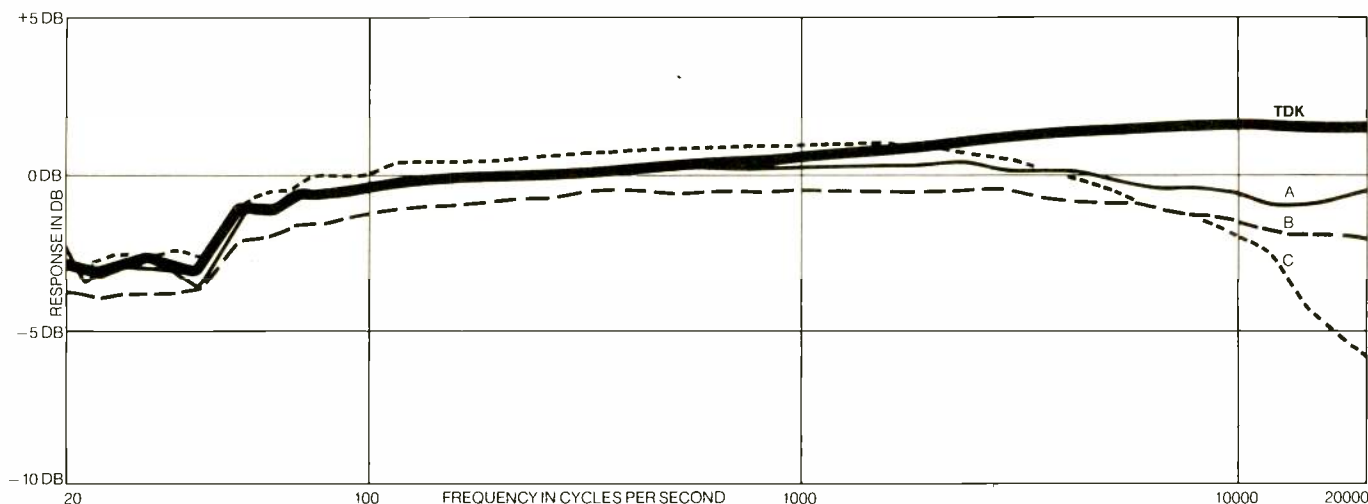
### MUSICAL NUTRITION

WHATEVER else your opinion of her may be, I think you'll have to agree that Auntie Mame was right when she said that life's a banquet, and that there are some poor . . . er . . . *slobs* out there starving to death. In the field of music alone it is little short of appalling how many people conduct their lives as if there were nothing on the menu but operatic pasta, symphonic dumplings, c-&-w grits, or rock candy, and more than a little distressing how much time they spend belittling the vile tastes of their tablemates. For myself, I cannot shake the notion that a diet that is *all fish, all soup, or all nuts*, whatever the nature and intensity of its unique satisfactions, will in time lead to systemic disorders in the sensibility, a crippling of the spirit, warts, and a lonely old age. I do not, of course, place the blame entirely on the diners; many a delectable musical dish, thanks to autocratic critics and timorous performers, has never made it out of the creative kitchen, and others have been so wretchedly served up that the appetite sickens. That is really too bad, for some of them contain vitamins available nowhere else, minerals essential to good musical nutrition.

The music of Louis Moreau Gottschalk is, I believe, just such an essential trace element, a peculiarly American compound whose late absence from the sounding air has caused our national music to lose its sense of direction. It is not the fault of Gottschalk or his music that he is no longer on the menu, but of late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century critics who found him lacking in essential "seriousness," and of performers who refused to risk joining him under the same brush. Gottschalk's timing was bad, of course. He came along at a time when our young country, having survived the rigors of the revolution of independence and a civil war as well, was desperately trying to join the community of nations, to gain its attention and earn its respect, and hayseed provinciality simply wouldn't do. What would do was a very conscious Teutonization of American musical culture, a *serious* project planned and directed from Athenian Boston by John Sullivan Dwight and his decorous *Journal of Music*. The project was less bold than it might appear, for the musical community was then comparatively small and easily manipulated. And it didn't work, either, as a glance at the infinitely various, far from monolithic structure of American music today amply demonstrates. But it did manage to shove Gottschalk (and a number of other domestic worthies) down below the salt. He might possibly have been forgiven for being American (he had, after all, traveled and played widely in Europe), but he was *popular*, and everyone knows that you cannot be both popular and "serious."

Now, I think, we very much need Gottschalk back. We need his brash sassiness, his rhythmic verve, his melodic winsomeness, and, yes, his popularity, to remind us that banquets are celebrations, that "seriousness" is not all. Others apparently agree with me: Angel Records has embarked on a new Gottschalk recording project with pianist Leonard Pennario, and the first fruits are reviewed in this issue. There are problems, surely. The line of performance tradition for this music is broken utterly—and not just by J. S. Dwight and his inheritors—for Gottschalk himself, a stunning virtuoso and his own best interpreter, made it difficult for his contemporaries to compete even after his death. It is a difficulty Pennario has faced up to courageously, however—not just by electing to play the long-despised notes in the first place, but by revealing, in the process, that he loves them. Let us not underestimate the rarity of that courage: think how many of our American pianists, cringing under the still-echoing whip of Dwight, dare not play this American music, turning instead to the more "serious"—and much less interesting—works of such as Henselt, Medtner, and Scriabin. Critics—many of them—will continue to scorn Gottschalk for not being Chopin (and Chopin for not being Bach?), and they will revile Pennario for his seeming frivolity, but let them eat crow. Gottschalk at last has a potential champion, as Scott Joplin now has his.

# TDK ED: BEST FREQUENCY RESPONSE. FOR AN EXTRA BUCK.



TDK ED tape was shown to have the best frequency response of four leading cassette tapes tested recently by an independent laboratory. The other three were large-selling popular competitors, retailing for about a dollar less than TDK ED. As you can see, their output tended to fall off noticeably in the high frequencies.

Even a slight loss of high-frequency reproduction can make a difference in clarity and detail to a discriminating ear. That quality of life that music should have just won't be there — the sheen on the violin note, the glitter on the cymbal finale.

Conclusion? If you're serious about the sound of music, try a TDK ED tape next time. It offers you that quality of lifelike brilliance you might otherwise have to buy a ticket to hear. And we think that's worth an extra buck.



Wait till you hear  
what you've been missing.



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Haydn—a Counter-Point

● One last look at “Classical Rookies.” At age three I was introduced to the classics through Wonderland Records’ “A Young Person’s Introduction to Mendelssohn.” Soon afterwards I got the Brahms, Haydn, and Liszt editions. Each record contained excerpts from the music of the composer plus some pretty juicy stories about his life. However, the stories seem pretty corny now that I’m fifteen and ready to take issue with Irving Kolodin himself.

I read with great interest Mr. Kolodin’s piece on Haydn’s 104 symphonies (September), but his statement that Haydn was “the equal of Bach and Handel as a contrapuntist” is hard to swallow. Bach was a contrapuntist like Horowitz is a pianist, Chaliapin was a bass, and Mozart was a genius. Maybe I ought to listen to more Haydn, but I just don’t think that Haydn equaled Bach in regard to counterpoint, and perhaps Mr. Kolodin should expand his statement. Also, Lincoln Perry’s Haydn cartoons were great.

STEVEN J. CAHN  
Port Washington, N.Y.

### Ragtime Cowboy

● I read James Goodfriend’s “Ragtime: The Last Roundup” (September) with much interest. The Biograph Joplin series, BLP-1013/4Q, was, as he suggested, “synthesized”: it was made directly from the music and punched into paper on a Lebarjan Music Roll Perforator by Harold Boulware of St. Louis. The machine was made prior to 1920 for the home hobbyist who wanted to make his own piano rolls. It would make four rolls at one time. Mr. Boulware set his up to make eight, and it took about five hours to produce them. His main purpose was to fill out the piano-roll repertoire of ragtime music as found in the scores.

Henry Pleasants’ fine review of Schafer and Riedel’s *The Art of Ragtime* in the same issue brings out the same shortcomings I noticed in the book. Louisiana State University Press also published a book about the Original Dixieland Jazz Band by H. O. Brunn in 1960, and that book also took a very narrow view of its subject. The ragtime book is at its best when it discusses how to play rags, and the Brunn book serves best when presenting the musicians’ personalities.

Trebor Tichenor and David Jasen are col-

laborating on a book called *Ragtime: An Original American Music*. I hope this adds considerably to the knowledge of ragtime, because these two men are among the most competent ragtime scholars in the world.

CHARLES B. DAVIS, JR.  
Midway Park, N. C.

### “The Best of Hoffnung”

● We very much appreciate the full page STEREO REVIEW devoted to reviewing our newly issued retrospective, “The Best of Hoffnung” (August). There was, however, one slight error of which you and your readers should be apprised. Angel, at one time, did indeed have three Hoffnung LP’s. Two are still available in our active catalog: S-35800, “The Hoffnung Interplanetary Music Festival, 1958” and S-35500, “Music from the Hoffnung Music Festival Concert, 1956.” The third LP, S-35828, “The Hoffnung Astronautical Music Festival, 1961,” was only recently deleted. Those persons buying the new collection will find a discography presentation of the two remaining LP’s and the musical contents of each in the lower right-hand corner of the liner.

BRAD ENGEL  
Manager, National Classical Merchandising  
Angel Records  
Los Angeles, Calif.

● As a “Hoffnung Music Festival” fan for many years, I was delighted to read James Goodfriend’s review of the revival recording “Best of Hoffnung” (August), and I was even more delighted to discover a copy of the disc at my local record shop, on sale at that. However, Mr. Goodfriend said that Mr. Hoffnung was “in his forties” in 1959 at the time of his death. But, since the liner notes give 1925 as Hoffnung’s year of birth, my calculations would make him only thirty-four years of age in 1959, and make him a genius at an even younger age.

LARRY D. MAUPIN  
Grand Island, Neb.

### Buffet: Boffo or Beastly?

● One of the many reasons I enjoy reading STEREO REVIEW is that it covers the broad spectrum of music, whether I happen to like all of the music so covered or not. I do think, though, that you should have a separate publication for the animals for whom Noel Cop-

page’s article on Jimmy Buffet in the September issue was written.

CHARLES J. SHEEDY  
Woodhaven, N.Y.

● My praises to Noel Coppage and his article on Jimmy Buffet (September). Not too often can one read an interesting article about someone they never heard of and want to run out and buy one of his albums!

DIANE BAUER  
Angola, Ind.

### Letters Carrier

● Since I have been a reader of STEREO REVIEW for only a year or so, it’s possible my question has already been asked and answered. It concerns the meaning of the picture at the head of the “Letters to the Editor” page. I have studied this vignette in an attempt to puzzle out the symbolism, but I’m afraid it’s beyond me. I would hazard a guess as to its locale and period—England in the mid-seventeenth century—but after that I’m at a loss. Why was this particular print chosen for this column? Could it simply be a representation of a seventeenth-century postman on his rounds?

JAMES SHORTELL  
Washington, D. C.

*“Aus Münster vom 25 des Weinmonats im Jahr 1648 abgefertigter Freud-und-Friedenbringender Postreuter,” reads our copy of this old German woodcut—which is to say that the music the mailman is playing on his posthorn is the joyful news of the Peace of Westphalia, which was concluded October 24, 1648, in Münster, bringing the Thirty Years War to an end. The illustration appears in a book titled The Age of Firearms and was chosen both because of the posthorn and the theme of peace, something any heated letters column could use a little of from time to time.*

### Cornet Cornucopia

● I was pleasantly surprised to read Robert Offergeld’s review of two new cornet albums (“Cornet Cornucopia”) in your August issue. My surprise was due to the realization that you were willing to allocate that much space to such a subject as the cornet, in view of the usual disdainful and snobbish references to (dare I say it?) band instruments found in many publications.

There are those of us among your subscribers who treasure not only our recordings of Mahler symphonies and Schubert lieder, but also discs by James Burke or the National Band of New Zealand. It would be gratifying to think that STEREO REVIEW plans to continue giving space to such subjects.

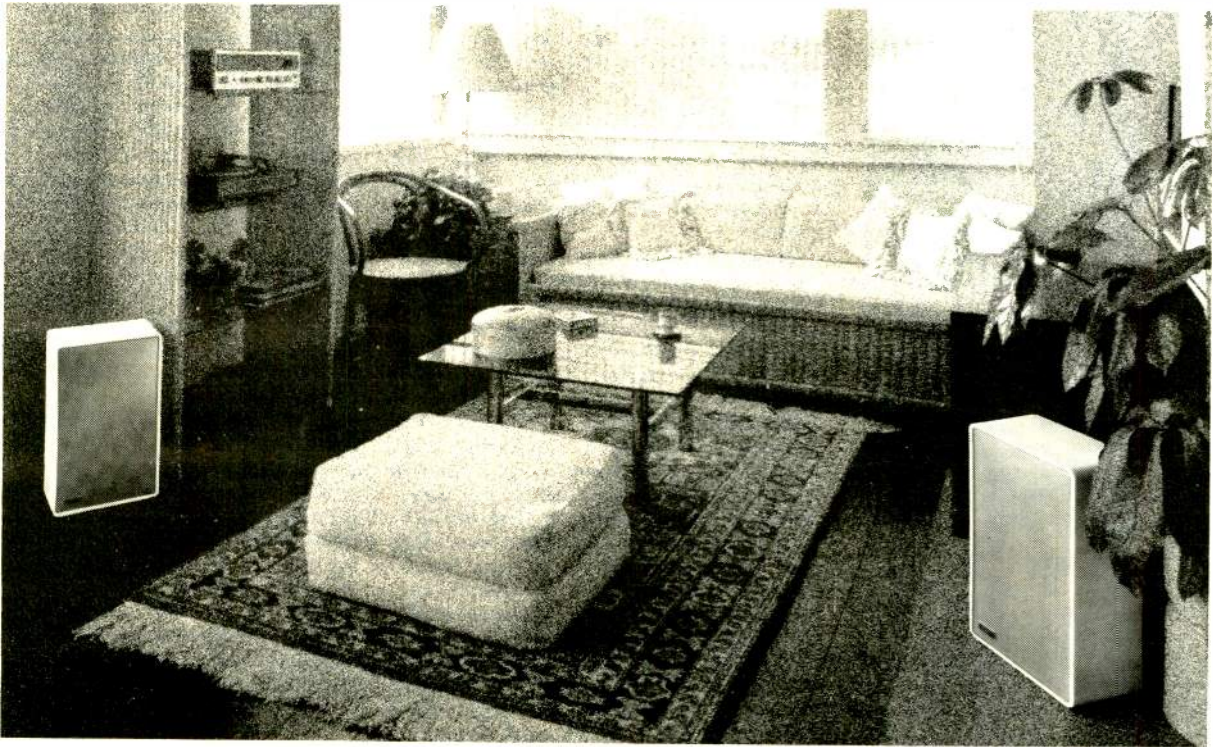
WENDELL COUTS  
Springfield, Tenn.

### Carpenters Chips

● Les Summers’ contention in the August Letters column that the Carpenters were the “commercial vehicle” that brought Leon Russell to the “forefront of the music profession” is debatable. The Carpenters recorded only one hit song by Leon, who was by then achieving fame and stardom on his own merits.

Furthermore, to state that the STEREO REVIEW staff is of a “corporate opinion that to be of any cultural value, music and musicians must be obscure and unacceptable to large numbers of people” is ridiculous, since in this  
(Continued on page 10)

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same issue alone ten recordings by established commercial artists were distinguished with STEREO REVIEW's Recording of Special Merit award.

And for Mr. Summers to suggest what the standards of the future may be is a bit of beforehand wishful thinking. However nice it is to think of our favorite songs and artists as being forever remembered in musical history, too often it isn't history that gives them a home, but merely the "oldies but goodies" radio stations.

GARY GRANDE  
Trafford, Pa.

### Das Korngold

● The September Letters to the Editor featured a discussion of the works of Erich Wolfgang Korngold, and there was a reference to the statement that his work was "more corn than gold." One letter writer observed that this was "only moderately amusing when it was originated years ago by another wit." For the "wit," I thank him; for the "moderately amusing," I am grateful. It is something to be at least moderately amusing after twenty-seven years.

The circumstances that produced the quip related to the first performance in New York of the Korngold violin concerto under the gilded bow of Jascha Heifetz on March 27, 1947. Efrem Kurtz was the conductor of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra in Carnegie Hall. It occurred to me, as the work unfurled, that it was a prime specimen of *Korngoldmark*. At the end of the performance, the late Olin Downes, seated, as usual, behind me, said in his familiar quizzical, pre-*Times* way: "Well, what did you think of that?" I responded offhandedly, "More corn than gold." He laughed and said, "I dare you to print that." The dare was hardly needed—if it was good enough for Olin, it was good enough for anybody. On March 28, 1947, a column in the *New York Sun*, headed "Heifetz Presents Korngold Score" and carrying my byline, bears witness with the last line of paragraph three: "... this score contains more corn than gold."

IRVING KOLODIN  
New York, N.Y.

### Editorial Policy

● Thank you for the information and guidance of STEREO REVIEW. It is a joy. I have several questions which I'm sure you can help me with:

- (1) Where can I get back issues of STEREO REVIEW?
- (2) Is there an index to record reviews that are not Best of the Month?
- (3) Please explain the procedure involved in labeling a recording Record of the Year/Honorable Mention, Best of the Month, or Recording of Special Merit. Who and how many decide which recording is deserving?
- (4) Does the Editor specifically approve the text (not the opinion) of all reviews printed, either run-of-the-mill recordings or exceptional ones?
- (5) If Joni Mitchell's "Court and Spark" is not a Record of the Year come February, will One Park Avenue be paved over and replaced with a parking lot?

FRANK GORSHE  
Davenport, Iowa

(1) Write to Ziff-Davis Service Division, Dept. BCSR, 595 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10012. (2) Reviews (and articles) are indexed

by Popular Periodical Index, Rutgers University, Rutherford, N. J. STEREO REVIEW is also microfilmed by University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, Mich. (3) Reviewers are themselves responsible for affixing the Recording of Special Merit and Best of the Month accolades. If more Best of the Month nominations are received in a given month than are needed for the section, the Editor and Music Editor decide which are likely to be (a) most significant for the greatest reader interest and (b) most significant musically. As for the Best of the Year awards, each regular reviewer (including Martin Bookspan and Irving Kolodin) is asked to nominate ten records that in his estimation deserve the honor—the ten need not be in the area of his musical specialty. The editors also contribute their nominations, and the results are tabulated. The system is fair, efficient, and amazingly prophetic.

(4) The Editor reads everything in the issue, once in manuscript and once in galley or page proof, besides editing many articles and features (Best of the Month, for example, every month). There is no tinkering with opinion; the aim is to insure the highest possible level of grammatical and factual accuracy while preserving the writer's own prose style. The Editor therefore neither approves nor disapproves, but he does agree and disagree.

(5) There is no way, other than tilting the scales, that will guarantee Joni Mitchell an award next year, but the Editor is on her side, and he's heavy.

### Joan Baez

● Congratulations to STEREO REVIEW for finally printing a sensible review of a Joan Baez recording, "Gracias a la Vida" (Best of the Month, August). The typical review of her albums consists of the personal opinion of a critic regarding Baez's personality and lifestyle with minimum mention of her music. It's time Joan Baez started getting the musical recognition she deserves and has been deprived of over the last few years.

TIM DUFELMEIER  
Keystone, S. D.

### More on Soundtracks

● I must take specific issue with allegations appearing in your September editorial. Your statement that you do not review movie soundtracks because you do not have room and that it is not pragmatic to do so just can't be taken seriously. Any music-review magazine which devotes an entire page to a picture of someone named Jimmy Buffett yet fails to find room to review a single one of the scores mentioned shows not only an unfair and unjustified bias, but, in view of your editorial statement, an absurd intellectual vacuum in your choice of how to use the space you have. Certainly the Jimmy Buffett fans are thrilled on receipt of a new pin-up from you to hang next to their Donny Osmond posters, but if we wish to be practical and pragmatic we could have devoted only half a page to that stunning and important photograph and acted in a more practical manner by publishing more material of interest to your large number of readers who appreciate your film score reviews. You also show a gross and snobbish attitude toward a field of music based on what must be either inexperience with the field or what is usually exhibited as an intellectually superior attitude masking an actual lack of understanding and will to learn.

Reaction to music is reaction to emotional  
(Continued on page 12)

# Is it live or is it Memorex? Who knows?



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forms. That the original form or subject is preset by the movie is irrelevant to the emotional reaction caused by the music. If a composer is skilled he can base his music on almost anything and be successful, as well as have his music stand on its own totally divorced from the film. One of the best examples of this principle is the adaptation by Miklos Rozsa of his own violin concerto for the movie *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes*. That there are lousy scores as well as superb scores shows just how much room for creative talent exists in this field.

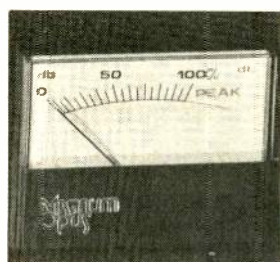
KARL E. SCOTT  
Santa Clara, Calif.

The Editor replies: "Unfair and unjustified

bias." "absurd intellectual vacuum." "gross and snobbish attitude." "lack of understanding and will to learn"—I confess that I am outclassed; I could scarcely do greater justice to Mr. Scott than he has already done himself. The "someone named Jimmy Buffett" is, in fact, Jimmy Buffett, a young singer-songwriter who bears about as much resemblance to Donny Osmond as W. A. Mozart does to Miklos Rozsa. Mr. Scott does not know who Jimmy Buffett is, and his "will to learn" is so weak that he won't even read a two-page interview to find out. Never mind; Mr. Scott (and a lot of other people) will know about him soon, perhaps even before he gets around to seeing the two movies (!) for which Mr. Buffett has lately written scores.

That Mr. Scott genuinely likes the movie scores he rises so snappily to defend I do not doubt, but he seems not to grasp the reason why we grant them a low reviewing priority. The world of music is full of strait jackets, starting with the scale itself and working on up through 12-, 16-, and 32-bar song forms, sonata form, fugue, and all the rest. But there is nothing anywhere else in music quite like the stopwatch that controls the writing of movie scores so absolutely. Staying strictly within the realm of words-with-music, a word, a line, a whole speech can be repeated for the convenience of the composer in opera, in song or lied writing, even in the Mass. Not so in movies: the composer cannot ring in "un altro bacio" because he wants it or the interior logic of the music demands it, for there is only one bacio in the script. The movie is, indeed, already made, and the music must be fitted to it, split second by split second; it is run off by rear-screen projection while the composer-conductor and the orchestra tailor the score to it almost frame by frame (I have seen it done by Lalo Schiffrin, Jerry Goldsmith, and Quincy Jones). They must speed up or slow down, and finish on time, mid-melody or not. When it is all finally over with, chances are that a minute or so, a sequence, even a whole scene will be cut—and the music must be reworked around the gap. In such a situation, a composer simply cannot have a musical idea that in itself demands development, or one that he desires development for. The difference is therefore a very significant one: the writing of movie music is a craft, a completely functional activity, totally subservient to outside control. Art music, of course, has no function other than simply to be; it is subservient to nothing beyond the whim and the skill of its composer. Whether a given piece of movie music or art music is good or bad is therefore immaterial, but the question of quality does, I think, tend to mislead Mr. Scott and others. Certainly some vastly skilled, ingeniously constructed, and fiendishly successful movie music has been composed by a number of accomplished hands. But if that music, as composed, is so sufficient unto itself that it can be appreciated as is and apart from the movie that inspired it, why do such acknowledged experts as Bernard Herrmann and Henry Mancini eschew the release of soundtracks and insist on redoing their scores in the form of suites and popular songs for recordings? That Miklos Rozsa used his Violin Concerto as part of a movie score proves no more than that its sounds were as effective a raw material for the purpose as anything else (Brahms, Beethoven, Tchaikovsky?) would have been. His attitude toward this exercise of his craft was a perfectly correct one, and one with which Mozart himself would surely have agreed.

The best measure of these matters, however, is the industry's own. The scores are invariably referred to as "soundtracks"—not "musictracks"—and no movies are ever sold on the basis of their having a score by Rozsa, Mancini, or anybody else. (These days, in fact, even directors get better billing.) The truth of the matter is that movie makers are sensibly determined to get as much out of the pig as they can—including the squeal. Soundtrack releases cost little, they publicize the picture they are drawn from, and they may even make a little money. Good for them. But, however effectively they are crafted, however



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(Continued on page 14)



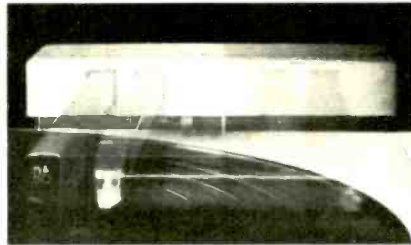
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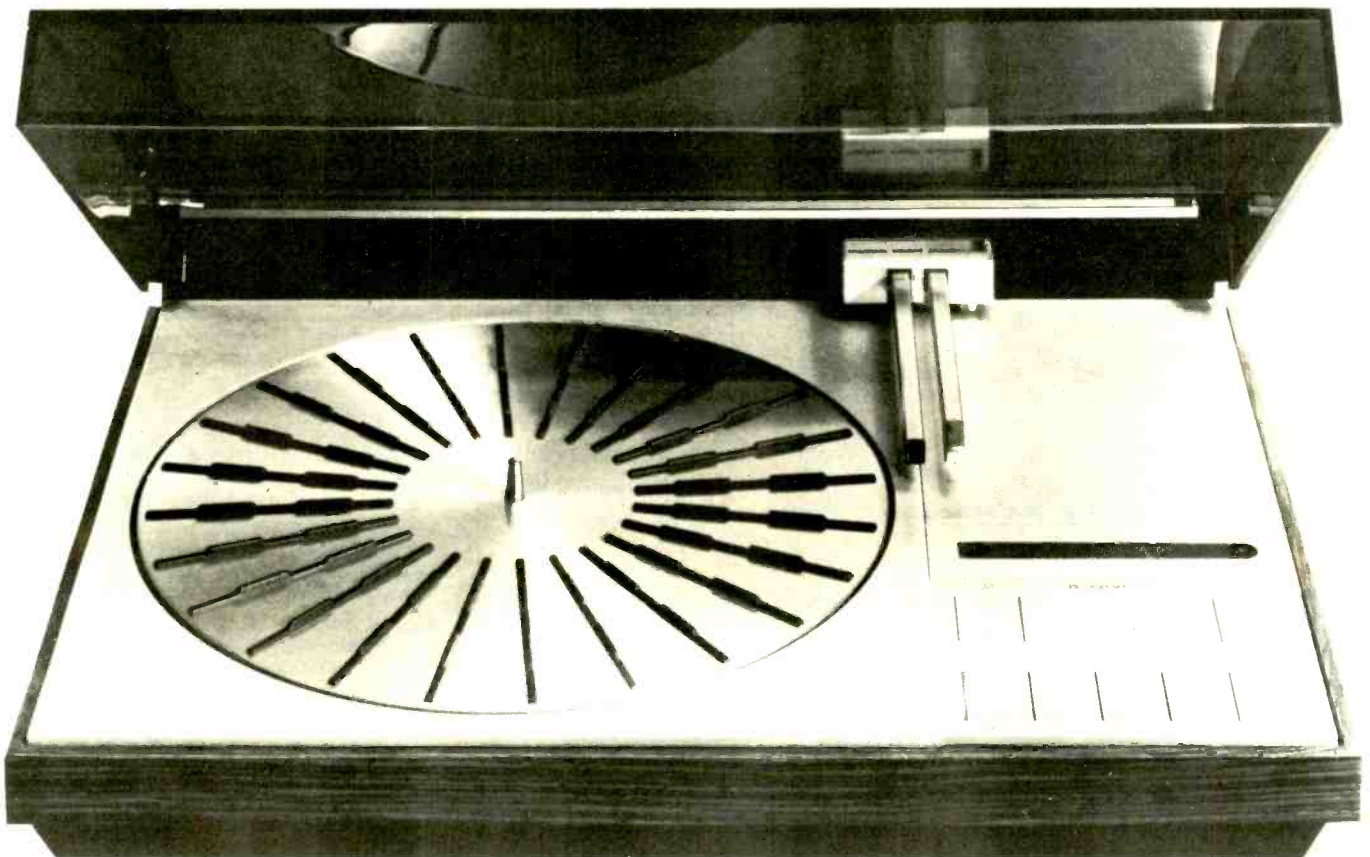
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well they perform their dramatic function, two sides of "John's Theme," "Mary's Theme," and "Rover's Theme," baldly stated and numbingly repeated without variation or other development, have a long way to go before they either need or deserve to be reviewed in a music magazine. There are exceptions, however; always there are exceptions.

#### Bells in Four Channels

● In his review of Stanyan's welcome release of "For Whom the Bell Tolls" (September), Peter Reilly says that the record is a new performance. Isn't this really the same one available in stereo from Warner Brothers in the late 1950's? I think Stanyan must have cleverly faked the rear channels somehow.

P. W. DARDEN  
Atlanta, Ga.

*The same performance, yes; fake, no. In calling it "new" the reviewer was trying to differentiate between this studio recording and the original soundtrack. Stanyan tells us, however, that they prevailed upon Warners to let them make a trial remastering of the Fifties multi-track recording in SQ-matrix quadraphonic. The results convinced Warners, and Stanyan's next similar project will be Spellbound—also in four channels. There are in the vaults, of course, many old multi-track masters stretching all the way back to the mono era that are perfectly feasible material for possible quadraphonic reworking, though success is in the hands of the gods.*

#### Teachers and Pupils

● Eric Salzman's review of the Saint-Saëns symphonies conducted by Jean Martinon (September) and his passing remarks on the composer's longevity prompt me to write concerning other teacher-pupil relationships (authentic, in this case, not "mythical"—although Mr. Salzman's suggestion of Saint-Saëns as Beethoven's pupil is an intriguing thought) that may not be so well known.

Both Franck and Widor studied with Lemmens, who was a pupil of Forkel and of Kirnberger, the latter being an authentic pupil of J. S. Bach. Dupré (who taught me improvisation) was Widor's most important pupil after Vierne, and he also studied with Guilment, who, in turn, worked with Franck. Both Widor and Dupré claimed to have received (via Lemmens) important aspects of the "true Bach tradition" of organ playing and composition, quite at variance with today's neo-Baroque tendencies.

Even more interesting, perhaps, is that Widor, who died in 1937, was the last surviving pupil of Rossini. Imagine the musical territory *his* life covered!

More obscure was another of my old masters, John Herman Loud, who died about 1952 after a long career as a Boston organist. Almost unmentioned at the time of his death was the fact that he was the last surviving pupil of Franck: he often spoke of having heard "Pater Seraphicus" improvising in the loft at Ste. Clothilde.

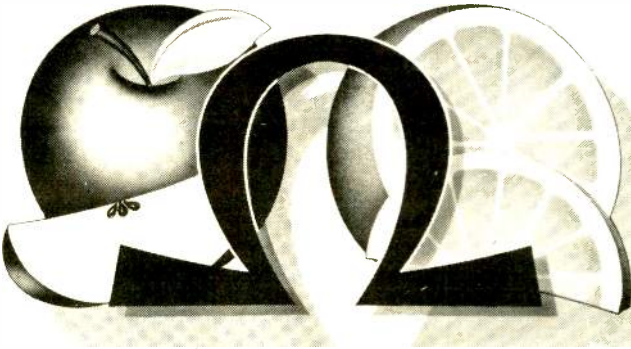
I am only forty, but, since I started study when I was five, I feel almost a generation older, having been with men who had walked with the great ones. It helps one remember that music is primarily a concern of human beings, not of movements, manuscripts, or organizations.

BOB STRIPPY  
Jacksonville, Fla.

# THE HITACHI REPORT

No. 27 • Subject: Power Selection • 4/2-Channel Receivers

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**And on and on and on.** The kind of music you like to hear can also have a bearing on your power requirements. Classical buffs usually require less power and lower volume than rock freaks. Then too, room size, approximate acoustic conditions, and the number of additional speakers the unit will be required to drive — are all factors that will help you make the right power choice.

The way we look at it, the more you know, the better equipped you'll be to compare the specs on our 4/2-channel (SQ, RM, Discrete) receivers. So do it, already. If you find something you don't understand, your nearby Hitachi dealer can set you straight. And that's getting to be a small wonder in itself.

#### SMR-7240

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#### SMR-5240

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#### SMR-4040

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# BOOKS RECEIVED

Compiled by  
**LOUISE GOOCH BOUNDAS**

● *Eddie Condon's Scrapbook of Jazz*, by Eddie Condon and Hank O'Neal. St. Martin's Press. New York (1974), unpagd., \$17.50.

About the only fault I can find with this beautiful book is that it is unpagd., which of course precludes a useful table of contents and an index. What if you want to find that picture of Muggsy Spanier and Tommy Dorsey at Town Hall, or the one of Ethel Waters in spangled hot pants? Well, you'll just have to leaf through the book again. Allow plenty of time—it's impossible not to get hung up on almost every page. Besides the photos, there are clippings and record labels and Mr. Condon's reminiscences and Mr. John Steinbeck's foreword. Who ever indexed a scrapbook, anyway?

● *Bix: Man and Legend*, by Richard M. Sudhalter and Philip R. Evans, with William Dean-Myatt. Arlington House, New Rochelle, N. Y. (1974), 512 pp., \$12.95.

This book is billed as "the definitive biography" of Leon Bix Beiderbecke, and in this case I do not think the billing is hyperbole. Research for the biography was begun over fifteen years ago, and the care with which the authors pursued their subject is manifest on every page of the book. The text is supplemented with more than a hundred photographs, many previously unpublished, as well as a fifty-seven-page chronology of the great jazzman's life and a seventy-page discography. There's also an excellent index, divided into three sections. You'll have little trouble finding what you're looking for here.

● *Glenn Miller and His Orchestra*, by George T. Simon. Thomas Y. Crowell, New York (1974), 473 pp., \$10.

"I don't suppose there was a single listener in the United States, unless he was tin-eared and tone-deaf, who didn't love and appreciate the music of the Miller band"—from *Bing Crosby's foreword*. Exaggeration? Maybe—but not much. The story of Glenn Miller is the story of the Swing Era and the moods of a country just before and during a great war. The book is well written, well illustrated, and authoritative. Like Bing Crosby, George T. Simon was a close friend of Glenn Miller, but his biography is far from the hero-worship puffery it might have been. Good reading.

● *Bourbon Street Black: The New Orleans Black Jazzman*, by Jack V. Buerkle and Danny Barker. Oxford University Press, New York (1973), 244 pp., \$7.95.

What does it mean to be a black jazz musician in New Orleans? Messrs. Buerkle and Barker interviewed the players themselves to find out, and their book (which takes a rather sociological approach to the subject) contains extensive quotations from such as Oscar "Chicken" Henry, Kid Johnson, and Olivia Charlot (they aren't all jazzmen!). Mr. Buerkle took his own photographs.

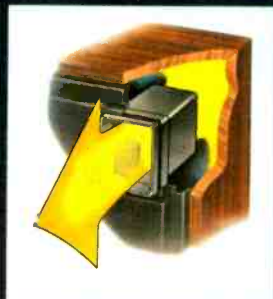
# New Zenith Allegro® brings deeper, richer sound to 4-channel.

## Here's how:

You're looking at the Zenith Allegro tuned port.\* It's part of a sound system with a difference.

You see, a lot of speakers (even air-suspension types) trap deep, rich bass inside the speaker cabinet, so you never hear it. But this tuned port channels out more of that sound, so you do hear it. (In fact, if you put your hand over the port, you can even feel it.)

With a specially-designed woofer for solid bass and mid-range tones, plus a horn-type tweeter for crystal-clear high notes, Allegro delivers virtually the full range of sound of the original performance. And does it so efficiently that other systems with comparable-size air-suspension speakers need amplifiers with twice the power to match Allegro's overall sound performance.



But that's not all. Because behind this remarkable speaker system is some equally remarkable componentry.

A solid-state tuner/amplifier designed specifically for use with Allegro speakers, and featuring AM, FM, and even 4-channel matrix FM reception, where available. A 4-channel discrete 8-track tape player. A precision record changer for 4-channel matrix records.

And you can even play (and greatly improve the sound from) stereo broadcasts, tapes, and records.

Zenith Allegro 4-channel. Once you hear it, you'll know how 4-channel sound should sound.

patent pending

**The surprising sound of Zenith.**

**ZENITH Allegro**

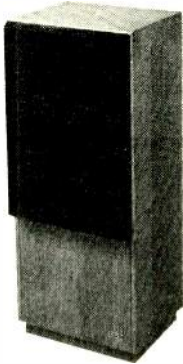
The quality goes in before the name goes on.®



# NEW PRODUCTS

THE LATEST IN  
HIGH-FIDELITY  
EQUIPMENT

## Altec Stonehenge III Speaker System



● THE Stonehenge III, the second in the Altec series of floor-standing column-shaped speaker systems, is a two-way design of relatively high efficiency employing a tall ported enclosure. The two-way driver—actually comprising the latest version of the Altec 604 “Duplex” monitor speaker—is coaxially arranged in that the sectoral horn of the high-frequency compression driver extends through the center of the 15-inch low-frequency driver’s voice coil. Crossover between the drivers occurs at 1,500 Hz, with a continuously variable level control mounted inside the grille panel to permit adjustment of the high-frequency

output. Specified impedance of the system is 8 ohms.

The Stonehenge III is rated for a power-handling capability of 65 watts of signal continuous. An input of 1 watt produces a 99-dB sound-pressure level at a distance of 4 feet with a pink-noise signal covering the range of 500 to 3,000 Hz. The system’s enclosure—measuring approximately 46 $\frac{1}{4}$  x 16 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 14 $\frac{3}{4}$  inches overall—is finished in oak veneers. An acoustically transparent foam grille (removable) covers the upper portion of the system’s front panel. Weight is 130 pounds. Price: \$595.

*Circle 115 on reader service card*

## Wollensak Model 8080 Eight-Track Tape Deck



● THE Model 8080 from the Wollensak division of 3M is an eight-track stereo record-play deck with built-in Dolby noise reduction and electronics designed

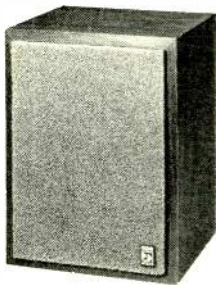
to take fullest advantage of 3M’s new “Classic” high-performance eight-track tapes. The deck will also play back prerecorded four-channel cartridges. A tape-select switch chooses the proper circuit characteristics for either standard tape (with which frequency response is 30 to 12,000 Hz) or the 3M cartridges, which provide a response of 30 to 15,000 Hz. Wow and flutter are 0.1 per cent, and the weighted signal-to-noise ratio is 60 dB with Dolby, 50 dB without.

The Model 8080 accepts either line or microphone inputs, with slider-type controls to adjust recording levels. The

transport controls, which are all tab switches, include fast-forward (3 $\frac{1}{2}$  times the normal 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ -ips playing speed), track select, PAUSE, and cartridge eject. The machine can be set up to eject a cartridge automatically at the end of the last set of tracks or to repeat one or all tracks. Outside program sources such as Dolbyized FM broadcasts can be routed through the 8080’s Dolby circuits for decoding. A special resettable tape counter registers elapsed real time in minutes and seconds. Dimensions of the deck: 19 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 5 x 10 $\frac{1}{4}$  inches. Price: \$344.99.

*Circle 116 on reader service card*

## BIC Venturi Formula 1 Speaker System

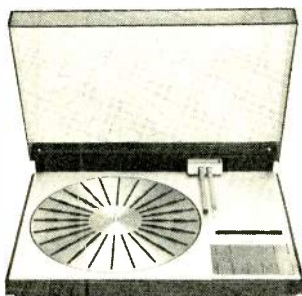


● THE smallest model in the Venturi series of speaker systems has been announced by British Industries Company. The new speaker, with dimensions of approximately 15 x 11 x 10 inches, employs a 6-inch woofer in an enclosure incorporating the manufacturer’s Venturi principle—a duct of gradually decreasing cross section that increases the velocity of air at the port opening. Above 1,500 Hz a special horn-loaded mid-range/tweeter assembly is used, affording 120-degree dispersion both horizontally and vertically. Overall frequency

response is 35 to 17,500 Hz. The Formula 1 is said to be highly efficient and hence usable with amplifiers and receivers of very low power-output capability. Maximum recommended amplifier power is 50 watts continuous per channel. The system has an impedance of 6 to 8 ohms. A control for adjusting the high-frequency output level is continuously variable. Price of the Formula 1: \$74.95. Acoustically transparent foam grilles are available in shades of brown, black, beige, burnt orange, blue, and red.

*Circle 117 on reader service card*

## B&O 4002 Record Player



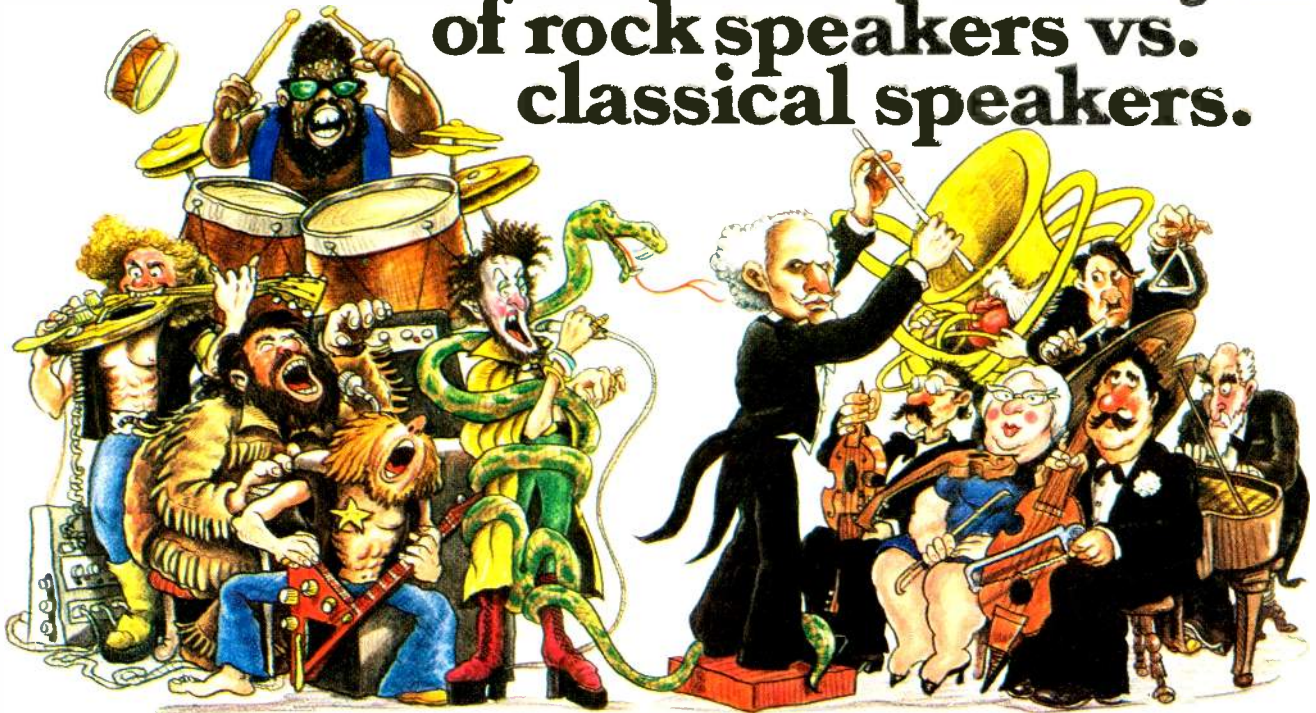
● BANG & OLUFSEN’S “Beogram” 4002 is a complete record-playing component consisting of a fully automatic single-play turntable and a magnetic phono cartridge suitable for CD-4 “discrete-disc” playback. The turntable, a two-speed (33 $\frac{1}{3}$  and 45 rpm) design belt-driven by a servo-controlled synchronous motor, features a straight-line-tracking “tangential” tone arm. The pivot assembly of the short, straight arm is driven along a guide rail by a worm-gear mechanism. Any deviation of the arm

from tangency in either direction is sensed by a photoelectric system that activates a servo motor to restore tangency and advance the arm across the record surface.

In the automatic mode of operation, the touch of a single button causes the 4002’s arm to index inward toward the turntable center, preceded by a scanning arm that uses reflected light to detect the presence and the diameter of a record. The platter speed appropriate for the

*(Continued on page 20)*

# The Rectilinear 5: end of the myth of rock speakers vs. classical speakers.



The new Rectilinear 5 is capable of playing very, very loud. Rock-festival loud. Even with a medium-powered amplifier.

At the same time, it's uncannily accurate. It sounds sweet, unstrained and just plain lifelike at all volume levels.

The temptation is great, therefore, to one-up that prestigious manufacturer who some time ago announced "The first accurate speaker for rock music."

But we refuse to perpetuate that mythology. It's perfectly obvious that the Rectilinear 5 reproduces classical music just as accurately as rock. We could never see how a voice coil or a magnet would know the difference between Jimi Hendrix and Gustav Mahler.

So we'd rather use this opportunity to set things straight once and for all.

Thus,

There's no such thing as a rock speaker or a classical speaker. Any more than there's a late-show TV set or a football-game TV set.

There are, however, speakers that impose a hard, sizzling treble and a huge bass on *any* music. And others that round off the edges and soften up the transient details of *any* music. That's the probable origin of the myth; but these aren't rock and classical speakers, respectively.

They're *inaccurate* speakers.

It's true that an aggressive treble and a heavy bass are characteristic of most rock music, even when heard live. It's also true that some record producers exaggerate these qualities, sometimes to a freakish degree, in their final mix of the recorded sound.

But that doesn't mean the speaker can be allowed to add its own exaggerations on top of the others.

A loudspeaker is a conduit. Its job is to convey musical or other audio information unaltered. If the producer wants to monkey around with the natural sound that originally entered the microphones, that's his creative privilege. He'll be judged by the musical end results. But if the speaker becomes creative, that's bad design.

By the same token, if some classical record producers prefer a warm, pillowy, edgeless string sound, that

doesn't mean your speakers should impart those same qualities to cymbals, triangles or high trumpets. (Stravinsky's transients can be as hard as rock.)

And if you like to listen at very high volume levels (after all, that's what rock is about—but so is *Die Götterdämmerung*),

you still don't need a speaker that achieves high efficiency through spurious resonances. What you need is something like the Rectilinear 5.

Everything in this remarkably original design was conceived to end the trade-off between efficiency and accuracy. The four drivers are made to an entirely new set of specifications. The filter network that feeds the drivers is totally unlike the traditional crossover network. Even the cabinet material is new and different.

Of course, those who feel threatened by all this fuss about accuracy and naturalness will point out that the monitor speakers preferred by engineers and producers in recording studios are usually of the zippy, super-aggressive variety.

That's perfectly true, but the reason happens to be strictly nonmusical.

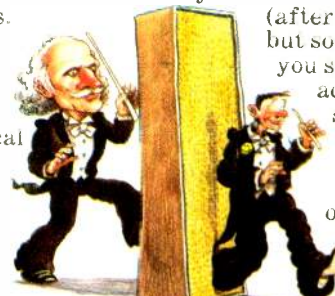
"I use the XYZ speaker only as a tool," a top producer explained to us. "I wouldn't have it in my house. It really blasts at you when you crank up the volume, so that any little glitch on the tape hits you over the head. After eight hours in the studio, that's what it takes to get your attention. I know how to deal with those unpleasant highs; they're in the speaker, not on my tape."

It's easy enough to find out for yourself. Any reputable dealer will let you hear the Rectilinear 5 side by side with a "rock" or "monitor-type" speaker. Adjust each speaker by ear to the *same* high volume level, making sure the amplifiers are of good quality. Then listen. To rock *or* classical.

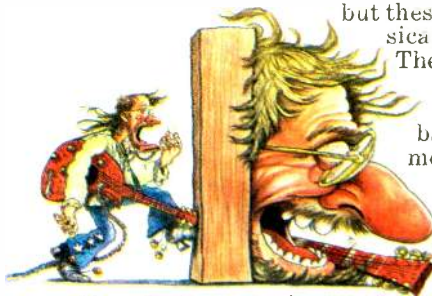
Then and there, the myth will crumble.

## RECTILINEAR®

Rectilinear Research Corp., 107 Bruckner Blvd., Bronx, N.Y. 10454  
Canada: H. Roy Gray Limited, Ontario



Equally wrong: Classical sound made vague and spineless by the speaker.



Wrong: Freaky sound made even freakier by the speaker.



Rectilinear 5 contemporary Laboratory Series bookshelf/floor speaker system: \$299.00  
Rectilinear Dispersion Base (patent pending) optional.

record diameter is selected automatically, and the arm is lowered to play the record. At the end the arm is raised pneumatically and returned to the rest position. The elaborate logic-control system prevents the arm's being lowered to the rotating platter surface if there is no record in place. Speed selection and arm cueing can also be performed manually. Buttons on the control panel move the arm to left or right either quickly or slowly, and another button lowers or raises it. Both playing speeds can be fine-tuned over a range of about  $\pm 3$  per cent.

The arm's tracking-force setting is visible through a small window in the pivot assembly.

The 4002's chassis (including platter and arm as a single unit) is suspended by a system of leaf springs and pendulums. This is said to convert any physical shock reaching the turntable into vertical motion, which is then rapidly damped by the mass of the assembly. The fundamental resonance of the chassis-spring assembly is 4.5 Hz. Wow and flutter of the turntable are 0.025 per cent, and rumble is  $-65$  dB. The Beogram 4002 is

supplied with the B&O MMC 6000 phono cartridge, for which a plug-in receptacle is provided in the arm. Resonance of the arm-cartridge combination is about 12 Hz. The turntable's overall dimensions are  $19\frac{1}{4} \times 4 \times 15$  inches, including the wood base and hinged dust cover supplied. The 12-inch aluminum platter has raised ridges to support records of different diameters. Price: \$650. B&O will also have a model available with a CD-4 demodulator built into its base as an option.

*Circle 118 on reader service card*

## Marantz Model 3800 Stereo Preamplifier



● A stereo preamplifier with built-in Dolby B noise-reduction circuitry is now offered by Marantz as the Model 3800. While it is intended principally for the encoding and decoding of tapes (and decoding of Dolbyized FM broadcasts), Marantz suggests that the circuitry can also be used to good effect in the playback mode as a dynamic noise filter for non-Dolbyized material. Complete calibration controls for the Dolby circuits are provided on the front panel, as well as a pushbutton to generate a Dolby calibration tone within the preamplifier and a small meter for determining Dolby lev-

els. Two stereo tape decks are accommodated by the 3800, with dubbing from either one to the other possible. Other inputs include two sets of magnetic-phono jacks (one set becomes microphone inputs when microphones are plugged into the front-panel phone jacks), tuner, and auxiliary. A mode selector provides positions for stereo, reverse stereo, and mono reproduction of either or both channels.

The tone controls of the 3800 take the form of separate sliders for each channel, providing independent adjustment of bass, treble, and mid-range. For the bass and treble controls there is a pushbutton-selected choice of two "turnover" frequencies at which the controls begin to act. Switches make it possible to bypass the tone controls completely or to permit them to affect signals going to the tape recorders. The preamplifier also has a low-cut filter, two high-cut filters (acting at 5,000 or 9,000 Hz), and switchable loudness compensation. Front-panel selection of main and remote speakers is

possible if the power-amplifier outputs are brought back to special connectors in the rear of the 3800; the speakers are then connected to terminals provided on the preamplifier. Also on the rear panel are six a.c. convenience outlets (four switched), two sets of preamplifier main outputs plus oscilloscope outputs, and screwdriver adjustments for FM Dolby calibration.

The Marantz 3800 is rated at an output of 3 volts with an output impedance of 150 ohms. Harmonic and intermodulation distortion are 0.02 and 0.01 per cent, respectively, at rated output, and the signal-to-noise ratio for the phono inputs is 100 dB, referred to the maximum output of the phono section. Frequency response is 20 to 20,000 Hz  $\pm 0.25$  dB. The Model 3800 measures  $15\frac{3}{8} \times 5\frac{3}{4} \times 8\frac{3}{4}$  inches. Price: \$649.95. The Model 3600 preamplifier, identical except for its lack of Dolby circuits, costs \$499.95. A wood cabinet is optional at an extra \$32.95.

*Circle 119 on reader service card*

## Sony TC-177SD Three-Head Stereo Cassette Deck



● SUPERSCOPE has introduced the Model TC-177SD stereo cassette deck, a three-head design (separate ferrite erase, record, and playback heads) that permits off-the-tape monitoring during recording. The transport employs dual capstans for controlled tape tension across the heads and minimum wow and

flutter. The machine has built-in Dolby-B noise reduction and separate three-position bias and equalization switches that adjust the recording and playback circuits for standard, chromium-dioxide, or Ferri-Chrome tape. The recording-level meters, which have VU characteristics, are augmented by a peak-indicator light that responds to brief excessive levels. In addition, a peak limiter can be switched in to keep recording levels at 0 VU or below. The transport controls are latching solenoid-assisted push-buttons, and they include a pause function. A memory-rewind feature will return the tape to any point preselected on the three-digit tape-index counter when the rewind button is pressed. Recording-level controls are sliders, separate for microphone and line inputs to permit mixing. A single knob controls

playback levels. The deck's microphone inputs are intended for low-impedance microphones, and the stereo headphone jack, which has a two-position switch to adjust volume, will drive 8-ohm phones.

The Sony TC-177SD has a frequency response of 20 to 20,000 Hz with chromium-dioxide or Ferri-Chrome tape, and 20 to 17,000 Hz with standard tape. Wow and flutter are 0.07 per cent, and signal-to-noise ratios (Dolby system off) are 49 dB with standard tape, 55 dB with chromium-dioxide and Ferri-Chrome tape. The Dolby circuits improve these figures by 5 dB or more at 1,000 Hz and by 10 dB above 5,000 Hz. The high-speed wind time for a C-60 cassette is 90 seconds. Dimensions of the TC-177SD are approximately  $17\frac{1}{8} \times 6\frac{1}{8} \times 12\frac{1}{2}$  inches. Price: \$699.95.

*Circle 120 on reader service card*





## ONE OF THE FINEST RECEIVERS YOU CAN FIND. IF YOU CAN FIND IT.

The Concord CR-260 is damn hard to find, because we're just as particular about the stores who sell it as we are about the quality of workmanship that goes into it.

And for under \$250\* it's damn hard to beat. You simply can't find features like ours in such a beautifully designed receiver for such a reasonable price.

While other receivers may have some of our features, none have all of them! There's simply no competition for the CR-260 at this price.

Here's what makes the CR-260 worth finding:

We've taken the care to make tuning more precise, even under the most difficult conditions.

While other receivers have one FM tuning knob, that's not good enough for the CR-260. We went to the trouble of engineering an additional second control for ultra-fine FM tuning.

And when it's receiving a stereo station the dial pointer changes from amber to red.

It even has two FM meters, one for signal strength,

and another for center of channel tuning. Other deluxe touches are the detents on the bass and treble controls that help you reset any combination exactly.

And here are some of the vital statistics: 50 watts rms total power output at 1% total harmonic distortion. FM capture ratio an incredibly low 1.5 db. And for just pure aesthetics, a beautiful blackout dial.

You'll want the full story on all the CR-260's features before you begin your search; just drop a line to: Concord Products, Benjamin Electronic Sound Co., 40 Smith Street, Farmingdale, N.Y. 11735.

We hope it's easier for you to find than it was for us to make.



**THE CONCORD CR-260.**  
Damn hard to find. Damn hard to beat.

\*Manufacturer's suggested retail, slightly higher in the west

CIRCLE NO. 17 ON READER SERVICE CARD

# 3 GOOD REASONS FOR BUYING AN EMPIRE CART-RIDGE

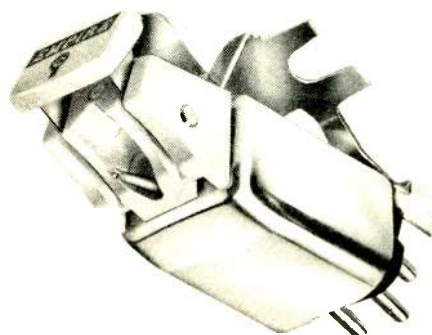
**1. YOUR RECORDS WILL LAST LONGER.** Unlike ordinary magnetic cartridges, Empire's variable reluctance cartridges have a diamond stylus that floats free of its magnets. This imposes much less weight on the record surface and insures much longer record life.

**2. YOUR RECORDS WILL SOUND BETTER.** Empire sound is spectacular. Distortion at standard groove velocity does not exceed .05%. Instruments don't waver, channel separation is razor sharp.

**3. MORE CARTRIDGE FOR YOUR MONEY.** We use 4 poles, 4 coils and three magnets in our cartridge (more than any other brand). Each cartridge must pass rigid tests before shipment.

For more good reasons to buy an Empire cartridge write for your free "Guide to Sound Design," EMPIRE SCIENTIFIC CORP., Dept. LL Garden City, N.Y. 11530

Mfd. U.S.A. **EMPIRE**



CIRCLE NO. 21 ON READER SERVICE CARD

## AUDIO QUESTIONS and ANSWERS

By LARRY KLEIN *Technical Editor*



### Car Dolby

**Q.** *A friend of mine spent a good sum of money for a car stereo tape player that included, among other things, Dolby noise reduction. It seems to me that the normal noise of driving would eliminate the possibility of detecting any substantial amount of tape hiss, and therefore anyone who pays extra for a Dolbyized car player is wasting money. I and several others would appreciate your opinion on this subject.*

MICHAEL W. MARKS  
APO, New York

**A.** On the basis of my experience with non-Dolby eight-track and cassette players for automobiles, I concur with your reasoning. Unless the car interior is very quiet and the car speakers capable of reasonable high-frequency response, then tape hiss is either masked by other noises or simply not loud enough to be obtrusive. For home cassette and eight-track machines Dolby circuits are, of course, as important as ever—particularly since Columbia, for one, is now Dolbyizing all their eight-track cartridges.

### 15- to 20-Degree Tracking

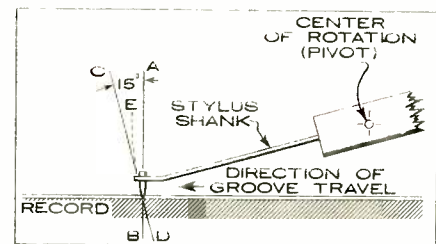
**Q.** *I have heard a rumor that phono cartridge and record manufacturers are switching to a 20-degree tracking angle. Where does that leave all us audiophiles with our investments in expensive 15-degree tracking-angle phono cartridges?*

C. E. MARTIN  
Boise, Idaho

**A.** Exactly where you were before. Some background will help clarify the situation. The 15-degree standard refers to the angle (or tilt from vertical A-B) that the recording stylus assumes when cutting the groove modulation into the master disc (C-D in the diagram). Theoretically, the pivoted playback stylus should follow approximately the same vertical movement (E-D) as the cutting

stylus if maximum playback fidelity is to be achieved. But, for several practical reasons, records are not all cut with an effective 15-degree tilt of the cutting stylus. For one thing, there's a certain amount of spring in the lacquer surface of the master disc that makes the cutting angle slightly ambiguous. Furthermore, recording engineers will frequently tilt the cutting head a degree or so in either direction in order to achieve a quieter cut on a given lacquer surface. And, to top off the confusion, there are several different ways of measuring the vertical cutting angle—all giving different numbers.

Now let's look at the playback end. The phono cartridges that we've



checked since the advent of the 15-degree "standard" reveal that a few cartridges fall slightly below 15 degrees, some go as high as 22 degrees, and most fall somewhere between the two figures. It seems that a phono cartridge that operates at exactly 15 degrees is very difficult to manufacture, simply because the geometry of the cartridge's stylus assembly and internal generating elements demand that the pivot point (and hence the cartridge body) be extremely close to the record surface—so close, in fact, that the bottom of the cartridge is likely to scrape the disc surface whenever a warp comes along. Given all this, your guess is as good as mine as to the actual angle that most cartridge styli are operating at.

Anyway, a re-evaluation of the situation has now resulted in the new standard, which calls for a 20-degree tracking angle rather than 15. Are we going to

*(Continued on page 26)*

# A Touch of Elegance

The loudspeaker that has achieved international distinction as the most highly reviewed speaker, regardless of size or price, is now available in a new, exciting continental styling option.



*The Mark of Excellence.*

**BOSE 901**<sup>®</sup>  
*Continental*



EMPIRE

*Empire  
Turntable*

EMPIRE

## From the Specs...

World's finest hysteresis synchronous motor—self cooling, high torque type with an inside-out rotor: Coupled to a 3 inch thick balanced flywheel through a flexible drive belt, precision ground to a tolerance of  $\pm .0001$  in. Total vibration transmitted to the record is less than one millionth of an inch! Rumble—90 dB (RRL). Wow and flutter an almost unmeasurable .01%. Lateral friction of the tone arm is only 1/1000th of a gram. Will track records as low as .1 gram. Exceeds every broadcast specification for professional playback equipment.

## From the Critics...

"A silent giant that's built to last—probably forever"	<b>Stereo &amp; Hi Fi Times</b>	"The feel of precision machinery...rumble was inaudible"	<b>Hi Fi Stereo Buyers Guide</b>
"No acoustic feedback even directly in front of loud-speakers"	<b>Hirsch-Houck Laboratories Stereo Review Magazine</b>	"Absolutely no speed error at either 33-1/3 or 45 rpm"	<b>High Fidelity Magazine</b>
"Built to last... gives great results"	<b>FM Guide</b>	"The turntable suspension is almost impervious to jarring or bumping"	<b>Audio Magazine</b>

## From the Public...

"I'm glad I bought it" **E.G., Lowell, Mass.** "It has no faults" **H.W., Birmingham, Ala.** "The whole turntable is beautiful" **D.G., Kalamazoo, Mich.** "No plastic parts" **T.H., Wilton, Conn.** "Own one for nine years" **W.L., Houston, Texas** "General overall feeling of quality" **R.J. Ft. Knox, Ky.** "Best reputation among people who know" **F.A., Sarasota, Fla.** "Far out" **J.W., Milwaukee, Wisc.** "Workmanship is outstanding" **R.W., Baltimore, Md.** "Fantastic" **R.E., Canton, Ohio** "Empire has a wonderful attitude towards the customer" **R.B., Arlington, Va.** "The best turntable in the world" **H.M., Honolulu, Hawaii**

# “THE BEST TURNTABLE IN THE WORLD”

The Troubador Model 598III comes complete with walnut base, plexiglass dust cover and world's finest cartridge (Empire 4000 D/III). List price \$399.95

Listening is believing—ask your hi fi dealer for a demonstration and write for your FREE "Guide to Sound Design." **EMPIRE SCIENTIFIC CORP.**, Garden City, N.Y. 11530

Mfd. U.S.A.

CIRCLE NO. 99 ON READER SERVICE CARD



SOME OF THE BOYS who make Jack Daniel's Whiskey during the week make a good brand of music on weekends.



Ray Rogers and his group play pig roasts, benefits and country jamborees throughout Moore County. Here in our Hollow, they handle an assortment of jobs to help smooth

out our whiskey. And they take equal pride in this line of work. You see, Ray says the country is filled with men who can make music. But there's only a handful who can make Jack Daniel's.



CHARCOAL  
MELLOWED



DROP



BY DROP

see a new crop of "20-degree" cartridges? Who knows? In any case, of all the problems that trouble the recording process, I regard the vertical tracking angle as being one of the least significant. I doubt that vertical-tracking errors of even 10 or 15 degrees would be audible 99 per cent of the time.

#### Recording Separate Cassette Channels

**Q.** Why is it not possible to buy a stereo cassette recorder that provides the option of recording either the right or left channels separately? I have used this feature on my reel-to-reel machine for special effects in audio-visual presentations, and if I buy a cassette deck I would like to have the same features.

CARROLL LANG  
Gilmore City, Iowa

**A.** Philips, the licensor of the cassette format, insists that cassettes be "mono compatible," by which they mean that any stereo program material recorded on a cassette should also be playable (in mono) on a half-track mono cassette player. However, if different programs were recorded on tracks one and two of a cassette, such mono compatibility would not occur. There are also a couple of technical problems that would have to be solved. The crosstalk between the two sections of the cassette head, which isn't bothersome for stereo, might be very audible with two adjacent mono tracks with different material on them. In addition, such a setup would require an erase head with two separate closely spaced gaps. (Present cassette erase heads are all half-track, because they are designed to erase *both* channels of a stereo recording simultaneously.) A quarter-track erase head that would effectively operate on only one of four cassette channels at a time and leave the others untouched might be very expensive to produce.

Incidentally, there *are* some special cassette machines for audio/visual use that can simultaneously record two different *mono* programs—each using about half the tape width—both going in the same direction. The upper track serves for one mono signal, the bottom one for the other, which might be a slide-change triggering signal or a student response in a language-lab setup. This sort of arrangement seems to obey the letter of the law set down by Philips and at the same time avoids the technical problems of producing a quarter-track cassette erase head.

*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!*

Tennessee Whiskey • 90 Proof • Distilled and Bottled by Jack Daniel Distillery  
Lem Motlow, Prop., Inc., Lynchburg (Pop. 361), Tennessee

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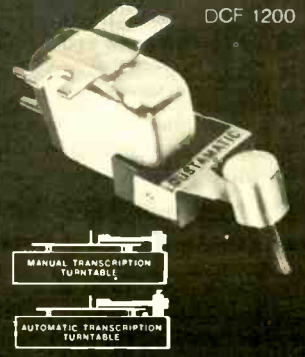
DCF 2000



## STEREO AND MATRIX

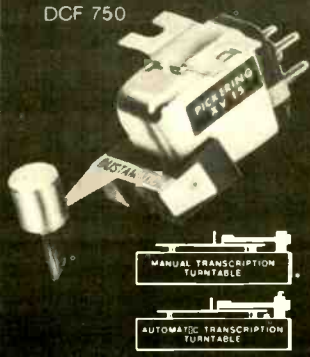
XV-15 1200E

DCF 1200



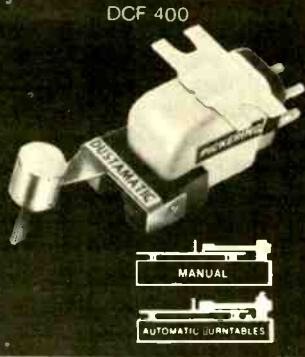
XV-15 750E

DCF 750



XV-15 400E

DCF 400



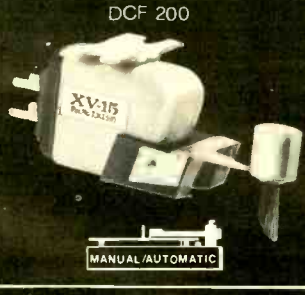
XV-15 350

DCF 350



XV-15 200E

DCF 200



XV-15 150

DCF 150



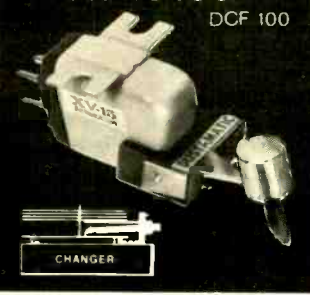
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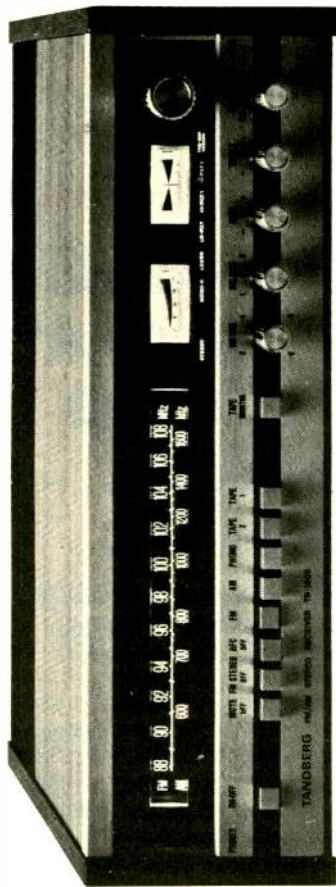
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# AUDIO NEWS

## VIEWS AND COMMENT

By LARRY KLEIN  
*Technical Editor*

● SOME five years ago I heard a number of four-channel tapes made by Acoustic Research that convinced me that quadraphonic sound reproduction really did have merit, that when everything was done correctly, it could provide a simulation of sonic reality far beyond the capabilities of even the best stereo reproduction. Unfortunately, nothing I've heard since in four-channel has equaled those tapes—until recently, when I was invited by Mitchell Cotter, a consulting engineer well-known to audio cognoscenti, to hear some of the work he has been doing in four-channel recording.

Cotter is a dedicated man who attacks problems right at their roots. For this one, he not only designed and built his own microphones, but a four-channel tape recorder as well—how else could the desired better-than-90-dB signal-to-noise ratio be achieved without either Dolby or dbx? Technical details on Mitchell's magic machine are not available pending granting of patents, but I did hear the tapes made with it, and *wow!*

Picture a large, slightly bright listening room with a pair of LST-1's stacked near each of the four corners, each of the eight speakers being driven by one channel of *four* Phase Linear 400 power amplifiers. With the master tape running in and my ear pressed practically against a grille cloth, there is *nothing* to be heard. Then the pianist hits the opening chords of Prokofiev's Toccata, Opus 11, and it's *real!* You would swear that the artist, Natalie Ryshna, is seated at her Bechstein concert grand located *right there!* The dynamics, the acoustics—everything—were as close to perfect reality as any recording I have ever heard.

By the time you read this, Cotter's company will have augmented its present catalog of three piano tapes with several others. Each four-channel tape is duplicated on the best available 1/4-inch mastering tape and includes a precision four-track alignment segment. Price per reel is \$19.95. For further information, send a stamped, self-addressed long envelope to Ambiphon Records, P. O. Box 341, Kingsbridge Station, Bronx, N. Y. 10463.

● DURING the recent Consumer Electronics Show in Chicago (covered in detail by Ralph Hodges in the September issue), I had an opportunity to hear a prototype of what can only be described as a revolutionary SQ-decoder "logic system" created by Tate Audio, an English firm. It has always seemed evident (to my ears, at least) that CD-4 discs—when they worked, that is—delivered a separation between channels superior to anything that any matrixed disc, however assisted by "logic" or other circuits, seemed able to provide. And without adequate separation, the location of the listener within the speaker quadrangle becomes so critical that channel balance can shift radically if one so much as moves from one end of a couch to another. I haven't tried to correlate just what "adequate" is with respect to precise decibel measurements, but I know it when I hear it. For me, four-channel matrix equipment that doesn't have *full* logic, wave matching, Vario-Matrix, or some other very sophisticated technique for untangling the channels is barely worth installing.

When listening to the Tate matrix decoder, however, if I hadn't known there was an SQ record on the turntable I would have sworn I was hearing either a CD-4 disc or a discrete four-channel tape—the separation was *that* good. I don't know how well the Tate unit will stand up under the toughest test of all—a direct A-B comparison between a well-recorded four-channel master tape and an SQ-encoded/Tate-decoded disc of the same material. But I've never been terribly concerned about whether or not I'm hearing a perfect sonic facsimile of what I would have heard during the recording session (it would be impossible with studio-made rock recordings anyway). What I want to hear in my home is music reproduced in a way that is either sonically plausible (if "reality" is the goal) and/or clean and interesting. The Tate decoder, depending on the quality of the SQ program fed to it, was both. With SQ discs playing, I could approach any one speaker and still hear apparently "discrete" sound coming from the other three. In addition, normal stereo discs, tapes, and FM broadcasts were reproduced with the best *synthesized* quadraphonic effects I have ever heard.

Tate won't reveal the operating principles, since their protective patents are still pending. In the form in which I saw it, incidentally, the four inputs of the black box were connected to the four outputs of a conventional no-logic SQ decoder—which indicates its potential as an add-on *super*-logic enhancer for existing SQ equipment. The Tate integrated-circuit modules will probably not be appearing in any original hardware for at least six months, but when they do, SQ will finally have an effective answer to CD-4's separation challenge.



In every sense the Infinity Column is an extraordinary speaker system.

It has our exotic, patented Wave Transmission Line tweeter, the first transient-perfect, totally coherent 360° tweeter in the world.† It has two additional midrange tweeters, one rear-mounted for ambience; as well as our two patented woofers, one down-mounted, in their Active Transmission Line enclosures.

It has an extraordinarily flat

frequency response, giving you *natural*, accurate orchestral timbres. Both acoustic and electronic instruments are reproduced with extraordinary accuracy—free from the “bumped-up” mid-bass and mid-highs that characterize the artificial sound of many much more expensive systems. And you don’t need Boulder Dam to drive it.

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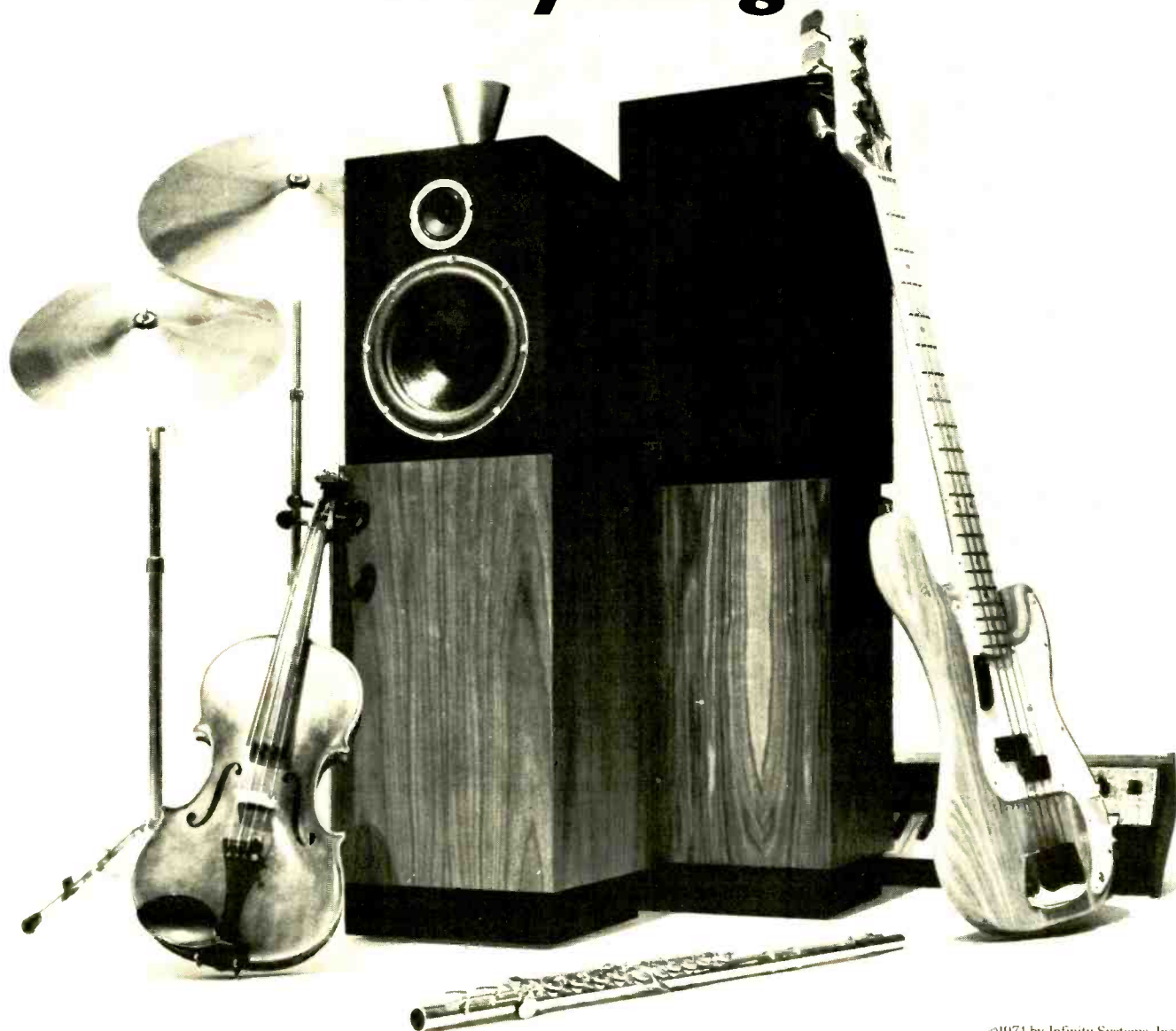
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†Developed and manufactured by Infinity under license by Ohm Acoustics Corporation.

\*Slightly more East of the Mississippi. Which is an other incentive for living in California.

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# AUDIO BASICS

By RALPH HODGES



## FOUR-CHANNEL LOGIC SYSTEMS

**M**OST four-channel receivers incorporate one or more "matrix decoders" (SQ, QS, etc.) to process appropriately encoded four-channel discs (or FM broadcasts), and even to provide a synthetic four-channel effect from ordinary stereo material. If you've inspected any of the current models, you've probably noticed switch positions for these modes of operation indicated on the front panels. What you'll be noticing on many more units in the near future, either on front panels or in owner's manuals, are references to various types of logic assistance for these decoders.

The purpose of logic, when added to the basic matrix decoders, is to reduce the audible effects of *signal leakage* between channels—a characteristic of all matrix systems. When interchannel leakage occurs, there is a loss of channel separation that can adversely affect the distinctness and stability of stereo localization. Logic assistance consists of one or more circuits that respond to certain specified conditions in the four-channel playback signal and take action, of one sort or another, only when these conditions crop up. Otherwise it remains inactive.

Decoders for the CBS SQ system are available with a number of logic "options," variously termed *front-back*, *wave-matching*, and *variable-blend*. Sansui's QS system offers *Vario-Matrix* logic, which also comes in several degrees of sophistication and complexity.

● **Front-back logic.** Since the basic SQ matrix is inherently limited in its amount of front-to-back separation, there is sometimes a tendency for center-front soloists to "drift" (that is, change their audible location) in the direction of the rear speakers, and vice versa. Front-back logic was developed to attenuate (literally, turn down) either the front or rear speakers when conditions in the signal indicate that a near-center voice or instrument really belongs between the opposite speaker pair.

● **Wave-matching logic.** Wave-match-

ing or "gain-riding" logic is similar in its action to *front-back*, but it is able to attenuate any of the four speaker channels *individually*. The term "wave-matching" refers to the way in which the logic senses both phase and amplitude similarities between all four channels to detect leakage.

● **Variable-blend logic.** Variable-blend, in its present form, is an extension of the front-back scheme. Signals that leak, for example, from the front channels to the rear will be mutually out of phase in the two rear channels. Therefore, if the left-rear and right-rear channels are electrically mixed ("blended") in certain logic-controlled amounts, some of the leakage material will be electrically canceled. Material properly belonging in the rear channels will *not* be canceled.

Among the multitude of SQ decoders available, some have no logic, others just one type, and a few, often referred to as "full-logic," have combinations of several types. The wave-matching/variable-blend combination is the newest and, audibly, the most effective.

● **Vario-Matrix.** The amount of separation in any given sector of a four-channel sound field is largely determined by the characteristics of the basic matrix itself. Sansui's Vario-Matrix is a technique that, under logic control, actually alters the characteristics of the QS matrix continuously. According to Sansui, the direction-sensing mechanism of human hearing is dominated by strong signals. In other words, the ear tends to be tolerant of directional ambiguities in softer signals if there is a sufficiently loud signal (a dominant voice, instrument, etc.) present that it can home in on accurately. Therefore, Vario-Matrix is designed to shift around the available separation of the basic matrix, favoring the sector from which the loudest signal is supposed to be emanating.

When considering a four-channel purchase, you should look closely into the type of logic provided (if any), for the differences are quite audible.

# Live versus recorded at Covent Garden

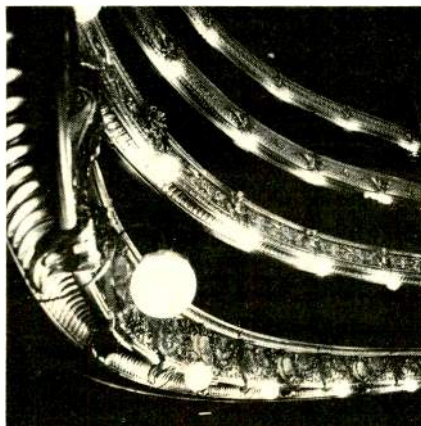


Rehearsal scene from Mozart's *Don Giovanni* at Covent Garden, London.

The most severe test for a loudspeaker system is to be compared with live music. The ultimate success is for the music from the speakers to remain indistinguishable from the real thing.

This is exactly what is happening at The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, London. Covent Garden has purchased five AR-LST speaker systems as well as a number of AR-7s. The AR speakers are in constant use in such 'roles' as the Commendatore or the voices of the underworld in *Don Giovanni*. They are also used for the offstage brass band in *Aida* and the taped sequences in the new production of Benjamin Britten's *Owen Wingrave*, as well as for many other purposes.

A recent article by Adrian Hope in England's *Hi-Fi Sound* magazine reported the comments of the Covent Garden technicians who installed the system: 'If you think about it, Covent Garden cannot make do with any audio equipment other than the very best. In a recording studio what you are putting out as a final end product is a recording. What



Twenty-four AR-6 speakers are installed at the Danish Royal Opera.

we are putting out here is a live performance and anything electronic is automatically the subject of the classic AB test — the audience can hear live sound *and* sound from a loudspeaker. So they have a perpetual yardstick to judge by.'

The idea of course is to create the illusion for the critical Covent Garden audience that they are always hearing live music.

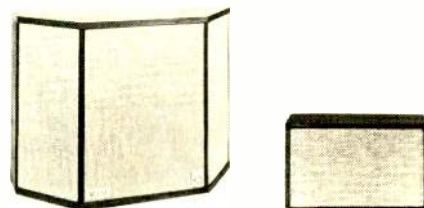
AR itself has produced public live-versus-recorded concerts. Audiences were asked to distinguish between the performance of live musicians on stage and a recording of the same music reproduced over AR loudspeakers — the same AR loudspeakers that were designed for home listening. As at Covent Garden, the illusion of live music has been virtually 100-percent effective.

The use of AR speakers in live musical performances doesn't stop with Covent Garden's AR-LSTs and AR-7s. The Danish Royal Opera makes constant use of twenty-four AR-6s and six AR-LSTs. And La Scala has recently installed four AR-LSTs.



Four AR-LSTs are in use at La Scala, Milan.

Try the grand illusion for yourself. There's a five-year guarantee that your AR speakers will perform as well as Covent Garden's. Or the Danish Royal Opera's. Or La Scala's.



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West Germany's craftsmen have earned a reputation for building turntables with superb engineering, costly materials, careful manufacturing and clean, functional design.

Until the introduction of the PE 3000 series of turntables, this kind of precision was available only at rather high prices. The first generation of the 3000 series proved otherwise: their prices began at little more than those of ordinary record changers.

The PE concept has now been carried on with three new models. Even the lowest priced, the 3044, offers such precision features as variable pitch control and cue control viscous

damped in both directions.

The 3046 and 3048 offer die-cast, dynamically-balanced platters; rotating single-play spindles; and separate anti-skating scales for different stylus types.

The 3060 continues at the top of the line. As Hirsch-Houck Labs reported in Stereo Review: "The performance of the PE 3060 belongs in the top rank of automatic turntables."

To appreciate the PE concept in terms of performance, visit your authorized PE dealer and compare PE turntables with others priced well above them. You'll see what makes each PE the best automatic turntable at its price.



Impro Industries, Inc., 120 Hartford Ave., Mt. Vernon, N.Y. 10553

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# TECHNICAL TALK

By JULIAN D. HIRSCH

● **FM TUNER MEASUREMENTS VS. SOUND QUALITY:** One of the basic difficulties in judging high-fidelity components is that their measured performance specifications do not necessarily correlate with what we hear. I have commented in past months on this problem, especially as it pertains to loudspeakers, but a similar (if less obvious) situation exists with regard to electronic components as well.

We are accustomed to judging the sensitivity of an FM tuner from the so-called "IHF Usable Sensitivity" rating. After all, this *is* the sensitivity, isn't it? Not exactly! The IHF defines one way of using test instruments to provide a measure of tuner sensitivity, but it is not the only way, by any means. And unfortunately the IHF technique doesn't really tell us very much about how well the tuner can turn weak signals into acceptable audio, which is what we assume "sensitivity" is all about.

The IHF Usable Sensitivity rating is defined as the level (in microvolts) of a fully modulated signal that results in a total of 3.2 per cent (-30 dB) of combined noise and distortion in the tuner's audio output. Depending on the specific tuner, this residual noise may be largely hiss or harmonic distortion, or (more usually) a mixture of the two. Unfortunately, such a signal would be judged by most as somewhat short of achieving high-fidelity sound. In other words, the IHF sensitivity specification really describes the lowest signal level in microvolts ( $\mu\text{V}$ ) that a tuner can accept if it is to deliver what amounts to an *unusable* output! It is really not much of a basis for comparing tuners, yet the designers and manufacturers fight for every last tenth of a microvolt of IHF sensitivity in order to convey a positive impression to the buying public.

The plain truth is that there is no way to judge solely from the IHF Usable Sensitivity number whether one tuner is actually more sensitive in use than another,

let alone the *degree* of such a difference. It is perfectly possible for a tuner with a  $5\text{-}\mu\text{V}$  IHF rating to give *quieter* reception of a weak signal (say, in the 10- to  $20\text{-}\mu\text{V}$  range) than would another tuner whose measured sensitivity is  $1.5\text{ }\mu\text{V}$ . Which one would *you* say is more sensitive?

This limitation has long been recognized, and in the new IHF/IEEE FM tuner standard a second definition of sensitivity has been added. This is the "50-dB Quieting Sensitivity," which refers to the input that reduces background noise (hiss) to 50 dB below the full modulation level. Such a signal is at least lis-

such as is published with our test reports on tuners and receivers.

If you examine a typical tuner quieting curve (see accompanying example), you will note that, at least in stereo, it rarely reaches its maximum quieting (lowest noise level) until the test-signal input exceeds  $1,000\text{ }\mu\text{V}$  or so. However, some of the best tuners are fully quieted at a few hundred microvolts, while a number of inexpensive units need an input of many thousands of microvolts to reach this condition. If you compare these tuners by listening to them, your ears will have no difficulty deciding which is quietest. This is actually a good criterion of excellence if the tuners are even roughly comparable in other respects. The same information can be inferred from our quieting curves. However, a simple listing of numbers, even if the 50-dB quieting sensitivity is included, cannot convey the same information in such a meaningful way.

I do not wish to imply that quieting sensitivity is the only basis for ranking FM tuners, but it is certainly one of the most obvious audible distinctions between them. Listening to the background hiss during pauses in the program eliminates such uncontrolled variables as the specific program material, the quality of the broadcasting station, and even the associated amplifiers and speakers.

Some of the differences in sound quality between FM tuners relate to their frequency response, since it is common to use a sharp cut-off, high-frequency filter in the audio output to remove 19-kHz (19,000 Hz) and 38-kHz stereo pilot signals which may be imperfectly suppressed in the multiplex demodulator. These filters often begin to reduce the output above 12 kHz, and a drop of 2 to 4 dB at 15 kHz is not uncommon. This effect, where it exists, is noted in our test reports. Some of the best tuners do not depend on separate filters, but use advanced-design multiplex demodulators that inherently provide adequate

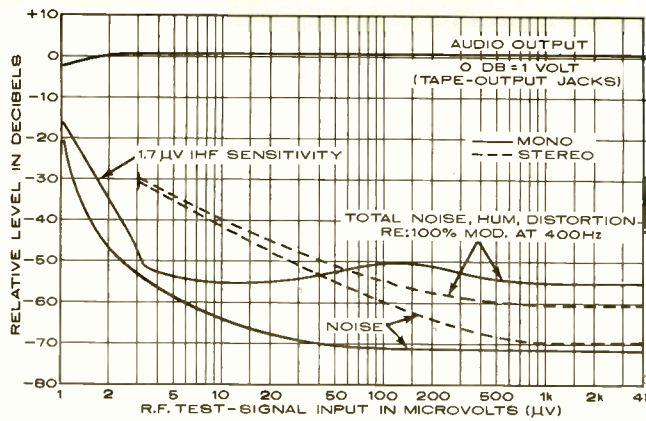
## TESTED THIS MONTH

●  
**Audioanalyst A-100X Speaker**  
**Scott R77S AM/FM Receiver**  
**Tandberg 9200XD Tape Deck**  
**Phase Linear 4000 Preamp**

tenable, though in most home listening environments one would still be very much aware of background hiss.

By considering both sensitivity figures—IHF and 50-dB quieting—one can judge the steepness of the tuner's limiting curve. Generally speaking, the steeper it is, the better the tuner is. Most good tuners, whose IHF sensitivities lie between 1.5 and  $3\text{ }\mu\text{V}$ , reach the 50-dB quieting point with inputs from 2.5 to  $10\text{ }\mu\text{V}$ . Fortunately, most of us do not try to listen to stereo signals (or even mono signals) that are in the range of  $10\text{ }\mu\text{V}$  or less. A typical "weak" signal is more likely to be in the 30- to  $100\text{-}\mu\text{V}$  range. Obviously, if one is to judge a tuner's performance in this critical range, one must examine the full quieting curve,

The levels of both random noise and total noise plus distortion are compared with the audio-output level as input-signal strength increases. Both mono and stereo are shown.



suppression of these unwanted signals. Incidentally, we have observed an interesting psychoacoustic effect that can cause the *apparent* brightness or "openness" of the program to be enhanced by the presence of small amounts of background hiss. (This same phenomenon also affects the apparent frequency response of high-frequency noise-reduction devices.) This effect, in all probability, has helped to make some tuners with unexceptional quieting and a loss of high-end response sound better than they really are.

When we come to distortion, it becomes very difficult to make any solid connection between measurements and audible effects. Particularly in stereo reception, distortion is a function of frequency and signal level, plus the addition of low-level spurious components arising from intermodulation between program distortions and the ultrasonic signals present in the multiplex demodulator. In a poor tuner, these can be heard as a "gargling" or fuzzy quality, and in the most advanced designs they are completely inaudible. Obviously, most

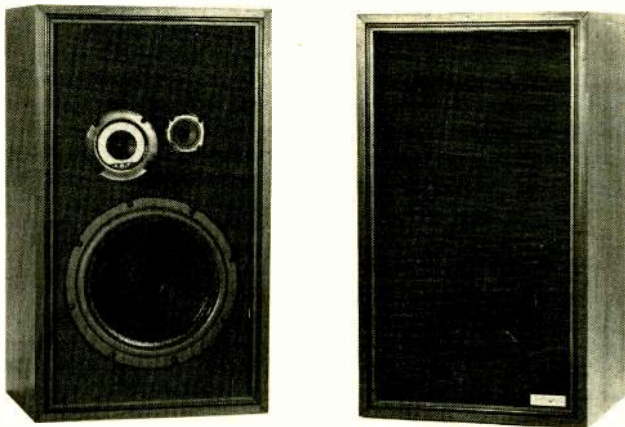
tuners fall between these limits, and the degree of offensiveness of such distortions depends on the type of programming you prefer and your own sensitivity to this particular deficiency. For most of us, low-level tuner distortions are submerged in the distortions inherent in the original records and tapes, and in the broadcasting process as well. Although this may be taken as a sad commentary on the quality of recorded and broadcast music, it also makes it possible for most of us to live with tuners we can afford. Those few tuners that are relatively free of these distortion effects are necessarily very expensive.

Summing up, when you are trying to pick the tuner that is best for you, do not be unduly influenced by the various "sensitivity" figures you will see quoted. Look for the signal level needed to achieve maximum quieting, and the actual signal-to-noise ratio at that level. This information can be obtained from our test reports, but it is even more easily determined by careful listening to the tuner and comparing it to others known to be of high quality. Either way, it is in this area that most of the real, audible differences between tuners will be found.

## EQUIPMENT TEST REPORTS

By Hirsch-Houck Laboratories

### Audioanalyst A-100X Speaker System



● **AUDIOANALYST'S** Model A-100X loudspeaker is a three-way "bookshelf" system covered in wood-grain vinyl. It measures 24<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> inches high, 13<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> inches wide, and 12 inches deep, and can be positioned either vertically or horizontally. The A-100X weighs about 35 pounds. The system impedance is nominally 8 ohms. The efficiency is moderately high for an acoustic-suspension system, and Audioanalyst recommends using an amplifier rated at 10 to 60 watts per channel. The dark, acoustically

transparent grille cloth is held in place by Velcro fasteners for easy removal and replacement.

The 10-inch high-compliance woofer, which is in a sealed enclosure, crosses over at 1,500 Hz to a 2-inch mid-range driver. The second crossover, to a 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>-inch wide-dispersion tweeter, takes place at 7,500 Hz. The crossover network uses inductors and capacitors, and two toggle switches in the rear of the cabinet permit adjustment of the mid-range and tweeter levels. Price: \$138.

● **Laboratory Measurements.** The smooth frequency response claimed for the A-100X was confirmed by our live-room frequency-response measurements, which roughly correspond to the total-energy-output characteristic of the speaker. When we joined our woofer response curve (close miked) to the reverberant-field curve, the composite frequency response was impressively flat—within ±3 dB from 40 to 15,000 Hz. Equally important, there were no "bumps" or "holes" in the curve greater than about 3 dB in amplitude, which is within the normal range of variation of our test method.

Audioanalyst states that the flattest response is obtained with both the tweeter and mid-range level switches in their LO positions, and this is supported by our findings, both in measurements and listening tests. However, each control changes the output of its associated driver by only 2 dB, the mid-range switch affecting frequencies from 2,000 to 7,000 Hz, and the tweeter switch affecting the frequencies above 6,000 Hz. The changes, resulting in a slight upward slope in the frequency response, are

(Continued on page 36)

# AKAI takes a giant step backward and forward.

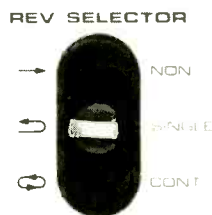
3 hours continuous record and playback with the "hands-off" wizardry of AKAI GXC-75D.

Just flip the magic switch and you never need to flip the tape. This is the stereo cassette wizard that thinks for itself. Record back and forth with automatic stop.

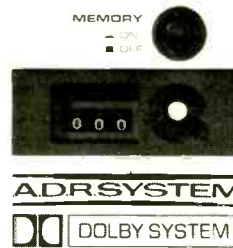
Playback can be one-way, both ways or continuous. Now you can tape an entire record collection, your favorite station or a live performance without missing a beat. The GXC-75D does it all for you, with incredibly faithful reproduction.

It has Dolby\* noise reduction, AKAI's exclusive ADRS (Automatic Distortion Reduction System) and over-level suppressor.

FREE! AKAI includes with the purchase of any tape recorder, BASF low-noise, hi-output reel-to-reel tape or 8-track cartridge, or Chromdioxid™ cassette. Up to \$16.00 retail value. (Offer good only in continental U.S.)



Illuminated, color-keyed control indicators let you know what's happening.



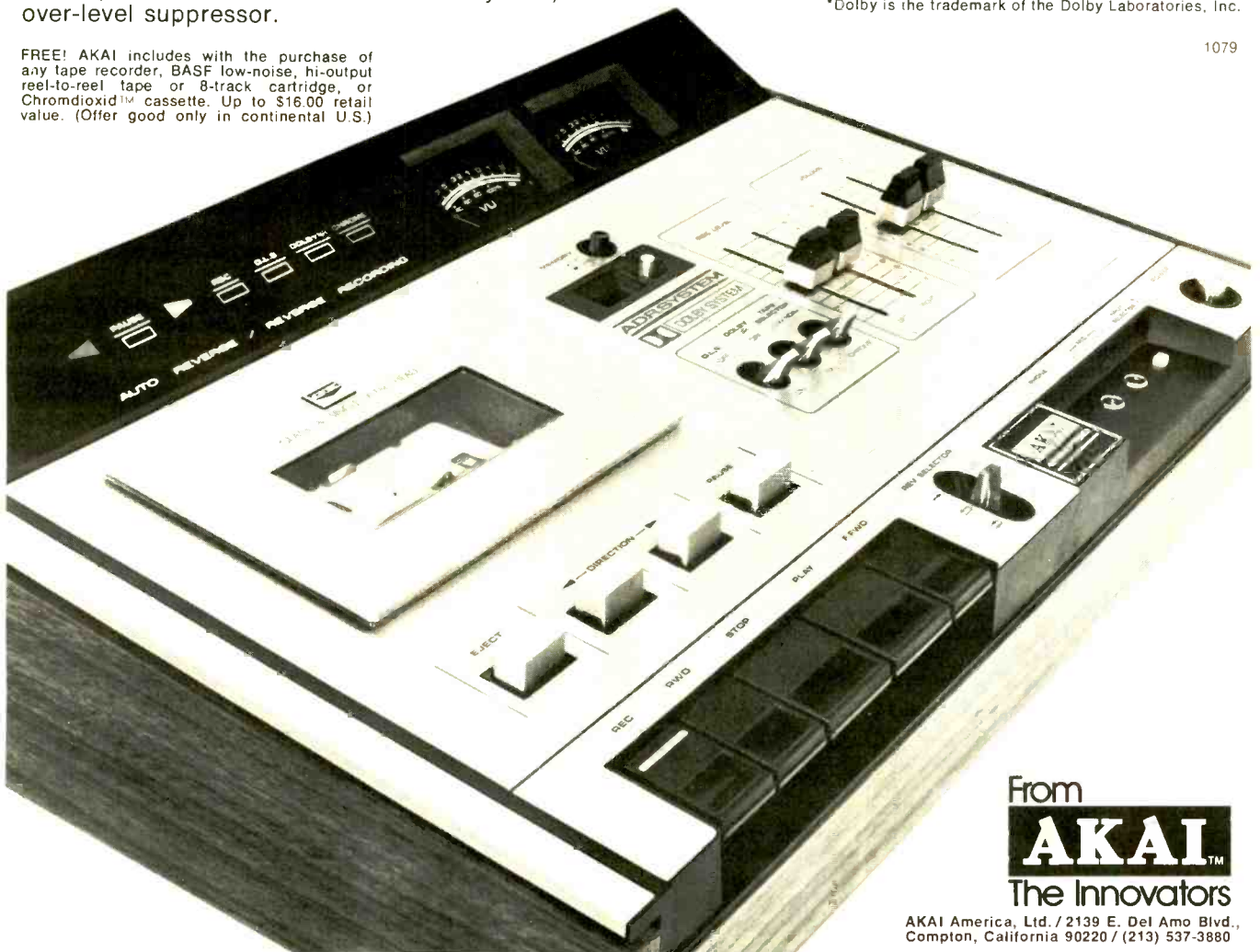
Precise switching controls one-way, round-trip, continuous playback and automatic stop.

Memory switch lets you return automatically to a pre-selected spot on the tape.

Get the wizard, just one of many ways to go cassette with AKAI, the innovators. From \$209.95 with Dolby.

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

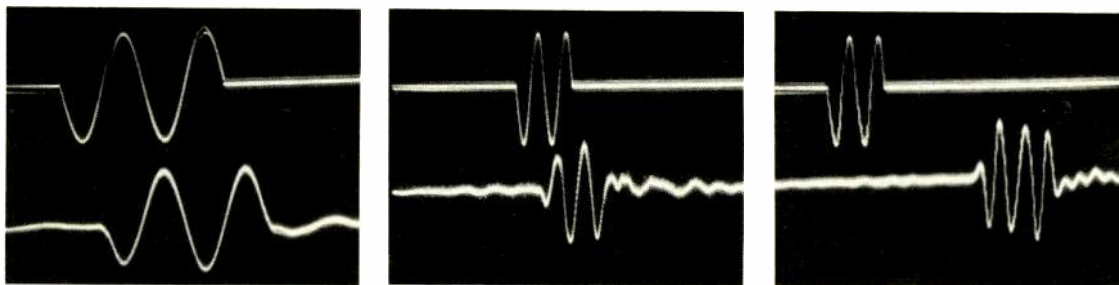
1079



From  
**AKAI™**  
The Innovators

AKAI America, Ltd. / 2139 E. Del Amo Blvd.,  
Compton, California 90220 / (213) 537-3880

Tone-burst performance of the A-100X, shown at (left to right) 500, 3,000, and 7,000 Hz, is better than average.



quite subtle, but they could be significant if the speakers were to be used in a highly absorbent acoustic environment.

As the specifications imply, the efficiency of the A-100X proved to be somewhat higher than that of most acoustic-suspension systems of comparable size. An input of about 0.5 watt in the octave centered at 1,000 Hz was sufficient to produce a 90-dB acoustic sound-pressure level (SPL) at a distance of one meter from the speaker. The bass distortion at a constant 90-dB SPL output was under 2 per cent down to 50 Hz, rising to 6 per cent at 40 Hz and to 16 per cent at 30 Hz. At a constant 1-watt drive level, which is probably more typical of the manner in which the speaker would be operated, the distortion was 2 per cent at 60 Hz, 4.5 per cent at 40 Hz, and 8 per cent at 35 Hz. The impedance curve showed that the speaker's 8-ohm rating is a realistic one. Except for a rise to 25 ohms at the woofer resonance of

50 Hz, the impedance was between 7 and 12 ohms over the full 20- to 20,000-Hz range. The tone-burst response was good throughout, and we judge the A-100X above average in this respect.

● **Comment.** Before we made any measurements on the A-100X, we spent considerable time listening to it. The smoothness of the sound was unmistakable, and we would judge that its designers have done an effective job of matching three rather conventional drivers to achieve above-average results.

In our simulated live-vs.-recorded test, the Audioanalyst A-100X proved to be "superb" (the actual term recorded in our notes for the test). The highs were exceptionally accurate (many speakers fall short in that respect), and were as well dispersed as we have heard from any single-tweeter system. There was a slight, almost indefinable mid-range warmth that was noticeable only by

comparison with the original sound being "imitated" by the A-100X. After we had measured the frequency response, it could be seen that the average level above 1,000 Hz or so was some 2 to 3 dB lower than the average below 1,000 Hz. When we set the two level switches to their HI positions, however, the general character of the sound was unchanged. Overall, the accuracy of the A-100X ranks very high, whether judged by this test or simply by critical listening.

Like several other speakers in its price class that we have tested, the Audioanalyst A-100X is indisputably a *high-fidelity* speaker. At higher prices (usually *much* higher), one can find speakers with greater efficiency, higher power-handling capability, better dispersion, or somewhat deeper bass response. At its price, however, the A-100X is a solid value, and a peer of the best speakers we have heard in the under-\$200 price range.

Circle 105 on reader service card

## Scott R77S AM/Stereo FM Receiver



● A NEW addition to the top of the H. H. Scott line is the Model R77S, a powerful and de luxe stereo receiver whose fresh styling sets it apart from many of its competitors. The front panel of the Scott R77S, in satin-finished aluminum, presents a pleasingly simple, uncluttered appearance. The blackout dial area, extending across most of the panel width, includes the two tuning meters and the tuning knob, as well as the AM and FM dial scales. Below the scales, illuminated words indicate the selected program source—PHONO 1, PHONO 2, FM, AM, and TAPE 2. This last input accepts a high-level signal and is equivalent to the AUX input of most am-

plifiers and receivers. (The TAPE 1 input is selected by the tape-monitor switch.)

The bass and treble tone controls, as well as the balance control, have lightly detented center positions. Pushbuttons are used for loudness compensation, mono/stereo mode selection, tape monitoring, high-cut filter, FM muting, and power switching. A row of five pushbuttons connects the amplifier outputs to any of three pairs of speakers, or to two combinations of two pairs simultaneously. A stereo headphone jack completes the front-panel facilities.

On the rear apron are insulated spring clips for the speaker outputs, 300- and 75-ohm FM antenna terminals (the latter

a coaxial connector), a pivoted AM ferrite-rod antenna, and terminals for an external AM wire antenna. The usual signal inputs and outputs are augmented by separate preamplifier outputs and main amplifier inputs joined by jumpers. There is a DIN connector in parallel with the tape-recorder terminals. The sensitivity of one of the two phono inputs can be switched for use with high- or low-output cartridges, and another switch changes the FM audio de-emphasis from the 75 microseconds used in the United States to the 50-microsecond European standard. The two speaker outputs and the power line are fused, and there is a single switched a.c. outlet.

The top and sides of the R77S are made of black anodized aluminum, highly resistant to scratches and contrasting with the silver-colored panel. The receiver is 18 inches wide, 6 inches high, and 14½ inches deep; it weighs 30 pounds. Price: \$599.90.

● **Laboratory Measurements.** When both channels were driven with a 1,000-  
(Continued on page 38)



# Introducing our new speakers. They stubbornly maintain their neutrality.

We call them *the Neutrals*. And that's how we designed them — to be neutral, as free of coloration as possible. Because Technics is convinced neutrality is the key to great speaker performance.

Unfortunately, many speaker designers feel that they have to add coloration to give their systems "personality" or "presence." But Technics believes that adding coloring is wrong because it permanently compromises fidelity. And that the best way to introduce special tone emphasis is with the tone controls on your amp or receiver. So you can control it.

Technics speakers achieve their unusually high degree of neutrality without using gimmicks. Instead, they use drivers of proven design. Like phenolic-ring tweeters, dome-center cone supertweeters, cone-type midranges, and air-suspension woofers. Expertly matched with specially

tailored crossover networks. And then precisely positioned in fully sealed enclosures.

Model	T-200	T-300	T-400	T-500
Freq. Resp.: free field	44-18kHz ± 3dB -10dB at 35Hz	40-20kHz ± 3dB -10dB at 30Hz	38-20kHz ± 3dB -10dB at 28Hz	35-20kHz ± 3dB -10dB at 25Hz
Dispersion: on axis-4m.	120° at 10,000 Hz	160° at 10,000 Hz	180° at 10,000 Hz	180° at 10,000 Hz
Power:				
minimum	10 watts	10 watts	10 watts	10 watts
max. music	100 watts	100 watts	100 watts	100 watts
max. 400Hz	40w-5 min.	50w-5 min.	90w-5 min.	100w-5 min.
Sensitivity: 3,000 cu. ft.	10w = 90dB SPL	10w = 90dB SPL	10w = 92dB SPL	10w = 92dB SPL
Drivers:				
woofer	10"	10"	12"	2-10"
midrange		3"	5"	5"
tweeter	1 3/4"	2"	3 1/2"	2-1 3/4"
supertweeter			2-2"	2-2"
Controls: normal/-3dB	tweeter	tweeter midrange	tweeter midrange	tweeter midrange
Enclosure:				
oiled walnut	H-21 3/4" W-12" D-10 1/2"	H-24 3/4" W-13 3/4" D-12 1/2"	H-27" W-15" D-13 1/4"	H-29" W-18 3/4" D-14 1/2"

Each of the four Technics *Neutrals* has an impressive roster of specifications. The most important ones are stated in the chart. And in terms that make the numbers meaningful.

Stop in at your dealer and experience Technics neutrality. The more you listen to it, the more you'll appreciate why we're so stubborn about maintaining it.

*The Neutrals*. The concept is simple. The execution is precise. The performance is outstanding. The name is Technics.

FOR YOUR TECHNICS DEALER, CALL FREE 800 447-4700. IN ILLINOIS, 800 322-4400.

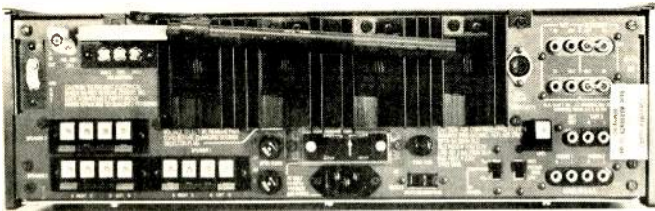


Grille available in brown or blue.



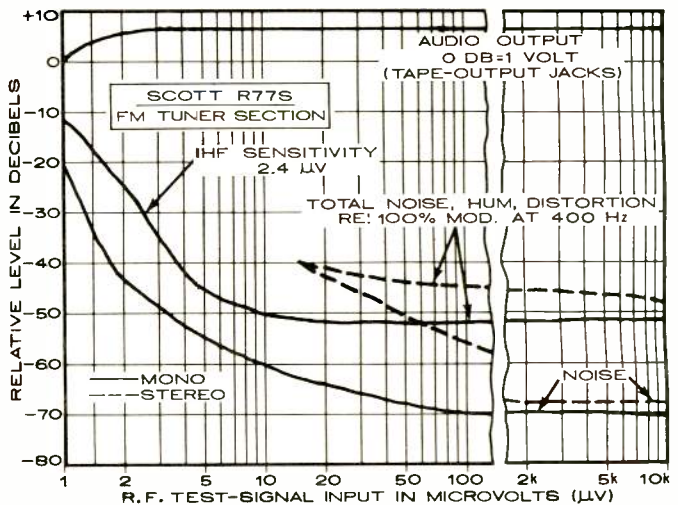
# Technics

by Panasonic



Below the heat sinks of the Scott R77S are the fuses for the a.c. line and speakers as well as a switch to convert the receiver for European current. Speaker and ground terminals are spring-loaded clips.

The levels of both random noise and total noise plus distortion are compared with the audio-output level as input-signal strength increases. Both mono and stereo are shown.



Hz signal into 8-ohm loads, the output waveform of the R77S clipped at 83 watts per channel—well above the amplifier's 70-watt rating. Into 4 ohms, the power at clipping was 123 watts per channel, and into 16 ohms it was 50 watts. At low power levels, the total harmonic distortion (THD) reading at 1,000 Hz was obscured by inaudible noise. But at higher signal levels it was very low: between 0.024 and 0.052 per cent from about 1 to 80 watts output. Intermodulation (IM) distortion increased smoothly from 0.045 per cent at 1 watt to 0.15 per cent at 85 watts.

The conservatism of the receiver's power ratings was further underscored by its low distortion from 20 to 20,000 Hz at rated power, as well as at half and one-tenth power. Harmonic distortion was typically between 0.02 and 0.05 per cent, and exceeded 0.1 per cent only at frequencies above 15,000 Hz.

The high-level (TAPE 2) input required only 63 millivolts for a 10-watt output, with a 74-dB signal-to-noise ratio (S/N). At its low (L) gain setting, the PHONO 2 input required 1.15 millivolts for a 10-watt output, and also had a 74 dB S/N. The high (H) gain setting increased the sensitivity to 0.38 millivolt, yet the S/N was almost unchanged at 72 dB. The phono inputs overloaded at 57 millivolts (L) and 21 millivolts (H). Clearly, it is

advisable to use the L switch setting, since few if any cartridges will require the higher gain.

The RIAA phono equalization was very accurate (within  $\pm 0.4$  dB from 30 to 15,000 Hz), and was affected by cartridge inductance to a much smaller degree than most receivers we have tested. The tone-control characteristics were "hinged" at about 700 Hz. Loudness compensation boosted low frequencies moderately and the highest frequencies to a smaller extent. The high-cut filter had a 6-dB-per-octave slope, with its -3 dB response point at 3,000 Hz.

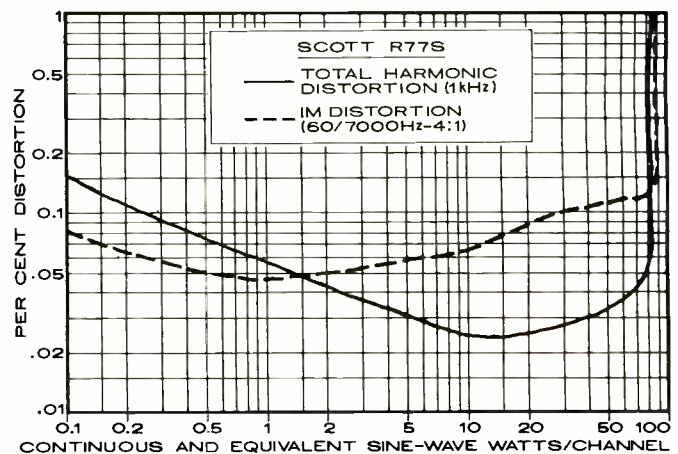
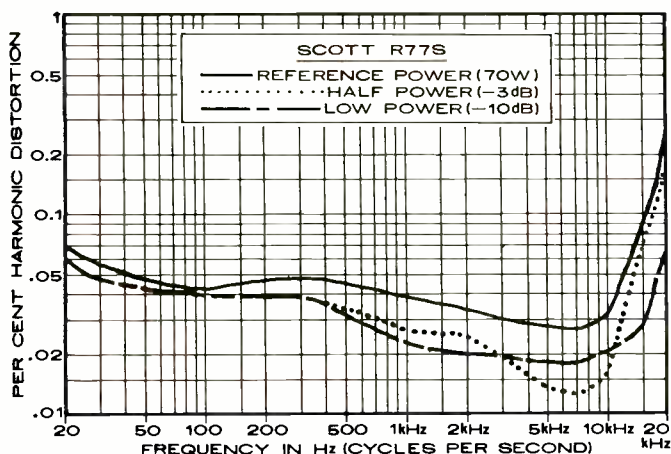
The FM tuner section had an IHF sensitivity of 2.4 microvolts ( $\mu\text{V}$ ); however, a steep limiting curve produced a 50-dB S/N (in mono) with only a 3.3  $\mu\text{V}$  input. The ultimate mono signal-to-noise ratio (S/N) at 1,000  $\mu\text{V}$  was 70 dB, with only 0.25 per cent distortion at 100 per cent modulation. Automatic switching to stereo took place at a 15- $\mu\text{V}$  input, with a 40-dB S/N. The input required for a 50-dB quieting level for stereo was 50  $\mu\text{V}$ , and ultimate quieting was 68 dB with a distortion of 0.5 per cent. The stereo FM frequency response was an excellent  $\pm 0.5$  dB from 30 to 15,000 Hz, and channel separation was typically 35 to 40 dB through the low and middle frequency range, falling to 20 dB at 15,000 Hz. The 19-kHz pilot carrier in the out-

puts was suppressed by 68 dB. Other measured FM-section performance characteristics include: capture ratio (at 1,000  $\mu\text{V}$ ), 1.8 dB; AM suppression, 70 dB (an exceptionally good figure); image rejection, 46 dB; alternate-channel selectivity, 60 dB. The interstation-noise muting threshold was 7  $\mu\text{V}$ , and the muting action was positive and noise-free, with only a slight click. The AM frequency response was down 6 dB at 3,600 Hz.

● *Comment.* When our sample of the receiver was turned on, there was a strong "thump"; however, we are told that special circuits are incorporated in later production models to eliminate the problem.

Not only was the sound of the Scott R77S all that could be desired, but it had a very satisfying air of precision in its appearance, control operation, and ease of tuning. In particular, the optimum FM tuning point for minimum distortion and maximum stereo separation was non-critical and well-defined by the center segment of the tuning meter. And if you prefer low-efficiency speakers, the Scott R77S should be ideal. We found it to be a real "powerhouse" receiver, easily able to drive cleanly some of the least efficient speakers at our disposal.

Circle 106 on reader service card



(Test reports continue on page 40)



## Choosing a blank tape is like selecting a wine

Ever notice how the audiophile (and oenophile) has built a wall of words—a sound barrier—around selecting a quality blank tape (and a fine wine). Neither should be so complicated to enjoy.

Now you needn't be a sound engineer to buy tape. Now there's the music tape BY CAPITOL.

Just choose tape (like wine) to suit the occasion. For everyday dictation or class lectures, use an ordinary tape (like vin ordinaire). But when you record music spend a little more for premium, the music tape BY CAPITOL.

If you insist, we can put it in audiophile terms: the music tape BY CAPITOL is "brighter" tape. Extra high output/low noise. It will extend the frequency response of any tape recorder.

Our backcoated cassettes are guaranteed jamproof. Our 8-track cartridge is the industry standard—professionals buy more of it than any other. And our backcoated open reel tape is the same high quality as studio mastering tape.

Got it? Now forget it. Why work so hard? When all you have to know is:

**When you record ordinary things, use an ordinary tape.  
But when you record music, record on**

**the music tape**  
cassette • cartridge • open reel BY CAPITOL



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CIRCLE NO. 6 ON READER SERVICE CARD



TM OF EMI LIMITED  
A MEMBER OF THE EMI GROUP

## Tandberg 9200XD Stereo Tape Deck



● THE Tandberg 9200XD is a slightly improved version of their popular Model 9000X, and in addition has built-in Dolby circuits. The 9200XD is a three-motor, three-head machine that can operate at  $1\frac{7}{8}$ ,  $3\frac{3}{4}$ , and  $7\frac{1}{2}$  ips. Its transport mechanism features the advanced logic-controlled, solenoid-operated system offered in the 9000X.

Like the other Tandberg tape recorders, the 9200XD uses cross-field biasing, with the recording bias signal applied to the base side of the tape by a special head located opposite the record head. The cross-field head extends the high-frequency response without the use of high levels of recording equalization. The tape follows a straight-line path across the heads, passing over tape-tensioning arms as it nears the 7-inch reels. The speeds are selected by a lever that also changes the recording and playback equalization. A new feature is the EDIT/CUE button, which permits listening to the tape during fast forward or rewind (to locate recorded sections), as well as when the reels are rotated by hand to zero-in on editing points. There is also a pushbutton-reset, four-digit index counter.

The tape-transport functions are controlled by a group of flat green buttons that operate with a very light finger touch. The logic system, which alone uses fifteen integrated circuits, makes it possible to operate the buttons in any sequence, or at any time, without risk of damaging or spilling the tape. A section of each button is illuminated when its function is selected. The PLAY button is spaced slightly from the fast-speed and STOP buttons, and the red RECORD button is still further away. The Tandberg 9200XD does not require simultaneous operation of two controls to engage the recording mode. However, one or both of the REC SELECT buttons under the meters must be depressed, and the tape stopped, before the RECORD mode can be engaged.

The lower portion of the panel, whose silver color contrasts with the black

transport section, contains the recorder's electronic controls. At the left are four vertical sliders that control the recording levels from two microphones and two line inputs (which can be mixed). At the far right are two more vertical sliders for playback-level control. The two large illuminated meters read the peak levels *after* the recording equalization has been applied, helping to insure against tape saturation at high frequencies (which can easily happen when the meters read the levels *before* equalization). The internal switching of recording and playback equalization when changing mode or speed, and of the metering circuits, is done by noiseless, solid-state diode switches. When the machine is at a stop, and the REC SELECT buttons are pressed, the meters light up and indicate recording levels. This continues during recording, regardless of the position of the SOURCE/TAPE buttons, which can be operated to connect either the incoming signal or the playback-head outputs to the line outputs. However, when the machine is in the play mode, the meters are automatically switched to monitor the line-output levels, as they are affected by the playback-level controls.

Below the meters are two  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch jacks for balanced microphone inputs (unbalanced sources can also be used). The preamplifier gain is controlled automatically by the microphone impedance to obtain optimum noise characteristics with dynamic microphones having impedances between 200 and 700 ohms.

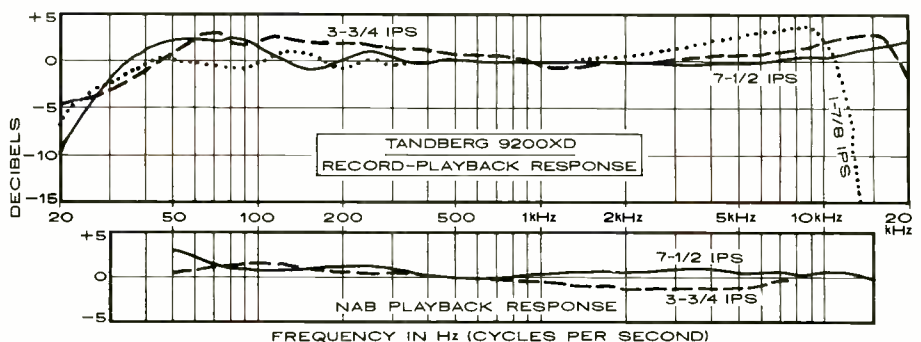
The headphone jack is designed to drive 8-ohm phones, but provides an adequate level for most higher-impedance units.

Two small knob switches have signal lights above them to indicate that they are in use. The *SONS* switch cross-connects the recording and playback amplifiers for making sound-on-sound recordings (in mono) by copying one track onto the other, with new material added. The DOLBY NR switch has several operating modes, and it is the most distinctive new feature of this recorder. Its three positions are NORM, FILTER, and DOLBY FM. The first is for Dolby recording from any source other than stereo FM, and for playing back any Dolbyized tape. The FILTER position introduces a 19-kHz notch filter to prevent the stereo-pilot carrier from interfering with the Dolby circuits when recording FM broadcasts. The DOLBY FM mode has two distinctly different uses. When recording a Dolbyized FM broadcast, it bypasses the recording Dolby circuits but feeds the playback signal through the Dolby decoders. This avoids the need for "double Dolby" recording, while permitting the program to be heard with full quieting and correct frequency balance during recording. The second purpose of the DOLBY FM mode is to listen to Dolby FM without making a recording.

The Tandberg 9200XD is  $15\frac{3}{4}$  inches wide,  $16\frac{1}{4}$  inches high, and  $5\frac{1}{2}$  inches deep; it weighs 34 pounds. It can be operated either vertically or horizontally. Price: \$949. Optional accessories include a carrying case (\$40), plastic dust cover (\$12), and a remote-control box (\$99.50).

● **Laboratory Measurements.** The playback frequency response, with Ampex test tapes, was within  $\pm 1$  dB over the 50- to 15,000-Hz range of the tape at  $7\frac{1}{2}$  ips, and within  $\pm 1.5$  dB from 50 to 7,500 Hz at  $3\frac{3}{4}$  ips. The overall record-playback frequency response, with Maxell UD35-7 tape (for which the recorder was biased) was  $\pm 2$  dB from 40 to 11,300 Hz at  $1\frac{7}{8}$  ips,  $\pm 2$  dB from 32 to 20,000 Hz at  $3\frac{3}{4}$  ips, and  $\pm 2$  dB from 30 to 26,500 Hz at  $7\frac{1}{2}$  ips. The meters of the 9200XD are calibrated differently

(Continued on page 42)



# Speakers are a matter of taste.



## Yours.

No other component in your high fidelity system will influence your enjoyment of music as much as your choice of speakers. Every speaker design has its own individual characteristics, and actually imposes its own personality on any music you play.

What kind of a sound do you prefer? The tight sound of an acoustic suspension speaker? The open sound and flexibility of an omni-radial speaker? Or the presence and realism of a multi-directional speaker?

No matter which you choose, Sansui makes a speaker to match your taste. And they are all superior in performance, delivering sharp definition, and a smooth, but crystal clear dynamic attack over a wide range.

Yes, speakers are a matter of taste. Only you can decide which one of the seven Sansui speakers is really the best speaker you ever heard. So stop in at your nearest Sansui dealer...and listen.

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*Sansui*

CIRCLE NO. 60 ON READER SERVICE CARD

from most we have seen, so that a standard Dolby-level tape gives a meter reading of  $-10$  dB and a 0.5-volt audio output. Since tape saturation begins rapidly at 0 dB or slightly above, peaks should be kept below that level as much as possible for best results.

We measured a reference 3 per cent distortion in the playback outputs with a recording level of 0 dB at  $1\frac{7}{8}$  ips, +3 dB at  $3\frac{3}{4}$  ips, and +1.5 dB at  $7\frac{1}{2}$  ips. The unweighted noise levels referred to these levels were respectively  $-50.5$  dB,  $-58$  dB, and  $-61.5$  dB. With IEC "A" weighting to attenuate the less audible low frequencies, these improved to  $-56.5$  dB,  $-64.3$  dB, and  $-68$  dB. Finally, when we added the Dolby system, the noise levels became  $-64.7$  dB,  $-71.5$  dB, and  $-74$  dB—all of them exceptionally good. The noise contributed by the microphone amplifiers (which are outside the Dolby system) was very small until the microphone gain controls were set to more than about 85 per cent of maximum. Considering the high gain of these circuits, that level will never be required with most microphones. At maximum gain, the noise increased by 5 to 14 dB depending on the impedance of the microphone used.

The line input for a 0-dB recording level was 0.1 volt (the microphone inputs required only 100 microvolts with a 600-ohm source), and the playback output was 1.23 volts at  $7\frac{1}{2}$  ips, decreasing to 0.78 volt at  $1\frac{7}{8}$  ips.

The tape speeds were exceptionally accurate, with errors of +0.13 per cent at  $7\frac{1}{2}$  ips and +0.5 per cent at  $1\frac{7}{8}$  ips (the  $3\frac{3}{4}$ -ips speed was exact). Wow was at the 0.01 per cent residual of our test tapes, and flutter was 0.06 per cent at  $7\frac{1}{2}$  ips, 0.07 per cent at  $3\frac{3}{4}$  ips, and 0.16 per cent at  $1\frac{7}{8}$  ips. In fast forward and rewind, a 1,800-foot reel of tape was run through in 70 to 72 seconds. The meters read 100 per cent of their steady-state values on 300-millisecond tone bursts, with negligible overshoot and a visibly slower decay. The Dolby circuits tracked very accurately, affecting the overall frequency response by less than 1 dB at all frequencies up to 16,000 Hz. The multiplex filter had no effect up to 15,000 Hz, but reduced the 19-kHz response by more than 24 dB.

● *Comment.* If you do not become careless and let the recording levels climb too far into the red area of the meters, the 9200XD makes virtually perfect recordings at all three speeds from FM radio and discs. We did not use it for live recording, but would expect it to be equally outstanding for that purpose, especially at the two higher speeds. The Dolby system, as expected, had its greatest subjective effect at the lower tape speeds, but nevertheless made a worthwhile contribution at  $7\frac{1}{2}$  ips. Obviously, when recording from microphones, it is desirable to keep the recording level controls at a reasonable setting



The head layout of the 9200XD. The cross-field head is underneath the lower cover.

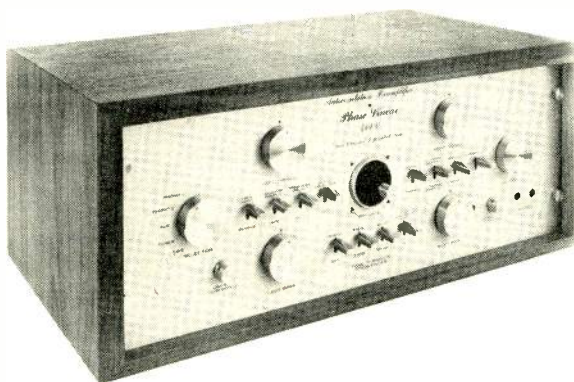
to prevent microphone circuit noise from negating the effects of the Dolby system. We also found the Dolby FM mode very convenient for listening to Dolbyized FM broadcasts.

The  $1\frac{7}{8}$ -ips performance of the 9200XD is, in all respects, comparable to that of a good Dolby-equipped cassette recorder—but with the numerous advantages of open-reel tape, such as longer playing time, easy editing, etc. This is not an insignificant achievement, since most open-reel decks fall well short of top-level cassette-deck performance at that speed.

Having previously tested and used the Tandberg 9000X, we had no difficulty becoming accustomed to the 9200XD. Compared with the usual tape recorder, it is somewhat different in its operating characteristics, but all in all it is one of the easiest and most enjoyable recorders we have used.

Circle 107 on reader service card

## Phase Linear 4000 Stereo Preamplifier



● THE Phase Linear 4000 stereo preamplifier, in the complexity of its circuits and its design philosophy, differs radically from any other preamplifier we have ever tested or seen. Most of its differences and special functions reflect Phase Linear's belief that it is not enough that a preamplifier process and amplify the program material without introducing distortion and noise. In addition, it should also be able to compensate to a very large degree for the losses in

dynamic range and signal-to-noise ratio inherent in the recording and reproduction process. This Phase Linear achieves by a combination of noise-reduction and dynamic-range-expansion circuits whose sophistication far surpasses anything previously available on the audio consumer level.

The Phase Linear noise-reduction system is "open-ended," meaning that it does not require pre-encoded FM, records, or tapes. It will work with any pro-

gram material, old or new, and provides about 10 dB of hiss reduction. Previous to the appearance of this Phase Linear preamplifier, the so-called "autocorrelator" noise-reduction technique was used mostly in space and satellite communications gear. The autocorrelator circuits in the 4000 are sufficiently complex that a full explanation of the operating principles would occupy almost as much space as this entire report. Suffice it to say that the latest version of the correlator circuit uses something like twenty-three discrete transistors, perhaps a hundred diodes, and five IC's that contain the equivalent of five hundred or more transistors. All of this circuitry is involved in analyzing the audio program in respect to its "correlatable" signal elements vs. its noncorrelatable (or random-noise) elements. The signal elements are passed through unaltered, while the noise is excluded by a series of bandpass gates controlled by the presence or absence of a correlatable (non-noise) signal.

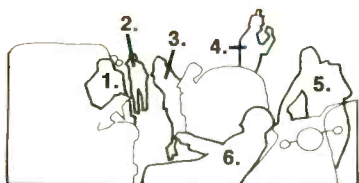
In addition to the high-frequency

(Continued on page 46)

# Can you spot the Camel Filters smoker?



© 1974 R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Co.



At the big neighborhood Garage Sale almost everyone has a gimmick. Pick the one who doesn't.

**1.** No. He's Vaughn Gudeel. Gimmick: Insists on "feeling the merchandise." Merchandise is about to teach him theory of acupuncture (it's alive).

**2.** Nope. He's Ben Takin. Bought water bed—that later developed an oil slick. Gimmick: Menthol cigarettes so cold, it's like trying to set fire to an igloo.

**3.** She's Vera Vane. Gimmick: With 20-400 vision, she "doesn't need" glasses. Thinks she's talking to old

college beau. Smokes *Cabbage Leaf* cigarettes—preferred by two out of three inchworms.

**4.** No. He's Frank Apraisal. Just bought "Man Packing Suitcase" painting. Later cleaned it and found it's really "Alligator Having Snack." Smokes cigarette with so many air vents it's like smoking a harmonica.

**5.** Right. He knows a genuine article when he sees it. Wants no gimmicks in his cigarette, either. Camel Filters. Good taste. Honest tobacco.

**6.** He's Noah Bargane. Just broke a 130-year-old chair. Now owns \$200 worth of genuine antique firewood.

**Camel Filters.**  
**They're not for everybody**  
 (but they could be for you).



Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health.

19 mg. "tar," 1.3 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette, FTC Report MAR. '74.



From front to rear: Dual 1229Q, \$259.95; Dual 1228, \$189.95; Dual 1226, \$159.95; Dual 1225, \$129.95.



# Why many choose the highest-priced Dual even though our lowest-priced model has all the precision your records need.

Even the lowest-priced Dual, model 1225, is a perfect example of Dual's basic design concept: to build every Dual turntable with more precision than you are ever likely to need.

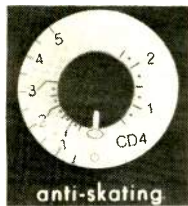
The 1225's vernier-adjust, counter-balanced tonearm can track flawlessly with the most sensitive cartridges available—at as low as one gram. Tracking pressure is applied exactly as with the highest-priced Dual—around the



Tracking force is applied directly around the vertical pivot, maintaining perfect balance in all planes.

vertical pivot, maintaining perfect balance in all planes. And the anti-skating system has separate calibrations for conical, elliptical and CD-4 styli.

Operating features include a single master switch for all start/stop operations, pitch-control, viscous-damped cueing and a hi-torque motor that maintains speed within 0.1% even when line voltage varies as much as 20%.



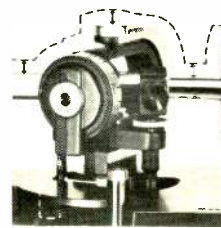
Separate anti-skating calibrations for conical, elliptical and CD-4 styli are provided on every Dual turntable.

Less obvious, but important nevertheless, the 1225 also provides the same high quality materials, carefully finished parts and meticulous quality control that have long earned Dual its reputation for reliability.

(Typically, many audio experts who bought the lowest-priced Duals early in their careers tell us they are still in service years later in a second system.)

Considering all this, why do so many serious music lovers spend \$259.95 for the 1229Q? Although the 1225 has all the

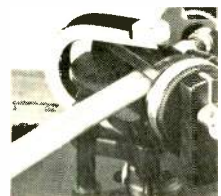
precision your records need, the 1229Q has refinements you may well want. For example, the 1229Q is a full-sized turntable with a 12" dynamically-balanced platter that weighs a full seven pounds. It is driven by the powerful Continuous-Pole/synchronous motor. The gimbal-mounted 8-3/4" tonearm can track at as low as 0.25 gram, and has provision for adjusting the vertical tracking angle of the stylus for single or multiple play.



The Mode Selector parallels the tonearm to center stack in multi-play mode; to single-record in single-play

The 1229Q also has an illuminated strobe, and cueing is damped in both directions to prevent bounce.

Dual's other multi-play turntables, the 1226 at \$159.95 and 1228 at \$189.95, offer one or more of these refinements.



Tonearms of the 1228 and 1229Q are suspended in a true four-point gyroscopic gimbal.

Considering all this, it's no wonder that readers of the leading audio magazines own more Duals in every price range than any other quality turntable. Evidently, they choose Dual first to preserve their records, then select a specific model depending on the refinements they prefer.

To sum up, Dual has made certain that your continuing investment in records will be protected even if you choose the lowest-priced model. How far you go beyond that is up to you. That decision can best be made when you visit a franchised United Audio dealer.



**United Audio Products**

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Exclusive U.S. Distribution Agency for Dual

noise-reduction circuits, the Model 4000 has a signal-controlled, low-frequency dynamic filter to reduce hum, rumble, and other low-end disturbances. Though not actually a part of the autocorrelator system, it is activated whenever the autocorrelator is turned on. Since the low-frequency filter is turned off when audio signals are above the system's hum and rumble level, it has no effect on the audible low-frequency response. When program signals are absent, the filter slopes off the low-frequency noise starting at about 200 Hz to about -15 dB at 20 Hz and below.

The other major special circuit, the "peak unlimiter," is a sophisticated four-band dynamic-range expander. It appears to be only slightly less complex than the autocorrelator (fifty semiconductors plus two IC's). The expansion action, which has different characteristics in each of the four signal-amplitude

a somewhat unconventional switching arrangement for monitoring from one of them while recording, or copying from the second machine onto the first while listening to another program through the preamplifier. It should be noted that one cannot monitor from the second recorder while recording, since its playback is through the TAPE 2 position of the input selector. In a row with the tape-recorder switches are a lever switch for activating the peak unlimiter, and another marked ACTIVE EQUALIZER. This enigmatic term refers to a circuit that provides a 3- to 6-dB boost at very low and very high frequencies, somewhat like a "loudness control" but much more subtle in its effect, and not dependent on volume-control setting.

Dominating the center of the front panel is a "joystick" balance control, which one might expect to find on a four-channel amplifier but certainly not on a

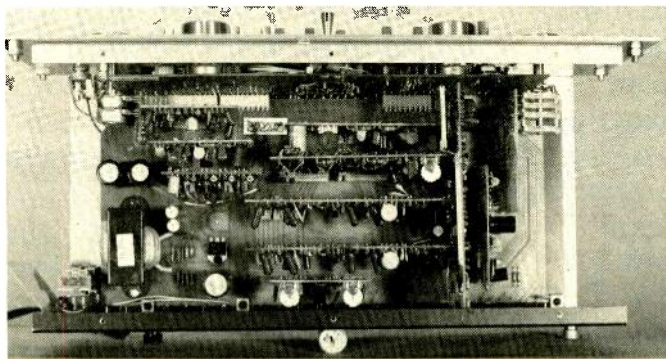
on program peaks, establishing the level at which the peak unlimiter goes into action. Two standard 1/4-inch stereo phone jacks, labeled ACCESSORY OUTPUTS, are in parallel with the four outputs in the rear of the preamplifier. These can be used to supply a fully controlled, noise-reduced signal to a tape recorder, a second power amplifier, or oscilloscope.

In the rear of the Phase Linear 4000 are all the expected inputs and outputs, plus a second pair of outputs, marked AUX, which parallel the two main front-channel outputs. Near the PHONO 1 jacks are two screwdriver adjustments marked CARTRIDGE LOADING. In our amplifier test reports we have commented on the fact that the RIAA phono equalization of most amplifiers is affected, to a greater or lesser degree, by the cartridge inductance. The PHONO 1 inputs can be adjusted to compensate for this effect. The instruction manual gives the recommended settings for most available phono cartridges, or the settings can be made by ear (the effect is at fairly high frequencies and therefore can be rather subtle).

The Phase Linear 4000 preamplifier is a large unit, matching the company's Model 400 power amplifier in size and styling. It is 19 inches wide, 7 inches high, and 8 3/8 inches deep; it weighs 18 pounds. Price: \$599. A walnut cabinet is \$35 additional.

● **Laboratory Measurements.** As suggested by the unconventional choice of tone-control turnover frequencies, the audible effects of the tone controls were subtle within the normal frequency range of program material. The maximum control range of  $\pm 8$  dB, combined with the limiting of the boost or cut to the frequency extremes, means that much of the time one can vary the controls through their full range with very little audible change in frequency balance. This approach is intentional, of course. The tone controls can add—or subtract—a small but important increment of response at the frequency extremes, where this action is usually required. By comparison, conventional tone controls are often too "heavy-handed" in their action, and produce an undesirable coloration when used to more than a minor extent. The "active equalizer" had an effect only below about 70 Hz and above 10,000 Hz, with a maximum boost of 6 dB at 20 Hz and 3.5 dB at 20,000 Hz. A useful combination of bass cut (150-Hz turnover) plus the boost of the active equalizer produced a "shelf" in the response below about 300 Hz, adjustable up to about 5 dB in depth. This removed much of the heaviness which is typical of many speakers whose own response emphasis in that frequency range is often accentuated by room resonances.

The RIAA equalization was virtually perfect, within  $\pm 0.5$  dB over the full  
(Continued on page 48)



*The Phase Linear 4000's interior is fully occupied with circuit boards. The parts count includes sixty-four discrete transistors, eight IC's, and about two hundred diodes.*

bands, is controlled separately by the overall signal level, the rate of change of high-level signals, and the rate of change of low-level signals. The combination of these characteristics and others (including an "ambiance" circuit that regenerates any lost reverberation decay characteristics) are also too complex to describe here in detail. However, working together they restore, to a very great extent, the program dynamics removed during the recording process.

Six large knobs control the more conventional aspects of the unit's operation. There are separate bass and treble tone controls (with eleven detented positions) for each stereo channel. Lever switches change the turnover frequencies beyond which the controls have their effect, with a choice of 2,000 or 8,000 Hz for the treble control and 40 or 150 Hz for the bass control. There is a switch to bypass all the tone-control circuits, and another to switch the a.c. power to the preamplifier and to three of the six outlets in the rear of the unit. An internal heavy-duty relay is used for controlling the switched outlets, which can handle a total of up to 25 amperes.

The input selector has positions for TAPE 2 playback, AUX, TUNER, and two magnetic phono cartridges. There are provisions for two tape recorders, with

stereo unit. Actually, the Phase Linear 4000 is a sort of hybrid in this respect, since it has a logic-assisted SQ decoder and two rear-channel outputs in addition to the normal stereo outputs. Because there is no provision for high-level four-channel inputs, it cannot really be considered a four-channel preamplifier. Nevertheless, it can provide effective SQ decoding of phonograph or FM radio programs, as well as synthesized rear channels from any stereo source.

To the right of the balance control are four more lever switches. One reduces all output levels by 20 dB (the unassisted gain control does not go down to zero level), and the next selects either SQ or two-channel operation (disabling the rear-channel outputs in the latter mode). The next switch selects either stereo or mono operation, and the last one turns on the autocorrelator circuits. The final knob operates the volume control.

A small knob adjusts the autocorrelator threshold, which need be reset (by ear) only for large changes in the incoming noise level. A screwdriver adjustment sets the threshold of the low-frequency dynamic filter to match the output of the phono cartridge. At the other side of the panel is another small knob, UNLIMIT THRESHOLD, which is adjusted until the small red light next to it flashes

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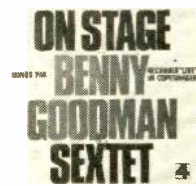
**AMD 332**  
Bill Withers Live  
Bill Withers



**AMD 334**  
My Love  
Engelbert Humperdinck



**AMD 325**  
The Way We Were  
Ronnie Aldrich



**AMD 330**  
Benny Goodman on Stage  
Benny Goodman



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I would like these additional tapes at \$3.99 each as my first membership benefit, plus .35 per tape.

---

I do not wish to buy a tape at this time. Enclosed is \$3.00 for full membership privileges.

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Rock  Classical  Country  Easy Listening

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Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

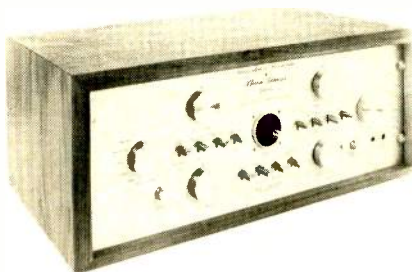
Please charge the above to my  Master Charge  BankAmericard  
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# Incredible.

How else would you describe a preamplifier with:

- A **Peak Unlimiter** that restores dynamics lost in recording to closely approximate the original.
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- An **AutoCorrelator** that makes record/tape hiss and FM broadcast noise virtually vanish without affecting musical content.
- **Plus** an Active Equalizer that gives you flat energy distribution over the full audio spectrum, Joystick Balance and Step Tone Controls that allow precise music tailoring to your listening environment and SQ\* and Phase Linear differential logic for Quad Sound.



The 4000 is an advanced stereo preamp that actually puts back in what recording studios take out . . . lets your music (at last) reach life-like levels without distortion . . . lets you (for the first time) hear your music from a silent background. It is, in a word, incredible. Ask your dealer for an audition.

Price: \$599

Cabinet: \$37

Warranty: 3 years, parts & labor.

## Phase Linear 4000

THE POWERFUL DIFFERENCE

PHASE LINEAR CORPORATION  
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## Phase Linear 4000 Stereo Preamplifier . . .

(Continued from page 46)

range. We measured the effect of cartridge inductance on the response, using several different cartridges and varying the cartridge loading adjustments, and found that any of them could be given a flat or rising high-frequency response instead of the usual rolloff.

For a 1-volt output, the AUX inputs required a 0.18-volt signal, and the phono inputs required 1.8 millivolts. Phono overload occurred at 62 millivolts, which we would judge to be a safe value with modern high-quality (meaning low-output) cartridges. The noise output of the preamplifier (unweighted), referred to a 1-volt output, was -68 dB on the high-level inputs and -65 dB on the phono inputs. With a 1,000-Hz test signal, harmonic distortion was under 0.03 per cent up to 2 volts output, increasing slowly to 0.1 per cent between 6 and 7 volts and 0.17 per cent at 8 volts. Intermodulation distortion was under 0.05 per cent up to 1 volt, increasing to 0.25 per cent at 5 volts and 0.6 per cent at 8 volts.

The signal-responsive nature of the autocorrelator and the peak unlimiter made it difficult to measure their performance by conventional techniques. Fortunately, their effects were plainly audible and our ears left no doubt of their effectiveness. The autocorrelator provides approximately the subjective noise reduction of a properly operating Dolby system. An A-B comparison with a good dynamic-filter noise reducer also showed about the same degree of hiss reduction. But unlike *any* dynamic filter we have used, the Phase Linear noise-reduction system produces absolutely *no* audible side-effects. We never heard a "swish" or other indication of a bandwidth change; the only audible effect it ever had on the signal was the removal of noise.

The low-frequency dynamic filter seemed to have no effect, since the rumble of our record-playing system has rarely been audible in any case. However, using a silent-groove record and maximum bass boost, we watched the cone motion of our woofers and observed a dramatic reduction when the low-frequency threshold was adjusted properly.

The SQ performance was judged by listening. It appeared to be roughly comparable to the simple "front-back" logic systems in its subjective "discreteness," and fell well short of equaling the performance of one of the recent SQ decoders with wave-matching and variable-blend circuitry. Nevertheless, the overall effect was good, and it did a fine job of

rear-channel synthesis with stereo program material.

● **Comment.** The Phase Linear 4000 is obviously a "different breed" from any other preamplifier, and its true merit can best be appreciated through extensive use. For example, the measured signal-to-noise figures, while certainly good, were not exceptional. But in actual use, the Model 4000 proved to be phenomenally quiet. Even without the assistance of its special noise-reducing systems, it would rank as one of the quietest units we have ever encountered. It appears that most of the extraordinary virtues of the 4000 derive from the exceptional attention paid to the psychoacoustic aspects of its performance. The choice of attack and decay times, and the contouring and selection of the specific frequency bands used in each of its special functions, advance the Phase Linear 4000 a step beyond any of the other expansion and noise-reduction systems we have tested. The 4000's ability to compensate for many of the deficiencies of loudspeakers and phono cartridges—even the best of them—gives the sound a clarity of the sort that is often erroneously attributed to mysterious and undefined properties of an amplifier.

But the most impressive characteristic of the sound from this unit is its silent background. The autocorrelator is very simple to adjust—simply turn the knob on the panel until the hiss takes a sudden drop. Continuing the rotation will eventually produce an equally sudden drop in high-frequency response, but over a wide range of intermediate settings, the noise is gone and the high frequencies remain. Like all noise-reducing systems, it is most effective on relatively quiet program sources, which it can improve to near perfection. If you have a very scratchy record, or a very hissy FM broadcast or tape to deal with, don't expect this unit to bring it up to top-quality standards. It will help, but it cannot work miracles.

The peak unlimiter is not as obvious in its operation, but switching it off should convince anyone that it is working. Over a wide range of moderate program levels, operating the switch has no audible effect. However, loud signals will be made noticeably louder, and—equally important—low-level signals (and noise) will drop appreciably in level when the circuit is turned on. Once you have used it, you won't want to be without it. And caution is in order: this feature is most useful with a powerful amplifier, but *be sure your speakers can handle the power it calls forth.* At maximum program levels, the peak unlimiter will cause the amplifier to deliver more than twice as much power to the speakers as it would with the circuit switched out.

We made some special performance

(Continued on page 50)

# ONKYO gives you 4 new ways to enjoy the sound of the '70's!



**Model TX-330**  
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Superb stereo with built-in 4 ch. Matrix synthesizer! Has a direct cpld. diff'l amplifier; 2 tape monitors & dubbing; fine FM Muting & Sensitivity; accepts 2 sets of speaker systems. Delivers 21 Watts RMS power per channel @ 8Ω; 0.5% THD. \$299.95



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# The undistorted truth behind the Avid dividing network.

At Avid, we know there's a lot more to building a really accurate speaker than just a super flat frequency response.

So, after we've done all we can to build the flattest, most linear response into our speakers, we spend a lot of time fussing over a whole bunch of equally important things.

Like dividing networks, for example.

The role of the dividing network is to send input frequencies to the right driver without introducing any distortion or degrading the transient characteristics of the speaker.

It sounds simple.

Unless you happen to be the engineer designing it. In which case it can become the most critical can of worms in the whole speaker design.

Pick the right crossover frequencies, interface the drivers just right, and you've got the frequency

response problem just about knocked. But you can't stop there.

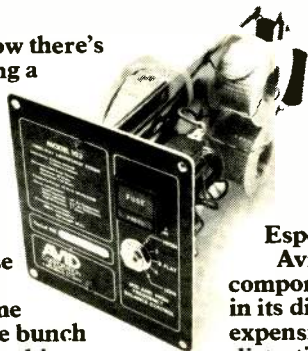
You see, if the drivers aren't damped just right, the dividing network can degrade the transient response of

the speaker, even if you've achieved a super flat frequency response. The result is a ringing response. Transient distortion. Poor imagery.

There's still more.

Because even the best designed dividing network in the world can be a real washout when it comes to intermodulation and harmonic distortion, if the components you use aren't up to snuff.

For instance, in a lot of speak-



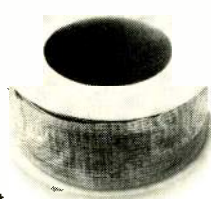
ers you'll find dividing networks using non-linear components like iron core coils. Great for the manufacturer because they're cheaper. Not so great for you because of the distortion they can create. Especially at higher power levels.

Avid uses only ideal, linear components such as air core coils in its dividing networks. More expensive, of course, but they're distortion free.

The point is, we're a company that is totally and unequivocally committed to just one thing. The design and construction of the clearest, best sounding speaker systems in their price range.

And that's not just so much advertisingese. It's for real. But, it's for you to decide. So here's what we'd like you to do.

Go to your Avid dealer. A-B an Avid with any other similarly priced speaker. Then pass judgement. We think we know what the verdict is going to be.



## AVID CORPORATION

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Kairon Electronics, Quebec



## Phase Linear 4000 Stereo Preamp

(Continued from page 48)

tests of the Phase Linear 4000 under actual use conditions in conjunction with a Phase Linear 400 power amplifier, a pair of AR LST-1 speakers, and a high-quality record player. We adjusted the volume control so that the maximum levels from the Leonard Bernstein recording of *Also Sprach Zarathustra* (Columbia MQ 30443) produced meter readings of 0 dB on the power amplifier—an indication that the full power of the amplifier was probably being delivered on peaks. The acoustic sound-pressure level (SPL) in the room about 12 feet from the speakers was 102 dB under these conditions. The softest passages of the recording produced an SPL of 65 dB, which appeared to be largely recording-hall ambience. During the playing of a silent-groove disc (the one we use for rumble measurements) with the amplifier control settings unchanged, the sound-level meter read a room background-noise level of 45 dB. (This level is low enough that one can upset the measurement by breathing.) When we switched off the autocorrelator and peak unlimiter, the noise level measured in the room rose to 57 dB.

To us, this indicates that the Phase Linear 4000 can reduce system noise, including turntable rumble and normal hum pickup, to below that of the ambient noise in a quiet listening room, and (with the components we used) some 12 dB lower than would be possible with any other top-grade preamplifier. Under these conditions, the maximum listening levels can equal or exceed those existing at the original performance, depending on the maximum power capability of the reproducing amplifier and speakers and, of course, on speaker efficiency. The important thing to realize is that the noise contributed by the program material, record player, and entire amplifying system can be made literally inaudible, even under very-high-gain listening conditions. This is why we do not say that the Phase Linear 4000 is the "best sounding" preamplifier we have ever heard—although we were tempted to do so. A good preamplifier should have no sound of its own, and many (including this one) meet that qualification easily. What we can say is that the Model 4000 makes any program played through it sound better than through any other preamplifier we have ever used, by virtue of its unique control features and most particularly its autocorrelator and peak unlimiter. Altogether, it is a most impressive technical achievement, one bound to influence equipment to come.

Circle 108 on reader service card

CIRCLE NO. 11 ON READER SERVICE CARD

# The Non-Giant Economy Size.

Unlike so many of our giant competition, Sherwood doesn't make a full line of audio equipment. No radios. No tape decks. No headphones. No turntables. Versatility may never be our claim to fame.

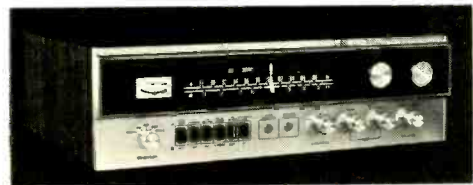
But the limited scope of our output does have benefits. We can concentrate on refining each of our products, engineering them for maximum performance.

A case in point is the S7310. With a minimum RMS output of 38 watts per channel (20-20,000 Hz at less than .5% distortion), this receiver outpowers all other units in its price range. With exceptional selectivity and sensitivity ratings.

We also utilize only the finest and most advanced of proved componentry: Dual gate MOS FET's and phase lock loop circuitry, the latest integrated circuitry and Solid-State FM IF Ceramic Filtering devices. Equally important, we've eliminated the gimmickry and gadgets that add nothing to the equipment except a potential for malfunction.

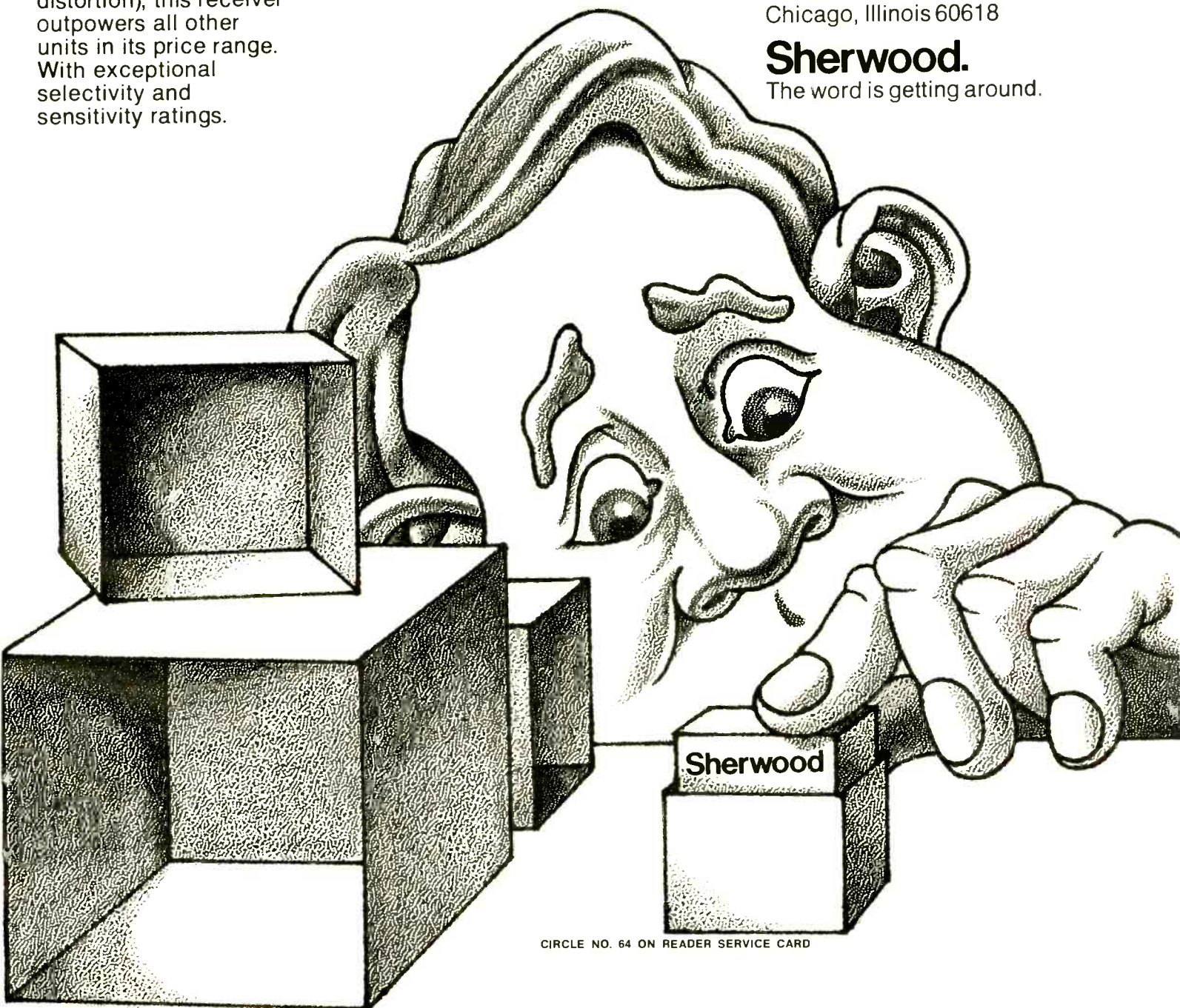
In short, if you look at receivers that do as much as Sherwood's S7310, they probably cost more than \$369.95. Or, if they cost the same, do less.

Which only proves that, in hi-fidelity manufacturing, good things come from small packagers.



Sherwood Electronic  
4300 North California  
Chicago, Illinois 60618

**Sherwood.**  
The word is getting around.



CIRCLE NO. 64 ON READER SERVICE CARD

# THE PUPIL OF TETÉ MACHADO

A report by  
Managing Editor  
William Livingstone

A FEW Fridays ago I spent the evening with Christie Barter, director of communications for ABC Records. Over drinks and dinner at Romeo Salta we gossiped about the record business on the two coasts, and Christie gave me the details of ABC's acquisition of the Famous Music labels (Dot, Blue Thumb, etc.). Having flown in from L.A. that morning on the Red-Eye Express and spent a long day at the office, Christie began to nod over dessert, so I walked him back to the Hotel Dorset and went on alone to the Red Feather, a Latin *boîte* a few blocks away. I thought I'd have a nightcap there and preview the act by Teté Machado, to which I was planning to take a Costa Rican friend, Thelma Sandoval, the following evening.

Sitting at the end of the bar, I had a pretty good view of the stage in the adjoining clubroom, but when the show was about to begin, a waiter came over and asked if I didn't want to move in to a table (a sign over the bar tells you *not* to take drinks from the bar to the show-room); he urged me, and though I feel self-conscious alone in a night club, I went. Didn't he just put me at a conspicuous ringside table practically in the lap of drummer Steve Ríos? He did.

Teté Machado is a glamorous Cuban actress of the pyrotechnical school. Famous for her beauty, she had a big career in pre-Castro Cuba, and her private life was of as much interest to her fans as her professional career (there were stories of extravagant affairs with rich lovers and even rumors of epoch-making orgies at her farm outside Havana). In the bar, where she had given me a couple of suspicious stares, she looked like a woman who would do any-



Ian Anderson

thing. Up on the little stage, she looked more like a woman to whom everything had been done.

Her repertoire is made up of songs by the Mexican composer Lolita De La Colina. There's no moon-June-croon- spoon nonsense in these songs; they have good lyrics about how awful it is when lovemaking becomes routine, about love affairs that begin and end in hotel rooms, and about how grand sex is when it all works. Some of them are, well, quite specifically erotic. They have been recorded by such artists as Olga Guillot, Sophy, and Blanca Rosa Gil and even by the composer herself in "*Desde Mi Cama con Amor*" ("From My Bed with Love," Tico CLP 1320). But many consider the best interpreter of these songs to be Teté Machado.

FOR the show Teté made a striking entrance wearing a Panama straw picture hat and a maribou boa, carrying Floria Tosca's swagger stick, and wearing at least one ring on every finger. She launched into *Camas Gemelas* (*Twin Beds*), threw the stick to one side and the hat to the other, and messed up her hair. After the first chorus, she came down off the platform, microphone in hand, and advanced to my table. Did I tell you I was already feeling uncomfortable? She leaned over as if to say something into my left ear, and when her cheek brushed mine it gave me a slight electric shock. The combo was playing away, and finally she said: "Sing." Sing? I didn't know what she was talking about. The mike was in front of my mouth, and when she repeated the command to sing, I said, "What am I supposed to sing?" The mike touched my chin and gave me a real

electric shock and I jumped about a foot. She turned her back in disgust and went to the next table where somebody's grandmother knew exactly what was expected and began to sing "la, la, la, LA, la, la" in time with the music.

I had cut a *brutta figura*, but the show went on, and I liked it. The back-up musicians were excellent (Ríos on drums, Julio Gutiérrez at the piano, and Joe Rivera on bass). Miss Machado does not have an exceptional singing voice, but she is an exciting performer nonetheless, relying on movement, her looks, and strong projection of lyrics. She punctuated the passion, suffering, and bitterness called for by some of the songs with flashes of humor and sweetness. Most of it was powerful stuff that came to a climax in a song called *Me Muero* (*I Am Dying*). It begins with "I am dying to caress your skin" and sort of goes on from there. Chucho Avellanet's recording (on UA Latino LT-LA 113 D) prettifies the song. But Teté Machado pulled out all the stops and flung a couple of rings into the audience, and when she began to tremble all over, the colored lights started to flash and she finished with a few orgasmic moans. Maybe a little corny, but very theatrical, and she made it work — to wild applause from the audience. One of her encores was *La Pequeña Teresa* ("Little Teresa wanted to fly/But Nature wouldn't teach her how"), a song I interpreted as an expression of penis envy. More colored lights. More applause. I beat a hasty retreat before the house lights came up.

WHEN I recounted all this to Juan Mayo, the South American friend who had insisted that I see Teté's show, he said, "Don't be embarrassed. She won't remember you. She's usually so spaced out she doesn't know what's going on around her. You can go back."

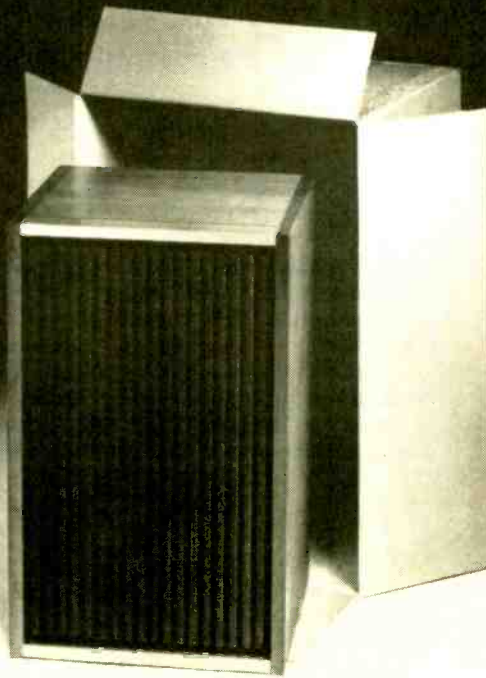
Saturday night back at the *boîte*, the waiter put Thelma and me at the same ringside table. The place was jammed and Thelma circulated to chat with various people she knew. When she returned, she said, "They're here to see her suffer. It's like Judy Garland, the way they're gossiping about her private life. One woman told me Teté is seriously ill but is bravely continuing to sing as long as she can." The show was about the same, but more intense because the crowd was larger, and we loved it.

And who says Teté doesn't know what's going on around her? In *Camas Gemelas*, after she had thrown aside the props and had come into the audience, she headed straight for our table and held out the mike to Thelma, who came in right on cue: "la, la, la, LA, la, la." Then she thrust it at me, looked me straight in the eye, beat time on the table, and mouthed "la, la, la, LA, la, la." I think I got it. Can I now bill myself as a pupil of Teté Machado?



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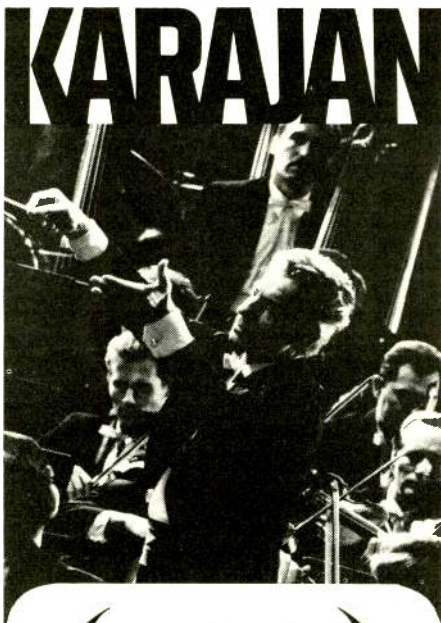
Woofer:	12" high-compliance (long-throw voice coil)
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# THE SIMELS REPORT

By STEVE SIMELS



## THE LAST OF THE HAM

EVERY now and then we get letters from readers (usually after we've delivered a heavy pan to an artist they hold particularly near and dear) inquiring about how we determine assignments for our reviewers. Well, there's no great mystery to it—we simply try to match, as judiciously as possible, the albums to be reviewed with the reviewers' particular areas of interest. There are other considerations, of course; often, for example, the fun of a review is hearing what a writer who has never commented on a particular artist has to say. Also, we try not to let any of our reviewers have at the same artist over and over again (which, by the way, is why I now solemnly promise *not* to review the new Stones album under any circumstances). And yes, gentle reader, our writers and editors quite often disagree with each other, as witness the brouhaha over Nilsson's "Pussy Cats" on page 106. In other words, there *is* no STEREO REVIEW party line (or if there is, nobody's told *me* about it).

Be that as it may, I'm still a bit queasy about being odd man out, critically speaking, which is the embarrassing position I find myself in at the moment in relation to Bryan Ferry's "These Foolish Things" album. Every reviewer worth his salt, it seems, has fallen over himself declaring the thing a work of genius, and so far the only people who have admitted to feeling about it as I do (that it's an unintentional comedy record at best and pernicious trash at worst) are Howard Kaylan and Mark Volman (better known as Flo and Eddie), who, after being played one of the tracks (Bryan's Tom Jones-ish version of *Sympathy for the Devil*) in a *Phonograph Record Magazine* Blindfold Test, remarked "He may be wealthy, but he sure doesn't have any taste." I bring the matter up only because Lester Bangs makes a strong case for the damn disc in these very pages (page 100, in-fact), and while I'm ordinarily opposed to turning this

magazine into what one of my colleagues has referred to as a "Review of Each Other's Record Reviews," the album rankles me enough that I simply can't let the opportunity to disagree pass by.

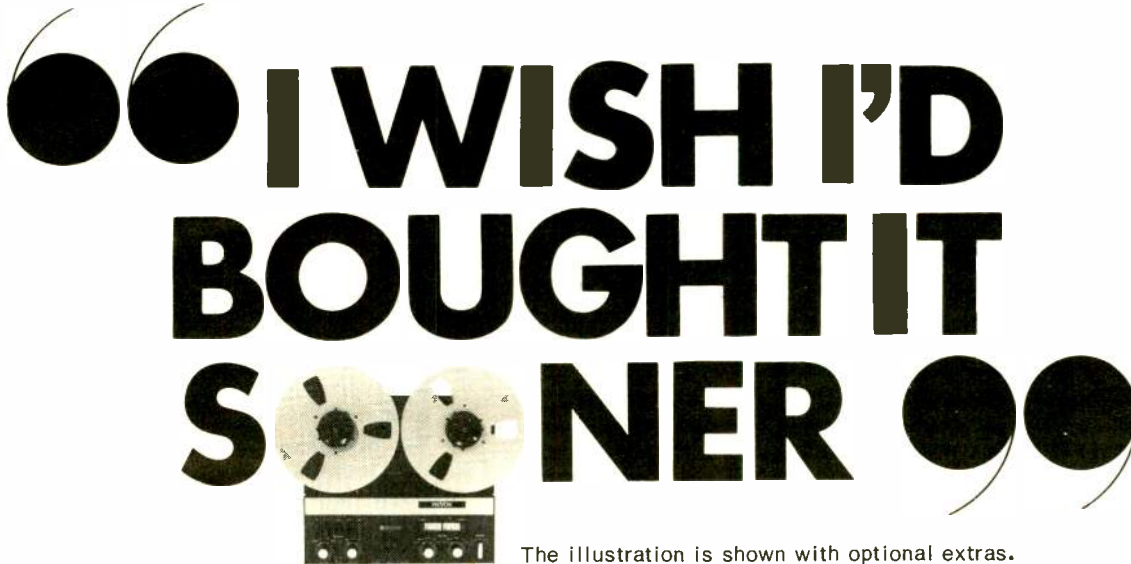
For the uninitiated, Bryan Ferry is the head honcho of an English band, wildly successful in their homeland, called Roxy Music (I quote Flo and Eddie again: "The only smart thing Warner Brothers ever did was drop them") which specializes in a kind of mildly avant-garde electronic rock that owes a little to the Velvet Underground, a little to Pink Floyd, and a lot to Ferry's own peculiar fixations. Their first two albums were monumental dogs, but I found their most recent effort, "Stranded," interesting in spots. Ferry writes most of the group's material and sings it in a voice—if that is the word—that even in a form for which I personally feel non-voices are preferable, strikes me as a bit much. He sounds like a nightmarish exaggeration of the most annoying affectations of Ray Davies, and a bit like Donovan might if he'd had a sex-change operation. In other words, godawful beyond belief, although striking by virtue of his sheer eccentricity.

On his solo album, he forsakes the experimental pretensions of his work with Roxy and attempts an oddly eclectic bunch of rock standards. But the word "standards" here is a bit misleading. It would be more accurate to say that he tackles a bunch of *famous* rock songs from various eras, and that he obviously considers them all of a piece. So we get Dylan and Lesley Gore, which I find a bit unsettling. Current critical cant has it that it's *all* trash, and while I have nothing against trash per se (I dearly love lots of those horrid old Lesley Gore records), the fact remains that *It's My Party* is and always was a lousy song. What value it has lies in its naïveté and the intense feeling of period it conveys. As music, or even as rock-and-roll (not  
*(Continued on page 56)*

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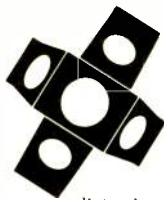
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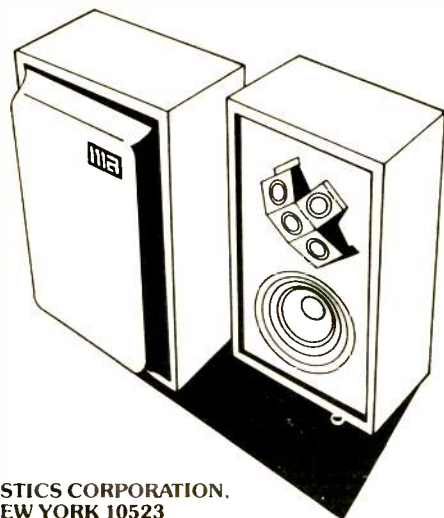
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always the same thing), it's a joke. But Ferry approaches it exactly as he approaches several legitimately great songs by Smokey Robinson, Lennon and McCartney, and Brian Wilson, and what are we to make of that?

Well, it seems to me that there are two possible ways we can take it. One is that, like David Bowie, Ferry at heart has little love or sympathy for rock-and-roll, and in a particularly vicious and campy way is making fun of these songs for no other purpose than to prove how groovy he is. This may be borne out by his on-stage demeanor; he tries to come off as a Thirties matinee idol, appearing of late in a white dinner jacket, flourishing either a cigarette or a brandy snifter, and in general cutting the kind of figure old ladies the world over may just adore.

**M**ORE likely, however, and equally depressing, he is probably quite sincere about what he's doing, he really admires *all* these songs, and he approached the whole project as a labor of love. Certainly the various interviews he's given in the British pop press tend to support this; the man appears to believe he is a serious artist. If this is indeed the case, then I can only conclude that he's also a blithering idiot. Consider, if you will, the particular track that has gotten the heaviest raves, and which sort of sums up the problems I have with the album, his version of *A Hard Rain's Gonna Fall*. Basically, it *almost* makes it; the arrangement, with its gospel overtones, rocks quite nicely, and his ludicrously affected singing is fairly appropriate because the thing was always supposed to be a sort of drone anyway. In fact, this performance could conceivably pass for Leon Russell, which is not my idea of a good time either, but at least it does not drive me screaming from the room.

But is Ferry content with this? Oh no! He adds (inspiration of inspirations), if you can believe it, *sound effects* to illustrate the lyrics—waves crash, crowds laugh, thunder roars—all the corniest old theatrical devices going. If Bryan knows what ham is, then the conclusion is inescapable: it's back to possibility one, and he's making fun of the song; he's peddling the same kind of hipper-than-thou condescension that David Bowie dished out when he covered the Stones' *Let's Spend the Night Together*, and I find it similarly repulsive. The rest of the record isn't quite so obviously contemptible—when he takes on Elvis, for example, he contents himself merely with a straightforward, if unconvincing, imitation—but by and large it's equally dreadful, and the only possible way I can see anyone relating to it at all is on the level of unconscious self-parody. And if *that* is where rock-and-roll is heading in the Seventies, then I'd rather drive a truck. Be warned. As for Lester, I'm sure he'll feel much better in the morning.

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# GOING ON RECORD

By JAMES GOODFRIEND  
Music Editor



## MAKING WAVES

A RECORD arrived in the office the other day, and with it a story. The disc is Musical Heritage Society MHS 1836, the repertoire the Etudes Op. 2 and Op. 5 of Adolph von Henselt, and the performing artist a young pianist named Daniel Graham. The story, I should add, has nothing to do with the composer or the repertoire, but is strictly about the recording company and the artist—and mostly about the artist.

Though there is nothing on the record jacket to tell you so, the disc was, in fact, produced by Mr. Graham himself. That is to say, he chose the repertoire, leased a recording studio, arranged for a proper piano, properly tuned, to be in the studio at the proper time, instructed the engineer, listened to the takes, supervised the editing, and approved the master tape—which he then sold to the Musical Heritage Society. It is not the only record of his own playing that he has so produced, though it is the first to be released. The company now pays him an advance against future recordings done the same way.

No one familiar with the way popular records are sometimes produced will be in the least surprised by any of this (except that they may wonder, "Why bother?"), for what is at stake in the popular market is two things: artistic "control" and money. Successful, and even possibly-to-be-successful, groups and soloists produce their own records, and sometimes even have their own labels, which are marketed by whatever major company they have contracts with to do so. They insist upon doing things their own way (and often will brook no interference by resident producers), and they know that the more the final product actually belongs to them (which is to say the more its component parts and services have been paid for by them, even though the money may have come as an advance from the major company) the higher the percentage of its selling price they will be in a position to com-

mand. The amounts involved can be enormous.

But a solo classical pianist recording some études by Henselt (or sonatas by Schubert, or variations by Beethoven, or almost anything else for that matter), has no problems of artistic "control." The control is automatically in his fingers and head, and even under the most despotic record-company conditions he is given the opportunity to accept or reject the final recording on both musical and technical grounds. Furthermore, how much money can possibly be at stake in a recording of Henselt's études? Mr. Graham is not a naïve man, and he does not suppose that either he or the Musical Heritage Society will make a killing on the market with such an item. Furthermore, although I do not know so for a fact, I would bet that whatever the advance received by the artist, it covers only a portion of the costs of the production. Why, then, does Mr. Graham (and others who have similar arrangements with various companies) do it?

Well, every performer, be he great, good, or godawful, has to start somewhere. The usual method has been to pick up recital performances here, there, and everywhere, sometimes for minuscule fees, sometimes for free; to sign on with a manager in the hope of getting better and more prestigious opportunities; to try to play some of the big cities, with or without orchestra; and eventually to scrape up the money to finance one's own New York solo recital. It has been a shibboleth from time immemorial that no musical artist can be successful without a New York debut and the reviews of it in the big-time newspapers.

New York debut recitals (unless you are already an international star) don't make any money, and they cost something around \$3,000 for a good hall, a good time slot, and a minimum of advertising. If you are lucky, and seen as promising, a critic from the New York Times will attend the recital. If you con-

tinue to be lucky, have your best of all possible performing days, and really play well and excite the (largely papered) house, he will write a good review of your effort. If you are luckier still, and if it is not cramped for space that day, the Times will publish it. You might also get a review from the New York Post or the Long Island Star, but no critic will turn up from the Herald Tribune, the World-Telegram, the Brooklyn Eagle, P.M., or the Daily News because four of them are not in existence any more and the fifth doesn't review classical-music events. The Times is therefore the only one you can really bank on these days, for it is the only one whose name has clout with the out-of-town concert promoters.

But for \$3,000 of his own money (plus whatever he can get as advances from the Musical Heritage Society), Mr. Graham can produce God-knows-how-many records of his own pianism and get, he estimates, an average of thirty reviews per record in newspapers and magazines throughout the country. In addition, he has something concrete (well, plastic) to send to concert managers so they can hear his playing firsthand before they make up their minds. And there is even the odd chance that he might make some money on royalties from record sales. Clearly, this is quite another way to skin the cat.

WE (and I) have expressed the opinion before in STEREO REVIEW that records constitute the primary field of activity in classical music today, with the concert hall in second place, but that has always been from the point of view of repertoire. There is no question that the radical differences in the listening habits of music lovers of today and of years past are due to the imagination and pioneering efforts of people in and associated with the record business. Ives, Janáček, Mahler, Nielsen, Bach, Vivaldi, and dozens of other composers are, as common listening experiences, the inventions of the record companies. Contemporary composers too have often found it easier, and generally more advantageous, to aim for a recording of one of their works rather than a concert performance. But to see records now taking on the age-old recital function of introducing and testing new young performing artists, and through the artist's own instigation, efforts, and finances, no less, that is something new. That it signifies the end of the New York solo recital itself I doubt, but it certainly signifies the end of its once exclusive and absolute power to make or break a new artist—and all the better for that.

By the way, I don't particularly like the études of Henselt myself, but Mr. Graham plays the hell out of them and has produced his record quite professionally. New days, new ways. (I'd say it in Latin but I don't know how.)

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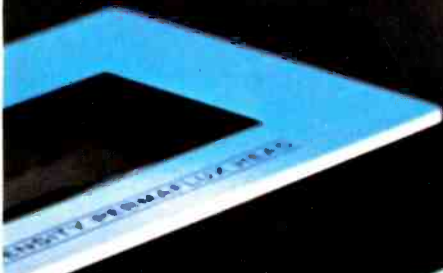
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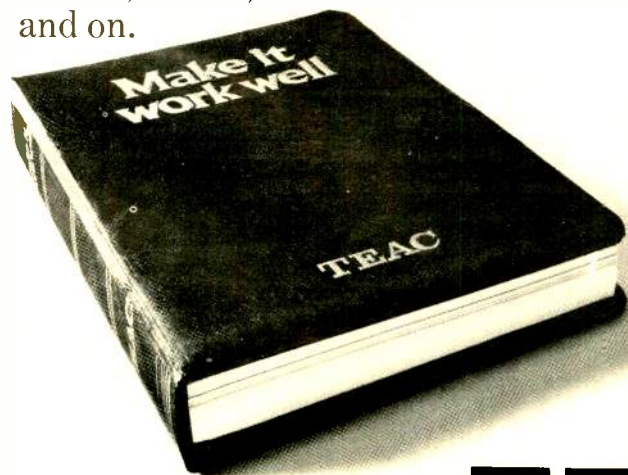
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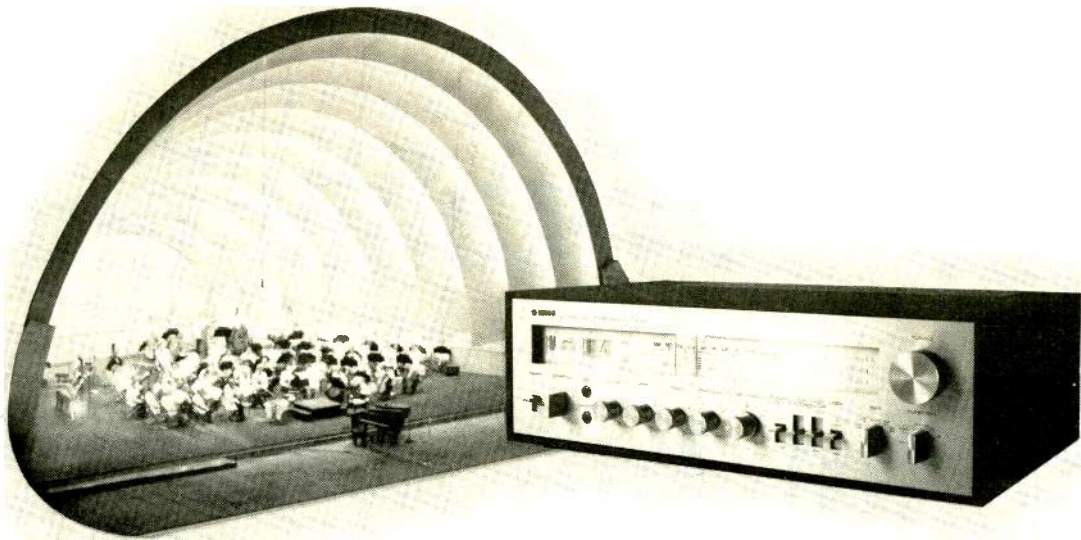
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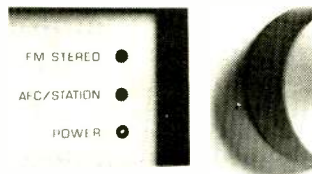
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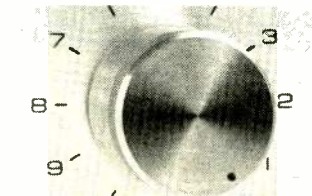
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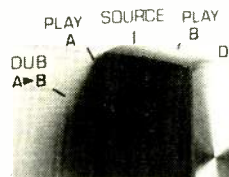


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# THE BASIC REPERTOIRE • 175

By MARTIN BOOKSPAN

## ENESCO'S ROUMANIAN RHAPSODY NO. 1

GEORGES ENESCO was one of the famed child prodigies of music. Born in 1881 in provincial Roumania, he was the son of a farmer. Music was all around him as he was growing up in the village of Cordaremi. His father got a small violin for him, and the child began to play by ear the tunes he heard at village weddings. Recognizing an uncommon talent, Enesco's father took him to Vienna in his seventh year to the head of the Vienna Conservatory, Joseph Hellmesberger—grandson of the Hellmesberger who was a friend of Beethoven and who had played in orchestras under him. Hellmesberger was reluctant even to receive father and son, but once he heard young Enesco play he immediately accepted him for study at the conservatory and took him to live in his own home.

In the Hellmesberger household Enesco was at the center of a busy musical life with traditions stretching back to Beethoven himself. When he was eleven, he took first prize at the conservatory in both harmony and violin. A year later his father took him to study at the Paris Conservatory. The principal influences on him there were Massenet and Fauré. A concert of his chamber music and songs was given in Paris in 1897, and that occasion launched the sixteen-year-old musician on an international career that was to last until his death in 1955. In his later years Enesco was active as a guest conductor with many of the world's leading orchestras. He played the violin and conducted when he visited the United States for the first time in 1923, and during the late 1930's he conducted a series of memorable concerts with both the New York Philharmonic and the Boston Symphony.

That eminent American music critic of the first third of the twentieth century, Lawrence Gilman, wrote nearly forty years ago: "Enesco is an unusual type of musician—a type that becomes rarer every day. He is one of the few living

examples of the artist virtuoso who is both eminent and self-effacing. Enesco, though still in his creative middle years, is, in his standards and predilections, a survival from another age. He is, in fact, anachronistic. In a musical era which is increasingly dominated by the spotlight, the wisecrack, and the exhibitionist, Enesco remains, quite naturally and involuntarily, an humble servant of the things that as an artist he reveres and loves. . . . He is a composer of depth and power and intensity, an interpreter of insight, a friend of good music and of good musicians. . . ."

Enesco's compositional output is wide-ranging, encompassing orchestral suites, symphonies, works for piano solo, sonatas for violin and piano, songs, and an opera, *Oedipus*, with a libretto based on Sophocles' tragedy, that is regarded by experts as his most important work. He is best known, however, as the composer of two Roumanian Rhapsodies for orchestra (a third, in G Minor, has apparently not been published), of which the first, in A Major, has been over the years one of the most familiar and frequently played of all works for symphony orchestra.

Authentic folk songs of Roumania are used in the First Roumanian Rhapsody. They are stated and repeated with intensified orchestration rather than being subjected to any kind of development. The opening tune, which takes shape from fragmentary phrases in the clarinets and oboes, is thought to be derived from a popular Roumanian drinking song, *I Have a Coin and I Want a Drink*. This tune is succeeded by another one, more rhapsodic, which is given to the strings, with descending chromatic scales in the woodwinds. The strings also have the principal material of the third melody, with cymbal strokes as punctuation. Much is made of these three tunes, almost unrelievedly in A Major, until the fourth one appears—surprisingly and refreshingly in the mi-

nor key. Still another tune arrives in the flutes, in an elaborate and accelerated section. The end is rollicking and brilliant, a fittingly robust finish to a score of ebullient good spirits and vitality.

In the early years of long-playing discs there was available a recording of Enesco's Roumanian Rhapsodies Nos. 1 and 2 played by the Colonne Orchestra of Paris and conducted by the composer. That disc (Remington 199-207), which has long been out of print, afforded an opportunity to hear Enesco's own conception of how the music should go. I still have the disc in my collection, and it reveals performances of measured and controlled freedom. Not for Enesco were the excesses of tempo and dynamics with which some conductors treat this music; rather, he preferred a more straightforward approach, allowing the music to make its own points.

AMONG currently available recordings of the Roumanian Rhapsody No. 1, the one that perhaps most closely follows Enesco's own attitude is Arthur Fiedler's (RCA disc LSC 3297, reel ERPA 3297C, cassette RK 1277). Although the venerable Boston maestro must have conducted this score literally hundreds of times, the recorded performance has a contagious exuberance and freshness. The members of the Boston Pops Orchestra play their hearts out, and the recorded sound—despite an origin in the early years of stereo technology—is still highly serviceable.

Of the other available recordings of the First Roumanian Rhapsody, Leonard Bernstein's (Columbia M 30645) and Antal Dorati's (Mercury SR 75018) strike me as being overinterpreted, Vladimir Golschmann's (Vanguard S 160) as too matter-of-fact, Eugene Ormandy's (Columbia disc M 31846, cassette MT 31846) and Constantin Silvestri's (Angel S 35677) as rather self-conscious.

Leopold Stokowski's recording (included on RCA discs LSC 2471 and VCS 7077, cassette RK 5072) derives from the same sessions, in about 1960, that produced the conductor's extraordinary account of Smetana's *The Moldau*. Much the same insight informs Stokowski's account of the Enesco Rhapsody, but I cannot recommend the performance, for the conductor unaccountably changes Enesco's carefully conceived concluding measures; instead of the composer's mounting climax rounded off by a definitive final chord, Stokowski abruptly ends the piece just short of the indicated conclusion. The result is an unresolved and inconclusive finish that wipes out all the excellence that has preceded it. The Boston Pops recording is the one to own.

\* Mr. Bookspan's 1973-1974 UPDATING OF THE BASIC REPERTOIRE is now available in convenient pamphlet form. Send 25¢ and self-addressed #10 envelope to Susan Larabee, Stereo Review, 1 Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016 for your copy. \*

The Original Dixieland  
Jazz Band: Tony Sbarbaro,  
Eddie Edwards, Nick  
LaRocca, Larry Shields,  
and Andy Ragas.



# “HOT” JAZZ

Seventeen years of creativity and adventure

By Joel Vance

THE combination of nostalgia and research into the forgotten delights of the American musical past has now firmly established in the public consciousness the genius of Scott Joplin, and it has begun the deserved enshrinement of Ferdinand Joseph La Menthe, alias “Jelly Roll” Morton. It is to be hoped that this trend will continue so that people will go on to rediscover the glories of classic, “hot” jazz as well.

Ragtime as a major popular music died along with Joplin in 1917, and Morton, who was grounded in ragtime, went on to become the first great jazz composer. But he was still relatively unknown when the Original Dixieland Jazz Band, a white quintet from New Orleans, opened at Reisenweber’s supper club in New York in the winter of 1917. The ODJB, as it came to be known, exploded upon the American popular music scene with a force since equaled only by that of the Beatles in 1964. The group astonished and entranced dancers and listeners. Columbia offered to record them, did—and refused to release the master for fear of being laughed at. So the band went over to Victor and made *Livery Stable Blues*; it was a sensational success and one of the first million-selling singles.

The ODJB was the first of many legends in classic, hot jazz, which had a seventeen-year run, from 1917 to roughly 1934. Hot jazz bristled with an in-

ventiveness and confidence not heard since, and it had an enthusiastic public support. The music was young and brash; so was the audience. There was plenty of money to spend in the pleasure-loving Twenties, and there was plenty of work for bands. The movies were still silent and radio was of limited importance. And though recording as an industry was only in its infancy, a host of little labels had already sprung up, most of them willing to take a chance on jazz. The majors showed a continuing interest. After the ODJB began to fade, Victor had Jelly Roll Morton’s Red Hot Peppers. Columbia had been saved from bankruptcy in 1924 partly by the phenomenal success of Bessie Smith, and demonstration of the existence of a valuable “race records” market encouraged all labels to seek black talent. For all these reasons, hot jazz is one of our best-documented popular art forms, preserved in wax at the time the original action was taking place.

If you’ve been a “mouldy fig” for as long as I have (since the age of four), and if you’ve continued to listen to the original “hot” recordings, you may have become convinced that so much was accomplished in those seventeen years that there really remained little for jazzmen to do, especially after World War II, when jazz lost or rejected its mass audience, never to get it back. For those who haven’t listened or who haven’t been convinced,

here is a checklist of some of the "hot jazz" records currently available. The albums listed are by no means *all* that should be heard or that can be gotten; I have tried to hit the high points and the major figures in order to construct a basic collection designed for the novice or for someone who has already had his first seductive taste of "hot" and is now eager for a heartier serving. (All records, with the exception of the recently recorded Joplin items, are of course from mono originals, though a few have been artificially transmogrified for stereo.)

## Ragtime, Blues, and Solo Piano

**SCOTT JOPLIN:** *Scott Joplin Plays Scott Joplin*, BIOGRAPH BLP-1006. *Piano Rags*, Joshua Rifkin (piano), NONESUCH H-73026 (two discs). *Heliotrope Bouquet*, William Bolcom (piano), NONESUCH H-71257.

**MA RAINEY:** *The Immortal Ma Rainey*, MILESTONE 2001.

**BLIND LEMON JEFFERSON:** *Black Snake Moan*, MILESTONE 2013.

**BESSIE SMITH:** *World's Greatest Blues Singer*, COLUMBIA GP-33 (two discs). *The Bessie Smith Story, Volume 1*, COLUMBIA CL 855.

**CLASSIC JAZZ PIANO STYLES.** RCA VINTAGE LPV-543.

The Rifkin recordings are largely responsible for Joplin's long-overdue artistic vindication and the subsequent ragtime revival. The collection played by the estimable William Bolcom includes some recently composed rags, but the most valuable item is the title selection, a collaboration between Joplin and the brilliant wastrel Louis Chauvin, of whose legendary ragtime work this is the only true surviving example. The "Joplin Plays Joplin" set includes eight piano rolls made by the master late in life when a terminal disease was rapidly paralyzing his hands. The "Classic Styles" anthology features work by Morton, "Fats" Waller, Earl Hines (probably the greatest jazz pianist ever), boogie-woogie Albert Ammons and Pete Johnson (they worked as a team), and the delicate Jimmy Yancey, whose gentle way with boogie gave it a class that enables us to trace its bloodlines back to ragtime.

Gertrude "Ma" Rainey was the first of the great recorded blues singers. She worked minstrel and medicine shows down South and black theaters up North. One of the girls in the chorus was Bessie Smith, who became Ma's protégé. Ma had a dead-sure sense of phrasing and was such a remarkable musician that she got more out of her voice than anyone would have thought was in it.

Blind Lemon Jefferson was the patriarch of country-blues singers. His laconic vocal style and superior guitar work influenced "Leadbelly," Lightnin' Hopkins, Robert Johnson, and a whole generation

of bluesmen. He was also one of the first blues stars on race records.

Bessie Smith was and, though long gone, still is the Empress of the Blues, with a voice of operatic power capable of conveying deep emotion. Columbia has reissued every record she ever made (some 160 of them) in five double-disc albums so that, when all ten discs are stacked on a spindle, the performances can be heard in chronological order from 1924 to 1933. It is a noble project, useful to both scholars and musicians, though the whole of it is hardly recommended for consumption at one sitting—too much even of the greatest is still too much. Her best performances are those made with Louis Armstrong backing her and with the combo led by Fletcher Henderson, and the Volume 1 recommended above gives a good sampling of what she could do. In any event, you simply *must* hear her definitive version of *St. Louis Blues*.

## New Orleans

**JAZZ ODYSSEY: Volume 1, The Sound of New Orleans (1917-1947)**, COLUMBIA C3L-30 (three discs).

**ORIGINAL DIXIELAND JAZZ BAND.** RCA VINTAGE LPV-547.

**JELLY ROLL MORTON:** *The King of New Orleans Jazz*, RCA LPM-1649.

**KING OLIVER:** *The Immortal King Oliver*, MILESTONE 2006.

**LOUIS ARMSTRONG:** *The Louis Armstrong Story*, COLUMBIA CL 851/4 (four discs). *The Genius of Louis Armstrong (1922-1933)*, COLUMBIA G-30416 (two discs).

Joe "King" Oliver's Creole Jazz Band, in which young Louis Armstrong played second cornet, was the next sensation after the ODJB. Oliver's band had made a tour of the West Coast in 1921 and then settled into Chicago, where it quickly became the talk of the town. Oliver got his nickname from the New Orleans habit of "crowning" the best and most popular jazz hornist. The New Orleans jazz style as exemplified by the Creole band was based on collective improvisation, and it wasn't all that far removed from the traditional New Orleans marching-band style. There were very few extended solos, but there were a lot of "breaks" in which the rest of the band stopped to let a solo instrument do a two-, four-, or even an eight-bar fill-in.

The largely improvised duo-cornet breaks devised by Oliver and Armstrong astounded audiences (Oliver gave Louis some idea of what he was going to do by silently depressing the valves of his cornet just before the break, and Louis did the rest). Because of the technical limitations of recording at that time, the cornets were often buried in the ensemble and sounded like fuzzy little tootlers,

King Oliver's Creole Jazz Band in 1922: Johnny Dodds, Baby Dodds, Honore Dutrey, Louis Armstrong, Joe "King" Oliver, Lillian Hardin (later Mrs. Armstrong), and Bill Johnson. The pygmy trombone on the floor is actually a slide cornet, sometimes played by Armstrong.



Frank Driggs Collection

while the clarinet, pushed to the front of the acoustic recording horn, wound up sounding as if it were playing lead. But the Creole band's records contain some marvelous moments nonetheless, and the drive and sweep that made the band famous are well in evidence.

Even within the collective improvisation idea, King Oliver's band is freer, looser, and swings more than the ODJB, whose music is sometimes a bit four-cornered. But there is still a thrill in hearing the first recordings of that memorable latter group, especially Nick LaRocca's sparkling cornet work on *Tiger Rag*—which, like most other staple tunes of the early jazz repertoire, was written by the ODJB (though Jelly Roll Morton is known to have put in a mild counterclaim).

The "Sound of New Orleans" set is spotty, but it does include the first ODJB record that so frightened Columbia, as well as some sides by the New Orleans Rhythm Kings. The NORK, as it came to be called, was a white band that prospered in Chicago, the biggest attraction outside of Oliver. It was especially distinguished for the liquid, eerie clarinet of the mad Leon Rappolo, who used to lean against telephone poles and play improvised harmony to the humming of the wires.

There are two other treasures in the collection. One is a 1947 version of Joplin's *The Entertainer*, played as scored in his *Red Back Book* by Bunk Johnson's elderly band of New Orleans men called out of retirement and obscurity. The tune is played straight, but with a saucy New Orleans beat and rhythm. The other jewel is a 1934 pick-up date under the leadership of trumpeter Wingy Manone, done for quick money in that Depression year and

featuring a motley grab bag of floating personnel. *I'm Alone Without You* was a straight-ahead dance tune, but—wonder of wonders!—Jelly Roll Morton, as a sideman, takes a solo in a style that can only be described as cocktail piano with fangs.

Morton's great period as composer and bandleader is amply recalled by the "King" set, entirely made up of the best of his Red Hot Pepper sides from 1926 to 1928. The Peppers were possibly the greatest of all New Orleans bands; it had superb musicians and the genius of Morton writing, playing, and arranging (Morton, though he encouraged solo improvisations, was a stickler for tight, "arranged" ensemble passages). The hallmarks of the band were wit, drive, a unique precision, and pride in what they did: all of this can be heard quite clearly on these sides.

When Armstrong went off on a solo career after leaving Oliver and then sitting in Fletcher Henderson's brass section for a while, he made the famous series of small-band sides with the Hot Five and Hot Seven (names that are not, of course, to be taken as literal descriptions of the number of musicians involved on any given date). Columbia's original 1950's series of "Golden Era" reissues is especially valuable, presenting the best of the Five and Seven dates along with the memorable teaming of Satchmo and Earl Hines. Soon after Armstrong's death, the "Genius" set was issued, and it covers his career from the time he was Oliver's protégé to the beginnings of his orchestral period shortly before he left for his second European tour in 1934, including some delicious combo dates. Taken together, these are definitive performances in the sense that they illustrate the multiple facets of his musical gifts.

## Chicago

**BIX BEIDERBECKE & THE WOLVERINES.** JAZZTONE S-1003.

**JIMMY NOONE & EARL HINES:** *At the Apex Club*, DECCA DL 79235E.

**THE CHICAGOANS.** DECCA DL 79231E.

**KING OLIVER:** *Papa Joe*, DECCA DL 79246E.

Chicago was the jazz capitol of the world for most of the Twenties period because it was the major city most easily reached from New Orleans and the lower Midwest (the areas in which most of the jazz activity was developing), and because the city had shown itself to be hospitable to hot bands. There was almost no jazz on the West Coast, except for occasional tours, and New York, except for Harlem, was locked up by the ODJB. But Chicago didn't produce its own jazz sound until a group of white youngsters, most of whom had gone to Austin High School, rushed out to buy instruments after hearing Oliver and the NORK. They even drew lots to see who would play what. They learned fast and finally got a sound that was muscular and always a little rough around the edges, but very exciting. The genius of the "Chicago school" was Frank Teschemacher, whose volatile, hoarse clarinet and arranging ideas were the lodestar of the sound. But there were other great talents as well, among them young Gene Krupa, whose thrilling, near-violent drumming startled and delighted the jazz fraternity. "Mouthpiece" of the group (and its rhythmic basis) was the irrepressible Eddie Condon.

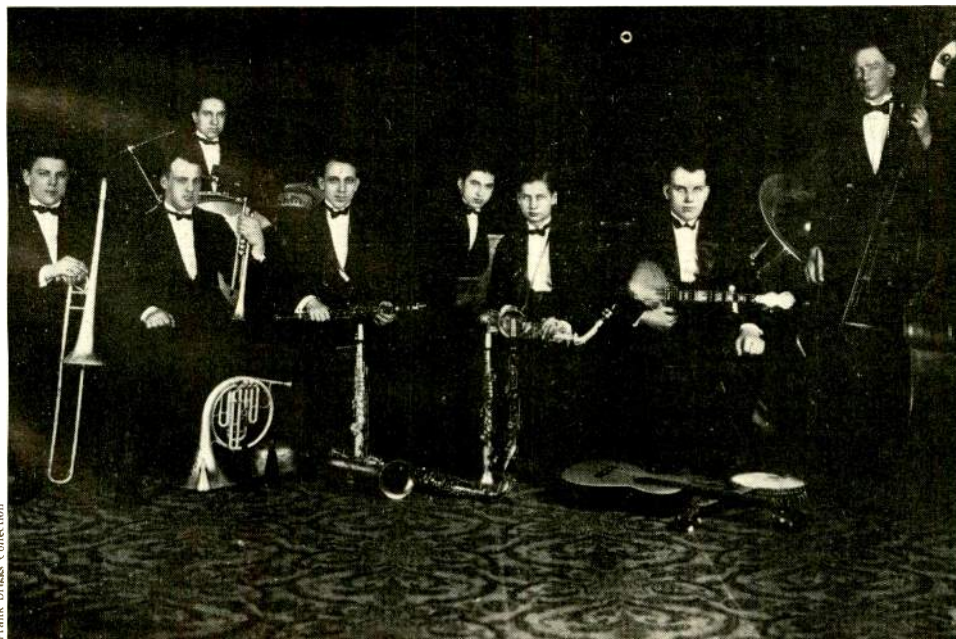
King Oliver, meanwhile, had lost the Creole band and put together the Dixie Syncopators to meet commercial requirements and changing styles. Oliver had abandoned the collective improvisation idea (Armstrong had made it obsolete) and had himself

switched from cornet to trumpet. His Syncopator records, made between 1926 and 1928, are the best proof we have of his greatness as a stylist, and improved recording techniques show off his beautiful open-horn tone as well as his use of the mute.

Earl Hines and Jimmy Noone led only one of the many combos that worked in small clubs on Chicago's South Side, but theirs was indisputably the best. These two great men inspired one other, Noone with his beautiful clarinet tone, dexterity, and pixilated sense of adventure, and Hines with his titanic sweep and power. The group was unusual in that it lacked both trumpet and trombone: the intimate "chamber jazz" it produced was a portent of things to come.

To nearby Richmond, Indiana, where the Gennett label had its recording "laboratories" in a warehouse next to a railroad track, came the Wolverines in 1924. The appraised aesthetic value of this Midwestern band has fluctuated over the years, depending on which critic you listened to, but they were considered at the time to be the only band that had an individual sound not owing too much to Oliver, the ODJB, or the NORK. Their star was cornetist Bix Beiderbecke, whose musical thinking, even in 1924, was forty years ahead of anyone else's. Bix is *the* legend, the Little Prince of jazz. Certainly his otherworldly solo on *Royal Garden Blues* has little to do with jazz as it was then, and nothing whatever to do with the blues.

Bix was always longing for a music that he alone was capable of creating but which he could never quite discover. He chose the cornet—as opposed to the heftier and piercing trumpet—for its warmth, and he had a concert musician's sense of and insistence on tonal purity and crispness of execution. But he also had a bite and sting in his playing that



*The New Orleans Rhythm Kings (NORK for short) in Chicago in 1922: George Brunies, Paul Mares, Ben Pollack, Leon Rappolo, Elmer Schoebel, Jack Pettis, Lew Black, and Steve Brown.*

could simply nail a tune to the wall. He became the idol of white Chicago musicians, adored Armstrong (and was adored right back), and soon went on to work with and star in the most daring and the most successful white orchestras of the time (the two characteristics not necessarily being embodied in the same group).

## New York

**JAZZ ODYSSEY:** *Volume 3, The Sound of Harlem*, COLUMBIA C3L-33 (three discs).

**BIX BEIDERBECKE:** *The Bix Beiderbecke Story*, COLUMBIA CL 844/6 (three discs).

**PAUL WHITEMAN:** *Paul Whiteman, Volume 2*, RCA VINTAGE LPV-570.

**JELLY ROLL MORTON:** *Stomps and Joys*, RCA VINTAGE LPV-508.

**KING OLIVER:** *King Oliver in New York*, RCA VINTAGE LPV-529.

**DUKE ELLINGTON:** *The Beginning (1926-1928)*, DECCA DL 79224E. *The Music of Duke Ellington*, COLUMBIA SPECIAL PRODUCTS JCL 558.

**FATS WALLER:** *Ain't Misbehavin'*, RCA LPM-1246. '34/'35, RCA VINTAGE LPV-516.

**JAMES P. JOHNSON:** *Stride Piano*, COLUMBIA CL-1780.

Chicago began to dry up as a jazz center in the very late Twenties. Small-unit bands were declining in favor of larger outfits, and New York was becoming the commercial center for music as well as everything else. So an exodus of jazzmen took place around 1928 and 1929 (the only major musician who didn't move was Earl Hines). Oliver, Armstrong, Morton, and the Chicago kids all set up shop: except for Armstrong they had wretched luck.

But all of them were impressed by a trio of new pianists. Duke Ellington had arrived in Harlem in

1923, and his compositions and surprising orchestral voicings had won the admiration of most traditional jazzmen. James P. Johnson had developed "stride" piano from a barroom novelty into a forceful, sturdy style, and Thomas "Fats" Waller was his most ardent disciple. Some of Ellington's earliest recordings are in the "Beginnings" set, and the "Music of Ellington" package includes his extraordinary 1928 recording of *The Mooch* with Baby Cox literally howling a vocal, backed by bluesman Lonnie Johnson's agile guitar. James P. Johnson would go on to write symphonies, chamber works, and such evergreens as *If I Could Be with You One Hour Tonight*. The fun-loving Waller wrote *Ain't Misbehavin'*, *Honeysuckle Rose*, and half a dozen other superior tunes, and he incorporated an element of infectious joy into his singing and playing that has never been equaled and is sorely missed today.

Oliver and Morton went into decline soon after their arrival in New York. Times and styles had passed them by. Oliver's health was failing, but he was still able to rally for an occasional inspiring solo, such as his muted choruses on *Sweet Like This*. Morton hesitatingly tried various styles in hopes of catching fire again, but his commercial success was over. He could, and did, content himself with telling anyone who would listen, "I invented jazz one Sunday in 1902." But whatever his fortunes, he remained a master pianist, never losing his disciplined flamboyance, and he made some masterly solo recordings for Commodore ("New Orleans Memories")—alas, not presently available—as late as 1939.

The best-known white popular orchestra of the Twenties was Paul Whiteman's, a twenty-seven-man army of highly trained musicians. Whiteman

*Jelly Roll Morton's original 1926 Red Hot Peppers: Andrew Hilaire, Kid Ory, George Mitchell, Johnny Lindsay, Morton, Johnny St. Cyr, and Omer Simeon.*



Frank Driess Collection





*The Wolverine Orchestra in 1923: Vic Moore, George Johnson, Jimmy Hartwell, Dick Voynow (standing), Bix Beiderbecke, Al Gande, Min Leibrock, and Bob Gillette.*

liked to think in grand designs; his orchestra played flashy and often overblown “concert” arrangements of pop tunes, and he picked up the billing “King of Jazz” along the way. In late 1927 Whiteman hired half a dozen certified jazzmen, among them Bix Beiderbecke, who was thrilled to join. Whiteman also engaged several young and promising arrangers like Bill Challis and Tommy Satterfield to write jazz-flavored scores. Bix was showcased on many of the Whiteman recordings, playing some of his finest passages, and even now the Whiteman records are just plain fun to hear.

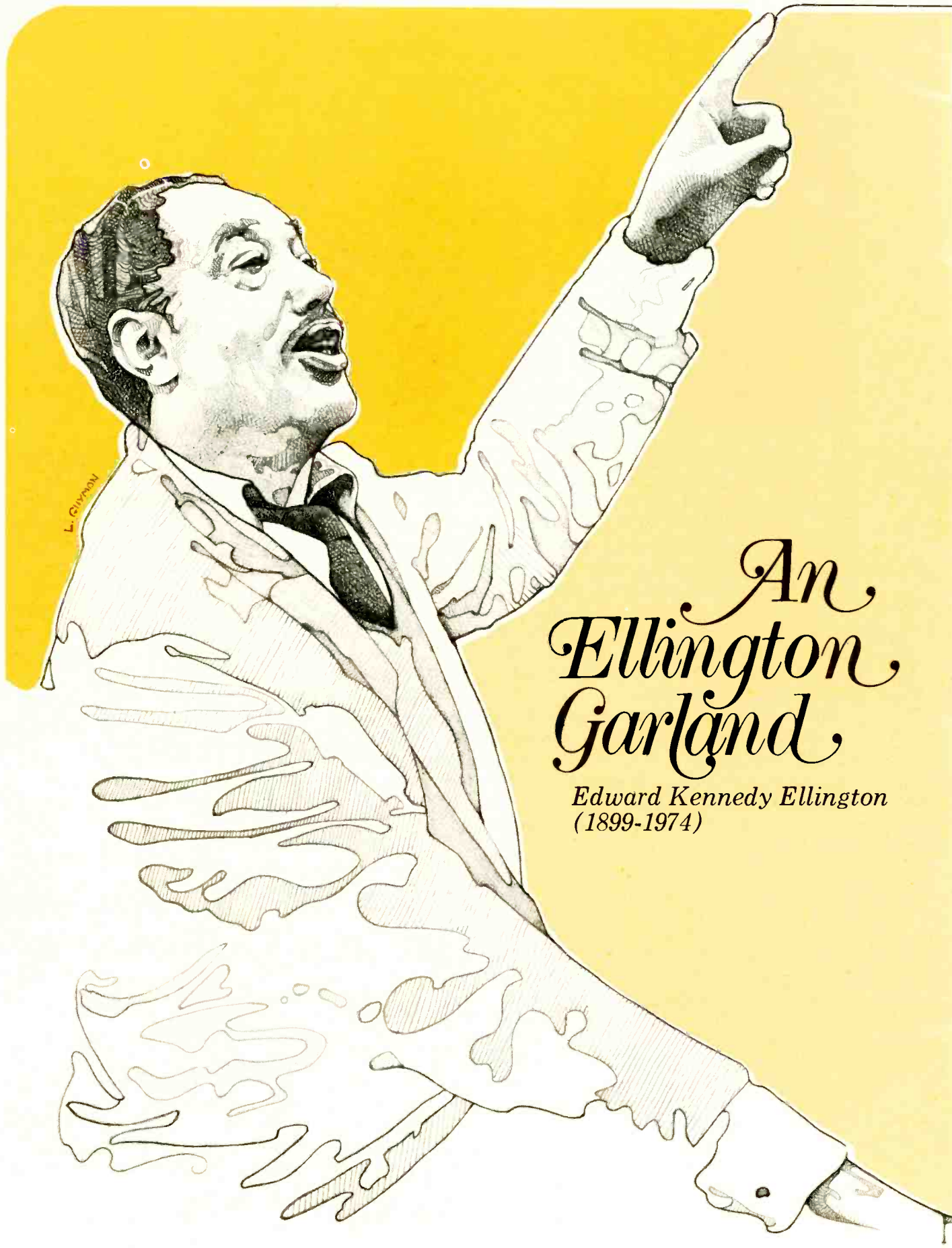
But Bix’s greatest work was done with a smaller orchestra led by his sax-playing chum Frankie “Tram” Trumbauer. Under Tram’s sponsorship Bix recorded his three greatest solos—*Singin’ the Blues*, *I’m Comin’ Virginia*, and *Way Down Yonder in New Orleans*—as well as his piano composition *In a Mist*.

The “Sound of Harlem” collection is really required listening for any hot-jazz fan. While much white New York jazz of the period was somewhat stuffy and cautious, black efforts were loose and boiling with energy. Among the delectable morsels in this anthology are piano solos by Eubie Blake, Johnson, Waller, and the forgotten Garland Wilson; double-entendre cabaret blues by Ethel Waters and Victoria Spivey; Ellington’s band masquerading under the name “Mills’ Ten Blackberries”; Armstrong’s version of *Ain’t Misbehavin’*; Cab Calloway and his orchestra doing a lickety-split *Corinne*, *Corinna*; Don Redman’s rich and panoramic *Chant of the Weed*; and the very first hit blues record, *Crazy Blues* by Mamie Smith (no relation to Bessie) and her Jazz Hounds. Taken all to-

gether, it’s enough to make you don top hat and tails and book a table at the Club Extravaganza (where the floor show used to open with fifty nude chorus girls splashing in a tank of champagne, pretending to be drowning and singing for help in syncopated hiccups).

**T**HE Great Depression of 1929 killed a lot of things, among them hot jazz. The big orchestras shrank or broke up, club patronage was down, and musicians joined the millions of unemployed. By 1935 the original meaning and sound of “hot” had all but disappeared, and the sound of “swing,” which replaced it, was largely concocted by Tin Pan Alley and played by highly drilled but mechanical orchestras. But the original “hot” recordings still testify to seventeen great years of creativity and adventure.

And how marvelous it is to be able to return via the turntable to those thrilling days. From out of the past come the perfect notes of Bix’s cornet, sailing through the open windows of a roadhouse on a summer’s night and dropping like tiny stars on the nearby lake. A young and feisty Armstrong, feeling his power to change the world, hits forty high C’s in a row just for the sheer hell of it. Bessie Smith contemptuously pushes away the microphone on the stage and fills the theater with her oceanic voice, easily hitting the third balcony. Jelly Roll Morton stands on a street corner bragging of his wealth. And when his friends scoff, Jelly grins so they can see the diamond set in his teeth. All this and more—everywhere you go there are dozens of bands large and small, all playing something wonderful and fresh and valuable, and the whole country is saying, “Yes!” “Hot jazz”—hot damn!



L. GIVMAN

*An  
Ellington  
Garland*

*Edward Kennedy Ellington  
(1899-1974)*

● We all know and will not forget Duke Ellington's musical genius, but any woman who was ever privileged to meet the great man almost always carried away with her a very special feeling because the Duke had an extraordinary way of making a woman feel beautiful and very special. He seemed to give his exclusive attention and soon you were pleasantly showered with a poetic phrase which he felt would suit and please you . . . you just walked away smiling. I shall always remember him that way . . . and smile.  
—Peggy Lee

● I have never known anyone who worked as hard as Duke and loved every moment of it. He lived a full and beautiful life and left so much beautiful music to the world for now and ever more. I loved him before I met him and will forever. I have recorded a few of his songs but I am looking forward to recording albums of his music. I shall miss him oh, so much, and so shall the world. May he sleep in peace.  
—Sarah Vaughan

● Duke Ellington was a great experience in what makes the world go round and round. Just playing his music was an adventure—the best music, the best charts in the business, and the chance to play from week to week, from year to year. The twenty-eight years I spent with the Duke were most rewarding and I wouldn't trade the grand memories for love or money. May God bless and keep Duke Ellington.  
—Russell Procope

● I have been distressed not only by the Duke's death, but also by the fact that here in London, while tributes have been fervent and well informed, not a word of acknowledgment or appreciation has appeared under the by-line of any "music critic" of any London newspaper. I suspect that situation has not been greatly different in Ellington's native land, and for the same reason. The orchestra he fashioned, and the music he composed for it, constitute one of the musical glories of the century, and yet, throughout his long and productive life, "music critics," with very few exceptions, have behaved as though all of this were neither modern nor music. They weren't listening. One is tempted to say that this was the Duke's tragedy. It wasn't. It is theirs.  
—Henry Pleasants

● I had the pleasure of working with Duke for fourteen years. It was a wonderful experience once I got used to his arrangements, but they gave me trouble at first. We used to have arguments over harmonic changes, but Duke always turned out to be right, and I learned to take his advice and listen to him—I both admired him and respected him.  
—Barney Bigard

● Duke Ellington was the all-round greatest. As a bandleader, he had a stage presence that was just outstanding, and he always commanded the audience's respect. He was one of the greatest composers I know. His compositions pertained to everyday life, and he could translate into song whatever he saw. He had no equal as an arranger, and he had a vision of his own, which he pursued and proved without regard to all the other styles that came in and went out. A lot of people didn't realize how much piano he could play, but he was original and didn't copy anybody. Highly intelligent, he could talk with anyone—kings, queens, presidents, all kinds of artists—on their terms. There will never be another like him.  
—Earl Hines

● Duke Ellington to me was a great African chief whom I would have loved to see in beautiful flowing robes. I think he was without a doubt one of the most accomplished men in history. The force, the beauty, and the history of Duke and the Ellington orchestras have to me been one of the most vital forces of love, beauty, and creativity. Every time I think I'm playing something new, it turns out I've actually heard the very same thing in perhaps a 1927 or 1928 Ellington solo or composition. I have found tremendous inspiration in the sound colors Duke produced and in the freedom he exhibited in his playing.  
—Randy Weston

● In all the years I knew Duke Ellington I never heard him criticize anybody or put them down. But once, at the Hickory House, he made a remark to me in a joking sort of way—"Goodness, you play so many notes!" It wasn't until some time later that it occurred to me that he might have been telling me in an oblique way that I was overplaying, and he was right! I've always tried to heed his advice since then.  
—Marian McPartland

● Duke Ellington was one of our best composers, and he had the best band. Duke always sounded different from all the other popular composers, and he sought out musicians, like Johnny Hodges, who had a peculiar tone that gave the band extra character. The last time I saw Duke he was hugging my wife. I said "Don't forget, that's my wife," and he replied, "Don't marry these pretty women, and I won't kiss them." He was a great man, a real charmer.  
—Eubie Blake

● Duke Ellington, like Art Tatum, was in a class by himself—one could not possibly compare him to any other musician or band leader. I admired Duke for many years, but it wasn't until 1941, when I toured with him, that I discovered how versatile he really was. He had his own style of playing, but he wasn't limited to it, and he knew each of his musicians so well that his arrangements obscured their individual weaknesses, and often molded greatness out of mediocrity.  
—Mary Lou Williams

● Duke Ellington was not only a giant among giants, he left a legacy of music unlike any other music in the world. I have asked through every medium at my command that everyone who loved and related to Ellingtonia join together on April 29th, when it's 8:00 PM where they are, next year and every year thereafter, to sing, play, whistle, or listen to an Ellington melody. Duke Ellington is the only musician I know of who can be honored in this way anywhere in the world.  
—Billy Taylor

● "We're lucky he didn't die when he was fifty, or sixty, or seventy," Benny Carter told me. "Think what we would have lost!" It was a consoling thought, and full of truth, for original music flowed from Duke Ellington almost to the last. He even had his electric piano in the hospital where he died, so that he could continue to work on his humorous opera, "Queenie Pie." In a noble poem Brock Peters recited at the funeral service, there were some singularly appropriate lines: "A day ends,/A way ends,/And a world ends here." Ellington's world was more than a microcosm of jazz itself. He had the whole jazz tradition in his grasp, and without him the music is now all too likely to prove a ship without a rudder.  
—Stanley Dance

● I met the Duke for the first time in 1932. After that our meetings were brief but memorable. The thing about him that came across most strongly was the great warmth of the man. He made the person he was talking with feel that he was tops. We won't see his likes again.  
—Mabel Mercer

● Duke Ellington persistently, if amiably, refused to categorize music, certainly including his own. And his own multifarious music was that of the most original composer in the history of American music so far. I would rank Charles Ives second. Both of these composers exulted in the very act of sounding their imaginations. And each, out of different memories and experiences in and against the American grain, especially savored the extraordinary variety and liveliness of American life forms which they transmuted into equally energizing musical forms. I did not know Ives. I knew Ellington from the time I was a boy. He was one of the most valuable teachers I ever had, his particular expertise, in and out of his music, having been the continual exploration and stretching of possibility.  
—Nat Hentoff

● There are so many things you could say about Duke. He made everybody who performed with him feel so good to be able to participate with him and his music. I was proud to be a part of that family of musicians, actors, and dancers.  
—Tony Bennett

● Duke was one of the greatest men in the world to work for. He was very strict about his music but not about anything else. We haven't had any composer of American music who was as great as he was. In fact, his thinking was in certain ways mostly musical. But his knowledge and experience covered so many things that you learned more than music by being with Duke. It's good that the band keeps going because that was Duke's instrument. He kept it so he could hear his music.  
—Cootie Williams

● Duke meant the world to me. He was the architect of jazz in his own division. He left his musical imprint with us. He came in, put a system down, and set the guidelines. Now that he's gone, it's even more important that we follow his thinking.  
—Lionel Hampton

# HUBERT LAWS, FLUTIST

“There is another kind of wealth,  
when you can feel full, musically”

By Chris Albertson

THE flute did not become fully recognized as a jazz instrument until the Fifties, though Wayman Carver was playing some hot licks on it in his college dance band during the Twenties. Carver recorded history's first jazz-flute solos in the early Thirties when he was with Chick Webb's Little Chicks, a contingent of the larger Webb band. He continued using the instrument on various recording dates throughout the Thirties, but, although he clearly demonstrated the flute's adaptability, it remained a novelty until twenty years later, when such reed men as Herbie Mann and Frank Wess picked up where Carver left off.

Today's jazz scene is rife with flutists, and Hubert Laws, a thirty-five-year-old Texan who has never heard a Wayman Carver record, is foremost among them. Born in Houston, Laws learned from his mother to play the piano, switched to the alto saxophone while in junior high school, and began playing the flute more or less by accident. “I wasn't listening to the flute at the time,” he recalls, “but the concert band at school was going to do the Overture to *William Tell*, and there was no one to play the flute, so I volunteered and became interested in the instrument. It became the main object of my attention, and I guess that's why I'm a flute player, but, actually, my whole family is musically inclined—even my father tried to sing.”

The most successful of the musical Laws so far, Hubert looks out for his brother and sisters: Eloise (who has recorded on her own for Columbia) and Debra appear as singers in his “Morning Star” album, and Ronnie plays tenor saxophone in “In the Beginning.” Charlotte, his youngest sister, has not yet appeared on records with Hubert, but reports are that she is doing fine as an “Ikkette,” dancing and singing with the Ike and Tina Turner Revue.

“Charlotte is only seventeen,” Laws boasts, “but she's an excellent dancer.” Hubert himself started out young, landing a professional job with the Jazz Crusaders at fifteen. Leaving the Crusaders in 1960, just before they began recording, Hubert, while attending Texas Southern University, had already started feeding a growing interest in classical music by performing with the Houston Youth Symphony. His pursuit of this interest led finally to New York's Juilliard School and, after graduation, study with the eminent classical flutist Julius Baker. “If more musicians would expose themselves to the various idioms,” he



advises, “I think it would enhance their playing in any particular idiom. It really affects your playing to be aware of what's going on.”

Through the years, Hubert has taken his own advice and gained varied musical experiences ranging from stints with Mongo Santamaria and Sergio Mendes to performances with Orchestra U.S.A. and the Berkshire Festival Orchestra and recording jobs with Arthur Prysock, Lena Horne, and numerous leading jazz groups. He started recording under his own name with Atlantic in 1964, but one gets the impression that he views those early recordings as some sort of false start, and that he feels his recording career really began with an album entitled “Crying Song.” “I was the first to sign with the CTI label,” he recalls, “and that was the first album they released. We have enjoyed a beautiful relationship.”

That relationship, now five years old, has yielded six extraordinary albums so far, albums that more and more reflect Hubert Laws' fondness for classical music. Relying heavily on adaptations and arrangements by Don Sebesky, Laws' recorded repertoire includes such unlikely items as Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* (abbreviated), Debussy's *Syrinx*, Fauré's *Pavane*, Mozart's Flute Sonata in F, and movements from Bach's Brandenburg Con-



CTI Records

certo No. 3. But Hubert also contributes his own compositions and includes material by contemporary jazz and rock composers. "The work I have done with CTI has been qualitative," says Hubert Laws, "in contrast with what I previously did at Atlantic Records. When Creed [Taylor, CTI's owner-president] and I sit down to discuss an album, we don't dwell on commercial considerations. We talk about music quality. I know a record company has to survive, but Creed hasn't made financial gain his primary objective."

**N**OR has Hubert Laws. He admits that he likes to enjoy the comforts of life, but adds that all wealth is not material. "I will very definitely become wealthy," he says, "but not necessarily in the sense that wealth is valued in our system. There is another kind of wealth, when you can feel full, musically. I feel a strong gratification from just having knowledge about things. I don't even have life insurance; I don't feel a need to have retirement benefits and things like that—I guess that's the philosophical part of me. Now, if I had children, I probably would have life insurance, but I do very well according to the standards of the system. That is, measuring success by dollars and cents. In fact, I do all right!

"There are so many ways you can make a dollar. I don't place a premium on dollars and cents any more, because I know that I can lose that, I can lose it very easily. So my values lie elsewhere. I can remember when I was a kid and we didn't have very much, materially. Those were some cherished moments in my life; I was close to my family and I didn't have some of the problems I have today. I like quality in everything, the place I live, my music, and so on, but I'm not obsessed with making a million dollars. That's why I avoid the club scene. Working six nights a week can impair your health, and that's the most important thing you have, so I do concerts and studio work. I do three hours, make enough, come out—and survive."

At a time when many well-known jazz musicians find themselves having to work for scale, and even more must take jobs out of their profession in order to survive, Hubert Laws would seem to be most fortunate. But, if America gave its native music its proper due, no capable jazz musician would be out of a decent-paying job in his chosen field, and, considering his stature, Hubert Laws would be doing even better. Can we even imagine Jascha Heifetz playing second fiddle on somebody else's record date?



# JAZZ-ROCK

Some of those unlikely seedlings nurtured in Miles Davis' hybridizing garden are bearing spectacular blooms

By Don Heckman

**I**t happened at the old Fillmore East, the long-since-shuttered mecca of "live" rock music. Miles Davis and his group were on the bill and I was standing at the rear of the auditorium watching this unusual appearance—in this setting—by a jazz group. A nineteen-year-old, standing next to me, muttered, as much to himself as to me, "Is that really Miles Davis?" He stared in disbelief at the leather-clad, fringe-bedecked figure who was moving, cat-like, across the wide Fillmore stage, shook his head, and said, "Man, my *father* used to listen to Miles Davis records when I was a kid—I mean *really* a kid; like an infant!"

And, of course, he was absolutely right. Miles Davis *has* been a major-league name since the late Forties, but only those unfamiliar with the trumpeter's penchant for surprise would have been startled at his presence in the high-decibel environs of the Fillmore East. Davis may not have been the first "name" jazz figure to break through to the audiences of the Sixties—Gary Burton and Charles

Lloyd, to name only two, had already gained considerable credibility with young listeners—but he was surely the first to find elements within the rock dialect that he could adapt to his own vocabulary.

As usual, his timing was excellent, and, as he had done so many times in the past, Miles both stunned and infuriated many of his contemporaries. At a time when some jazz musicians were deeply offended, often for quite justifiable reasons, by the attention rock was receiving, Davis' move represented almost a desertion to the enemy camp. Always sure of his instincts, however, Davis went right ahead, adding new musicians, trying out electronic techniques, expanding his music to include the metronomic rhythms and modal harmonies of rock.

And those first seeds planted by Davis (with the assistance of such musicians as Keith Jarrett, John McLaughlin, Joe Zawinul, Tony Williams, Airta Moreira, Chick Corea, Wayne Shorter, and others) blossomed into exceptionally healthy flowers. Unlike the Broadway theater, that moribund mistress

of fickle fate, jazz in the mid-Seventies is very much alive. Five years after my encounter with that prospective young jazz fan at the Fillmore East, recordings by Miles Davis, Herbie Hancock, Billy Cobham, and John McLaughlin—to name but a few—have achieved coveted gold-disc status. Jazz groups, playing music that ranges from Dixieland to bop to modern eclectic, seem to be springing up at every neighborhood night spot, and major events like the Newport Jazz Festival are having their greatest success ever.

Davis could not, and did not, do it alone. But, like so many great artists in other fields, he did act both as a catalyst and a finalizer, one who assembles and activates various elements in an environment in a way that makes the total greater than the sum of the parts. I can vividly recall hanging out with Davis a few years ago in his sensuously decorated Manhattan apartment shortly before the release of his album "In a Silent Way." "This one will scare the shit out of them," he said in his hoarse, gruff voice—a voice that is the contemporary jazz equivalent of the well-remembered Louis Armstrong growl. He sat at the piano and showed me the chordal clusters and scales that were at the root of some of the pieces and then, not yet having a fully mixed tape available, insisted that I listen over the telephone while an engineer at the Columbia studios played some of the completed sections over the line.

The music was hypnotically entrancing, even when heard under sonically limited conditions, and my initial response was more than confirmed when I heard the tapes in more favorable circumstances. Davis (and, again, I must underline the important contributions of his assisting musicians—pianist Joe Zawinul, for example, composed the album's title cut) had done what seems, in retrospect at least, to be extremely logical. He took the enormously varied tonal palette of avant-garde jazz and applied its brilliant hues to the repetitive rhythms of rock. With

a succeeding album. "Bitches Brew," Davis solidified his conceptions in a set of pieces that have become contemporary classics.

Simple? On the face of it, perhaps, but at its roots it was a highly original and surprisingly viable way of bringing together two kinds of music—jazz and an offshoot of jazz—that had often seemed totally antithetical. And it did so in a way—unlike some of the more commercially popular fusions—that managed to preserve the aesthetic integrity of both. The effectiveness of the Davis jazz-rock synthesis has been amply demonstrated by the fact that so much of the jazz that has followed it uses a similar approach.

The style has already very nearly achieved a sound and a substance as predictably familiar as the chromatic harmonies and fleet articulations of bebop. In the Davis-influenced jazz-rock style, melodies are long-toned, filled with disjunct intervals, fuzz-tone, and electronic feedback; the underlying basic rhythms are more implicit than explicit; and improvisations float above a jungle of snorting, growling rhythmic sounds (most groups have added a percussionist to the traditional trap drummer, primarily for the purpose of livening textures with explosive counterpoints of sound). And finally, group interaction and collective improvisation sometimes achieve a dazzling interplay rarely heard since the heyday of New Orleans jazz.

This is not to say that the music is necessarily easy to get into. I can recall a Newport Jazz Festi-



val program in which the Mahavishnu Orchestra was programmed with several other, more traditional acts. The audience was as various as Joseph's coat, but its majority clearly consisted of fairly conservatively dressed couples in their thirties and forties. They sat, contented as clams, through the earlier part of the show, but when the McLaughlin group came on and both the decibel level and the level of musical abstraction rose dramatically, they

left in droves. So, like it or not, the developing new jazz of the Seventies may very well prove to be as controversial and divisive as bop was in the Forties.

The irony is that the revolutionary musical devices of the avant-garde jazz of the Sixties took such a circuitous route to find a wider audience. A decade ago musicians like John Coltrane, Ornette Coleman, Eric Dolphy, Don Cherry, and others found it almost impossible to receive a sympathetic hearing. Yet what they were offering (and I am reducing my description to its most rudimentary level) was an adaptation of jazz that brought it squarely in line with much of the rest of the world's music.

These jazz musicians were advancing a form of improvisation in which the polar elements were

of the instrumentalists. But Dixon would sit dramatically in the middle of this vast (for jazz) array of players and, like some master African musician, spontaneously signal individual players to play one or another part, to take solos, to remain silent, to hold long, sustained tones. It was an almost magically spirited method of performance, virtuosic—perhaps even ritualistic—for both the players and the leader. It was one that obviously could never be repeated in precisely the same way, and yet one that, despite its radical techniques, was a logical extension of the jazz that had preceded it as well as a clear counterpart of the communal methods found in certain types of highly complex African musics.

Rock music (at that point it was still called “rock ‘n’ roll”) was relying on the familiar frameworks of the blues, AABA song form, and verse-chorus folk-



melody and harmony, in which emotional expression possessed structural qualities, and in which a collective interaction prevailed. Most of these elements are to be found in the musics outside the sphere of Western European influence, but jazz, until the early Sixties, depended upon the chordal structures of popular songs as a basis for improvisation, and this kept them firmly rooted in the harmonic architecture of a European heritage. The jazz players of the Sixties rejected this fundamental premise and opted instead for a more primal form of music: for many black musicians this represented a genuine effort to relate themselves to the African music that is their heritage.

Bill Dixon, for example, one of the unsung creative voices of avant-garde jazz, held workshop rehearsals in the mid-Sixties on New York's Lower East Side at which as many as thirty or forty musicians, many of them the best young players of the decade, were present. As a participant, I was repeatedly astonished by the richly complex waves of sound Dixon drew from the musicians. And yet his control as a composer was minimal in its formal means: a few fragmentary patterns for the percussionist and bassists; some pre-set phrases for each

music structures. But as the English and West Coast groups of the late Sixties stretched out their solos into the mesmerizingly extended improvisations sometimes described as “acid rock,” a similar melodic-rhythmic procedural/structural pattern began to emerge. I heard many performances by such groups in the late Sixties and early Seventies that immediately reminded me, in the density of their sound, of Bill Dixon's work.

The rock musicians, however, had two things going for them that avant-garde jazzers lacked: (1) an insistently repetitious, rudimentary rhythmic foundation, and (2) an eager, available, supportive audience with plenty of cash to spend on both record albums and concert-going. Those two elements made a world of difference, paradoxically separating and yet allying jazz and rock. When Jimi Hendrix used distortion and electronic feedback in his solos and (like the Who and others) systematically smashed and burned instruments, amplifiers, and speakers to the rapturous encouragement of his audiences, he may or may not have been specifically aware of similar “noise” elements and theater



techniques in the music of such players as Archie Shepp, Pharoah Sanders, Albert Ayler, and Don Ellis. But, aware of it or not, Hendrix probably wouldn't have developed the way he did *without* those prior developments.

The cycles of jazz innovation and pop exploitation are not unfamiliar, and the rock-jazz interaction is hardly the first example of such a pattern in American musical history. New Orleans jazz music

in spite of, rather than as a result of, their unquestionable brilliance. Most listeners still think of Ellington as a suave front man and songwriter rather than as one of the most original composers ever produced by the United States, and Louis Armstrong is similarly viewed as a slightly clownish "Dixieland" singer-trumpeter (*Hello, Dolly* and *Mack the Knife*) rather than as the man who, almost singlehandedly, established the premise of spontaneous solo improvisation and virtuosity in jazz.

The racial implications are unavoidable, and de-



of the early years of the century was soon transformed into the bouncy commercial dance rhythms of the Twenties—the "Jazz Age." Ma Rainey, Bessie Smith, Ida Cox, and the other great singers of the Classic Blues years exerted a direct influence upon such "torch" (to use the term in a very broad sense) singers as Helen Morgan, Fanny Brice, Lee Wiley, and, more contemporaneously, Janis Joplin. The great black jazz bands of the late Twenties and early Thirties—those led by Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Fletcher Henderson, and Jimmy Lunceford—provided both style and material for the enormously successful white bands of the Swing Era. Billie Holiday and Ella Fitzgerald have influenced virtually every singer alive today, and even quasi-jazz performers like Tiny Grimes, Slim Gaillard, and T-Bone Walker were seminal influences upon the black pop performers—B.B. King, Ray Charles, Little Richard, and Bo Diddley—whose music was a major watershed for the many streams of today's pop. Even poor old Scott Joplin, the subject of so many revival recordings and programs today, died an unhappy man, unaware even in his wildest dreams that a popularized version of his music might one day win an Academy Award and become the number one record album and number one single disc in the country.

Obviously, it has rarely been the innovatively creative performers who have benefited materially from their efforts. Even exceptions like Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington succeeded almost in

spite some rare public acknowledgments, for every Ellington and Armstrong there have been hundreds of black musicians like Bennie Moten and Frankie Newton, musicians who were not exactly creative geniuses, yet who, if they had been white, surely might at least have had careers that rivaled those of, say, a Tommy Dorsey or a Bunny Berigan. But the real message behind this clear and continuous exploitation is that jazz is something more than a transitory pop music *style*. The essential elements of jazz—improvisation, an exhilarating "live" rhythmic pulsation, and a persistent input from the deepest roots of Afro-American culture, usually mined from the bedrock of gospel music—have very simply been the basic protein for America's pop-music metabolism, the energizing force behind every new pop-music cycle. Jazz, the vocal musics that nurtured it, and the musics that have come out of it are truly contemporary art because they speak for the spontaneity of a culture that is itself a part of the medium. It is simultaneously instant journalism and pressure-point emotional expression. And the musics it has fathered—notably contemporary rock—are therefore among the most universal aesthetic expressions of the twentieth century.

There is a certain poetic justice in the fact that so much of today's pop rock has become laced not only with the *influence* of jazz musicians, but with the actual music itself. And it is even more encour-

#### RECOMMENDED JAZZ-ROCK LISTENING

**Chick Corea:** *The Song of Singing*, BLUE NOTE BST 84353, ⑧ 9138, ③ C 1138

**Mahavishnu Orchestra:** *Birds of Fire*, COLUMBIA KC-31996, ⑧ CA-31996, ③ CT-31996

**Weather Report:** *Mysterious Traveler*, COLUMBIA KC-32494, ⑧ CA-32494, ③ CT-32494

**Don Ellis:** *Tears of Joy*, COLUMBIA G-30927, ⑧ GA-30927

**Miles Davis:** *Bitches Brew*, COLUMBIA GP-26, ⑧ 18-BO-0908; *In Concert*, COLUMBIA KG-32092, ⑧ GA-32092, ③ GT-32092

**Billy Cobham:** *Crosswinds*, ATLANTIC SD 7300, ⑧ TP 7300, ③ CS 7300

**Oregon:** *Distant Hills*, VANGUARD VSD-79341, ⑧ M 89341, ③ M 59341

**Larry Coryell:** *Introducing the Eleventh House*, VANGUARD 79342, ⑧ M 89342, ③ M 59342

**Donald Byrd:** *Slow Drag*, BLUE NOTE 84292

aging to see that the success of rock-oriented jazz musicians seems to be spilling over into the arena of more traditional forms of jazz. This year's Newport Jazz Festival, always a bellwether of the jazz condition, included a lineup that ranged freely across once-forbidden stylistic lines. A little something for everyone seemed to be the premise, and programs that ranged from Harry James' swing band to jazz-rock jam sessions, from Eddie Palmieri's salsa-based Latin jazz to an evening devoted to the popular song as one of the richest sources of material for jazz development, underlined the long-term significance of jazz in all areas of popular music.

To speak of a "jazz revival," however, can be misleading. Jazz is not like swing (which is a jazz style), nor is it like rock (which may be several steps removed, but which is still an offshoot of jazz). In its jazz-rock form, however, it is the most successful jazz style since the Swing Era. And the music played by today's young jazz men possesses enormous potential resources, providing even the most modestly talented performers with a tonal palette as chromatically brilliant as anything jazz has ever seen.

The danger lies in its overuse. Much of contemporary rock music has fallen prey to the excesses of ear-scouring decibel overkill. As in the monolithic orchestral pieces of the late nineteenth century, too little substance has been expanded with too many resources. At the moment, players like Herbie Hancock, Billy Cobham, the musicians in Weather Report, Miles Davis, Larry Coryell, Gary Burton, Airtio Moreira, and others are making superb creative use of the expanded resources available to them. But the danger of excess (already noticeable in the music of Eumir Deodato) is always present.

It will be fascinating to hear the spin-off styles that will evolve from what we must for the moment call, for lack of a better name, jazz-rock. Already certain groupings can be discerned. The Miles Davis alumni—Hancock, Cobham, Shorter, and Zawinul (of Weather Report), McLaughlin (of the Mahavishnu Orchestra)—are all following a similar pathway, pushing their electronic gadgetry to the limit but still, with varying degrees of success, holding on to the dense, improvisational energies of jazz. Coryell, *not* a former Davis associate, also favors the disjunct melodies and decibel-heavy intensity of the style. Pianist Chick Corea, on the other hand, plays a lighter, Latin-influenced music, as does Brazilian drummer Airtio Moreira (with such superb associates as Ron Carter, Flora Purim, and Hermeto Pascoal). A lesser-known group, Oregon, has reached back to the fleeting raga-rock craze and come up with a gentle, vaguely Eastern-sounding jazz-rock.

And one can hardly overlook the roaring big bands led—now intermittently—by such luminaries as Don Ellis, Buddy Rich, Maynard Ferguson, and Woody Herman. Ellis' work in particular has been sadly neglected. And many jazz regulars, running the gamut from liberal to conservative, have flavored their work with varying quantities of rock seasoning; musicians as diverse as Pharoah Sanders, Donald Byrd, Horace Silver, Ramsey Lewis, Steve Kuhn, Stan Getz, and numerous others have been influenced by rock in one way or another.

**T**HE key question will be longevity. It is, after all, the *essence* of jazz that will keep it forever alive despite the jazz styles that pass like sky-brightening comets. In the case of jazz-rock, its very commercial success may spell the limits of its life as a popular style; we are an extremely fickle audience, voracious in our desire for an ever-changing variety of stimuli. But even if the jazz-rock phase is a short one, it will once again have introduced a new young generation to jazz, just as New Orleans music and swing and modern jazz did in the past. And that must be counted a plus, because in each listener who responds favorably to a Herbie Hancock or a Larry Coryell there exists the potential for a wider responsiveness to jazz and that gloriously colorful history that prepared the way for jazz-rock. As the dear, departed Duke Ellington knew so well, if a jazz man can just get an audience to open its ears, he's won half the battle.

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**Don Heckman**, for several years Contributing Editor to *Stereo Review*, has a background in jazz, rock, folk, and classical music, and he writes, plays, produces, or observes all of them.

# AMPLIFIER POWER-OUTPUT RATINGS: A NEW FTC TRADE REGULATION RULE

The road to consumer protection is not exactly paved with pillows, as Technical Editor Larry Klein's account of the continuing struggle with one such effort reveals

ONCE upon a time I served as part—an ineffectually protesting part, as I recall—of the committee that put together that toothless collection of ambiguities and loopholes known as the Institute of High Fidelity Amplifier Standard (IHF-A-201, 1966). The subsequent inability of the IHF to control, despite this Standard, the specification hyperbole of its own members, to say nothing of the truly inspired wattage fantasies of the “brown-goods” console manufacturers, ultimately came to the attention of the Bureau of Consumer Protection, Federal Trade Commission, whose task it is to protect the consumer from commercial fraud.

In fairness, it must be stated that the high-fidelity component manufacturers, in contrast to producers of brown goods, were paragons of power-rating virtue. For example, not too long ago there was an uproar among IHF members provoked by the “ $\pm 1$ -dB” qualification that some component manufacturers were appending to their wattage ratings. In practice, adding a  $\pm 1$ -dB tolerance to the wattage specification meant that the manufacturer could, in effect, claim about 25 per cent more power for his unit. Such a claim wasn't exactly a lie; it was simply meaningless—except perhaps in respect to achieving a competitive sales advantage among the technically unsophisticated.

But that was penny-ante power inflation in contrast to what the brown-goods boys (whose ranks include some of the best-known U. S. manufacturers of TV, home appliances, and console “hi-fi”) were doing. For example, as part of my testimony at the first FTC hearing called to examine the problem, I submitted a specification sheet from one of these major manufacturers claiming a 100-watt power rating for one of their compact music systems. Along with the spec sheet I also supplied data provided by the same manufacturer of tests done in accordance with EIA (Electronic Industries Association) practices. The manufacturer's own data indicated that his unit was able to put out no more than 6 watts per channel at 5 per cent distortion—

and that only over a limited frequency range. If, following common IHF practice, the bandwidth were extended to cover the full audio range, and if the reference distortion were reduced to 1 per cent, the amplifier in question could be legitimately rated at only about 2 watts per channel. To this day I've not been able to figure out the specific mathematical manipulations that enabled this manufacturer to spec his unit at 100 watts, but I'm sure his technique is well known and possibly even improved upon by his brown-goods competitors.

At any rate, it was just that sort of hanky-panky that alerted the FTC to the possible need for some consumer-protecting government regulation of the matter. The FTC's intention was simple enough: they wanted to ensure that when the consumer is trying to decide among several brands of amplifying equipment, each rated at, say, 30 watts per channel, the 30-watt rating would in every case be derived by the same technically valid and fair procedure.

AND so, in January 1971, the Federal Trade Commission requested comment on a proposed Rule that would lay down a uniform way of specifying amplifier power. Several public hearings were held from April 1974 onward, and modified versions of this Rule were subsequently distributed so that industry and consumer comment could be invited and evaluated. (A late version of the proposed Rule was also printed in its entirety as part of an article in *STEREO REVIEW* in April 1973 by William Dixon, the FTC's Special Assistant Director for Rulemaking, who clearly spelled out the FTC's thinking on the need for such a Rule.)

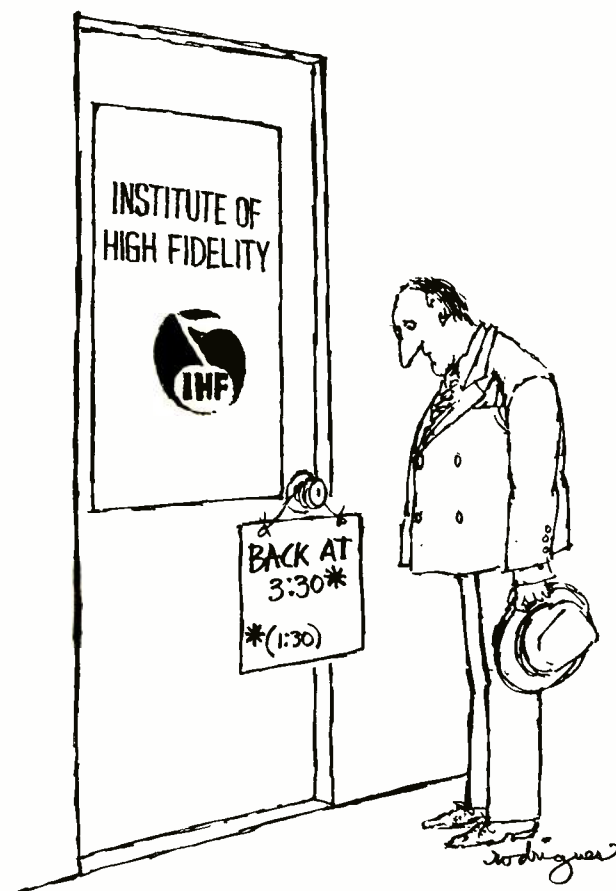
After numerous delays, most of which resulted from the repetitive and tedious process of publicizing each stage of the proposed Rule and then gathering and evaluating industry and consumer reaction in the interest of fairness and technical validity, the Rule in its present wording (see box on page 81) was finally promulgated on May 3, 1974. It will become law on November 4, 1974. (overleaf)

Close comparison of the promulgated Rule against the slightly earlier version that appeared in *STEREO REVIEW* reveals the addition of an amendment labeled "Section 3. Standard Test Conditions." Section 3 details the techniques to be used for making amplifier power measurements. In my critique of the earlier version of the proposed Rule accompanying the Dixon article, I noted that the test conditions were spelled out only to the extent that the Rule required the use of "ratings and testing methods . . . that are well-known and generally recognized by the industry. . . ." But suppose the "generally recognized" IHF Standard is in conflict (as well it might be) with another "generally recognized" standard—one promulgated by the EIA, for example? I went on to suggest that the clever manufacturer could then choose whichever of these test techniques would show off his equipment to best advantage, and the poor consumer would be as confused as ever.

The FTC apparently recognized the danger cited, and Section 3 is the result. However, there is a joker buried in the language of Paragraph (c) that, if enforced, could result in radical de-rating or redesign of most of today's amplifying equipment. When the new Rule was published, the EIA thought the problem serious enough that they were considering court action to halt the Rule's enforcement, but the advice of their legal counsel was that the chance of success in a court appeal in a matter of this kind is "practically nil." The nature of the difficulty is spelled out in detailed technical terms in the discussion ("The Flaw in the Rule") that appears on page 82.

So much for background. Next, Leonard Feldman, Technical Director of the IHF, and I were asked by the IHF to meet with the Federal Trade Commission to see what, if anything, could be done about Section 3(c) and to get the Commission's clarification on the specific meanings of some of the disclosure provisions as well. Since the disclosure matters dealt mainly with questions of how products may be advertised, I concentrated on the Section 3(c) preconditioning requirement that had so upset the audio industry.

It soon became evident that up to that time no one had clearly presented to the FTC the *technical* reasons why the 3(c) test requirement was unrealistic and unfair. Commission members asked two pointed questions: Why had there been no vigorous protest about the one-third figure when the final draft of the rule was circulated? Why did some manufacturers claim that they would have no trouble preconditioning at one-third power?



The answer to the first question came easily, if not without some embarrassment for the industry. The fact that transistor-output circuits are most inefficient at 40 per cent of full power is known to *designers* of such circuits, but the designers were frequently *not* the ones who were asked to comment on the proposed Rule. The chief engineer, or the product manager, or even the company president who *was* asked might simply never have been aware of that somewhat obscure transistor parameter. (As a matter of fact, I have since spoken to several circuit engineers—one of whom has written a book on transistor circuit design—who had simply not considered the ramifications of the one-third-power preconditioning requirement.) The EIA and the IHF *had* both asked the FTC for a 10 per cent (instead of 33 per cent) of full power preconditioning period, but apparently they had never indicated *why* they had asked for this figure, nor did they explain the consequences of using a 33 per cent preconditioning level. It is likely, then, that the FTC thought that these objections had no more significance than the easily resolved disagreement over whether the a.c. line voltage during tests should be standardized at 115, 117, or 120 volts.

We had no ready answer for the FTC's second

question, but I volunteered to check with at least one of the manufacturers who claimed that their equipment could withstand the preconditioning and report back to the FTC on my findings. What I learned and told the FTC was this: whether or not any given amplifier can withstand the FTC's preconditioning requirement is a reflection of the engineering philosophy of the designer. If the engineer has built the equipment using ultra-conservative thermal design (including oversize power trans-

former and heat sinks, and possibly even a built-in cooling fan), then, although the amplifier's output stages will generate as much heat as before, it will be dissipated by the "thermal design" of the equipment. Designers who have taken this path claim that the lower operating temperatures help maintain long-term stability and minimize the chance of breakdown.

Those engineers who choose a more conventional design route claim that their products will

## FTC TRADE REGULATION RULE ON AMPLIFIER POWER-OUTPUT SPECIFICATIONS

### Power Output Claims for Amplifiers Utilized in Home Entertainment Products

#### § Section 1. Scope.

(a) Except as provided in paragraph (b) of this section, this Rule shall apply whenever any power output (in watts or otherwise), power band or power frequency response, or distortion capability or characteristic is represented, either expressly or by implication, in connection with the advertising, sale, or offering for sale, in commerce as "commerce" is defined in the Federal Trade Commission Act, of sound power amplification equipment manufactured or sold for home entertainment purposes, such as, for example, radios, record and tape players, radio-phonograph and/or tape combinations, component audio amplifiers and the like.

(b) Representations shall be exempt from this Rule if all representations of performance characteristics referred to in paragraph (a) of this section clearly and conspicuously disclose a manufacturer's rated power output and that rated output does not exceed two (2) watts (per channel or total).

(c) It is an unfair method of competition and an unfair or deceptive act or practice within the meaning of Section 5(a)(1) of the Federal Trade Commission Act [15 U.S.C. § 45(a)(1)] to violate any applicable provision of this Rule.

#### § Section 2. Required disclosures.

Whenever any direct or indirect representation is made of the power output, power band or power frequency response, or distortion characteristics of sound power amplification equipment, the following disclosures shall be made clearly, conspicuously, and more prominently than any other representations or disclosures permitted under this Rule:

(a) the manufacturer's rated minimum sine wave continuous average power output, in watts, per channel (if the equipment is designed to amplify two or more channels simultaneously)

(I) for each load impedance required to be disclosed in paragraph (b) of this section, when measured with resistive load or loads equal to such (nominal) load impedance or impedances, and

(II) measured with all associated channels fully driven to rated per channel power;

(b) the load impedance or impedances, in ohms, for which the manufacturer designs the equipment to be used by the consumer;

(c) the manufacturer's rated power band or power frequency response, in hertz (Hz), for each rated power output required to be dis-

closed in paragraph (a)(I) of this section; and

(d) the manufacturer's rated percentage of maximum total harmonic distortion at any power level from 250 mW to the rated power output, for each such rated power output and its corresponding rated power band or power frequency response.

#### § Section 3. Standard test conditions.

For purposes of performing the tests necessary to make the disclosures required under Section 2 of this Rule:

(a) the power-line voltage shall be 120 volts AC (230 volts when the equipment is made for foreign sale or use, unless a different nameplate rating is permanently affixed to the product by the manufacturer, in which event the latter figure would control), RMS, using a sinusoidal wave containing less than 2 percent total harmonic content. In the case of equipment designed for battery operation only, tests shall be made with the battery-power supply for which the particular equipment is designed and such test voltage must be disclosed under the required disclosures of Section 2 of this Rule. If capable of both AC and DC battery operation, testing shall be with AC line operation;

(b) the AC power-line frequency for domestic equipment shall be 60 Hz and 50 Hz for equipment made for foreign sale or use;

(c) the amplifier shall be preconditioned by simultaneously operating all channels at one-third of rated power output for one hour using a sinusoidal wave at a frequency of 1,000 Hz;

(d) the preconditioning and testing shall be in still air and an ambient temperature of at least 77° F (25° C);

(e) rated power shall be obtainable at all frequencies within the rated power band without exceeding the rated maximum percentage of total harmonic distortion after input signals at said frequencies have been continuously applied at full rated power for not less than five (5) minutes at the amplifier's auxiliary input, or if not provided, at the phono input;

(f) at all times during warm-up and testing, tone, loudness-contour and other controls shall be preset for the flattest response.

#### § Section 4. Optional disclosures.

Other operating characteristics and technical specifications not required in Section 2 of this Rule may be disclosed, *provided*:

(a) that any other power output is rated by the manufacturer, is expressed in minimum watts per channel, and such power output representation(s) complies with the provisions of Section 2; except that if a peak or other instantaneous power rating, such as music power or

peak power, is represented under this Section, the maximum percentage of total harmonic distortion [see Section 2(d)] may be disclosed only at such rated output; *and provided further*,

(b) that all disclosures or representations made under this Section are less conspicuously and prominently made than the disclosures required in Section 2 of this Rule; and

(c) the rating and testing methods or standards used in determining such representations are disclosed, and well known and generally recognized by the industry, at the time the representations or disclosures are made, are neither intended nor likely to deceive or confuse the consumers, and are not otherwise likely to frustrate the purpose of this Rule.

(NOTE 1: For the purpose of paragraph (b) of this section, optional disclosures will not be considered *less prominent* if they are either bold faced or are more than two-thirds the height of the disclosures required by Section 2.)

(NOTE 2: Use of the asterisk in effecting any of the disclosures required by Section 2 and permitted by Section 4 of this Rule shall not be deemed *conspicuous* disclosure.)

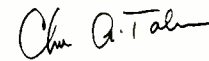
#### § Section 5. Prohibited disclosures.

No performance characteristics to which this Rule applies shall be represented or disclosed if they are not obtainable as represented or disclosed when the equipment is operated by the consumer in the usual and normal manner without the use of extraneous aids.

#### § Section 6. Liability for violation.

If the manufacturer or, in the case of foreign-made products, the importer or domestic sales representative of a foreign manufacturer of any product covered by this Rule furnishes the information required or permitted under this Rule, then any other seller of the product shall not be deemed to be in violation of Section 5 of this Rule due to his reliance upon or transmittal of the written representations of the manufacturer or importer if such seller has been furnished by the manufacturer, importer, or sales representative a written certification attesting to the accuracy of the representations to which this Rule applies, *and, provided further*, that such seller is without actual knowledge of the violation contained in said written certification.

Promulgated: May 3, 1974  
Effective: November 4, 1974  
By the Commission.



Charles A. Tobin  
Secretary

## THE FLAW IN THE RULE . . .

● For technical reasons, the one-third-power operating point called for in Section 3, Paragraph (c), "Standard test conditions" of the Rule is very close to the least efficient area of a high-power transistor amplifier's operating mode (the actual worst point is 40 per cent of full power). In fact, the efficiency of an amplifier is higher at both lower and higher power outputs. This inefficiency is expressed only in respect to the amount of heat produced during operation, *not* in respect to any *audible* aspect of performance.

The heat produced during normal operation of any amplifier is dissipated by its *heat sinks*, the large, black ribbed structures found on all high-power amplifier chassis. These heat sinks are expensive to manufacture and, in addition, constitute a large part of the bulk of the amplifier. In order to withstand the one-third-power preconditioning requirement without activating the thermal protection circuits, most amplifiers' heat sinks would have to be increased in size by perhaps 100 per cent, and the power supplies would probably also have to be significantly upgraded. In other words, *amplifiers, in order to maintain their power rating, would have to be made larger, heavier, and perhaps as much as 50 per cent more expensive. All this in order to pass a test requirement that is totally unrepresentative of any operating condition the amplifier is likely to encounter in normal home use.*

Paragraph (c) is obviously intended to ensure that, before a power measurement is made, the amplifier has reached its normal-use temperature by operating for one hour as it would *normally in the home*. Unfortunately, the preconditioning requirements of the Rule are quite *unrepresentative* of normal home operating conditions and therefore defeat the implicit intention of Paragraph (c).

It may be argued that *all* amplifiers will be affected equally by the preconditioning procedure, and therefore no harm has been done—the manufacturers need only reduce their "rated" power-output claim until the thermal protective circuits are no longer activated by

one-third power operation. This is true, except that in general it is only the higher-power amplifiers, the Cadillacs and the Rolls-Royces of the audio industry, that have a real heat problem. The smaller amplifiers will be able to make do with a modest increase in heat-sink size (or none at all), simply because most of them use the chassis itself as the major heat-dissipating element. The result, therefore, is a disproportionate burden placed upon the manufacturers of the better-quality components.

Statistical analysis of music has shown that the peak-to-average power ratios range from perhaps 5 to 1 to more than 20 to 1. Thus, if an amplifier is capable of and achieves, say, 100 watts on the loudest signals, it will be delivering an average of perhaps 5 watts continuous power to the load. A preconditioning hour during which the amplifier was driven to 10 per cent of its full power would therefore be a very conservative representation of its actual operating conditions.

● *Example:* A typical 100-watt-per-channel amplifier is 78 per cent efficient when operating at full power output. This means that 100 watts of signal will be delivered to the 8-ohm load and 28 watts of unwanted heat will be produced. Good design will permit sufficient heat dissipation by the amplifier under normal home conditions so that the protective thermal cutout does not engage. However, the same amplifier, when operating at one-third power output (33 watts), is only about 44 per cent efficient. This means that the 8-ohm load gets 33 watts of signal and the heat sink gets 42 watts of heat. Under that circumstance, the thermal-protection circuits of most amplifiers will be activated. To recapitulate: significantly *more* internal heat is produced by operating the amplifier at one-third power than is produced by operating it at full power. In fact, there is so much more heat produced that most amplifiers are not designed to withstand continuous operation at the one-third level. (If the numbers seem not to add up correctly, it is because efficiency is calculated by adding audio watts to heat watts and then calculating what percentage of the *total* is audio watts.)

## . . . AND HOW TO MEND IT

● UNDERSTANDING that once a Rule is promulgated it is not subject to easy revision, and that any necessary "changes" are best made on the level of *interpretation*, STEREO REVIEW suggests a procedure that will serve both the letter and the intent of the preconditioning requirement of Section 3, Paragraph (c).

We propose that the "sinusoidal wave at a frequency of 1,000 Hz" test signal specified in the Rule have a cycle such as 1 millisecond on, 2 milliseconds off repetitively for one hour. The test-signal amplitude is adjusted so that the amplifier is driven to its *full* rated power. (A test signal having that characteristic can be supplied by a tone-burst generator or other standard laboratory instrument.)

The result of this procedure will be that the amplifier will be driven to an *average* of one-third power using a 1,000-Hz sinusoidal test signal, just as the present Rule requires. Although the amplifier will be deliver-

ing one-third power to the load, its efficiency level will be equivalent to that obtained at the full-power level (78 per cent). A 100-watt-per-channel amplifier would therefore deliver 33.3 watts to the load (as read by an a.c. rms meter) as required by Section 3, Paragraph (c), but it would have to dissipate only about 9.5 watts of heat.

Note that the Rule does *not* specify that the 1,000-Hz test signal be continuous (steady-state); the 1-millisecond on (at full power), 2-milliseconds off cycle therefore satisfies both the letter and the intent of the Rule, and no amendment is required. Furthermore, this test signal has a characteristic that resembles a music signal more closely than a continuous tone does. It is worth repeating that the revised approach will *not* require a rewriting of the Rule because *the test signal will still provide operation at one-third power for one hour* as the Rule requires, but without unrealistically stressing the amplifier under test far beyond its intended and claimed power performance.

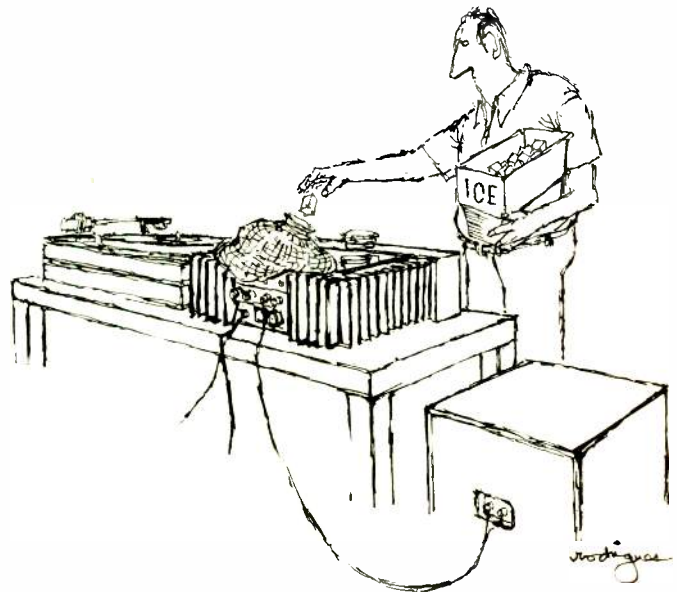
withstand, without deterioration, anything that is encountered in normal use, and they regard the other approach as "overdesign," akin to putting radial steel tires on a baby carriage. They agree that such a design approach may have certain advantages in more demanding heavy-duty applications (for example, amplifiers for a large public-address system or for a live rock concert), but nothing is achieved by such thermal overdesign for the usual consumer installation except a large increase in the size, weight, and *cost* of the amplifier.

To provide real, if extreme, examples of both design approaches, I cited one manufacturer who produces an excellent-sounding 250-watts-per-channel amplifier that sells for \$1,200. The manufacturer assures me that it will easily withstand anything the FTC test demands. Another brand, equally good-sounding, will provide 350 watts per channel and sells for \$800. When subjected to the preconditioning requirement, its thermal protective circuits come on after about 20 minutes and interrupt operation until the unit cools down. (Of course, an *external* fan could be used to help dissipate the heat, but the Rule specifically forbids that.)

So we have two amplifiers, both of which have distortion figures at full power well under 0.05 per cent, and both of which have a fine reputation. The one that will withstand one-third-power preconditioning sells for \$400 more and delivers 200 watts less power. In my view, the consumer should be allowed to pay his money and make his choice between two such amplifiers, basing his decision on what seems reasonable to his budget and to his concept of how his equipment should perform. The FTC, by its preconditioning requirement, is in effect demanding that *all* equipment be expensively designed for heavy-duty use. Since there is legitimate engineering disagreement as to the validity of such an approach for a *consumer* product, it appears inappropriate for the FTC to make a legal statement in that area—particularly since it could mean that, for the next generation of audio amplifiers, the consumer would have to pay more to achieve exactly the same specifications and quality of audible performance.

There has been an on-going effort over the years to achieve ever-better correlation between laboratory test results and audible performance, the goal being to refine measurement techniques to the point that when a product *tests* better, it also *sounds* better. Unfortunately, the preconditioning requirement, as written, works in the opposite direction, for the power rating of an amplifier will have less correspondence with audible performance than it had before Rule went into effect.

The gentlemen from the FTC explained that once a rule is promulgated it is, in effect, "engraved in stone," and formally amending it would be a time-consuming and difficult procedure. The problem therefore is how to "fix" the Rule in regard to Section 3(c) by adjusting the interpretation rather than amending its specific language. STEREO REVIEW's proposal for repairing the rule (see box) was put aside in hope of arriving at an "easier" interpretive solution. We brainstormed that sticky semantic/legal/electronic problem for an hour or so, and it was finally suggested by William Dixon that since amplifiers are more efficient (they heat up less) in



the area *above* the 40 per cent operating point, the manufacturers might be able to find some area between, say, 60 to 80 per cent of full power at which they could safely precondition for one hour. (The rule would then be interpreted as requiring preconditioning at one-third power *or above*.) Leonard Feldman said he would query the members of the IHF on that point and report back to the Commission on their reactions.

**A**T the time of this writing (mid August) all the responses are not in, but there are indications that a significant number of manufacturers would continue to be in trouble anywhere above one-third power. I therefore urge the Commission to consider adopting STEREO REVIEW's proposed Rule interpretation because it is not only the simplest and the fairest, but it does the least damage to the language and the intent of the Federal Trade Commission regulation.

# LUCIANISSIMO!

Reviving the days when tenors were tenors...  
...and their sopranos knew it

By William Livingstone





THE ancient tribal ritual of gathering around the campfire to watch the exceptional warriors and maidens perform their particular feats of virtuosity survives in modern life in a sense in our theaters, opera houses, and concert halls. Male performers win admiration, appreciation, and even love, but the performer who really gets the tribe worked up, who draws a primal roar from the collective throat of the audience, is usually a woman. She may be a coloratura soprano, such as Lily Pons or Joan Sutherland, whose high notes stimulate our auditory nerves in unusual ways; a ballerina, such as Maria Tallchief or Carla Fracci, personifying physical beauty in motion; or a singer of larger-than-life temperament, such as Judy Garland or Magda Olivero. Since it is rarer for a male performer to bring on a comparable flow of adrenalin, when it does happen, the resulting frenzy is often even greater. Think of the bobby-soxer hysteria generated by the young Frank Sinatra, of Beatlemania, of the adoration enjoyed by the dancer Rudolf Nureyev.

Another such male has now come along. In the last few years an Italian opera singer has proved that he can rival any prima donna in his power to draw almost Dionysian responses from audiences. He is a thirty-nine-year-old tenor who is over six feet tall and weighs in at an undisclosed figure estimated to be in excess of 325 pounds, and his name is Luciano Pavarotti. ("My name is not paa-vuh-ROD-dy. Is pah-vah-ROHT-tee," he says with lingering emphasis on the double "t.")

His voice is comparable to Beniamino Gigli's or Giuseppe di Stefano's in its inherent beauty of tone, his diction is flawless, and his taste and musicianship are reminiscent of Jussi Bjoerling. This combination prompted Harold Schonberg, of the New York *Times*, to label Pavarotti "a Golden Age singer." In opera he is exceptionally convincing both in comedy and drama. (His comic flair sometimes borders on hamminess—what other tenor gets a laugh after the quartet in *Rigoletto*?). And he is a sexy actor, nuzzling Beverly Sills' bare shoulder while waiting for the applause to stop in *I Puritani*, embracing Joan Sutherland and chucking her under the chin in *La Fille du Régiment*, and caressing Joann Grillo's breasts in *Rigoletto*.

But it is at his recitals that his fans really let themselves go. He began singing concerts in 1973 and in America first. ("Yes," he says, "they like recitals in Italy too, but they expect you to sing twenty-five arias!") He programs groups of Italian classical songs, includes a couple of arias, and adds two or three more as encores. Throughout the recital he toys with a large white handkerchief and mugs a bit at the audience between numbers—he knows he is reducing the fans to jelly. At the end, when the ovation peaks, Pavarotti bows low to the audience, stretching out his arms as though wishing to embrace all three or four thousand, and all hell breaks loose. Dignified businessmen stamp their feet, old ladies wave Italian flags, and frenzied teenagers tear their programs into confetti and throw it into the air. Because of his generous physical proportions, the magnitude of his talent, and the strength of his personality, some fans and even a few associates affectionately call him Lucianissimo.

Off stage, he is affable and intelligent, an attentive listener and a good talker in fluent and rather piquantly accented English. I interviewed him at his suite in a New York hotel near Lincoln Center. Freshly shaved and showered, he strode into the living room, wearing grey slacks and a blue silk sport shirt and exuding a cloud of a

very macho cologne (Jean Patou's Eau de Sport Lacoste). With one hand he picked up a large armchair and spun it around so that he could sit facing me.

Since it was his performances in *La Fille du Régiment* that really established him as a big star in New York, I asked whether he especially enjoyed playing comedy. "Yes, I do," he answered. "It's more difficult because you have to move around more and you have to concentrate more on projecting the character with action. I sing only two comic roles—Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore* and Tonio in *La Fille du Régiment*. Tonio is especially difficult because of the aria in the first act with nine high C's. It's a little crazy, but very exciting. A drama like *I Puritani* is exciting in another way, not just for the public but for the singers too. I think *Puritani* represents the human limit of the voice. At the beginning you are afraid. You feel like a . . . pecora. *Come si dice pecora?* Baa, baa. I know: sheep. You feel like a sheep, but at the end, if it goes well, you feel like a king, a champion." He clasped his hands high in the boxer's gesture. "For five minutes you want to shout, 'I won! I won!'"

"So far, all my roles are in Italian, except for *Daughter of the Regiment*, and that is really an Italian opera. I am an Italian singer, and I thank God for it every day. The Italian language she is melody herself. French has charm, Spanish too, but Italian is more definite, and it is sweet and has legato. You don't have to be born in Italy to sing it well. Bjoerling was Swedish, and his diction in Italian was excellent. *Molto bello*. I think Italian is the perfect language for singing."

Pavarotti was born in Modena, a small city near Bologna. He grew up there and studied there, preparing himself to be a teacher. Later he decided on a singing career. In 1961 he made his debut in nearby Reggio Emilia in *La Bohème*. His success brought him engagements all over Italy, and in 1963 he sang in Holland, England, Austria, Switzerland, Hungary, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Spain. In 1964 he sang at the Glyndebourne Festival, and in 1965 he toured Australia with Joan Sutherland's company. His Scala debut came in 1966 in Bellini's *I Capuleti ed i Montecchi*, and his Metropolitan debut in 1968 in *Bohème*. Medals, prizes, and critical acclaim have been rained on him everywhere.

WHEN I asked about his training and how he acquired the bel canto style for which he is famous, he seemed not really to understand the question. "It is my feeling," he said. "and Modena, where I grew up, is near Parma," as though breathing that air would confer bel canto style. "I sing only one verismo opera, *Bohème*, and even that can be sung in a bel canto way." He studied acting with both of his singing teachers. "Each has a mirror in the studio so that you can see yourself while you sing. It is not very difficult for a singer to act well enough for the stage. Nobody expects him to be Laurence Olivier. It's a mistake to give too much attention to acting. When the curtain goes up, you have two or three hours of maximum concentration, and something must suffer. I think it is enough in operatic acting to be *decoroso*. You must try to sing beautifully and musically and with feeling. You have to excite the audience. You must really touch them. If you don't do *this*," he said, stroking the back of his arm, "How you say? . . . raise goose pimples? . . . two or three times during a performance, I think you accomplish nothing."

Pavarotti still lives in Modena with his wife, Adua, and

their three young daughters. When I mentioned that I had recently visited Modena, he asked whether I had seen the very beautiful Romanesque cathedral of which the city is justly proud. I had. Then he wanted to know where I had eaten in Modena, and after complimenting me on my choice of restaurants, he asked precisely *what* I had eaten and whether I had enjoyed the meal. He spoke longingly of that region's cuisine and local wines. "The food is a bit rich there, but everyone eats well. Not just big people like me, skinny people too. The soprano Mirella Freni is from Modena. We lived on the same street. We are *fratelli di latte*. Milk brothers? When we were babies our mothers bought milk for us from the same wet nurse. We are still close friends—we've sung together many times and have made several recordings together."

He speaks with equal respect and affection for many of the other divas with whom he has sung, such as Renata Scotti. "She is great in opera, but I think even better in concert. Her Hunter College recital was incredible—such charm and the maximum excitement." He is especially fond of Joan Sutherland, who is said to have taught him a good bit about breath control. "Joan and I work well together. When we were rehearsing *Rigoletto* at the Met with Sherrill Milnes—none of us small—they threatened to reinforce the stage floor. I told Joan I was worried about her. I thought we should get Martti Talvela for Sparafucile because I wasn't sure the bass we had could carry her out of the inn in the last act. She's a big girl, but not as big as an Italian Gilda who was so fat they used to say that to carry her from the inn Sparafucile had to make two trips.

"Montserrat Caballé is a marvelous singer, and she is big too. When we were rehearsing *Bohème* in Barcelona, her home town, everyone laughed at us playing young lovers. But for the performance they put us in black costumes—it is our best color—and she sang so beautifully and was so touching that the public went wild.

"Audiences around the world are generally responsive. They are especially warm here. I find the English public a bit cool. They are very musical, but so polite they do not wish to interrupt with applause. They wait for the end of the act. For me that is a little *too* well-bred. Why not applaud after an aria if you feel like it? You may miss thirty seconds of music; that is nothing, and the artist needs the support. He needs to know how the thing is going."

**P**AVAROTTI has made many recordings of complete operas and recitals, almost all on the London label. For many weeks this year his album "King of the High C's" (London OS 26363) was at the top of the charts of best-selling classical records. I asked whether he enjoyed recording. "No. I am happy on stage with the public in front of me in the dark. In the studio I am too far from the conductor, and I can see people looking at me, which is distracting. Concentration is difficult. What helps is constantly thinking about the meaning of the *word* I am singing. I can listen to my records only very critically, but there are a few moments on them—very few—that give goose pimples even to me. For example, the *Lamento di Federico* on "*Primo Tenore*" [London OS 26192] and a few phrases in *L'Elisir d'Amore* [London OSA 13101].

"I listen to other singers' records only before I prepare a new role, and I don't want to copy anyone else. I am pleased when people compare me to Bjoerling or Di Stefano—they are my idols—but I think my voice is darker than Pippo's [Di Stefano's], more brown. I think it has its

own sound that can be recognized in as little as three bars.

"I learned very young that no singer can please everyone, and I read the critics with that in mind. A critic is *one* man with a right to form and express his opinion, but he can be wrong sometimes. There was a performance of *Lucia* at the Met with Scotti. The public was enthusiastic, and I thought it was good, even my movements—not Laurence Olivier, but all right. The critic from the *Times* did not like it, so I listened to a tape. That night we were right, and the critic was wrong. It was not just good, it was glorious."

Pavarotti will not be at the Met this season except possibly for one gala performance. When we talked, he was looking forward to his Paris Opera debut in September and was preparing Verdi's *Luisa Miller* for San Francisco in November. His other American engagements include the Verdi Requiem with Zubin Mehta and the Los Angeles Philharmonic and later with Georg Solti and the Chicago Symphony. An extensive recital tour will culminate in two gala concerts with Joan Sutherland and with Richard Bonyngue conducting a full orchestra at Avery Fisher Hall in February.

London Records has two recital discs ready for release: his Carnegie Hall program from 1973 (recorded with orchestra) and a collection of arias. Also recorded are *Madama Butterfly* with Freni and Karajan and *Puritani* with Sutherland and Bonyngue. "This year I will record *La Favorita* and *Maria Stuarda*. I have always wanted to sing *Puritani* at the Met, and Joan and I will do it there in a new production in 1975-1976."

**W**HEN I talked with Pavarotti two years ago he thought that after the age of forty he might put aside his bel canto roles and take on a more dramatic repertoire. Now, with forty a bit closer, he seems to have changed his mind. "I think I will continue with my lyric repertoire," he said, "and avoid the heavier roles. But I am going to open the San Francisco season next year as Manrico in *Trovatore*. Perhaps it is wrong, but I cannot resist that role. I don't intend to sing many performances of it, and after that I will look for other lyric parts such as in Donizetti's *Parisina d'Este*. My voice is essentially lyric, and I want to keep it sounding fresh, natural, and rested.

"When people tell me, 'You have a beautiful voice and your singing is so effortless,' I am both pleased and a little irritated. I want it to *sound* easy, but I would like for the public—and the critics—to know that it is hard work to sing beautifully and to continue to do so. When someone asked Gigli at sixty-five why he still vocalized an hour a day, he said, 'As long as you sing, you must continue to study.' And I do that.

"At school one day they asked one of my little daughters what her father did for a living. She answered, 'He does nothing. He is a thief.' When this was reported to me, I asked her if she really thought I was a thief. 'Yes,' she said. 'Do you think I go out at night and rob banks?' 'No, not banks, apartments. When you come back you never give my mother money, only a piece of paper.' (My check.) 'You do nothing all day but stay at home and sing, and if you think that is work, you are mistaken. Anybody can sing. I can sing.' Well, it *is* work, and it's hard work, but I love it. I am not a slave to my voice, but singing is something I do with my heart. I am a happy man. God has been kind to me, and I ask nothing more of Him than to let me sing well for many years. As long as I can continue to do that I will be a happy man."

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



## CLASSICAL

### HUMPERDINCK'S NEGLECTED MASTERPIECE *HANSEL UND GRETEL*

*RCA's splendid new recording shows him to be Wagner's successor and Strauss' herald*

It seems to me that it has been too long since anyone has said anything nice about the *other* Engelbert Humperdinck. Of course, each age must give a certain priority to its own, and I'm sure that there are many who feel that the Engelbert Humperdinck of the twentieth century has made contributions to music that in some way have at least partially offset the contributions music has made to him. Nevertheless, the Engelbert Humperdinck of the nineteenth century (he actually lived until 1921) is deserving of *some* contemporary notice, and a new recording of his masterpiece, the opera *Hansel und Gretel*, from Ariola-Eurodisc by way of RCA, appears to provide exactly the right opportunity to rebalance the scales.

Humperdinck must be the most neglected *master* of the nineteenth century. I say that because I cannot believe that any man who could have composed *Hansel und Gretel* and the few bits of *Königskinder*, plus the few songs I have been able to hear, could have written only *that* much magnificent music and no more. In the music histories Humperdinck is duly given credit for the miracle of amalgamating the Wagnerian harmonic and orchestral palette with the child's world of make-believe without anyone's ever finding anything negative to say about it—as they did of Strauss' *Salome*, for example: "A sixteen-year-old girl with the voice of Isolde? Ridiculous, Herr Strauss!" But there

is something more to Humperdinck than that. He is not only the logical, if unexpected, successor to Wagner, he is—even on the basis of the comparatively slight evidence we have been given to hear—a good half way along the route to Strauss. The premier performance of *Hansel und Gretel* was, in fact, conducted by Richard Strauss, and anyone who doesn't think Humperdinck's Evening Prayer duet and Dream Pantomime were firmly in Strauss' mind when he composed the Silver Rose music of *Rosenkavalier* hasn't heard one or the other very recently.

But it is not only in such musical details (striking though they are) that Humperdinck's music exemplifies the accomplishments that were both impor-

tant in themselves and that, in certain ways, made Strauss possible, for he is to be credited with the much larger achievement of making the enormous resources developed by Wagner fit, so to speak, for human conception rather than being limited to the delineation of those thundering figures out of Norse mythology. Wagner himself did it—once. But even *Meistersinger*, great as it is, cannot touch the delicacy, humor, and tenderness that infuse every page of *Hansel und Gretel*.

Let's get rid of two long-held suppositions about *Hansel und Gretel*: first, that it is a Christmas opera, and second, that it is an opera for children. George Jellinek, in his admira-



HANSEL AND GRETEL AND FRIEND  
*Too good for the kiddies*



RCA Records

ANNA MOFFO: a miraculously boyish (!) Hansel

able introductory notes to the RCA set, points out that the premiere was given on December 23, 1893, thus establishing a Christmastime tradition which has been maintained through the years. But the opera itself cannot have anything to do with Christmas, for the children are sent out into the woods to pick strawberries, and they spend the night out-of-doors without fear of ice or snow. As for the second canard, it is not a children's opera because it is simply too *good* for children (I have two of my own, so I cannot be accused of insulting bias even as I say that I know children's limitations well). Yes, children *will* love the story and the tunes. But so will you, and a great deal more too. The opera, I would judge, is about a foot over the head of the most receptive child: that is to say, it is at just about the height of the adult human heart, where, with any sort of opening in the armor at all, it will unerringly strike.

I know there have been fine recorded performances of *Hansel und Gretel* before, and there will undoubtedly be others after, but at the moment this one strikes me as well-nigh perfect. Helen Donath makes an appealing and believable Gretel; with no derogation of purely musical values (which is a roundabout way of saying that she sings beautifully), she clearly expresses a child's fright, wonder,

and joy. I am *quite* sure I could never find anything visibly boyish about Anna Moffo, but she almost miraculously makes her voice convey just such a quality through her singing as Hansel. I find her superb in the role, her voice blending with Donath's where it should blend, asserting its individuality where it should do just that. Those rare moments when her voice takes on its more expected feminine sensuality are cause only for a smile at the successful impersonation overall.

Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau brings to the role of the father gifts of characterization that have rarely been lavished on such a simple creature before. The role can be—and has been—sung otherwise, but one can have only praise for the way it is done here. Charlotte Berthold, with a less than ravishingly beautiful voice, nevertheless makes an admirable mother, and the single-aria parts of the Sandman and the Dew Fairy are lovingly and effectively sung by Arleen Auger and Lucia Popp.

Of Christa Ludwig, I must begin by saying that the first words out of her mouth in this recording make one wish only that the Witch came into the opera well before side four. She makes of the role everything one could want it to be, and her pronunciation alone is sufficient to make me want never to hear the opera in any language other than the original German. The Boys' Choir of Tölz makes small but heavenly sounds at all the right times, and they, like everybody else, are remarkably on pitch throughout. The Bavarian Radio Orchestra, not known as one of the world's virtuoso ensembles, seems to be more than adequate to its task, and conductor Kurt Eichhorn brings a fine sense of pacing to the proceedings, making the most of the orchestral episodes without in the least overdoing them. He has, in addition, the good musician's knack of not "interpreting" a passage too much the first time around, saving something for later when the same theme comes in again.

I find the recording not particularly adventurous, probably not equal to the best that can be done technically today, but certainly adequate. A full German and English libretto is furnished, though the two don't always agree. In all, a recording that is a best of the month, any month, and a work for all seasons.

*James Goodfriend*

**HUMPERDINCK: *Hansel und Gretel*.** Anna Moffo (soprano), Hansel; Helen Donath (soprano), Gretel; Charlotte Berthold (mezzo-soprano), Gertrude, the mother; Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (baritone), Peter, the father; Christa Ludwig (mezzo-soprano), the Witch; Arleen Auger (soprano), the Sandman; Lucia Popp (soprano), the Dew Fairy; Boys' Choir of Tölz; Bavarian Radio Orchestra, Kurt Eichhorn cond. RCA ARL2-0637 two discs \$11.96.

## POPULAR

### MICKEY NEWBURY: JUST THIS SIDE OF CORNY

*A hard-to-categorize songwriter is at his sensitive best in a new Elektra release*

**I**F a songwriter is sensitive to the subtleties of human interaction, and if he is also sensible enough to be fearful of the implications of most of them, then the right place for him to be is just this side of corny. He has to work on the emotions without being evasive or obtuse about it, *and* he has to do it without cloying. He has to take risks; that's what he gets for being so sensitive. Mickey Newbury has been to that risky place, and the trip resulted in "I Came to Hear the Music," one of those rare albums capable of being cherished by everyone from Paul Simon fans to Waylon Jennings fans to Frank Sinatra fans.

As a writer, Newbury seems to have a consciousness something like that of Jimmy Webb, whose appeal is also broad-based (if not wildly scattered) and whose music is similarly difficult to categorize. There's downright *schmaltz* in there—sound effects between the cuts (though they *are* tasteful, laid-back effects), that *Love Look (at Us Now)* thing that *must* have been commissioned by the Carpenters, and great swooping sweeps of symphonic-pompous strings—but after listening to the whole disc I'd have to say it works and is extremely well produced besides.

Side one is almost a song cycle, the maverick piece being the last track, *If You See Her*, which, it turns out, is a sort of centerpiece for the whole album, once you take side two into account. In any case, it's one of the loveliest and simplest songs of

MICKEY NEWBURY: a softly contoured vulnerability



Elektra Records

1974. Newbury himself supplies the inspired part of the arrangement, a neat, propelling little folkie rhythm on gut-string guitar. Before that point, the subject of the mini-cycle was time, and no song wasted any of mine. Side two is a mixture—but of what? Two songs are something like rock, with *1 x 1 Ain't 2* marvelously driven by the flawless timing of two acoustic rhythm guitars (played by Ray Edenton and Jerry Shook) and an extraordinarily inventive fiddle-dobro mesh created by Buddy Spicher and Reggie Young. Two slow songs are something like country, but they don't have the make-believe naïveté that country songs of this sort would have. Two others are, well, *songs*. Perhaps it's significant that, prowling around in the printed lyrics, I can't find the one or two good lines I'd like to pull out and quote. Each of Newbury's lines is so closely related to the ones before and after that the stuff has to be taken whole verses at a time (so does some of Webb's), and how many people in pop music are really up to dealing with art that conceals art?

Newbury has a nice voice; he conveys both cowboy ruggedness (which, around Nashville, sure helps) and a softly contoured vulnerability, and he's just now becoming familiar with the controls—which means he's still just erratic enough to be fascinating. I am duly fascinated. *Noel Coppage*

**MICKEY NEWBURY:** *I Came to Hear the Music*. Mickey Newbury (vocals, guitar); Henry Strzelecki (bass); Buddy Emmons (keyboards); orchestra, Chip Young arr. *I Came to Hear the Music*; *Breeze Lullaby*; *You Only Live Once (in a While)*; *Yesterday's Gone*; *If You See Her*; *Dizzy Lizzy*; *If I Could Be*; *Organized Noise*; *Love Look (at Us Now)*; *Baby's Not Home*; *1 x 1 Ain't 2*; ELEKTRA 7E-1007 \$6.98, Ⓣ ET8-1007 \$6.98, Ⓞ TC5-1007 \$6.98.

### KEITH JARRETT'S NEW JAZZ PIANO

*An album of improvisations confirms where jazz has been and suggests where it's going*

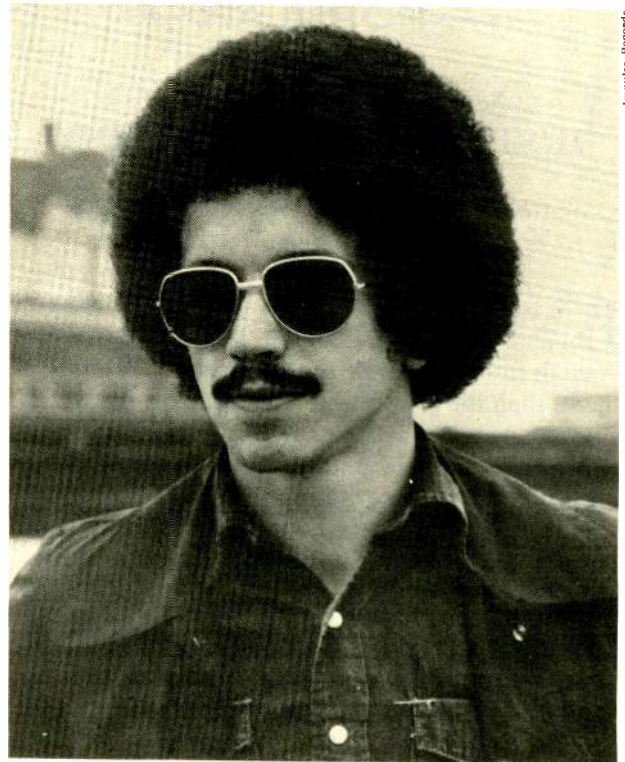
**K**EITH JARRETT has been around for a while now, and it looks as if his enormous talent is finally getting the recognition it deserves. After all, how many young pianists can boast a three-record solo album? Born in 1945 in Allentown, Pennsylvania, Jarrett gave his first solo concert at the age of seven. A scholarship student at the Berklee School, he has worked with Tony Scott, Roland Kirk, Art Blakey, Miles Davis, and Charles Lloyd. Venturing out on

his own in the late Sixties, he demonstrated his versatility in an album of his own compositions, accompanying his own singing on eleven instruments. The result was disastrous, but Jarrett's subsequent efforts have more than made up for "Restoration Ruin," as the album was called.

Whether it's stride, McDowell, Tatum, or Powell, you'll find a touch of it in his new ECM album "Solo Concerts Bremen/Lausanne," a collection of untitled improvisations. Keith Jarrett is a master improviser with a warm, genuine feeling for his music's past and an astute sense of its present. Combine this with a piano technique that Horowitz or Rubinstein might admire, and you have an artist so impressive that mere words could not do one measure of his music justice. Brilliantly played and superbly recorded, this is the finest new album of jazz piano I have heard in twenty years.

Chris Albertson

**KEITH JARRETT:** *Solo Concerts Bremen/Lausanne.* Keith Jarrett (piano). Untitled improvisations. ECM 3-1035/6/7 ST three discs \$11.98.



Impulse Records

KEITH JARRETT: three discs by a master improviser

## THE UNDERWHELMING JIMMY WEBB

*The Oklahoma songsmith's staying power is demonstrated again in his latest for Asylum*

As Jimmy Webb continues to flourish on recordings, each new one filling in another section of the creative territory he has staked out for himself, my conviction deepens that he will be one of the lasting pop creators. Other hugely successful composers have come and (mostly) gone since the time Webb first zapped the charts a number of years ago, their work spiralling down into silence like the last eddy of water draining, with a final whirring gurgle, from an empty tub. But Webb is still with us, still going his own artistic way.

His newest album, "Land's End," is a chiaroscuro delight of shifting moods and themes, totally unforced and completely entertaining. His humor in *Lady Fits Her Blue Jeans* (about a temperamental temptress who steals flowers, free-loads expensive dinners, and is adept at hurling strawberry pies) is wryly relaxed ("Rings for her fingers and a kiss for her nose"), his sense of fantasy always sharply in focus, as in the playfully commercial *Feet in the Sunshine* ("I know you got troubles/I can tell 'cause the soles of your shoes look grim./Your feet have

done a lot for you./Why don't you do something for them.>"). *Ocean in His Eyes* is a dark song about dependency and selfishness in a crumbling love affair; it is performed by Webb with such narrative skill that for once you feel that it is a story about two unhappy people rather than one lone complainer. And he even presents a stylish kind of romanticism in *Asleep on the Wind*: "Love is a glass of wine./Balanced on the siderail of a ship./Across the sea at midnight, it may not last the daylight. . . ." Take it away, Fred and Ginger!

There are a lot more of these little pleasures here, not the least of which are the nicely filigreed but never over-ornate arrangements, but the big attraction is still Webb's songwriting talent. Amid all the clacking satanism, empty glitter, and just plain screaming so abundant in today's pop music, he proves without strain that you can improve your chances of being heard, understood, and appreciated by speaking in a normal tone of voice and having something interesting to say. This is a beautifully crafted and, happily, underwhelming album.

Peter Reilly

**JIMMY WEBB:** *Land's End.* Jimmy Webb (vocals and piano); orchestra. *Ocean in His Eyes; Feet in the Sunshine; Cloudman; Lady Fits Her Blue Jeans; Just This One Time; It's a Sin; Crying in My Sleep; Land's End/Asleep on the Wind; Alyce Blue Gown.* ASYLUM SD 5070 \$6.98.

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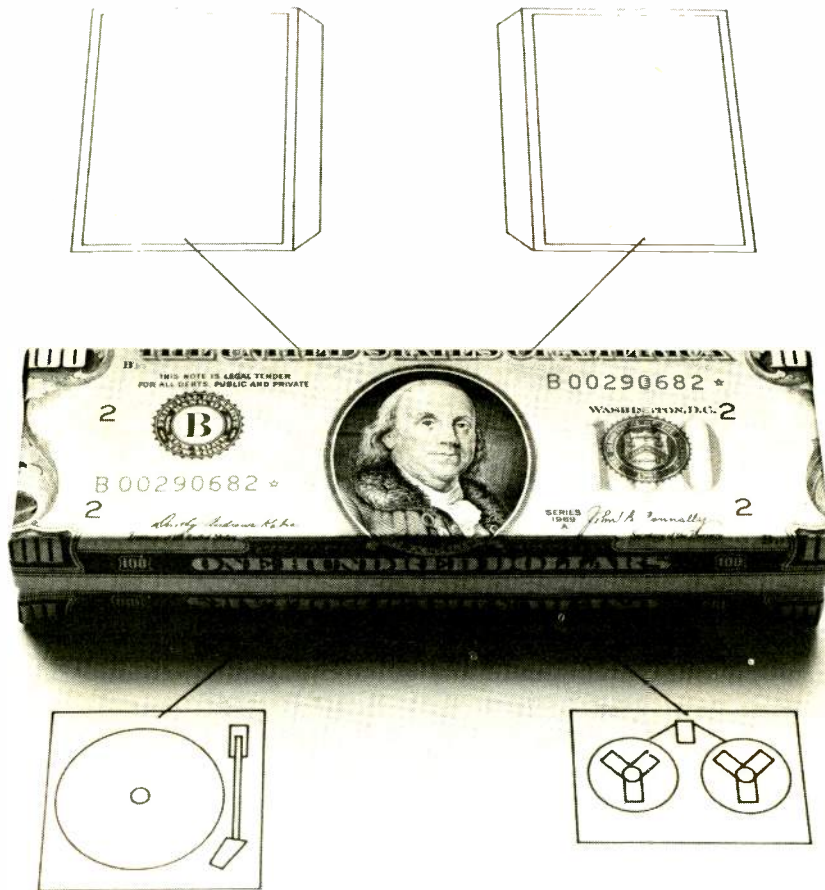
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# POPULAR DISCS AND TAPES

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## RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**ALICE COOPER:** *Alice Cooper's Greatest Hits*. Alice Cooper (vocals); Glen Buxton, Michael Bruce (guitars); Dennis Dunnaway (bass); Neal Smith (drums). *I'm Eighteen; Is It My Body?; Desperado; Under My Wheels; Be My Lover; School's Out; Hello Hooray; Elected; No More Mr. Nice Guy; Billion Dollar Babies; Teenage Lament '74; Muscle of Love*. WARNER BROS. W 2803 \$6.98. © L8W 2803 \$7.95. © L5W 2803 \$7.95.

Performance: **Generally excellent**  
Recording: **Excellent**

As just about everybody knows by now, underneath all the drag and glitter and show-biz outrageousness, Alice Cooper has made some of the most musical and impressive rock-and-roll in recent memory. Unfortunately, however, despite their generally brilliant string of singles, they have never really made a successful album. The reasons for this are varied and lengthy, having to do in part with the basically limited expressive range of Alice's singing and the lack of ambiguity in the band's childish sexual posturings. But it seems rather silly to dwell on their weaknesses when there are so many things they're good at, and especially now that we finally have an album that shows them almost consistently strong.

All their goodies are here (with the exception of the churning rocker from "Love It to Death." *Caught in a Dream*, which is the song that first convinced me there was indeed more to this band than met the eye), and unsurpris-

ingly they all hang together pretty well, both musically and thematically. The masterpiece, of course, is *School's Out*, which in 1972 was the first real summer single since the Beach Boys' *Do It Again*. All the stops were pulled

Warner Bros. Records



ALICE COOPER

*Musical goodies under the glitter*

out with this one; it has two irresistible choruses, a searing lead guitar line (the first time I heard it I was sure that it was John Lennon with Elephant's Memory), downright savage production, and a lyric with a beautifully calculated amalgam of teen angst and revolution for the hell of it that catches and capitalizes on youthful frustrations almost as well as *Summertime Blues* or *My Generation*. But almost all of the tracks here are terribly exciting, and if you're still unconvinced about Alice Cooper, I suggest that this is the place to start catching up. If you've been a fan all along, you'll want it anyway just for convenience's sake, and besides, it has easily the best cover art of any album so far this year. *Steve Simels*

**AMERICA:** *Holiday*. America (vocals and instrumentals); Willie Leacox (drums). *Miniature; Tin Man; Another Try; Lonely People; Glad to See You*; and seven others. WARNER

BROS. W 2808 \$6.98. © L8W 2808 \$7.97. © L5W 2808 \$7.97.

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

Did you know that "Cause never was a reason for the evening . . . or the tropic of Sir Galahad"? Well, I didn't either, but it's the sort of thing one learns from America's lyrics. El deepo, huh? Someone talked George Martin, no less, into producing and arranging this, and what George did puts America into perspective about as well as anything could. What George did was take some leftover "Sgt. Pepper" arrangements off the back burner, making America more tuneful-sounding than usual—and making it painfully clear that this is strictly a place for second hand ideas. It does no real harm, and at least George can say now that he, too, has been to the desert on a horse with no name. Just think of America the way you would think of bubblegum if Kahlil Gibran wrote the baseball (or rock-and-roll) cards. . . . *N.C.*

**BOBBY BLAND:** *Dreamer*. Bobby Bland (vocals); orchestra. *Yolanda; Cold Day in Hell; Who's Foolin' Around; The End of the Road; Dreamer*; and five others. DUNHILL DSX-50169 \$5.98. © 8023-50169M \$6.98. © 5023-50169M \$6.98.

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

Bobby Bland has one of those rough, lived-in, blues voices that, like B. B. King's, can communicate effortlessly. Bland tries to be his own man, however, and often he catches that particular strain of buoyant fatalism that comes so naturally to street people. *Ain't No Love in the Heart of the City* and *Twenty-Four Hour Blues* are the kind of hard, gritty material he ought to concentrate on instead of frittering away his time on such soap operas as *Yolanda* and *I Wouldn't Treat a Dog (the Way You Treated Me)*. The production of "Dreamer" is good enough in a glossy way, but it somehow always avoids really getting into it when Bland seems anxious to. *P.R.*

**ARTHUR BROWN'S KINGDOM COME:** *Journey*. Arthur Brown (vocals, percussion). (Continued on page 97)

### Explanation of symbols:

- Ⓜ = reel-to-reel stereo tape
- ⓑ = eight-track stereo cartridge
- Ⓒ = stereo cassette
- Ⓛ = quadrasonic disc
- Ⓡ = reel-to-reel quadrasonic tape
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other musicians. *Time Captives*; *Triangles*; *Gypsy*; *Conception*; and three others. PASPORT PPS-98003 \$6.98, © 8167-98003 C \$7.95.

Performance: **Rakish but rough**  
Recording: **Quite, ah, something**

This must be the Arthur Brown that Steve Simels recently referred to as "the original Sixties madman." To tell the truth, I only vaguely remember an Arthur Brown, and by the time the Eighties roll around I'm sure I won't remember this. It's mad enough, though, in a contrived way; someone will probably call it Stockhausen rock, or an attempt at same. Everything but a little of the vocals has been doctored, bent, and practically stultified by electricity. Brown plays the "Bentley drum machine" and, it says here, sings, but most of the noises are made by Victor Perraino, who handles the melotron, piano, synthesizer, and that venerable gadget from the horror-movie soundtracks, the Theremin. Guitarist Andy Dalby helps out where he can by adding heavily corroded layers of screechy feedback, and bassman Phil Shutt feeds in some strange clacking noises. Sometimes it's effective, but you'd have to be on something pretty strong to stay with it all the way. In *Time Captives* (why does this kind of album always have a song called *Time Captives*?), an unseemly collection of electronic aberrations actually appears to harmonize on a series of slow, stately chords, draining each of its last colorful whimper. But there is little music, all in all, to justify all these things, and the setting created makes the strained, adolescent sound of Brown's and Dalby's voices seem all the more mundane. Brown had some good ideas, but executing them effectively would take a lot more discipline than he shows here. N.C.

**ERIC CLAPTON: 461 Ocean Boulevard.** Eric Clapton (vocals, guitar); George Terry (guitar); Yvonne Ellman (vocals); Dick Sims (organ); Carl Radle (bass); Al Jackson, Jamie Oldaker, Jim Fox (drums); Alby Galuten (piano, ARP synthesizer). *Motherless Children*; *Give Me Strength*; *Willie and the Hand Jive*; *Get Ready*; *I Shot the Sheriff*; and five others. RSO RECORDS RO 4801 \$6.98, © TP 4801 \$6.97, © CS 4801 \$6.97.

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

Eric Clapton has returned to recording and performing after a prolonged absence. He is quieter now, preferring the acoustic, folkish sounds that many tired rockers, their youth exhausted, use to move themselves gingerly back into circulation.

Clapton is so relaxed, so cautious, and sometimes so furtive that he sounds like George Harrison playing George Harrison's standard lick. Still, Clapton's harking back to folk—the British were influenced by early "skiffle" groups no less than the Yanks by the little folk boom of 1958-1963—yields some pleasing moments. *Give Me Strength* continues the dabbling with religious statements he made famous in *Presence of the Lord*. *Let It Grow* recalls the great days of British rock, to which Clapton made such a fine contribution, and contains his most notable solo in the album. *Get Ready* has a tight little riff going through it. *I Can't Hold Out* is from the Elmore James blues catalog; *Motherless Children* is a blues-gospel that was first done by Blind Willie Johnson in the Twenties.

But *Willie and the Hand Jive* sounds comatose when compared with the original Johnny Otis hit from the Fifties. Clapton does it with a reggae rhythm. Fusing rock warhorses with Caribbean rhythms isn't a bad idea (try it with *Slippin' and Slidin'*, for example), but *Willie and the Hand Jive* is the wrong tune for it.

This is a very pleasant album, but I get the feeling that if it weren't by Eric Clapton it wouldn't get much attention. Taken as a page in the book of his career, it's interesting enough—but is Clapton, like Bob Dylan, an example of someone whose career has been kept afloat by the instant nostalgia of these times? I wonder, I wonder. J.V.

**JIMMY CLIFF: Struggling Man.** Jimmy Cliff (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *Struggling Man*; *When You're Young*; *Sooner or Later*; *Let's Seize the Time*; *Come On People*;



ERIC CLAPTON  
*A pleasant, folkish stage in his career*

and five others. ISLAND SW-9343 \$5.98, © 8XW-9343 \$6.98.

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

I was much impressed by Jimmy Cliff's work in the soundtrack of *The Harder They Come* last year. Cliff is from Jamaica and one of the reggae stars of that delightful island; he also starred in the film, which is the story of a ghetto boy from Shantytown.

"Struggling Man" is Cliff's third solo album released in the United States. I must regretfully say that it's so relentlessly drenched in social messages that Cliff's talent and the entrancing reggae rhythm might as well not be there. To put it in the strongest terms, he is as vapid and boring here as Curtis Mayfield. I do not know for certain what the conditions are in Shantytown, and I assume that Cliff's sentiments about improving the lot of the average Jamaican are genuine. But I am put off by the dull, predictable, and irritating political rhetoric, which would make even your local teenage Trotskyite shrug. Cliff preaches well elsewhere, but the sermon here doesn't move, and that is a damned shame. J.V.

**SANDY DENNY: Like an Old Fashioned Waltz.** Sandy Denny (vocals, guitar, piano); orchestra, Harry Robinson arr. *Solo*; *Like an Old Fashioned Waltz*; *Whispering Grass*;

*Friends*; and five others. ISLAND SW-9340 \$5.98, © 9340 \$6.98.

Performance: **Bursting at the themes**  
Recording: **Voluptuous**

Sandy Denny's idea, apparently, was to make the whole experience roll along slowly and sedately, rotating within its own revolutions like, well, like an old-fashioned waltz. She has drawn out simple and stylized folk melodies (mostly her own, but all rather derivative) until they seem to melt and run together, and has opted for a supposedly timeless, classical-orchestra sound for backing. Members of Fairport Convention are supposed to be bashing away in there somewhere, but that's mostly an academic, jacket-credit matter. Twice she slips into old supper-club creakers with piano-bar piano backing—doing *Whispering Grass*, which is silly, and *Until the Real Thing Comes Along*, which is worse than silly—and these aberrations lay a pretty strong one-two combination on what little spell she had managed to cast. I much prefer the previous album, "Sandy," which didn't get tangled up in this theme nonsense and therefore had ample variety without having to raid left field. Sandy's rounded, softly contoured, just-slightly-alooof singing is still among my favorite sounds, but I think that only the last song, *No End*, gives it enough to say. N.C.

**FANIA ALL STARS: How It Was! How It Ended! How It Was Going to Be!** Ray Barretto (conga); Willie Colon (trombone); Larry Harlow (keyboards); Johnny Pacheco (percussion); Roberto Roena (bongos); Bobby Valentín (bass); Mongo Santamaria (conga); Ricardo Ray (piano); Manu Dibango (sax); Jorge "Malo" Santana (guitar); Jan Hammer (organ); Billy Cobham (drums); Bobby Cruz, Cheo Feliciano, Ismael Quintana, Justo Betancourt, Santos Colon, Hector Lavoe, Ismael Miranda, Pete "El Conde" Rodríguez (vocals). *Viva Tirado*; *Chanchullo*; *Smoke*; *There You Go*; *Mama Guela*; *El Ratón*; *Soul Makossa*; *Congo Bongo*. FANIA SLP 00470 \$5.98.

Performance: **Good**  
Recording: **Variable**

The Fania All Stars are an elite group, made up of orchestra leaders, famous sidemen, and distinguished guests, whose concerts are an annual event in Latin New York. Although much of their music here is strong and satisfying, many of the talents are wasted or forced to give room to some guest whose presence ain't necessarily uplifting.

The idea of the album was to show that Latin musicians are indeed compatible with rock, jazz, and "soul" musicians—not exactly one of the pressing problems of our era (and besides, it has been demonstrated thousands of times before). To that end, Manu Dibango, Jorge "Malo" Santana (brother of Carlos), and Mahavishnu Orchestra refugees Billy Cobham and Jan Hammer make extended appearances. Their presence is a mixed blessing. Jorge Santana has his brother's guitar style, which isn't much. Saxist Manu Dibango had a crossover pop-jazz hit, *Soul Makossa*, one of those fluke records that makes jazz fans cry, "Jazz is coming back!" and makes them wonder in the next breath whether jazz is selling out. Cobham's drumming and Hammer's organ playing are good, even very good, but they have been added to the All Stars for their names, not their music.

(Continued overleaf)

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A further example of the misuse of talent for the sake of cultural exchange is provided by the vocalists. Four of the finest Latin singers—Santos Colon, Ismael Miranda, Hector Lavoe, and Cheo Feliciano—are compelled to sing yeh-yeh back-up riffs on *Soul Makossa* while Dibango honks away on his blah-blah sax. The studio sessions (which would have been recorded live if 40,000 fans in Yankee Stadium had not gone crackers after *Congo Bongo*, several hundred of them rushing the stage) provide the best music in the album, though I still could do without the guests.

I do not think that Latin music needs the influx of other styles. I don't believe there is any reason to see it conquer the nation or the world. It is happy and successful, and it gives an enormous amount of pleasure and comfort to millions of people already: let it stay where it is. No doubt I am a reactionary crank, but I would rather see at least one musical style flourish in its own corner instead of diluting itself and giving itself away to other styles which have largely become stale, venal, and in need of help.

J.V.

**GENESIS: *Genesis Live*.** Genesis (vocals and instrumentals). *Watcher of the Skies; Get 'em Out by Friday; The Return of the Giant Hogweed; Musical Box; The Knife*. CHARISMA CAS 1666 \$6.98.

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

This proves, to those who haven't caught the act on television, that Genesis isn't just a patch-in, dub-happy studio band, but a real performing band. It is better than seeing them on television or in (gasp, shudder) real life because with an album one doesn't have to look at all the corny costumes and cosmetics Peter Gabriel runs through for his embarrassingly hammy "visual interpretations" of what he's more or less singing. Yuck! The band is technically all right, and once in a while—as in *The Musical Box*, from the second album—manages to put the song above the players' theatrical pretensions and get, as they say, into it. The result is a rare, sweet, beat-up sort of innocence. That, unfortunately, is the exception; the rule is to overact on the instruments the way Gabriel overacts in his portrayals. Genesis tends to overmanage a piece, having overwritten it to start with, and the sound too often has too little contrast, too few reference points in it. Maybe they take themselves too seriously, or maybe they take comic books too seriously or something. When the costume party ends, maybe we'll find out.

N.C.

**INCREDIBLE STRING BAND: *Hard Rope & Silken Twine*.** Incredible String Band (vocals and instrumentals). *Maker of Islands; Cold February; Glancing Love; Dreams of No Return; Dumb Kate; Ithkos*. REPRIS MS 2198 \$5.98.

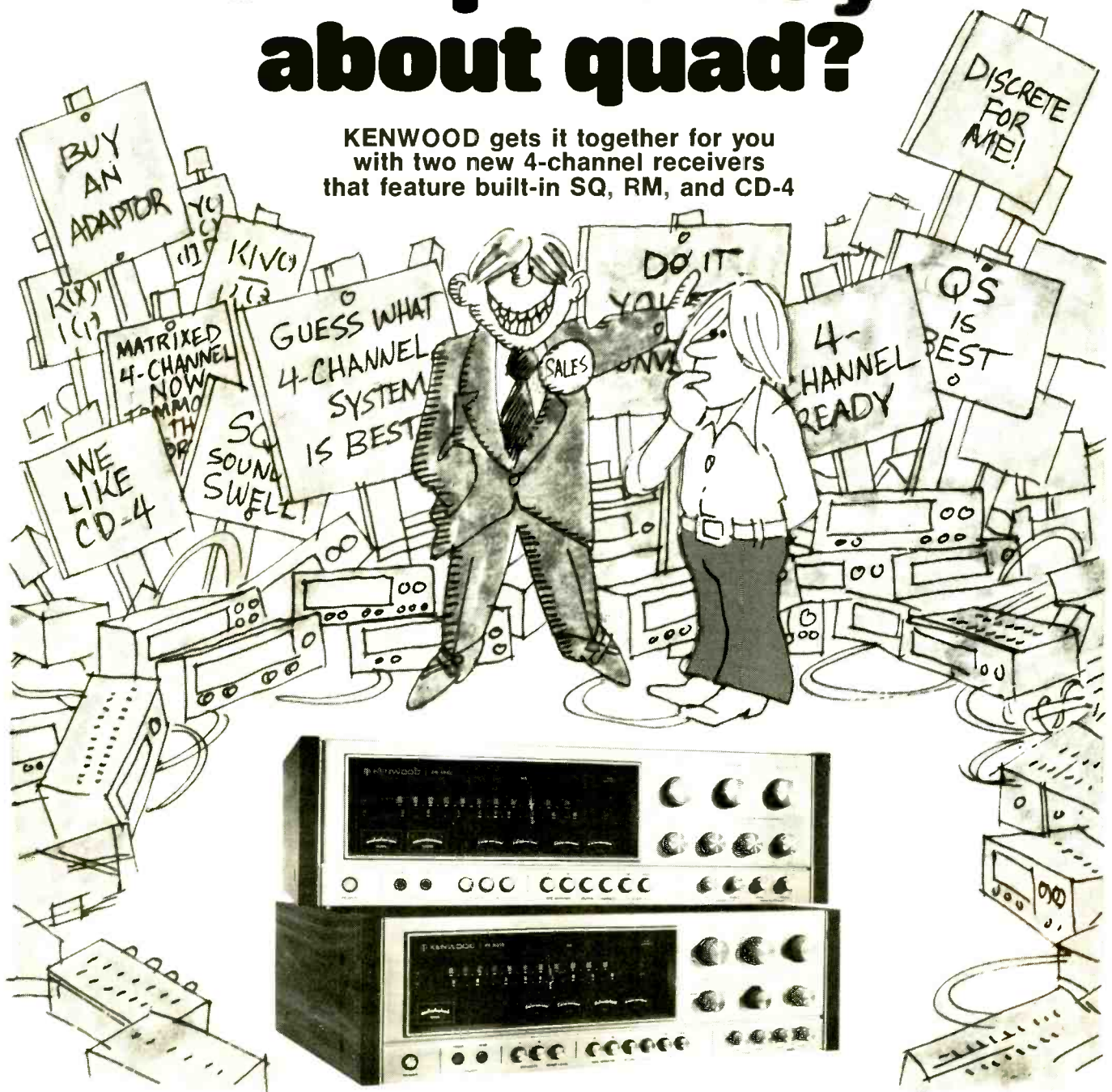
Performance: **Improving again**  
Recording: **Very good**

Getting past Mike Heron's schmaltzy opener, *Maker of Islands*, may take some doing, but this album does find the Incridibles enduring and is probably the best of their last several attempts. By "best" I don't mean strictly *best*, you understand; I mean it helps rebuild some of that shadowy mystique that was really what people seemed to need from this group. The important thing the band offered was

(Continued on page 102)

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As the rock styles of the Sixties have become increasingly threadbare, as the stars held over from that decade have proved to be as bereft of any genuinely inspired innovation as the Bowies of the Seventies, old standbys and young turks alike have given in to the temptation to wallow in a smoke screen of nostalgia that is, at its best, just pathetic. "Pinups," "Moondog Matinee," "Playin' Favorites" (with Don McLean, as if we didn't have enough problems)—all are painful retreads, by turns sentimental and bathetic, of songs and styles

has a perverse but brilliant penchant for singing back and forth against the melody and yet somehow *with* it at the same time, always firm, moving, right there. Ferry literally oozes irony, so maybe it's only ironically appropriate that his golden-goodies album, "These Foolish Things," is not just the only fully assured and personalized album of this type, but a rock masterpiece transcending generic classification.

Just try on the opening song, *A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall*, which completely revivifies Dylan by treating him with abso-

merely a function of his talent that in *Baby I Don't Care* he *becomes* Elvis so effectively that he could do it successfully on any stage in the world. It's no mere rock-and-roll revival either—this music exists in a benevolent vacuum of fine strong pop that straddles all barriers and eras.

A case in point is *It's My Party*, where Ferry doesn't change the gender from the Lesley Gore original. It comes off not so much camp as cartoon, as herky-jerky sarcastic as *Don't Worry Baby* is sincerely, uncontrivedly, straightforwardly moving. Ferry doesn't bother doing an elaborate Beach Boys takeoff—even though it must have been tempting to try to capture the spirit and sound of the California surf-and-wheels culture that is so exotic to Limeys (it's a temptation the Who, among others, have succumbed to, with embarrassing results). But Ferry makes *Don't Worry Baby* work on its own terms as a strong, mainstream ballad.

**S**IMILARLY, *The Tracks of My Tears* could have been a total travesty, since nothing could be farther from Ferry's snarl than Smokey Robinson, but here again he brings it off without compromising either Smokey or himself, for Ferry is a crooner as well as a barker; he can sing in any style, even sounding almost black sometimes. In *Loving You Is Sweeter Than Ever*, for example, he comes far closer to Levi Stubbs than blue-eyed soul. It's a charging arrangement with brilliant drumming and lovely tides of Motown back-up vocals by the Angelettes, who put the frosting on brilliant, triumphal cascades of pure AM sound. The crucial point here and everywhere in this record is that it is not just a stylistic exercise, it's a matter of deep feeling channeled through one of the subtlest senses of humor around. Take *I Love How You Love Me*, which is rendered with all the ersatz passion befitting both Ferry's wit and this song's era. Roger Ball's sax solo is full of real, last-dance, bittersweet erotic tension, and it does seem strange that a man as cynical as Ferry must be able to hit that evocative high-school American chord so straight and true.

But Ferry makes clear why all these costume changes work in the title song, which is his obligatory bow to the "straight" pre-rock torch-song past he is so enamored of. *These Foolish Things* provides the attitudinal key to its namesake album's success: "The ties that bound us/Are still around us." There's a fine muted trumpet, and there are cabaret hand-claps toward the end, where it starts to rock in an almost calliope-like fashion, finally soaring out like a perfect Phil Spector dream. Which, like Dylan and all the rest, is indeed still around us. It just took Bryan Ferry to make it manifest again.

**BRYAN FERRY:** *These Foolish Things*. Bryan Ferry (vocals and piano); other musicians. *A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall*; *River of Salt*; *Don't Ever Change*; *Piece of My Heart*; *Baby, I Don't Care*; *It's My Party*; *Don't Worry Baby*; *Sympathy for the Devil*; *The Tracks of My Tears*; *You Won't See Me*; *I Love How You Love Me*; *Loving You Is Sweeter Than Ever*; *These Foolish Things Remind Me of You*. ATLANTIC SD 7304 \$6.98, © TP 7304 \$6.98, © CS 7304 \$6.98.



Atlantic Records

## HERE COMES BRYAN FERRY

Taking foolish things seriously

By Lester Bangs

done with much more vitality (and often in identical arrangements) at least a decade or more ago.

It's a disgusting phenomenon, and you wouldn't expect the captain of the most exciting new group of the Seventies to try following up these dismal acts with his own attempt at a recap. Roxy Music, after two uneven and idiomatically scattershot albums, emerged as one of the strongest and freshest forces on the pop scene with "Stranded," and its leader Bryan Ferry is almost certainly the New Voice in Town with the biggest guns and the most flair. Now he has come up with what amounts, depending on your temperament, to either the ultimate challenge or the supreme conceit: a solo album of rock standards from all eras, rearranged, toyed with, and generally bounced around the wide parameters of the Ferry mode. Bryan's strongest asset is his unique voice, a rich yet eccentric baritone, much given to quirky leaps upstream, and he

lutely no respect at all. Ferry sings it in his grand manner, flat and against the melody, with more attention to personally stylized nuance than original meaning, creating superb melodrama to a backdrop of chunky beat, female choirs, and a little production fillip after each line: metronome laughter after "I heard one person starve, I heard many people laughing," etc. It's such a strong performance that it reaffirms Dylan at the same time it's denying his validity, and thus it emerges supremely pop. Gutsy too, but it's the new *fey* gutsiness; Bowie is too much a warbler for this kind of thing.

Perhaps the essence of Ferry's triumph here is that, unlike Bowie or the Band, he is not afraid to play with the various styles he's dabbling in. So of course we get Dylan harp not in *Hard Rain*, but in *River of Salt*, where Ferry uses it to far more appropriate melancholy ends. This is also one of his most affecting vocal performances, perhaps because it's the least affected. I suppose it's



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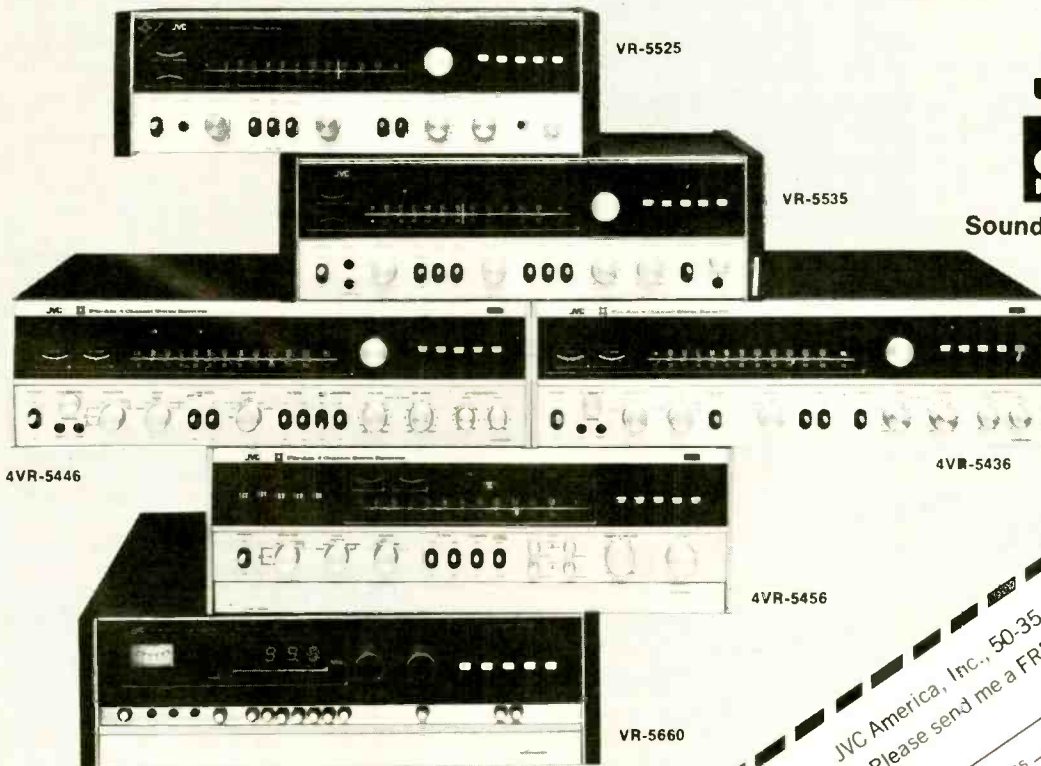
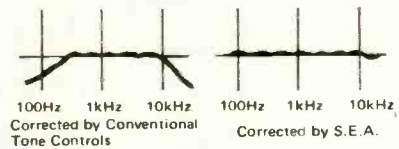
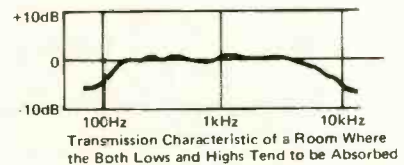
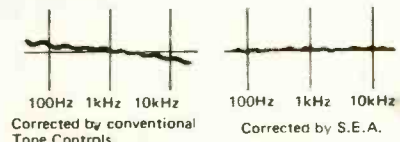
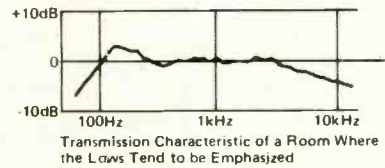
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never picking and singing per se, but atmosphere, especially strangeness, unicorn possibilities. I can't make head or tail of *Ithkos*, the overall title of a group of more or less related song fragments covering all of side two, but I'm sure it's quite something, with its references to places I can't find in the atlas and with Robin Williamson playing the oud and everything. (I did find *oud* in the dictionary and felt rather let down by that; it's just another of those relatives of the mandolin. You see, you shouldn't investigate these things too much.) Anyway, Robin also plays some de-ranked pennywhistle licks somewhere else in the glimmering vagueness of *Ithkos*, and an eerie flute on his song *Cold February*. And sideman Danny Thompson plays a wild line on acoustic bass further down in *Ithkos*.

catching the spirit of things. Heron, however, seems almost as interested in conventional musical ideas as he is in strangeness, and he'd better watch that. His score for the strings in the opener is just, you know, blah—but then he does do some weird, off-the-beat singing in *Dumb Kate*, lame though that song is, and later on he plays sitar and stuff like that. So I have some hope that they'll keep it up, whatever it is they're keeping up; we don't seem able in the Seventies to afford many of the little curios that seemed almost routine a few years ago, but maybe they'll let us have just this one. *N.C.*

**ETTA JAMES:** *Come a Little Closer*. Etta James (vocals); orchestra. *Mama Told Me; Power Play; Sooki Sooki; You Give Me What*

*I Want*; and six others. CHESS CH60029 \$6.94, Ⓢ 8033-60029C \$7.95.

Performance: **Fervid**  
Recording: **Good**

Etta James comes on so strong, band after band, that even your speakers may start to sweat by the time you come to the end of this set. She rampages through something like *Power Play* as if she were singing it out of the window of a burning car that has gone out of control. Her extended gut-moans at the beginning of *Feeling Uneasy* can give rise to feelings of real alarm in any listener, and *Out on the Street Again* leaves no doubt that the street isn't Park Avenue. On one very good number, however, *St. Louis Blues*, her fire-bomb approach works very well indeed. She's able to shake up and revive that venerable standard so that it sits up, takes notice, and breathes some Seventies air.

This is a good enough album, but it's not for those who get worn out easily, or for those whose five-day deodorant pad is on its fifth day. *P.R.*

**BONNIE KOLOC:** *You're Gonna Love Yourself in the Morning*. Bonnie Koloc (vocals); orchestra. *Colors of the Sun; Crazy Mary; Children's Blues; The Lion Tamer*; and six others. OVATION □ OVQD/14-38 \$5.98.

Performance: **Gentle**  
Recording: **Good**

Bonnie Koloc has one of those sweet, gentle voices that can lull me into a state of well-being faster than the first snowfall. But as pretty as she sounds, she's completely unexceptional. I got a little stirred up by her performance of Jim Croce's *I'll Have to Say I Love You in a Song*, but then again, Croce was exceptional. I suppose I'll have to render a suspended judgment on this one artistically, because who ever heard of a cat-in-cream worrying about relative values? *P.R.*

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**KOOL & THE GANG:** *Wild and Peaceful*. Kool & The Gang (vocals and instrumentals). *Funky Stuff; More Funky Stuff; Jungle Boogie; Heaven at Once*; and four others. DELITE DEP-2013 \$6.98.

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

This admirable seven-man group started out in Jersey City nearly ten years ago as the Jazz-iacs, but found they couldn't make a living playing jazz, and so set out to keep the faith and pay the rent by developing a bumping, undulating rhythm style perfect for dancing but overlaid with genuine jazz writing for the horn section. *Jungle Boogie* and *Hollywood Swinging* were big hits as singles, and the album looks like, as they say in the music business, a smash. It is the group's best so far, and illuminates their cheerful schizophrenia between funk and jazz. *Heaven at Once, This Is You, This Is Me*, and *Wild and Peaceful* show the way that jazz will have to go if it ever wants to come back and be a relevant music for mass attention.

Kool & The Gang deserve much credit for their inventiveness, and for just hanging in there for nine years. There must have been times, coming off the bandstand, when they despaired of ever having things their own way. But adversity sometimes builds better bands, and as with all good outfits there is a

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bond of personal loyalty among the members of Kool & The Gang and a near-mystic idea of what their mission is. During their appearance at the 1974 Newport Jazz Festival in New York, where they were easily the best thing on the bill for that particular concert, they announced that they wanted the audience to use the next few minutes "to think about what you can do for your brothers and sisters." This was not claptrap be-black rhetoric; they meant it. And for the next three minutes the audience heard a single, sustained saxophone note, pure and sweet, and thought about things. It was much like the only valuable subway graffito I ever saw: "Be Rich in the Heart." This album is rich-hearted. *J.V.*

**SISTER JANET MEAD:** *The Lord's Prayer.* Sister Janet Mead (vocals); instrumental accompaniment; Les Sands arr. and dir. *The Ten Commandments; With You I Am; Gloria; Father, I Put My Life in Your Hands; Take My Hand; The Lord's Prayer;* and six others. A & M SP 3639 \$5.98, © 3639 \$6.98, © 3639 \$6.98.

Performance: **To a modest beat**  
Recording: **Good**

Sister Janet Mead, a Sister of Mercy who teaches school in Adelaide, Australia, believes that "people should be given the opportunity to worship God with the language and music that is part of their ordinary life." Suiting action to conviction, she performs songs with lyrics on religious themes, often contemporary versions of traditional texts, offering the result in a musical style I suppose one could describe as virginal rock. The program opens with a treatment of the Ten Commandments in basic Australian ("I am the Lord thy God, put no one else before me . . . don't covet your neighbor's wife, all that he has no! no!") sung with an open innocence that is disarming. There are also modern versions of Psalms 32, 63, and 103, by a composer named Arnold Strals, which are not exactly improvements on King James but work well enough with the kind of music Strals has chosen to supply. Mr. Strals has also treated *The Lord's Prayer*, but it deserves, and has received, better treatment. Throughout the whole rather long session the imperturbable Sister Mead puts over one pious piece after another in her sweet little voice, backed by a gentle chorus and instrumentalists who seem to be aware that they are in church and never pound too hard. It's mild stuff compared to the gospel singing we are used to in this land, but it is refreshingly guileless and appealing.

*P.K.*

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**NATI MISTRAL:** *Trascendencia Universal y Madriñena de Nati Mistral.* Nati Mistral (vocals); Luis Maravilla (guitar); Los Gemelos (vocals and guitars); orchestra, Maestro Cisneros cond. *Luna de España; Las Castigadoras; Yo Te Quiero Vida Mia; ¡Puerta Puerta!; El Café de Chinitas; Las Tres Hojas; La Linda Tapada;* and seven others. ALHAMBRA C 7004 \$4.98.

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

Often described as the greatest interpreter of the Spanish song, Nati Mistral is one of the aristocrats of popular music. She belongs in the elite company of Edith Piaf, Amalia Rodrigues, Mabel Mercer, Blossom Dearie, Peggy

Lee, and Gisela May because she has their intelligence, musicality, taste, and sensitivity to lyrics. But her voice is more beautiful than theirs, and she commands a wider variety of styles. By calling her an aristocrat, I do not mean to suggest that she gives arty or intellectualized readings of popular songs: she is simply so expert that she elevates any song to a higher level of art.

This most welcome album is an excellent sample of her work. On side one she is accompanied by orchestra, and on side two by the solo guitar of Luis Maravilla or by the famous singing twin guitarists Los Gemelos. Here she ranges from timeless interpretations of three Spanish folk songs set by García Lorca, through a couple of classic *pasodobles* evocative of the bullring, to some fine love songs,

such as *Yo Te Quiero Vida Mia (I Love You, Darling)*. An accomplished actress, she can condense a whole little play into the two or three minutes of a song. She gives you pathos in *La Linda Tapada (The Beautiful Prisoner)* about a gypsy girl who has murdered her lover and comedy in the witty *¡Por Si Las Moscas! (Just in Case)* about a movie-mad laundress who irons by day but fancies herself the Greta Garbo of the student quarter at night.

I cannot adequately describe the sensuous beauty of Nati Mistral's voice or what she does with the deep velvet of her lower register. Just do yourself a favor and buy this album. If you don't know Spanish, you could learn it (and there is no better model for diction than Miss Mistral). It isn't necessary to speak French to appreciate Piaf, and Nati



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**MICKEY NEWBURY:** *I Came to Hear the Music* (see Best of the Month, page 89)

**MARIE OSMOND:** *In My Little Corner of the World.* Marie Osmond (vocals); orchestra. *Crazy Arms; Singing the Blues; Invisible Tears; I Love You Because;* and six others. MGM M3G 4944 \$5.98, Ⓜ M8H 4944 \$6.98, Ⓞ M5H 4944 \$6.98.

Performance: **The devil made me listen**  
Recording: **Gloppy**

This album clearly illustrates one of the burning social imperatives of our day—that is, the Osmonds must be forced to cease breeding for the sanity and well-being of us all. This time we've been favored with little Marie Osmond, all decked out with a clutch of songs meant to be sung by someone at least twice her age. She is surrounded by the soupiest c-&-w-style arrangements (glunking electric guitars sobbing around her every phrase) as she sings her little heart out, and her little ass off, in some sort of weird imitation of Brenda Lee. After ten tracks I felt possessed of a manic idea for a musical remake of *The Exorcist*. This time there would be no stand-ins, no dummies, and no trick photography—just darling Marie. And, of course, specially written-in parts for the Osmond Brothers, who would sing a medley of their greatest hits as someone pushed them out a window, one by one. I didn't much care for this album. P.R.

**FRANK SINATRA:** *Some Nice Things I've Missed.* Frank Sinatra (vocals); orchestra. *Sweet Caroline; If You Are the Sunshine of My Life; What Are You Doing the Rest of Your Life; Bad, Bad Leroy Brown;* and five others. REPRIS F 2195 \$6.98, Ⓜ L8F 2195 \$7.97, Ⓞ L5F 2195 \$7.97, Ⓜ L9F 2195 \$7.97.

Performance: **A master at sunset**  
Recording: **Good**

Although his public behavior has become increasingly like that of a petulant adolescent, on records Frank Sinatra is still the master romantic of popular imagination. It won't really matter to his fans, I'm sure, that his voice is thinning as rapidly as his hair, that his nonchalance is now sloppiness, or that he seems uneasy in so many of his performances. Sinatra still looms larger than any one film, any one recording, or any one performance. He is not only an entertainment legend, he is the talisman of an entire generation.

His latest album makes a halfhearted attempt to conjure up the old magic once again, but with the exception of one stunning track, *What Are You Doing the Rest of Your Life*, in which he gives the kind of performance that personifies grace and style in modern popular singing, it is a generally lifeless exercise in Starmanship. Don Costa's production tiptoes around him, and the charts reflect a sycophantic nervousness about doing anything but repeating the big, lush sounds that have been trademarks of his recordings for the last couple of decades. The result is a *Bad, Bad Leroy Brown* that lies there in a "hip" Sixties lump like a fin-tailed Cadillac of that era parked in the driveway of a once "cool" night club; a *Tie a Yellow Ribbon Round the Old Oak Tree* given such a throwaway performance that one has the feeling he's doing a crossword puzzle

at the same time; and a rushed, over-busy interpretation of *You Are the Sunshine of My Life* that only Stevie Wonder's accountant could love. Neil Diamond's *Sweet Caroline* doesn't get any better treatment than it deserves; it is flicked off like a piece of lint.

But Sinatra remains Sinatra, the master of the lyric phrase, the man who, when he wants to, can transform the banal into the riveting (listen to the way he sieves the clumsy, fat-head sentimentality of the Bergmans' words for *Rest of Your Life* here to get a pure, passionate love song). And, most important of all, there is his ability to create a performing personality that is half knight errant and half street kid grown older and wiser but still charmingly impertinent. Chevalier, late in his life, said that he thought Sinatra was the greatest American entertainer he had ever seen (and kids from Mémilmontant don't easily give



SLY STONE

*Back with the old fire and easy confidence*

compliments to kids from Hoboken). Chevalier may have been right. But at the moment Sinatra's recorded performances don't do much credit to his past beyond reminding us how great it was. P.R.

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**SLY & THE FAMILY STONE:** *Small Talk.* Sly & The Family Stone (vocals and instrumentals). *Small Talk; Say You Will; Mother Beautiful; Time for Livin'; Can't Strain My Brain;* and six others. Epic □ PEQ 32930 \$7.98, Ⓜ PEA 32930 \$6.98, Ⓞ PET 32930 \$6.98, Ⓜ EAO 32930 \$7.98.

Performance: **Welcome return**  
Recording: **Excellent**

This is undoubtedly Sly Stone's best album in many a year. He sounds happy, relaxed, and confident, and he has picked up the beat he let drop during a time of personal and professional troubles. There are several fine jump tunes here where Sly has his old fire, and his band, flabby and sleepy in recent albums, is once again tight and energetic. Some of the cuts are unedited at their beginnings, catching in-studio conversation, instrumental tune-ups, and practice runs—this is to give and demand of the listener an intimacy without which Sly's talent can't cheerfully function.

Sly was always one of the most genial of humans, and sweet traces of that come through,

in particular in *Small Talk*. You will pardon my nostalgia when I recall that sometime in the late Sixties, during my criminal career as a music publicist, I once went to his hotel room to handle a transoceanic phone call I had set up with an English paper that wanted to interview him. Sly, who didn't know me at all, said when I entered: "Be comfortable, man, because this is your home now."

I had been in awe of his genius before I met him, and the brief and pleasant memory of my few minutes with him made his subsequent trouble—and the defeated, feeble music of the last few years—painful for me. I am therefore glad to report that his great talent is now back on the rails and that this most positive of fellows is again making positive music. Yay! The recording is excellent in four channels or two. J.V.

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**SPARKS:** *Kimono My House.* Russell Mael, Ron Mael (vocals); Martin Gordon (bass); Dinky Diamond (drums); Adrian Fisher (guitar). *This Town Ain't Big Enough for Both of Us; Amateur Hour; Falling in Love with Myself Again; Here in Heaven; Thank God It's Not Christmas;* and five others. ISLAND H.P.S 9272 \$5.98.

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

Sparks is captured by Russell and Ron Mael, American brothers who emigrated to England and acquired facsimile English accents. They sing in tweety-bird close harmony, write gently lunatic songs, perform with expertise, and are backed by an instrumental trio that surgically executes every cliché known to British pop-rock for the last ten years.

As satire the album is brilliant. As music, it's split down the middle; while the lyrics are daffy and the presentation comedic, the melodies are, in some cases, first-rate. *This Town Ain't Big Enough for Both of Us*, a smash in England recently, is delivered à la Gilbert & Sullivan, and if you ignore the folderol and follow the melody, you'll hear something that Messrs. G & S would not have been ashamed of either.

But it is only fair to say that listening to the whole album all at once tends to jiggle the cranium. There isn't any breathing space for the listener—it all rushes on deliberately and inexorably. The album is a symphony of satires that are best taken a few movements at a time—say, three cuts a day for three days. Sparks' LP is an embarrassment of riches. That is its only flaw, and outside of that it is one of the albums of the year. J.V.

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**SYREETA:** *Stevie Wonder Presents Syreeta.* Syreeta Wright (vocals); orchestra. *I'm Goin' Left; Waitin' for the Postman; Heavy Day; Your Kiss Is Sweet; Spinnin' and Spinnin';* and six others. MOTOWN M6-808S1 \$5.98.

Performance: **Expert fun**  
Recording: **Superb**

Syreeta Wright collaborates with Stevie Wonder here as both writer and performer. On most of the songs her lyrics are full of a fine, liberated sass, as in *Just a Little Piece of You* and *Your Kiss Is Sweet*. Her renditions are always lively, even in the three Wonder songs she had no hand in the writing of. Syreeta is fun as she sidles through her mate-

rial with all the nonchalance and insouciance of a girl who *knows* she's got something extra. The production and arrangements by Wonder are, as usual, marvelous. Record after record, he proves that he has an extraordinary feel for every aspect of pop recording. And no one else can create that special, carefree, joyous feeling of musicians having a ball with their own work that pervades even a routine Wonder session. In this instance, Syreeta seems to be having more fun than anyone. P.R.

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**JAMES TAYLOR: *Walking Man*.** James Taylor (vocals, guitar); David Spinozza (electric guitar, electric piano, organ); Andy Muson (bass); Don Grolnick (keyboards); Rick Marotta (drums); other musicians. *Walking Man; Rock 'n' Roll Is Music Now; Let It All Fall Down; Me and My Guitar; Daddy's Baby; Ain't No Song*; and four others. WARNER BROS. W2794 \$6.98, Ⓟ 1.8W 2794 \$7.97, © 1.5W 2794 \$7.97.

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

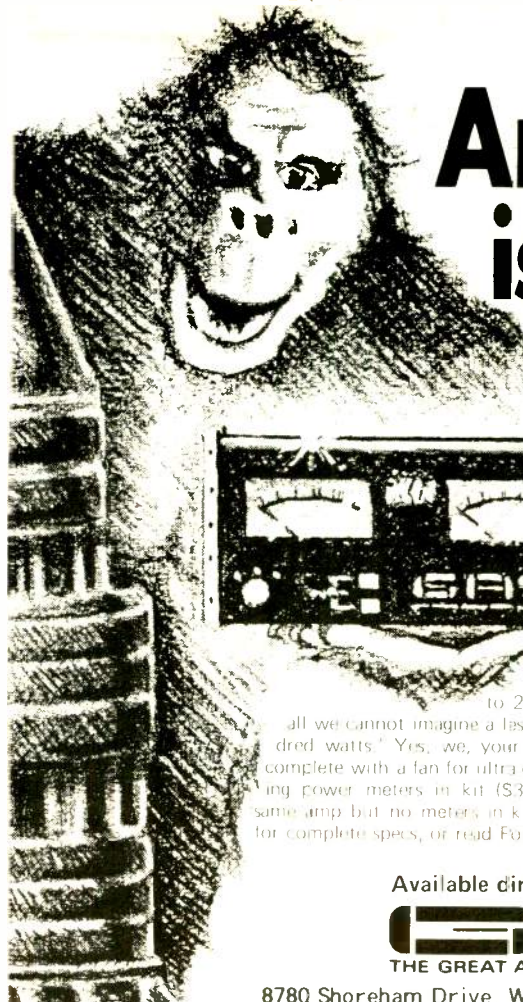
"Moving in silent desperation . . ." this album starts off, and I groan, "Aargh, not again," anticipating another of those James Taylor lick-and-a-promise treatments in which I am expected to suffer along with the poor little rich kid to tunes he started but my own imagination has to do the real work on. But the first song (the title one) pulls nicely out of that nose dive, and James Taylor seems to be doing the same thing himself; this album is musical, not *too* tedious, and not nearly as sketchy and tentative as the two preceding it. It is, in ways, more like the ones that preceded *those*. The title song is one of his better musical meditations upon himself in years, even if it is characteristically afflicted with unnecessarily vague symbolism, and it is balanced by the last song on the other side, *Fading Away*; both have to do with one's relationship to the fray. The first half of *Fading Away* doesn't seem to square words with melody, but it's a better than average song. *Me and My Guitar* has its moments lyrically, and the arrangement effectively underscores them; *Migration* has a melody reminiscent of Carly Simon and a very spiffy arrangement. *Hello Old Friend* is schmaltzy, but everything else does its bit with points to spare, and the backing is middle-class and solid. Danny Kootch and his gang are gone; David Spinozza seems to be in charge now and uses, among other things, Carly, Paul and Linda McCartney (for back-up singing), and two horn sections.

Taylor's vocals still don't suggest that harnessing his throat is the way out of the energy crisis, but they do have a strength about them that I've never noticed before, and his confidence in his singing is bound to grow after a recording like this. It has the marks of a pro on it. N.C.

**URIAH HEEP: *Wonderworld*.** Uriah Heep (vocals and instrumentals). *Wonderworld; Suicidal Man; The Shadows and the Wind; So Fired; The Easy Road*; and four others. WARNER BROS. W 2800 \$5.98, Ⓟ 1.8W 2800 \$7.97, © 1.5W 2800 \$7.97.

Performance: **Okay**  
Recording: **Good**

I am a tired, jaundiced, old man and I do not understand much about this current rock-and-  
(Continued on page 108)



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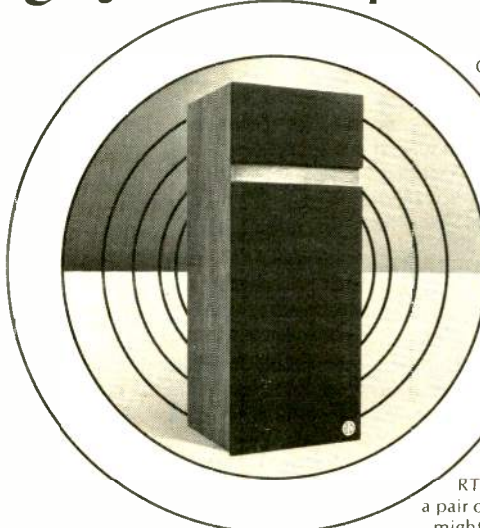
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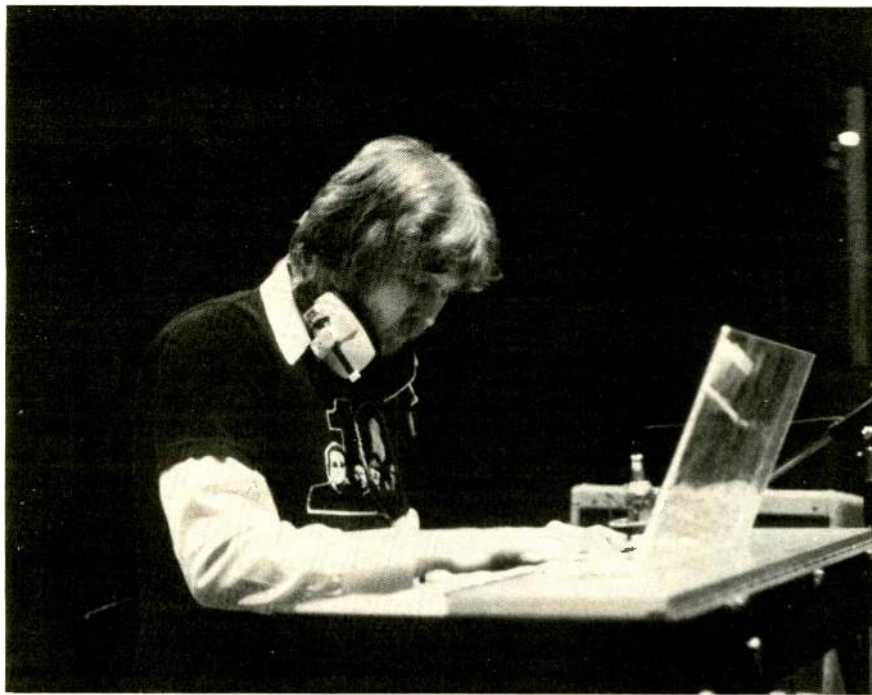
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RCA Records

## HARRY NILSSON'S "PUSSY CATS" ...and how they sounded

### ...to Steve Simels

THEY say confession is good for the soul. Well, that may well be, but what they don't say is whether or not confession is good for job security. You see, I have the new Nilsson album before me for review, and it seems there's no way out . . . I have to confess. I know my colleagues are going to hate me for this (Harry having been one of last year's cover boys, a great favorite around the office and all), but here goes: I do not now, and have never at any time, particularly cared for Harry Nilsson, and this new album "Pussy Cats" (produced by no less a hero of my youth than John Lennon) has altered my opinion not a whit. At the same time, I will fess to being as awed as the next guy by the sheer breadth of Harry's demonstrated musical and technical talents. He's a virtuoso vocalist who can sound like any singer, past or present, if he sets his mind to it; he knows his way around a recording studio at least as well as, say, Todd Rundgren; and he's a songwriter of impressive facility and cleverness. Further, he's a genuine Loon (it's no accident that Keith Moon, the most authentic nutcake in all of rock, plays with him on this album), and if there's anything that rock needs more of at this point in its history, it's Genuine Loons.

So why, then, you're probably wondering, don't I get off on him? I'm not quite sure. AM radio, I suspect, has something to do with it; I defy anyone who listens to that increasingly moribund institution not to develop an almost pathological aversion to such Nilssonian piffle as that goddamn *Coconut* song, or his unspeakably hideous transmogrification of Badfinger's *Without You* (which in their hands had been a mar-

ginally sentimental tune salvaged by a spare and stately arrangement) into a piece of romantic schlock unmatched for sheer ersatz grandiosity by anything this side of *Il Trovatore*.

More likely, my lack of appreciation for what he's done stems from his basic stance as a writer and performer, which to my mind reduces itself to a kind of ironic detachment (it is a stance, by the way, that Harry shares with his good buddy Randy Newman, whom I similarly mistrust). It manifests itself in lots of ways: in his attitude of "give me five minutes and I can write a song about anything," in his continued disavowal of live performance, and even in the sheer expertise of his studio technique and his choice of material. You can tell me all you want, for example, how "authentic" his "Little Touch of Schmilsson" album was, in which he attempted the "standard" (translate pre-pre-rock) pop repertoire, but the fact of the matter is that Harry Nilsson represents something totally different from Frank Sinatra, and even though he approaches those songs with seeming reverence and faithfulness to the genre's conventions, it's impossible for someone like Harry to sing them without making some kind of oblique (unflattering) comment on what they mean *today*. Harry, being nothing if not subtle, is well aware of this, and, I maintain, fully intended this kind of implied condescension—despite the fact that, unintentionally and on a purely musical level, the record wasn't a hell of a lot better than the album Ringo Starr (another of his old buddies) put out a few years ago, which was a charmingly naïve and totally sincere run-through of a suspiciously similar repertoire. Ultimately, what Harry is dishing out is defeated by its own sophistication. Irony is all very well and good, but it doesn't

communicate all that much, and although I can dig it on its own recycling level, I can't help preferring the kind of artist who deals in more bedrock human concerns than pop music and its creator's relationship to it.

So what about the new album? Well, as you may have gathered by now, it contains nothing I'm going to be listening to after my three or four times through it for the sake of my reviewer's conscience. It opens with a passable rendition of Jimmy Cliff's beautiful *Many Rivers to Cross*, which has a nice neo-Spector production from John (in the vein of his last album), dead catchy guitar figures, and a vocal by Harry that is an obvious parody of John's Primal Screaming—at once hilariously accurate and inappropriate to the song. There's a remake of *Rock Around the Clock* that is both 1974-heavy and almost slavishly accurate but still will not cause anyone to rip out theater seats, a Dylan tune treated in the manner of *Jump into the Fire* as heavy-metal jungle boogie, a symphonic work-out of *Save the Last Dance for Me* that in its own way is equally as dreadful and sans soul as the recent hit cover version by the (gasp!) DeFranco Family, and some light bits of whimsy penned by Harry that have made next to no impression on me at all (except for *Black Sails*, which has one of the most gorgeous string arrangements I've heard in ages and manages to take a few mild satiric pot shots at Carly Simon, among others). It's all very agreeable, good fun, highly sophisticated, immaculately done, and in the final analysis terribly, terribly cold. So, for me anyway, it is dispensable.

### ...to Noel Coppage

HARRY NILSSON'S "Pussy Cats" is a celebrity album. Like "Ringo" and other recent results of a need among pop stars to belong to a fraternity, it presents itself mainly as a social event. The producer, John Lennon, is a man who likes being envied, and he takes co-star billing upon himself to the point of putting his picture on the cover along with Nilsson's. A whole slew of pictures—of John, Harry, the ubiquitous Ringo, and the others at work and play in the studio—is provided in the fold-out jacket. These are Polaroid snaps of studiously poor quality, the kind (we are apparently expected to assume) a fan might take, the kind Paul McCartney recently provided with his album (which depicted such musically irrelevant celebrities as James Coburn on its cover). The packaging also involves liner notes by Derek Taylor, who goes out of his way to admit (twice) that he had time in his busy schedule to hear only one of the songs before the deadline made him do the notes.

Nobody makes any bones about emphasizing personalities over music—nobody, that is, except Harry Nilsson. Once the record starts, his approach is as private and subtle as it usually is, and that's probably what keeps the odor of ego balm from overpowering the whole works. Harry has never had any identity problems as a singer—his voice is too idiosyncratic for that—and so, having to prove nothing, he does wind up serving the music as well as using it. He also has a strange sense of humor and a true composer's skill at teasing melodic ideas

into place. He has never been all that clear about whether music was supposed to be a means or an end, but he has told us (listen again to *I'll Be Home*) not to take it all so seriously. So he wears it well, this distance between the *idea* of celebrities working together and what they actually do.

His own compositions seem nicely placed in the middle ground of that distance. The album's most evocative piece, *Black Sails*, has a slow, orchestrated, delicately sculpted melody and lyrics that aren't really song lyrics at all but an extended pun: he harpoons the nautical metaphor until it goes belly-up—kidding, along the way, everyone from Carly Simon to Long John Silver. *Black Sails*, *All My Life*, and *Don't Forget Me* (which finds Nilsson mixing romantic clichés and realism into quite a fizzy tonic: "I'll miss you when I'm lonely/I'll miss the alimony too . . ." and "When we're older/ And full of cancer—/It doesn't matter now/ Come on, get happy . . .") are together well worth the price of admission. (The fourth Nilsson original, *Old Forgotten Soldier*, is not as poignant as it could be, either taken straight or as irony, but he does a wonderful job of singing it.)

**T**HERE are some cuts, though, that I simply cannot stand: *Rock Around the Clock* and *Loop de Loop* because they are bad songs that depend on nostalgia's interfering with sober aesthetic judgment, and Dylan's *Subterranean Homesick Blues* because of the mockery Nilsson and Lennon make of it, making it sound like a diatribe delivered, without conviction, in the midst of a drunken apathy (they may be trying to act as reporters, helping us compare today with the day of the song, but there are less annoying ways of doing that). The Lennon sound, though, serves Harry well and makes some things surprisingly effective—for example, Jimmy Cliff's *Many Rivers to Cross*, a 1969 model given a bit of the old Primal Scream treatment, and Lennon's own light-weight string of seagoing puns ("C'est la, c'est la/C'est la vie/Sail upon the ocean/Sail with me"), plus *Mucho Mungo/Mt. Elga*, in which Klaus Voorman shows again why the ex-Beatles like his bass so much.

In sum, the album is more impressive than it is satisfying: it is disjointed, as if John were completely in charge here, Harry completely in command there. Perhaps one is reluctant to try to influence the work of a celebrity, even if one is a celebrity himself . . . and perhaps (as I suspect) these are unusually introverted celebrities. No great synergy comes boiling out of the speakers, but then it is very good when it is good, and all that miracle stuff went out with the Beatles anyway. Didn't it?

**HARRY NILSSON:** *Pussy Cats*. Harry Nilsson (vocals, piano, clavinet); Danny Kootch, Jesse Ed Davis (guitars); Klaus Voorman (bass); Sneaky Pete (steel guitar); Jim Keltner, Ringo Starr, Keith Moon (drums); other musicians. *Many Rivers to Cross*; *Subterranean Homesick Blues*; *Don't Forget Me*; *All My Life*; *Old Forgotten Soldier*; *Save the Last Dance for Me*; *Mucho Mungo/Mt. Elga*; *Loop de Loop*; *Black Sails*; *Rock Around the Clock*. RCA CPL1-0570 \$6.98, © CPS1-0570 \$7.95, © CPK1-0570 \$7.95.

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roll. But I will try to do my duty. So I stare at this "hard rock" album. It appears to be by a group called Uriah Heep. Now that sounds familiar, almost as familiar as Deep Purple, which, I am given to understand, is another "hard rock" group. As I said, I am old and tired, and you must forgive me if I get the two groups mixed up. Mercy, if I'm not careful I may be telling you what I think of Uriah Purple or Deep Heep.

Well, I have listened very carefully to this latest album by Deep Uriah, and I must say I think the band is getting better—their albums have become progressively less painless, anyway. I suppose that is because they are getting older. After all, if you've been doing something—anything—for a certain number of years, you get bored and want to make a change. Uriah Heep is no different from the rest of us, and they have switched from that relentless clankety-bang stuff to what can charitably be described as something similar to what the Beatles were doing six years ago. To that I cry, "Right arm!" just as the young people do. Congratulations, Purple Heep, or whatever the dickens your name is. *J.V.*

**JIMMY WEBB:** *Land's End* (see *Best of the Month*, page 90)

**MARION WILLIAMS:** *Blessed Assurance*. Marion Williams (vocals); B. M. Oakley Memorial Temple Choir, Walter Stewart dir.; instrumental accompaniment. *Heaven Belongs to You: Jesus, Jesus: These Old Burdens*; and three others. ATLANTIC SD 7302 \$5.98, TP 7302 \$6.97, CS 7302 \$6.97.

Performance: **Powerful**

Recording: **Very good remote**

I have been a great admirer of Marion Williams since her days with the Stars of Faith, and, even though I haven't always agreed with Atlantic's choice of repertoire, she has remained my favorite gospel singer after Mahalia Jackson. Miss Williams' Verve recordings with Ray Brown and Milt Jackson, made ten years ago, combined a standard church repertoire with outstanding jazz backing, and the result, though unheralded, was sensational. Atlantic would do well to repeat that or a similar combination. But recording Marion Williams in the familiar surroundings of her own church in Philadelphia was not at all a bad idea.

I have heard this album criticized for containing too much talk, and I have to agree that the dialogue separating the tracks and the benediction with which the set fizzles out become more and more boring every time you listen to the album. However, the record also contains almost thirty-seven minutes of music powerfully performed by today's greatest gospel artist, so we are very far from being shortchanged. *C.A.*

**BOB WILLS' TEXAS PLAYBOYS:** *For the Last Time*. Leon McAuliffe (vocals, steel guitar); Eldon Shamblin (guitar); Al Stricklin (piano); Johnny Gimble (fiddle, mandolin); Smokey Dacus (drums); Hoyle Nix (vocals, fiddle); Leon Rausch (vocals, bass); Keith Coleman (fiddle); Tommy Allsup (bass); Bob Moore (bass); Jody Nix (vocals, drums); Merle Haggard (vocals, fiddle). *Playboy Theme; Yearning; Faded Love; What Makes Bob Holler; Stay All Night; Goin' Away Party; Big Balls in Cowtown; Keeper of My Heart; Twin Guitar Boogie; Bubbles in My Beer; Blue Bonnet Lane; When You Leave*

*Amarillo; San Antonio Rose*; and eleven others. UNITED ARTISTS UA-LA216-J2 two discs \$9.98, EA216-J \$9.98.

Performance: **Faithful swing**

Recording: **Excellent**

There are a couple of things to remember when listening to Bob Wills' music and thinking about the country-swing sound he put together. The first is that Wills and his bands played almost exclusively for dances, where the audience, being busy, does a different kind of listening. The second is that musicologists are bound to like something of this sort more than real people do, as musicologists also do a different kind of listening. Country swing makes few if any emotional demands on the listener, which is probably good for both dancers and musicologists.

Bob Wills' experimentation was important to the development of country music largely for its spin-offs and side effects. He made the field steel-guitar conscious, electric-guitar conscious; his use of drums, horns, and piano, and his encouraging the guitars to play what were essentially horn parts—the open-mindedness of his whole approach—helped shake country out of some of its sleepy little assumptions. Leon McAuliffe's early work on the "Hawaiian" guitar was an important influence on several of today's good pickers, including Josh Graves, the best dobro player there is—and Bob Wills' style with the fiddle inspired, among others, Merle Haggard, back in Merle's jailbird days, to straighten himself out and do something in music. Several of the songs were adapted to various shades of country interpretation, especially Bluegrass. But country swing itself has not amounted to much in anyone else's hands. The lesson may be that the *sound* of country swing—for all the sociology attached to it—is tedious, dry, and only about half an inch deep. The words of the songs have almost no connection with the real world, and the attitude of the players is, almost by definition, about the same as the attitude of the players in the Lawrence Welk Orchestra.

This album, recorded at the instigation of producer and session man Tommy Allsup during two days in Dallas in 1973, is both a tribute to the ailing Bob Wills and a last round-up of the Texas Playboys. Wills was in a wheelchair in the studio the first day, and even did his "Ahaa" folk holler on a couple of numbers, but he lapsed into unconsciousness that night. So there is pathos here, about the music if not in it. That second day found these old friends, some of whom had lived like members of the same family for many years, gathered to remember their fallen leader by playing this benign, offhand music. Strange.

So this is a musicologist's delight, if they can accept the presence of Merle Haggard in there, taking the vocals on three songs and fiddling in the chorus (talked his way in); the two LP's are beautifully recorded, packaged in a nice box-like thing, and accompanied by a whole booklet of notes by Wills' biographer, Dr. Charles Townsend. *San Antonio Rose, Stay All Night* ("stay a little longer"), and the other major tunes Wills wrote and otherwise made famous in the Thirties, Forties, and Fifties are played, we are assured, the way the Playboys always played them. It is not what I'd call a profound listening experience, but I suppose the people interested in studying or dancing need music too. *N.C.*

(Continued on page 112)



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**EUBIE BLAKE:** *Live Concert.* Eubie Blake (piano and vocals). *Tricky Fingers; James P. Johnson Medley; As Long As You Live;* and four others. EUBIE BLAKE MUSIC EBM-5 \$5.98 (available by mail from Eubie Blake Music, 284-A Stuyvesant Avenue, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11221).

Performance: **Veteran vigor**  
Recording: **Excellent remote**

This is the indefatigable Mr. Blake's fifth release on his own label, and it is one of his best. Recorded during a concert in Morristown, New Jersey, last year when he was but eighty-nine, it captures Eubie Blake in a most exuberant mood. He breezes through spirited versions of some of his own compositions—both known and not-so-known—and throws in a delightful tribute to the late James P. Johnson, whom he admired greatly. At least as interesting as the music is Mr. Blake's anecdotal running commentary, delivered with characteristic charm and wit.

There are now six albums (one was released just after this one) on the Eubie Blake Music label, and not one is without significance. It just boggles the mind to think what Mr. Blake's playing must have been like fifty years ago, when he was in his prime. C.A.

**KEITH JARRETT:** *Solo Concerts Bremen/Lausanne* (see Best of the Month, page 89)

### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**HUBERT LAWS:** *In the Beginning.* Hubert Laws (flute); Ronnie Laws (tenor saxophone); Dave Friedman (vibraphone); Ron Carter (bass); Airtio Moreira (percussion); orchestra. *Mean Lene; Moment's Notice; Come Ye Disconsolate; Restoration; Airegin;* and three others. CTI CTX 3 + 3 two discs \$10.98, © CT8 3 + 3 \$12.98, © CTC 3 + 3 \$12.98.

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

Hubert Laws has been with the CTI label for five years now, and this is his sixth album release. I don't know whether the title was meant to imply this, but "In the Beginning" does, in fact, seem like a return to Laws' early recordings. That is to say, there are no sweeping violins, and, except for two tracks—*Come Ye Disconsolate* and Erik Satie's *Gymnopédie No. 1*—the album consists of straight jazz played by a small group, including Hubert's brother, Ronnie, on tenor saxophone.

I have always had the highest praise for Hubert Laws, but this album makes me want to double all previous accolades and send copies out to certain record producers as a lesson in good taste. The repertoire runs from the silky, romantically done Satie piece to a wild drums-and-flute-only version of Sonny

Rollins' *Airegin*, and you should run to your nearest record shop for it. C.A.

**ANITA O'DAY:** *Hi Ho Trailus Boot Whip.* Anita O'Day (vocals); various instrumental accompaniments. *What Is This Thing Called Love?; Key Largo; How High the Moon; It's Different When It Happens to You;* and six others. BOB THIELE MUSIC BBM1-0595 M \$6.98.

Performance: **Oh happy O'Day**  
Recording: **Good mono transfers**

When she was a band singer, Anita O'Day avoided the sex-kitten image; she didn't twinkle her eyes or flash her teeth at the audience, she dressed conservatively and with taste, and, above all, she sang with the inventiveness of a jazz instrumentalist. It was Ms. O'Day who originated and perfected the distinctive vocal style that brought June Christy and Chris Connor fame, and of the three only Anita O'Day's voice has survived the years.

The recordings in this collection were made for the Signature label more than twenty-five years ago, when Ms. O'Day, after working with the Gene Krupa and Stan Kenton bands, ventured out on her own. Her phrasing is so fresh that only her bop scats and the technical quality of the recordings date the voice. The accompaniment—by three different bands—is another matter; it, of course, is dated, but there is fine playing by such men as Artie Shapiro, Billy Kyle, Ray Sims (Zoot's brother), and Benny Carter, who is also responsible for some excellent arrangements.

There are only ten short tracks here, but we can forgive that since producer Bob Thiele had no more to draw from. Everything here counts—a noteworthy reissue. C.A.

### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**WEATHER REPORT:** *Mysterious Traveller.* Joe Zawinul (keyboards, vocals, maracas); Wayne Shorter (tenor and soprano saxophones); others. *Nubian Sundance; American Tango; Jungle Book;* and three others. COLUMBIA KC 32494 \$4.98, © CA-32494 \$6.98, © CT-32494 \$6.98.

Performance: **Best yet**  
Recording: **Excellent**

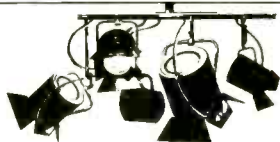
This is Weather Report's fourth album, and there are no signs that its creativity is letting up. Addition of sound effects (crowd noises in *Nubian Sundance*) may provoke some cries of "gimmickry," but 90 per cent of the group's sound is electronic gimmickry to begin with, and, as long as it fits, I don't care if they incorporate a Senegalese circumcision ceremony.

Noting the absence of bassist Miroslav Vitous (one of WR's founders) from all but one track, I called Columbia Records' public relations/publicity department and asked if he had defected. "No," was the reply, "only the drummer left the group."

"Which drummer?"

"I really don't know. . . . I think his name is Brown. Yes, that's it, Brown. . . ."

I was embarrassed. I hadn't even known Mr. Brown was with the group. Well, perhaps Vitous overslept, and maybe that's why Joe Zawinul and Wayne Shorter give us the latter's *Blackthorn Rose* as an unaccompanied duet—they should do a whole album like that. Columbia's employees may not be the best informed, but I think they should know that they have now released the most splendid Weather Report to date. C.A.



## THEATER • FILMS

**LEE ERWIN:** *Sound of Silents*. Lee Erwin (organ). Erwin: *The Eagle*; *The General*; *Thief of Bagdad*; *Phantom of the Opera*. Erwin-Creech: *My Best Girl*; *Queen Kelly*; *Wings*. Rapec-Pollack: *Charmaine*, from *What Price Glory*; *Diane*, from *Seventh Heaven*. ANGEL S-36073 \$6.98, 8XS-36073 \$6.98, 4XS-36073 \$6.98.

Performance: **New wine, old line**  
Recording: **Excellent**

Once a promising boy pianist in Huntsville, Alabama, Lee Erwin used to slip into one of the local movie houses and fill in for the organist at supertime during the showing of whatever silent movie was playing. Later he got the job himself and pulled down \$20 a week while he attended the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music. Erwin went on, like all good aspiring American composers in the early Thirties, to study under Nadia Boulanger in Paris, then rose to the rank of chief organist at the RKO Albee in Cincinnati, served as arranger and composer for the Arthur Godfrey Show, and now teaches music at Lehman College in New York. But a few years ago Mr. Erwin went back to the silents. New York's Beacon Theatre, restored to its old-time movie-palace glamour, held a gala screening of the silent movie *Queen Kelly*, starring Gloria Swanson, and he played, on the Beacon's old mammoth organ, a score he had composed for the occasion. Miss Swanson was there, the evening was a smash, and Mr. Erwin has since gone on to compose "new scores" for *The General*, *The Thief of Bagdad*, *My Best Girl*, and others.

The record from Angel is a compendium of romantic love themes, opening title fanfares, and busy episodes underlining the action for these movies, and its greatest achievement, aside from the engineers' impressive fidelity to the sound of the organ at the Fox Theatre in Washington where the stuff was taped on a resident Wurlitzer pipe organ, is how much Mr. Erwin's music manages to sound like what I dimly remember from childhood as the real thing. The notes may be new, but the approach couldn't be more old-fashioned—which is probably as it should be. The organist pulls out every stop to work up a chase of one locomotive by another in *The General*; supplies heaps of Oriental atmosphere for the flights of flying carpets and winged horses in *Thief of Bagdad*; captures, as Rory Guy's liner notes put it, the "goodness and girlishness" of the curly-haired Miss Pickford with distressing accuracy in *My Best Girl*; and bounces out as waltzy a waltz as you might care to hear for the Masked Ball scene in *Phantom of the Opera*. But, although Mr. Erwin is awfully good at atmosphere, he adheres all too faithfully to the old Hollywood edict that the music for a movie should never really be consciously heard, and his music

*(Continued on page 115)*

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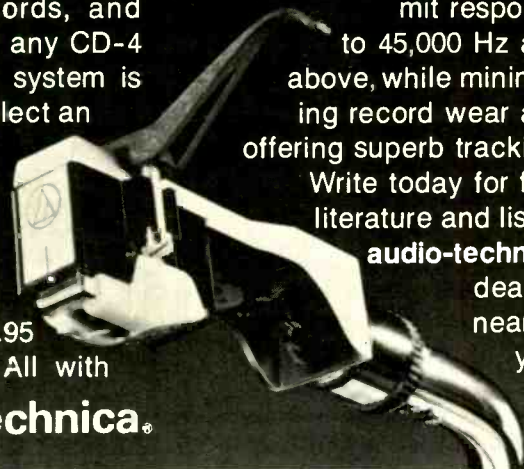
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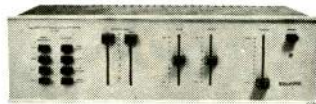
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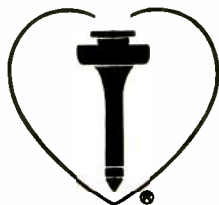
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## RONNY WHYTE & TRAVIS HUDSON

Reviewed by William Anderson

I THINK I have figured out to my (doubtless temporary) satisfaction what it is that is wrong with music on TV: it's the people who are responsible for choosing what is programmed. It is not that they are tasteless monotones who wouldn't know a good tune if one stood up and bit them (though there is certainly *some* of that going around), but that they are, by and large, people of a certain age, which means that their training and experience in music and other theatrical arts have been more large-scale, venue-wise (Hollywood sound stages, Broadway theaters, and Las Vegas circuses), than small-scale like the tube. The result is that, with tiresome consistency, they can think only in terms of the "special," which in TV-land is just another word for "large." Whether it's Barbra Streisand, Perry Como, Liza Minnelli, or David Bowie, it must be wide-screen, full-stage, big-band, and cast-of-thousands. Even on the talk shows, when some solo performer gets a rare chance to do his or her thing, nine times out of ten it's full orchestra (Doc Severinson may know what a small combo is, but he wouldn't know how to get it to play softly) and Lana Cantrell, Della Reesa, or Helen Reddy belting, belting, decibelting. And so, what I long for, apparently in vain, is something appropriate to my living room, my mood, and that 25-inch screen, somebody addressing me in a modest, conversational tone, a tight little, bright little cabaret turn, carefully constructed, lovingly detailed, witty, musical, and polished.

I have, I see, just described the singing team of Travis Hudson and Ronny Whyte. They are, alas, not on the tube where I would dearly love to see them, but on a sparkling new Monmouth-Evergreen album bearing the motto "It's smooth, it's smart. It's Rodgers, it's Hart!"—borrowed, of course, from Cole Porter's *DuBarry Was a Lady*. Let me lose no time whatever in assuring you that the line applies fairly not only to the Rodgers & Hart songs but to the Hudson & Whyte (Travis & Ronny?) performances, and though I have seen (and prefer) them in scintillating person, the disc minus the "visuals" is no mean substitute.

Everybody knows more Rodgers & Hart songs than they think they do (in general, songwriters and lyricists get even less respect than Rodney Dangerfield, and with much less justice), and there are a few old favorites here. Mostly, however, Travis & Ronny refreshingly travel the back roads of the canon, all the way from *I'd Like to Poison Ivy* (*The Melody Man*, 1924) to *This Is My Night to Howl* (the new production of *A Connecticut Yankee*, 1943). I would recommend to your particular attention here *I'll Tell the Man in the Street* (*I Married an Angel*, 1938), *The Girl Friend* (from the show of the same name, 1926), and especially Travis' *Atlantic Blues* (*Lido Lady*, 1926). But they're all good, and you will soon find your own favorites.

There is no sticky "nostalgia" stamp anywhere on front, back, inside, or outside of this happy, hummable music. Travis & Ronny are too young to remember any of this stuff from the first time around, but they sing it like older pros anyway, and they bring it all up to date in the process. Ronny Whyte's arrangements have no little to do with this: compounded in equal measures of respect for the great originals and ingenious contemporary comments on them, they are the very model of their kind. Lucky New Yorkers may still be able to catch Travis & Ronny live in their current engagement at the St. Regis. For the rest, we can only hope that Johnny can read something besides his monologue. Johnny?

**RONNY WHYTE & TRAVIS HUDSON:** *It's Rodgers, It's Hart!* Travis Hudson (vocals and alto kazoo); Ronny Whyte (vocals, piano, celeste, and tenor kazoo); other instrumentalists. *I Feel at Home with You; You're Nearer; Nothing but You; I'll Tell the Man in the Street; What's the Use of Talking; You Always Love the Same Girl; This Is My Night to Howl; The Girl Friend; Where's That Rainbow; Atlantic Blues; You Have Cast Your Shadow on the Sea; On a Desert Island with Thee; I'd Like to Poison Ivy; Nobody's Heart; Sing.* MONMOUTH-EVERGREEN MES 7069 \$6.98.

does tend to slip by while your mind wanders elsewhere, especially with no movie to look at while it plays. P.K.

**JOSEPH AND THE AMAZING TECHNICOLOR DREAMCOAT** (Tim Rice—Andrew Lloyd Webber). Gary Bond, Peter Reeves, Maynard Williams, Gordon Waller, Roger Watson (vocals). Children's choir: chorus and orchestra, Chris Hamel-Cooke and Andrew Lloyd Webber cond. MCA 399 \$5.98.

Performance: **A comedy cantata**  
Recording: **Superb**

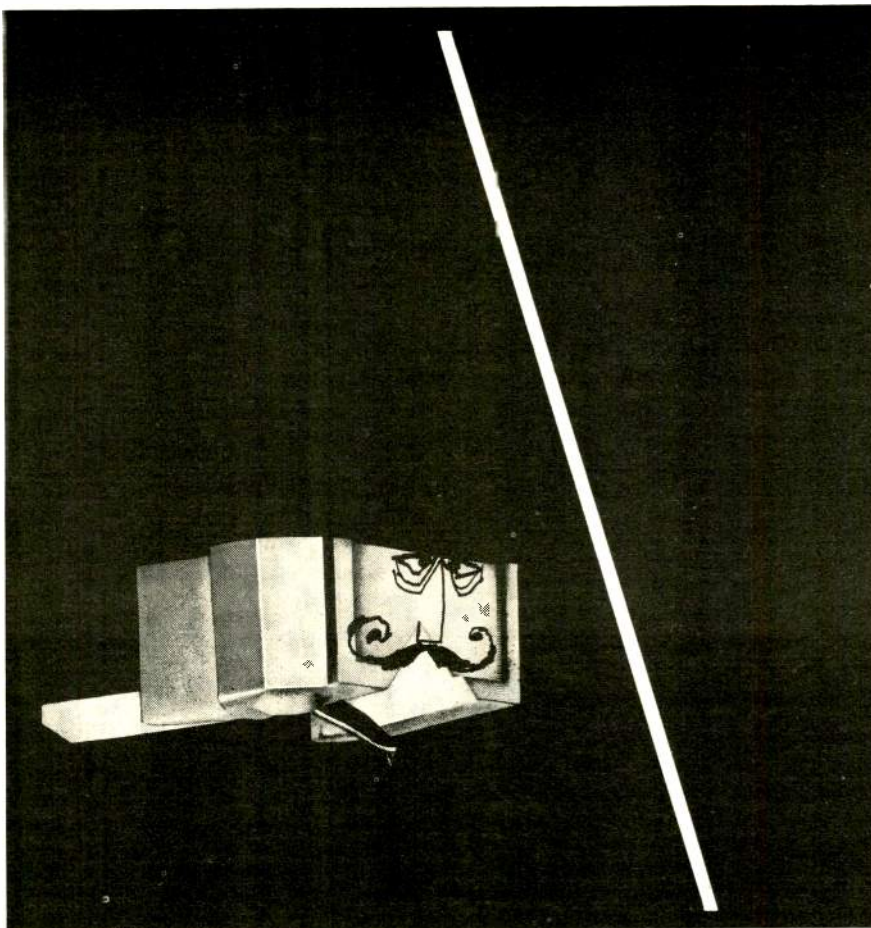
Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber, the boys who brought you *Jesus Christ, Superstar*, are back on the boards this time with *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*. *Joseph* is a work that has lengthened with time. It started with a London school performance when it was about fifteen minutes long, and kept going until, in 1968, a half-hour version was recorded by Decca in England. Meanwhile, in 1969, Rice and Webber took time out to write *Jesus Christ, Superstar* and become rather rich. They returned to *Joseph* in 1972, lengthening it again to a forty-minute span for a staging in Scotland at the Edinburgh Festival that year. Now, with the incorporation of material from another cantata from the same pens called *Jacob's Journey*, it is even longer. And I must say at once that, long as it is, I like it even better than the still longer *Jesus Christ, Superstar*. As Mr. Rice and Mr. Webber put their professional minds to retelling in verse the Biblical tale whose theme inspired one of Thomas Mann's greatest novels, they seem to be out to entertain and comment perceptively on the text rather than to evangelize—which is fine with me.

When Joseph puts on the coat of many colors "in a class above the rest" which he has received from his father Jacob and struts about lording it over his brothers, he is depicted as quite the obnoxious chap I always suspected he might have been. "I look handsome," he croons, "I look smart, I am a walking work of art." All through the story of Joseph, from the way he carries on about the coat through the descriptions of his megalomaniacal dreams, his success with the millionaire Potiphar's wife in Egypt, and his condescension in saving his family from starvation after he has won over Pharaoh himself with his dream-readings, Rice and Webber wisely stick to comedy and never indulge themselves in romantic pieties. Thus, there are no arias on a par with Mary Magdalene's *I Don't Know How to Love Him* in *Joseph*, but there are no tedious self-indulgent bathetic stretches either. Instead, what we have, finally, is an up-to-the-minute comic cantata which is right in the mainstream of musical tradition—not hurt at all, as far as I am concerned, by Reuben's song of nostalgia for "the good years in Canaan" limned in a French accent entirely appropriate to the material.

The performances—Peter Reeves as the narrator, Gary Bond as Joseph, Gordon Waller as Pharaoh, and lead vocalists Maynard Williams and Roger Watson—are wonderfully alive. *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* is recommended for all those who enjoy the Rice-Webber way of telling a Bible tale, and particularly for children; they are far likelier to remember the Joseph of this impudent version than the stuffy ones prepared by lady schoolteachers with three names. P.K.

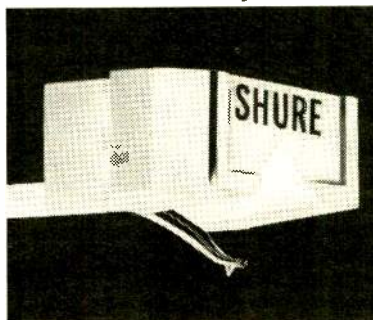
(Continued overleaf)

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## FOLK



### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**FINBAR AND EDDIE FUREY:** *Hornpipes, Airs and Reels*. Finbar Furey (Irish pipes), Eddie Furey (guitar). *The Spanish Cloak; Sliabh na mBan; Graham's Flat; Piper in the Meadow Straying; Rocking the Baby*; and five others. NONESUCH H-72059 \$3.98.

Performance: **The jig is never up**  
Recording: **Good**

If Irish pipe music is your weakness, better drop what you're doing and saunter over to your neighborhood record dealer for this one. Personally, when I've heard two jigs and a reel on an Irish bagpipe I am ready to call it a day at the pub and sneak home for a quiet nap, but if I must have Irish music it is Finbar Furey and his brother Eddie that I would rather have provide the stuff than anybody else I can think of. Finbar plays a mean Irish pipe and whistle, while his brother is master of the whistle, guitar, and bodhran, an instrument I can't find in the dictionary but which I am sure Eddie Furey manages as nimbly as any Irishman alive.

Since most Irish pipe music was written to be danced to, this program appeals as much to the feet as to the ears, even when, as in *Sliabh na mBan*, which means *The Mountain of the Women*, the subject matter happens to be the defeat of a band of partisans from Tipperary in a 1798 rebellion. The collection contains its share of the usual reels, jigs, and airs, but what makes it different, aside from the impeccable authenticity of the performances, is the finale—an elaborate tour de force that purports to be a musical chronicle of a fox-hunt. It is a most ingenious, sustained piece for pipe and guitar, with an intriguing musical development that sets it off from the rest and brings out in the Fureys not only their virtuosity as instrumentalists but their native wit.

P.K.

**GYÖRGY LAKATOS:** *Gypsy Music from Olden Times*. György Lakatos and His Gypsy

**BILL SPENCE WITH  
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STRING BAND:**  
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fiddle-based tunes  
for Saturday night  
in the provinces*



Al Napper, Woodward Associates

Band (instrumentals). **Sarasate:** *Zigeunerweisen*. **Csermák:** *Lament and Fast Dance*. **Boulangier:** *Dojna-Fantasy*. **Monti:** *Csárdás*. **Bihari:** *Lament, Verbunkos and Fast Dance*. **Járóka:** *Dancing Fingers*. **Kóczé:** *Concert Presto; Gypsy Medley*. QUALITON LPX 10130 \$6.98.

Performance: **From Budapest with zest**  
Recording: **Excellent**

This is the kind of music Hungarian gypsy bands generally play for visiting tourists. It is therefore a hardy export item, combining attractive melodies with fiery and imaginative execution. There is a close-to immediacy about the recording that would be hazardous were this not an outstanding ensemble with exceptional intonation and balances. If you like this type of music, you will be pleased with the disc, and the remainder of this review need not even concern you.

For those interested in the background—since the jacket lists the titles in four languages but contains no notes of any kind—let me add that two pieces are by Antal Csermák (1774-1822) and János Bihari (1764-1827), famous composers and performers whose music-making was a major influence on Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsodies. (Csermák was a trained musician, Bihari an uneducated gypsy whose songs survived in the simplified notation of his friends.) I find it amusing to discover *Zigeunerweisen*, a medley of folk songs transcribed by Sarasate, re-transcribed for precisely the kind of ensemble Sarasate must have heard some seventy years ago. I assume that the *primás* (leader) is the grandson of Flóris Lakatos and the son of Sándor Lakatos, topnotch musicians of past generations. György Lakatos certainly plays with their kind of virtuosity.

George Jellinek

### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**BILL SPENCE WITH FENNIG'S ALL-STAR STRING BAND:** *The Hammered Dulcimer*. Bill Spence (hammered dulcimer); Tom McCresh (fiddle); Jon Pedersen (banjo); Joan Pelton (piano); other musicians. *The Boys of Wexford; Scotland the Brave; Come Dance and Sing; Ragtime Annie; Sandy River Belle; The Black Nag; Childgrove; Smash the Windows; Coleraine*; and twenty others. FRONT HALL FHR-01 \$5.98 (plus 35¢ handling charge from Front Hall Records, R.D. 1, Wormer Road, Voorheesville, N.Y. 12186).

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

From out of nowhere—no, from out of the Eldron Fennig Folk Museum of American

Ephemera, no less—come Bill Spence, the hammered dulcimer, and a charming album with a fey and sprightly spirit hopping around above a solid grass-roots footing. The hammered dulcimer, an ancient but mostly overlooked forerunner of the piano (not so overlooked in places like Vermont these days), sounds like someone's running a roll whose holes have become marvelously and delicately fuzzy through a fine old player piano. The machine amounts to a sound box with an array of slanty-mounted strings on top, and one hits them with little wooden hammers. Bill Spence, living surely one of the fuller lives in upstate New York, not only plays hammered dulcimers but makes them. He seems to be the indispensable man at tiny Front Hall Records, and he and Fennig's All-Star String Band play for country dances around the region.

There is no standard for judging hammered-dulcimer players (few people have ever heard one), but I'm taking no risk at all in calling Bill Spence a virtuoso; he is fast, his timing is perfect, and his inventiveness in the matter of ornamentation is limited only by the fairly narrow scope of music the band seems committed to playing—reels and old fiddle-based tunes predominate. The repertoire may limit Spence, but it doesn't necessarily limit the album, which represents the kind of thing the group does in real life on Saturday nights in the provinces. These tunes will last—they already *have*—and *Golden Slippers* may work as well for you as it did for your grandpa, especially when a *second* hammered dulcimer (played by Walter Michael of Bottle Hill) is brought into it. *Don Tremain's Reel* is a knockout, too, with two fiddles playing almost the same notes and using stereo separation to great advantage.

The whole album is good stereo; it is beautifully engineered, an almost unheard-of quality in a disc from a low-budget folkie label. I wouldn't say I've *flipped* over it, you understand, just that I've found it necessary to put the kids on dried milk and saltines for a few months while I save up for my own hammered dulcimer. N.C.

**BUKKA WHITE:** *Big Daddy*. Bukka White (guitar and vocals). *Black Cat Bone Blues*; *Gibson Hill*; *Glory Bound Train*; *Black Crepe Blues*; *Shake My Hand Blues*; and seven others. BIOGRAPH BLP-12049 \$5.98.

Performance: **Excellent, considering**  
Recording: **Excellent**

Booker T. Washington (Bukka) White left his Mississippi home in 1918, when he was nine, made his first records for Victor twelve years later, gained considerable popularity in 1937 with his Vocalion recording of *Shake 'Em Down*, spent two years in his home state's infamous Parchman Farm prison, recorded, was sentenced to a county workhouse, recorded again, slipped into obscurity, and was "rediscovered" in 1960 by some folkniks. A couple of years ago, Columbia reissued the fourteen sides White recorded for Vocalion in 1940, and if you have room in your collection for only one Bukka White album, *that* is the one to get.

This Biograph set, recorded in 1973, is not to be entirely dismissed, however. Though the years have not been kind to White's voice, which is now rough and scraggly, there are some interesting songs and stellar guitar work here. The polish may have dulled, but Bukka White is still sounding better than many of his resurrected contemporaries. C.A.

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# CHOOSING SIDES

By IRVING KOLODIN



## THE LATE, LATE, SHORT, SHORT PIECE

"SCORN not the short piece" might seem to be a particularly apt admonition for today, when this genre of musical composition is being put down with such seemingly ruthless regularity everywhere. But since the words were actually written more than a hundred years ago by Robert Schumann, in his capacity as a critic rather than as the composer of some of the greatest of all short pieces (has anyone recorded *Träumerei* recently save as part of the *Kinderszenen*?), one must conclude that there were even then, as there are now and perhaps always will be, people who measured musical merit by the yard rather than by the inch.

The long-playing record has something to answer for in this regard, having unfrocked, by virtue of its voracious temporal appetite, the high priests of the art of making an imperishable artistic statement in as little as 3 minutes and 30 seconds. (Little did Roy Harris think in the Thirties, for example, when he wrote for a fill-up side a piece titled *Four Minutes and Twenty Seconds*, that he was memorializing an epoch of the recording art.) But the LP has atoned no little for its sins by making it possible for James Creighton, archivist of the Edward Johnson Music Library's Recording Archives at the University of Toronto, to bring together all those old minutes and seconds to produce a "Masters of the Bow" series (on the Discopaedia label) devoted in large part to the late, late, short, short piece as practiced, perfected, and performed by violinists Jan Kubelik, Ferenc von Vecsey, Váňa Přihoda, Maud Powell, Mischa Elman, Toscha Seidel, Efrem Zimbalist, and Jascha Heifetz.

Least it be supposed that Creighton has a *parti pris* on behalf of Auer pupils (the last four listed above were), promised future releases will be devoted to the art of Eugène Ysaÿe, Joseph Joachim, Fritz Kreisler, Kathleen Parlow, Bronislaw Huberman, and similar luminaries of the past. To me, these records are an exercise in instant recall, for, with the exceptions of Kubelik, Powell, Přihoda, and von Vecsey, these are performers I heard often.

Taken all together, it is an astonishing reminder (though perhaps it should not be) that, of all pre-electric-era recordings, those of string players retain more of the identifying traits of musical personality than those of anyone save singers. Violinists used either their own instruments or the famous Stroh

(named for its inventor, Charles Stroh, it substituted, for the belly of the violin, a small megaphone-shaped attachment pointed directly into the recording horn), and the impartial wax soon separated those who were merely fabulous technicians from those who were also artists with strong and sharply defined musical profiles.

As an instance, I had not heard a recording of Jan Kubelik (father, of course, of the con-



MAUD POWELL (1868-1920)

temporary conductor) in so long I had totally forgotten what his musical character was like. But after hearing the seventeen pieces on the two sides of No. 1001 in the Discopaedia series, I rather think I will recognize his playing the next time I hear it. He was the master of a curiously clean, silky sound, over which he had immaculate control in remarkably minute dynamic gradations. To be sure, he plays a series of finger-breaking variations on Gounod's *Veau d'Or* (an excerpt from Wieniawski's *Fantaisie Brillante on Themes from "Faust"*) with rather more enthusiasm than he does a Mozart *Romanza* (K. Anh. 205), but he performs Drdla's *Serenade* with a charm that makes it clear why it just had to be a salon favorite (though the composer himself was unable to so clarify when he made a tour of the Keith vaudeville circuit around 1925).

On the other hand, the second side of No. 1004 begins with Přihoda's back-to-back performances of those celebrated early disc-

mates Drigo's *Serenade* and Drdla's *Serenade*, and he immerses the latter in a glutinous coating of slides that would limit its suitability to but a few of the less discriminating salons. It is said, on Přihoda's behalf, that, while living by playing in a café orchestra as a young man in Milan, he was heard in recital by Arturo Toscanini, who praised him highly. If the program had been restricted to such matter as Paganini's Variations on Paisiello's "*Nel cor più mi sento*" and the Toselli *Serenade* included on this disc, perhaps. But something tells me that if the Maestro had heard Přihoda play the second movement of Bach's D Major Suite (the Wilhelmj arrangement) as he does here, he would have simply put on his hat and walked out.

Ferenc von Vecsey, another violinist I never heard (he died at forty-two and didn't play in America after 1915, when he was twenty-two), also plays the Bach-Wilhelmj "Air," Tartini's *Devil's Trill* Sonata, and a portion of the same "*Faust*" *Fantaisie* favored by Kubelik. He plays the Waltz from the *Kermesse* chorus, and it sounds for all the world as if the tune were being whistled through the teeth while the filigree is performed by a demented clarinetist. Von Vecsey could certainly play the violin, but, as with so many other virtuosos, *serious* music wasn't really his line. The evidence is contained in a performance of the Beethoven E-flat Sonata (Op. 12, No. 3). This track is, at least mechanically, something of an ear-opener—an electric recording of the Thirties, previously issued on the Cetra, Decca, and Polydor labels, if I read the annotation correctly. It may also be something of a sleeper: it identifies the performer responsible for the firmly phrased, well-shaded piano part as G. Agosti. If this is the Guido Agosti who has a high reputation as a pedagogue in Italy and who spent last winter at the Juilliard School (he would have been thirty-four at the time of von Vecsey's death), it is one of the few recordings by him (outside of those in which he accompanied the soprano Suzanne Danco) I have encountered.

Of those responsible for the other five discs, the one least likely to possess an identity for contemporary record buyers is Maud Powell. A native of Peru (Illinois, that is), Miss Powell was born only three years after the end of the Civil War, and was good enough by age eleven to go abroad for study with such masters as Heinrich Schradieck (Leipzig), Jean Charles Dancla (Paris), and Joachim (Berlin). The qualifications that led Dvořák to entrust to Miss Powell the first American performance of his A Minor Concerto (under his own direction) are reflected in her choice of short shorts. It is bereft of Paganini, Wieniawski, and Vieuxtemps, partial to such pieces as Bruch's *Kol Nidrei*, the Kreisler version of Grieg's *To Spring*, and Elgar's *Salut d'Amour*, for all of which she was to the manner born—just the right amount of heart-throbbing vibrato, ear-tickling *portamento*, and non-rigid rubato. Certainly if she had originated in, say, Yorkshire rather than Illinois she would have ended up as Dame Maud rather than becoming merely Mrs. Godfrey Turner in 1904, the year after she shared a thirty-week tour of Europe with John Philip Sousa and his band.

In his very full life, Efrem Zimbalist has accumulated a whole series of non-violinistic identities: husband of Alma Gluck, stepfather of novelist Marcia Davenport, father of the best-known G-man other than J. Edgar Hoover.



er (TV's Efreem Jr.), director of the Curtis Institute since 1941 (he retired in 1961), and, more recently, husband of Mrs. Mary Louise Curtis Bok. But he was also, first and foremost, one of this century's greatest violinists, an artist who rejoiced in being known as the "scholar" of the Auer school. I am delighted to hear again his twinkling performance of the G-flat Chopin Waltz, with joyful abandon and warmth of feeling in their proper proportions: two samples of Glinka (*Persian Song*, from *Ruslan and Ludmilla*, and *The Lark*); a charming *Acquarelle* by Tor Aulin; and four of his own lovingly crafted compositions. At last report, Zimbalist was in his eighty-sixth year, enjoying, in retirement in Nevada, the ripened fruits of his many identities.

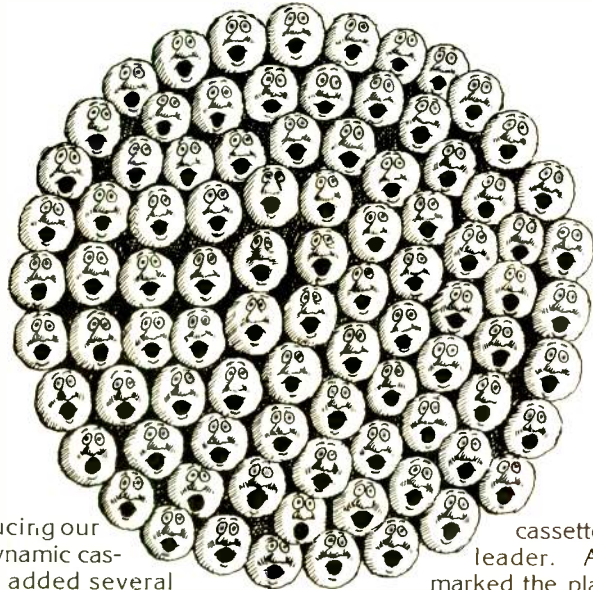
Though the total of eight discs has now been narrowed down to a remaining two, any coupling of the names Mischa Elman and Jascha Heifetz could be termed "narrow" only in the broadest sense. What they did and how they did it has been so extensive and so far-ranging that any dip into their vast recorded repertoires is sure to contain odd and unusual things. The first track of the Elman disc (No. 1006) is a version of Fibich's *Poem* (before it became *Moonlight Madonna*) that is immediately evocative of the enormous reservoir of ardor Elman commanded, and which he lavished on such melodic pieces as the E-flat *Romance* of Anton Rubinstein, the Chopin Nocturne in the same key, and, inevitably, the Dvořák *Humoresque*. He was, like Kubelik, Powell, Seidel, and Zimbalist, one of a kind, a violinist who became famous for having a tone so big it could communicate anything he had to say.

**N**ONE of us now alive ever heard both Sarasate and Heifetz. Samuel Langford, the famous predecessor of Neville Cardus as critic of the *Manchester Guardian*, did. He paid Heifetz the compliment of comparing him with Sarasate, saying that he, too, couldn't play the first movement of Beethoven's *Kreutzer* Sonata to the Langford taste. It has always seemed to me that if, in 1925, a critic had to reach back for a likeness to a performer who had *died* in 1908, then the one he was writing about had to be pretty good too.

Heifetz has lived with the legend of his own infallibility for more than fifty years ("the" New York debut was on October 27, 1917), and, as the TV visit with him a few years ago demonstrated, he still sustains it at seventy-plus. Discopaedia's generous serving of twenty pieces (No. 1010) ranges through such gems of artistry as Lili Boulanger's *Cortège* and Nocturne in F, the Achron arrangement of Mendelssohn's *On Wings of Song*, the Tchaikovsky *Sérénade Mélancolique*, and a version of Bazzini's *La Ronde des Lutins* whose *spiccato*, double trills, harmonics, and left-hand pizzicatos remain of a perfection beyond the reach of any other violinist since they were recorded in the Twenties. Such short shorts will be with us for a long, long time.

The transfers are, on the whole, excellent, save for two slightly off-pitch "takes" on the von Vecsey disc, which Creighton acknowledges in his uniformly pertinent and helpful commentary. The records are available from Discopaedia, P. O. Box 99, Station "D," Toronto, Ontario, Canada M6P 3J5. The price is \$6.50 per disc, plus \$1.60 postage and packing charge for orders of up to five records; six records or more will be sent post free in North America.

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# CLASSICAL DISCS AND TAPES

Reviewed by RICHARD FREED • DAVID HALL • GEORGE JELLINEK • IGOR KIPNIS  
PAUL KRESH • ERIC SALZMAN

## RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**J. S. BACH: *Motets (complete)*.** *Singet dem Herrn ein neues Lied (BWV 225); Der Geist hilft unser Schwachheit auf (BWV 226); Jesu, meine Freude (BWV 227); Fürchte dich nicht (BWV 228); Komm, Jesu, komm (BWV 229); Lobet den Herrn, alle Heiden (BWV 230); Sei Lob und Preis mit Ehren (BWV 231); Ich lasse dich nicht, du segnest mich denn (BWV Anh. 159).* Regensburger Domspatzen; Capella Academica Wien; Hamburg Bläserkreis für Alte Musik; other instrumentalists; Hanns-Martin Schneidt cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON ARCHIVE 2708 031 two discs \$15.96.

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

**J. S. BACH: *Motets, Volume I*.** *Singet dem Herrn ein neues Lied (BWV 225); Der Geist hilft unser Schwachheit auf (BWV 226); Fürchte dich nicht (BWV 228); Sei Lob und Preis mit ehren (BWV 231).* Aeolian Singers; Martin Neary (organ continuo); Sebastian Forbes cond. LONDON STEREO TREASURY STS 15186 \$3.49.

Performance: **Generally commendable**  
Recording: **Poor**

Archive's new set of the Bach motets is a bit more "complete" than most, for it includes not only *Sei Lob und Preis* (BWV 231), a movement adapted from Cantata 28, but also *Ich lasse dich nicht* (BWV Appendix 159),

which was once thought to be by Johann Sebastian but is now believed to have been written by Johann Christoph Bach (1642-1703)—though J. S. did add one of his own chorales to it. The eight works on two discs, where usu-

Baker's Biographical Dictionary, 1900 edition



MRS. H. H. A. BEACH

*Not as conventional as one might expect*

ally there are only six or at best seven, make a very appealing package, as indeed do these performances by the Regensburg "cathedral sparrows" with Eduard Melkus' Capella Academica of Vienna providing instrumental support. The music itself was, in the majority of cases, intended for use at funerals or memorial services, and the quality (especially *Singet dem Herrn, Jesu meine Freude*, and *Komm, Jesu, komm*) is on a par with the greatest Bach we possess.

There have been numerous recordings of the motets, some for a cappella choir (they could have been performed that way on occasion), others with lesser or fuller scoring, and some even using solo singers in certain sections of the scores. All of these are stylistically feasible. The motets recorded on London's inexpensive Stereo Treasury Series by a fine British group, the Aeolian Singers, opts, for example, for organ continuo only and in-

volves a smaller disposition of voices than one usually hears. Unfortunately, in spite of some commendable singing (a bit British in tone) and an excellent sense of style, phrasing, and tempo, the performances are dealt a severe blow by the badly balanced and frequently distorted recording. The Archive reproduction, in contrast, is notable in its clarity and balance of both voices and instruments. The considerably less expensive Barmen-Gemarke Cantorum version with the Collegium Aureum on Victrola VICS-6037 is even clearer in its exposition of the complicated polyphonic strands, and the overall sonics there are brighter on top. The seven motets contained in the latter recording are beautifully performed, with the difference between it and the Archive readings being primarily a matter of some faster pacing (in *Singet dem Herrn*, for example) and a sometimes consciously striving for effect for effect's sake (the slightly overdone expressive opening to *Jesu, meine Freude*) on the part of the Regensburg choir; things flow just a little more naturally on the part of the Barmen-Gemarke group. Both of these sets are worth anyone's attention, however, although I still retain an enormous fondness for the four motets (BWV 225, 227, 229, and 230) recorded on Cantate imports 656004 and 656011 as performed by Wilhelm Ehmann and the Westfälische Kantorei in the most spiritually glowing manner imaginable. Archive includes texts and translations, incidentally. I.K.

**BEACH: *Piano Quintet in F-sharp Minor, Op. 67*.** **FOOTE: *Piano Quintet in A Minor, Op. 38*.** Mary Louise Boehm (piano); Kees Kooper and Alvin Rogers (violins); Richard Maximoff (viola); Fred Sherry (cello). TURNABOUT TV-S 34556 \$3.50.

Performance: **Tame but attractive**  
Recording: **Good**

"Mrs. H.H.A. Beach," she signed her scores, and she was the first woman in America—one of the first women anywhere—to compose a symphonic work. Born Amy Marcy Cheney in a small New Hampshire town in 1867, she was almost entirely self-taught as a composer. Her Quintet in F-sharp Minor is strongly

(Continued on page 124)

### 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
- Ⓒ = quadrasonic cassette

Monophonic recordings are indicated by the symbol (M)

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

# THE DYBBUK

Leonard Bernstein's new ballet  
stands on its own musically  
apart from the dark story  
of a blighted love

Reviewed by Paul Kresh

Dancers Helgi Tomasson  
and Patricia McBride



In the course of his celebrated, multifaceted career, and right in the midst of his world travels and numberless appearances as conductor, pianist, teacher, television personality, and music director of the New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein has somehow managed to squeeze in time to write the scores for four musical comedies, an opera, three symphonies, a serenade, his *Chichester Psalms*, his *Kaddish*, and a *Mass* with text from the Catholic liturgy and additional dialogue by Stephen Schwartz.

As a composer, he has turned often to religious themes, but as he himself wrote in discussing his second symphony, *The Age of Anxiety*, "I have a deep suspicion that every work I write, for whatever medium, is really theater music in some way. . . ." Up to now, Bernstein's best-realized scores have been such secular pieces for the musical stage as *On the Town*, *Wonderful Town*, *West Side Story*, and *Candide*; the brief opera *Trouble in Tahiti*; the carefree ballet *Fancy Free*, the introspective *Facsimile*, and works like the *Age of Anxiety* itself, which proved to be an outstanding ballet score when Jerome Robbins took hold of it.

The *Kaddish* and *Mass* suffered from inept texts written mainly by the composer (a poet he isn't) and the fatal blights of sprawl and pretension. The *Chichester Psalms* of 1965 stuck to the Psalms of David and therefore worked out much better. Now, in his new ballet *Dybbuk*, as in his early (1942) *Jeremiah Symphony* and so often since, Bernstein has turned once again to Jewish sources, this time to Hassidic music and cabalism, the theme of S. Ansky's eerie nineteenth-century play *The Dybbuk*. The result, I think, is Bernstein's most powerful contribution to the dance repertoire in years.

In Ansky's *The Dybbuk* (those of us who saw a remarkable old Polish movie based on the play many years ago will never forget it) a young student of theology named Chanon meets a rich girl named Leah and they fall in love. Leah's father has other plans for her, however, and arranges a more profitable match. Chanon turns in desperation to the dark forces of cabala to get Leah back. Through secret words he does unleash such powers—and dies. At Leah's wedding, his soul enters Leah's body as a *dybbuk*, a de-

mon soul that speaks through her lips, directs her conduct—and can be expelled only by exorcism. But when the *dybbuk* is routed, Leah also dies.

Robbins' ballet is based more on the atmosphere of the play than on its plot, making use of somber colors and austere sets scrawled over with mystic letters, evoking the religious magic of the play through dances that suggest dark rituals and the dread dangers of dabbling with the unknowable. In preparing the score, Bernstein says that he went beyond Ansky and started investigating numerology and the cabalistic obsession with numbers, making a diagram of a sacred tree whose branches represent the divine virtues and toying with the twelve-tone system to devise a scale with nine notes which he expanded into multiples of eighteen and thirty-six for his score.

Because of all this occultist musical dabbling—or more likely, perhaps, in spite of it—he has devised a piece of music that celebrates the mystical side of Judaism through strong, startling, and severely modern chords, strange and compelling harmonies, producing a dusky introversion and a wistfulness that captures the spirit of a love predestinately blighted by awesome, inexorable forces. His mastery of orchestral texture, his ability to fashion passages of inspired lyricism on the one hand and to evoke the galvanic energies of terror on the other, have fused here into a unified, hypnotic whole that never resorts to cheap effects or feels obliged to scrounge after secondhand esoterica in the wilder pages of Scriabin. There are times when the dark weavings of orchestral sound are reminiscent not only of his own *Age of Anxiety* and *Kaddish* but of the spookier passages in Britten's *Turn of the Screw*. Bernstein's demons, however, though rooted deeper beneath the earth, leap right out at you—there's nothing oblique about them.

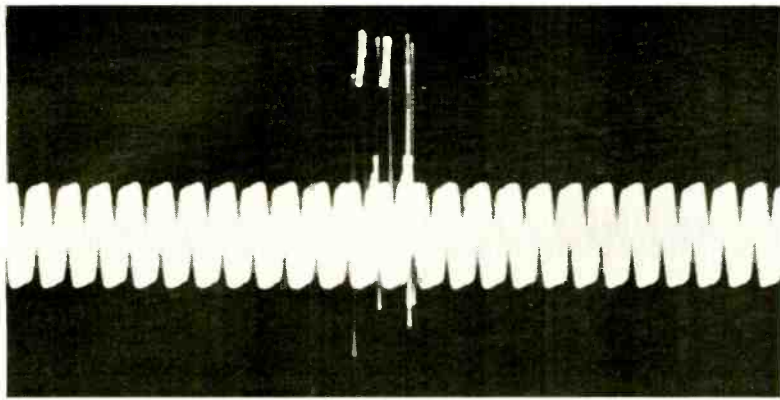
So impressed was I with *Dybbuk* when I saw it performed, and so miffed at its reception by some dance critics (though Clive Barnes later rescinded his verdict in the *New York Times*, admitting that the score "works"), that I was delighted to be able to attend Columbia's recording session one rainy day last spring and get closer to the

music. When I arrived in the late afternoon Mr. Bernstein had been there with the singers and the New York City Ballet orchestra since ten in the morning and would be there till six that evening: it always comes as something of a shock to realize again that symphonic works are rarely recorded at a single stretch, but must be painstakingly pieced together out of many separate "takes."

The composer was wearing a worn white T-shirt with a red neckline, his glasses were perched up on his forehead, his grey hair was tousled, he looked kind of tuckered out, and he wanted to rehearse "bar T" again. "It's boom-TAH," he instructed a percussionist. In the control room, producer John McClure was eating potato salad off a paper plate and telling engineer Bud Graham where he wanted a tape splice. Vocalists David Johnson and John Ostendorf, who sing the Hebrew prayer portions of the score, looked worried. Even though they and the orchestra had been repeating the work at all New York City Ballet performances, their conductor had usually been Robert Irving, and the composer turned out to cherish rather different ideas about dynamics and tempos.

Now that the record is out, it is a happy thing to be able to report that Bernstein the conductor has done full justice to Bernstein the composer on a stunning record that continues to yield fresh surprises and felicities at each replaying. And the recorded sound, over which the producer and engineer spent such anxious concern that day, is simply superb. I have not listened to the quadraphonic version (it's just come out), but the standard stereo one is quite overwhelming enough for me.

**BERNSTEIN: *Dybbuk*.** Complete ballet. *Part One: The Community; The Fathers; Witnesses of Birth; The Children.* *Part Two: Kabbalah—Six Variations.* *Part Three: Witnesses of Death; Leah; Possession; Exorcism.* David Johnson (baritone); John Ostendorf (bass); New York City Ballet Orchestra, Leonard Bernstein cond. COLUMBIA M 33082 \$6.98, □ MQ 33082 \$6.98. Ⓞ MA 33082 \$6.98, Ⓞ MT 33082 \$6.98, Ⓞ MAQ 33082 \$7.98.



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reminiscent of César Franck's ardent, melodious Quintet in F Minor, if never as distinguished in terms of themes and organization. But it's a pleasant, dreamy, sensuous work, not nearly as ladylike as one might expect from a respectable woman of her time, and it gets a strong, affectionate performance here.

Arthur Foote's Suite in E Major for String Orchestra, memorable for the salty pizzicato passages of its second movement, has been recorded several times. He was one of a distinguished group of New England composers, several of them pupils of the region's musical pioneer John Knowles Paine. Foote, born in Salem, Massachusetts, in 1853, was one of Paine's first pupils at Harvard. Like Mrs. Beach, he was active in the musical life of Boston, where he was a church organist and organized chamber music concerts. The piano quintet heard here is a songful, soulful work with a couple of arch gypsy passages in the first movement, some airs that might conceivably have been inspired by American Indian material, and an ending that is a thoroughly Brahmsian romp. The playing by pianist Boehm and the quartet is accurate, incisive, and winning. No icons are shattered in either of these quintets, but they are certainly models of craftsmanship, and neither can quite be dismissed as pedestrian. *P.K.*

**BOUCOURECHLIEV: Archipel 4.** Catherine Collard (piano). PHILIPS 6504 112 \$7.98.

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

André Boucourechliev is one of the important members of the post-World War II generation

of European composers who is not yet very well known over here. Born in Bulgaria, he has long been active in Paris, where he is a notable presence in contemporary music.

*Archipel* means "archipelago," and Boucourechliev has written a series of pieces for various combinations under that title in which the performers must chart their own course through a score that is more a map of a landscape than a set of single-minded directions. This kind of relationship between the performer and the composer, an outgrowth of so-called aleatory music, was pioneered by the American composer Earle Brown and was adapted by Boulez and others in Europe. It is, in part, a product of the desire to reintroduce an element of liveness, of performer collaboration, of virtuosity, of fantasy, and even of uncertainty into the performance situation, which had been almost strangled by the ultra-precision of total serialism.

The problem of recording this kind of music, essentially a response to the live performance situation, is an interesting one. Any given performance of such music can only be, for better or for worse, a single set of possibilities out of many, frozen into permanence by the recording medium. The solution is, of course, to present more than one realization—which is just what is done here: we are taken through this archipelago of sound four times. The routes are different each time, so that the results, while recognizably from the same source, have great variety.

The primary impact of these wide-ranging voyages through the piano keyboard is that of extreme sound fantasy and virtuosity. Whopping great pile-ups of tone alternate with ring-

ing sonorities and tumbling clatters of keyboard sound. There are extraordinary qualities of sound imagination in the writing and of expressive power and skill in the playing. Mlle. Collard has remarkable authority in this music, and the recording is excellent, encompassing as it does the outer extremes of an instrument that is difficult to record even in its more modest moments. I should add that the disc surface is gorgeously silent. Four versions of this music are perhaps a little much to take at a sitting—I would have opted for two versions with something else by Boucourechliev on the reverse. Still, this is a fascinating experience that charts some rocky and picturesque shores. *E.S.*

**CHOPIN: Piano Concerto No. 1, in E Minor, Op. 11; Piano Concerto No. 2, in F Minor, Op. 21; Variations on Mozart's "Là ci darem la mano," Op. 2; Grand Fantasy on Polish Airs, Op. 13; Krakowiak Rondo, Op. 14; Andante Spianato and Grande Polonaise, Op. 22.** Abbey Simon (piano); Hamburg Symphony Orchestra, Heribert Beissel cond. Vox □ QSVBX 5136 three discs \$11.95.

Performance: **Dashing, glittery**  
Recording: **Excellent**

This compendium of Chopin's piano-and-orchestra output finds the redoubtable Abbey Simon in a rather glittery and virtuosic form as opposed to the intensely poetic mood that prevailed in his remarkable Turnabout recording of the B-flat Minor Sonata. Only in the lovely *Andante Spianato* of Op. 22 does he give full play to the lyrical-coloristic bent I have always particularly admired in his Cho-



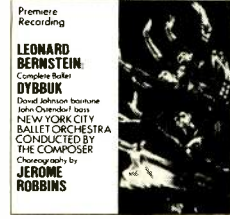
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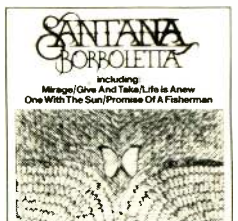
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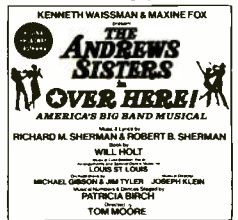
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pin playing. In short, I wish he had loosened up a bit in his readings of the two concertos—the music can take it. The more virtuosic short pieces, however, fare excellently here. Herr Beissel and his Hamburg players deliver full-blooded and rhythmically alert backing. Moreover, Vox's QS (Sansui) four-channel sound emerged from my speakers with a pleasing rear-channel ambience and with good, solid frontal piano-orchestra presence and balance.

In general, I find Simon's dashing treatment of the short pieces more to my taste than Arrau's rather heavily detailed ones on Philips. However, those in search of exceptional budget-price recordings of the concertos need look no further—at least in the instance of No. 1—than Gilels and Ormandy on Odyssey, not to mention the late Dinu Lipatti's unique version on Seraphim (mono). *D.H.*

**DAVIDOVSKY: *Inflexions*.** Chamber Ensemble, David Gilbert cond. *Chacona*. Jeanne Benjamin (violin); Joel Krosnick (cello); Robert Miller (piano). **STREET: *String Quartet 1972*.** Concord String Quartet. **TRYTHALL: *Coincidences*.** Richard Trythall (piano). COMPOSERS RECORDINGS, INC. CRI SD 305 \$5.95.

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

These works are the 1973 Naumburg Chamber Music Recording Award winners and represent what might be said to be the current state of the "official" university contemporary-music movement. Virgil Thomson observed, 10 these many years ago, that the kind of music a composer writes is conditioned by how he earns his living. Certainly it is true that the system of degrees, teaching jobs, and grants has, intentionally or not, produced a certain kind of new music: abstract, post-Expressionist, highly organized. Nothing wrong with this, of course—some very good music has been produced in this manner—except that it is a system that tends to produce music largely cut off from the mainstream of contemporary life, and it is a system that, like all such, tends to be self-perpetuating and to stifle growth. All of the music here seems to want to escape the worst problems of avant-garde formalism, but the only place to go seems to be inward—into a kind of revival of some kind of intense, highly articulated, personal Expressionism.

Of the three composers represented here, Mario Davidovsky, a native of Argentina but long resident in New York, is the best known, largely for his electronic and electronic-and-live compositions. The two works here, one from 1965, the other written in 1972, represent a return to purely live-instrument forms, showing perhaps, in some interesting and individual ways, the influence of the electronic experience.

Tison Street, the youngest of the composers here (he was born in 1943), has written a clever, intriguing, and somewhat disjointed work that attempts—with partial success—to integrate serialism and other formal arcana with a sensuous wave-like ebb and flow.

Richard Trythall's *Coincidences* stands a bit apart from the other works in its use of more generalized serial ideas of the sort one finds in Stockhausen's piano pieces. It is probably more immediately accessible as sound and gesture than the other works here, although it lacks their linear Expressionist element, and its dynamism seems cooler, more

calculated. The music gets exciting because excitement (density of notes, increase in number of attacks, greater dynamic range, increase in performer freedom, or whatever) is a parameter of the piece.

All of this music is serious, dedicated stuff. All of it is well-written and high-powered. But there is no audience for it, and none of it is very likable or even very important. I used to be on the Naumburg Award Jury, and perhaps, if I were still on that jury, I might have even voted for these works. Nevertheless, something is wrong with this situation, and I find the whole thing very disturbing because of its bizarre cultural implications.

At any rate, though, everything seems extremely well performed here, and the recorded sound does the music justice. *E.S.*

ENESCO: *Roumanian Rhapsody No. 1* (see The Basic Repertoire, page 63)

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**FAURÉ: *Requiem, Op. 48*.** Kyoko Ito (soprano); Norio Ohga (baritone); Takashi Sakai (organ); Tokyo Metropolitan Choir and Orchestra, Kazuo Yamada cond. COLUMBIA □ MQ 32883 \$7.98, □ MAQ 32883 \$8.98.

Performance: **Mostly very good**  
Recording: **Exceptionally good**

It would not, surely, take a confirmed Gallophile to be surprised at this disc's provenance. At first glance a recording of the Fauré Requiem emanating from Tokyo seems as incongruous as, say, one of Ives' *General William*



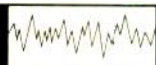
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Booth coming out of the USSR. But such is the trend toward cultural homogenization under the impetus of electronic communications technology that almost anything can happen. And in this particular instance, the consequences are surprisingly gratifying, both musically and sonically.

For my taste, Gabriel Fauré's Requiem, composed in 1887 in memory of his father, is the most beautiful work of its kind, and I never fail to be moved by a good performance of it, whether it be understated and refined in the best Gallic tradition or richly dramatic as in this Tokyo version. Baritone Norio Ohga is by far the more convincing of the two vocal soloists; Miss Ito's vocal timbre is not only uncomfortably penetrating in the famous "Pie Jesu" solo but also seems too closely miked. The chorus, on the other hand, is altogether superb in all departments—intonation, sonority, enunciation, rhythm—and Takashi Sakai deserves a special bouquet for the effective organ registration he employs, making the instrument here a genuine participant rather than a mere harmonic buttress. The orchestra, too, is wonderfully vital and intense in its response to Fauré's writing. Indeed, it is regrettable that Columbia did not find room in the liner notes for some information about these excellent performing artists.

For those understandably disinclined to put to one side such excellent recordings in the French tradition of the Requiem as the recent Musical Heritage Society reissue (MHS 1507) of the 1964 Erato/Epic Grand Prix du Disque winner directed by Louis Frémaux, there is the attraction in this new Columbia disc of highly effective semi-surround quadraphonic sound, with exceptionally fine frontal localization of the various choir sections; the soprano-tenor dialogue in the Sanctus is a striking instance in point. The orchestral body and presence throughout is nothing short of phenomenal, yet it is never obtrusive. And fortunately, aside from the minor reservations I have already expressed, the musical results are eminently satisfactory as well. D.H.

FAURÉ: *Sonata No. 2, in G Minor, for Cello and Piano, Op. 117* (see SAINT-SAËNS)

FOOTE: *Piano Quintet in A Minor, Op. 38* (see BEACH)

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

G. GABRIELI: *Hodie Christus natus est; O Jesu mi dulcissime*. MONTEVERDI: *Christe adoramus te; Cantate Domino; Ego flos campi*. SCHÜTZ: *Psalmen Davids: Lobe den Herren meine Seele. Cantiones Sacrae: Quid commisisti; Veni, Rogo, in cor meum; Cantate Domino. Kleine Geistliche Konzerte: Was hast du verwirret?; Bringt her dem Herrn. Geistliche Chormusik: Die mit Tränen säen; Die Himmel erzählen*. James Bowman (counter-tenor); Jean Knibbs (soprano); Linda Hurst (mezzo-soprano); Peter Hall (tenor); David Thomas (bass); David Lumsden (St. Giles organ, Cripplegate); Louis Halsey Singers, Louis Halsey cond. L'OISEAU-LYRE SOL 333 \$6.98.

Performance: **Exceptional**  
Recording: **Superb**

This collection of motets commemorates the visits to Venice by Heinrich Schütz in 1609, when he was a pupil of Giovanni Gabrieli, and in 1628, when he may have studied or at least come into contact with Claudio Monte-

verdi. The influence of both men on Schütz is readily apparent: color and contrast (often through antiphonal devices) emerge brilliantly in the first of the two Gabrieli Christmas motets, and they likewise make their effect in the earlier Schütz motets; similarly, Monteverdi's recitative-like monody finds its way into Schütz's small-scaled, declamatory vocal solos in the Little Sacred Concertos. The collection is a fascinating one in this sense, but it also makes apparent that this indebtedness is only one aspect of Schütz's style—as Bach did, he adapted and then made the adaptations his own.

The bulk of the anthology is choral, but there are three solo motets sung by counter-tenor James Bowman (Monteverdi's *Ego flos campi* and Schütz's *Was hast du verwirret? and Bringt her dem Herrn*). Both his contributions and those of the choir and the other solo-



JAMES BOWMAN

Outstanding in Schütz and Monteverdi motets

ists are outstanding in every respect. This is the sort of record which, because of its straightforward, relatively innocuous title ("Motets by Gabrieli, Monteverdi, and Schütz") and varied contents by three different composers, could easily be lost in the shuffle. Do seek it out; it's a gem. Texts and translations are provided. I.K.

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

HANDEL: *Concerto No. 13, in F Major, for Organ and Orchestra ("The Cuckoo and the Nightingale")*; *Concerto in D Minor for Flute, Violin, Cello, and Continuo*; *Concerto No. 3, in G Minor, for Oboe, Strings, and Continuo*; *Concerto in D Major for Two Violins, Cello, and Continuo*; *Sonata à Trois in F Major for Oboe, Bassoon, and Continuo*. Herbert Tachezi (organ); Leopold Stastny (flute); Jürg Schaeflein (oboe); Alice Harnoncourt (violin); Nikolaus Harnoncourt (cello); Concentus Musicus of Vienna, Nikolaus Harnoncourt cond. TELEFUNKEN SAWT 9618-A \$6.98.

Performance: **Splendid**  
Recording: **Marvelous**

This is an exceptionally well-played collection of Handel, mostly concertos, of which the only really well-known items are the Organ Concerto and the G Minor Oboe Concer-

to. The remaining works, mostly early pieces (ca. 1706-1716), are unfamiliar, though their style of writing is often unmistakably Handel-like. Some of these have elaborately conceived obbligato parts, for cello or bassoon, for example, and they are all performed with splendid stylistic understanding.

An especially good instance of the kind of music making to be heard here, so full of zest and even British heartiness, is the second movement of the Organ Concerto, which in its rhythmic alacrity and gusto must surely rival the spirited playing of such British ensembles as the Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields or the English Chamber Orchestra. Here, however, the instruments used are all historical ones or reproductions, and the combination, especially in the Organ Concerto (which has the fullest scoring), is absolutely irresistible. I wonder only at the tempo deviations of the solo organ cuckoo theme, which Mr. Tachezi may have intended to be humorous but which I feel upset the rhythm. But this is a small fault and in no way detracts from the excellence of the album as a whole, its value as entertainment, and its importance as a recorded Handel contribution. The sound reproduction is marvelous. I.K.

HUMPERDINCK: *Hansel und Gretel* (see Best of the Month, page 87)

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

JOPLIN: *Magnetic Rag. Elite Syncopations; Magnetic Rag; Heliotrope Bouquet; The Nonpareil; Lily Queen; The Strenuous Life; Binks' Waltz; The Sycamore; Eugenia; Something Doing*. Ralph Grierson (piano); the Southland Stingers (orchestra); George Sponhaltz arr. and cond. ANGEL S-36078 \$5.98.

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

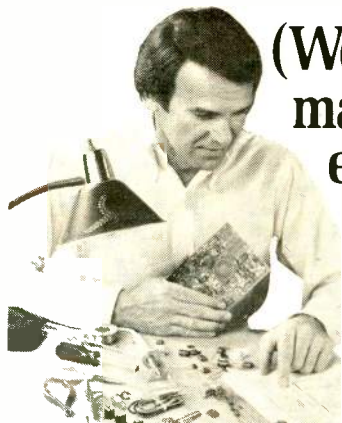
The delights of the ragtime revival, coupled with the very welcome vindication of Scott Joplin, may soon be approaching the state once described as "too much is enough." The saturation of the market by Joplin-based recordings released by performers and ensembles both great and mediocre will not, I hope, cause a backlash, but at this point it would perhaps be best for everyone to push his chair away from the banquet table and digest awhile.

In the meantime, perhaps as a liqueur, the second album by the Southland Stingers will ably serve. The first effort by the group, "Palm Leaf Rag," done as a follow-up to the success of "The Red Back Book" by Gunther Schuller and the New England Conservatory Ragtime Ensemble, was frankly imitative and box-square. In attempting to re-create the sound of the original period orchestrations used in "The Red Back Book," George Sponhaltz wrote arrangements for Joplin pieces that were relentlessly peppy and eventually annoying.

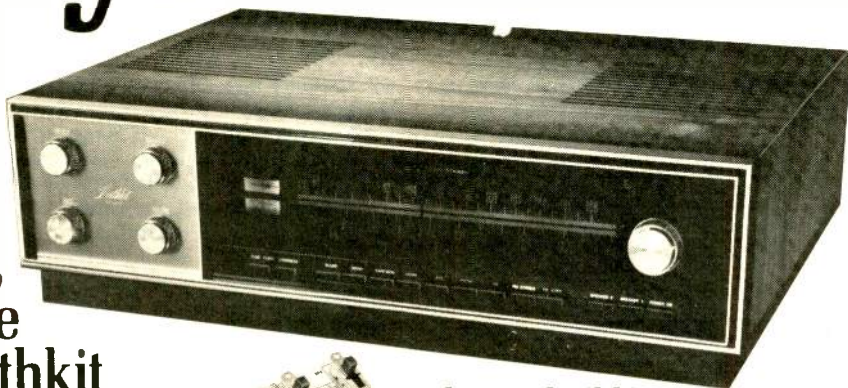
But with "Magnetic Rag" Mr. Sponhaltz has changed his emphasis from oom-pah to lilt. The group benefits thereby, Joplin's works get a fairer hearing, and the very talented Ralph Grierson gets to play more piano than he did on the last outing. This album has the grace and flow that were missing from its predecessor. Of the works themselves, what to say? They are all marvelous, with the exception of the title piece, one of Joplin's last (Continued on page 131)



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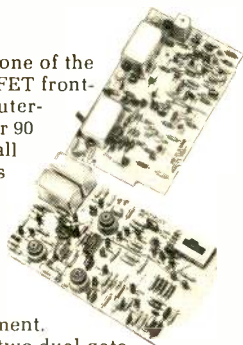
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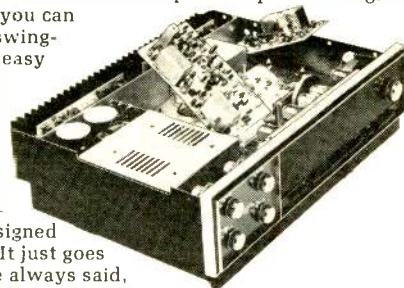


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## THE PATIENCE OF LOUIS MOREAU GOTTSCHALK

Reviewer Robert Offergeld feels we have kept him waiting long enough

I HAVE been listening with great interest to a new and newsworthy Angel release called "The Union," which gives us Leonard Pennario in a peculiarly substantial program of Louis Moreau Gottschalk piano pieces. The album takes its title of course from Gottschalk's extraordinary Civil War battle piece of the same name, and, for reasons to be noted below, it may come as a surprise to those who imagine that the sentimental nostalgias of nineteenth-century America were as fragile as our grandmothers liked to pretend. I don't know whose rather sweeping sense of synecdoche it was at Angel that spotlighted in this fashion Gottschalk's most muscular example of patriotic Americana, but the notion turns out in the doing to have been an inspired one.

To begin with, the lively sense of news given off by this release has little to do with repertoire as such, for there are other versions currently available of everything we find here. What is not generally available elsewhere is Mr. Pennario's refreshing point of view about the nature of Gottschalk's music. He obviously has all the proper feelings about its unique historical context. But he just as obviously does not regard this context as its only or even its principal value, and it will help us measure the high merit of this approach if we briefly note the *kinds* of Gottschalk that Mr. Pennario plays.

The categories are mainly three:

(1) Three Afro-American pieces developed from New Orleans material for European or South American audiences (*Le Bananier, Bamboula, Pasquinade*).

(2) Three Afro-Hispanic pieces developed from West Indian sources for West Indian audiences (*Danza, Souvenir de Porto Rico, Ojos criollos*—not, as Angel has it, *Creole Eyes*, by the way; no authentic edition calls it that).

(3) Three pieces developed from United States material for United States audiences (*The Union, The Banjo, The Last Hope*).

Now it was the very essence of Gottschalk's posthumous bad luck that none of the three audience groups noted ever got to hear what he wrote for the other two. And the resulting ignorance in all quarters regarding the range of his *total* production is what permitted our massively Germanic musical establishment to dispose of Gottschalk's "case" without ever bothering to

consult more than a fraction of the musical evidence.

One result of this cultural kangaroo court has been the intimidation in some degree of even those who now feel that Gottschalk got a rotten deal. After all, the verdict of German musicology was supported, and not reluctantly, by people like J. S. Dwight, the Harvard Academics, and Edward MacDowell. So perhaps Gottschalk's stuff is best approached as a collection of more or less charming period pieces. Maybe, after all, it is best to play it at a certain distance, as if between stylistic quotation marks—with nice clean lines, an ironic bow to Victorian elegance, and as little real sentiment as may be.

Possibly. But I'm happy to say that Mr. Pennario does not seem to think so. With his performance of *The Union* (he opens his program with it) he tackles the Gottschalk "case" at its most critical point, for even some of Gottschalk's partisans have felt uncomfortable about this allegedly opportunistic patriotic barnstormer. Mr. Pennario makes it clear that they needn't have upset themselves. In his hands *The Union* to begin with *sounds* perfectly gorgeous (which is more than can be said for a lot of far brainier American music that has been written since). One good reason for its sounding so grand is of course Mr. Pennario's highly sensuous and anything but monochromatic tone (Gottschalk's contemporaries always reached first for coloristic adjectives in describing *his* playing). Another good reason is his effortlessly wide dynamic range, which means that his virtuoso climaxes disclose no sense of strain. Still another is his interesting and completely successful exploitation of Gottschalk's predilection for high treble razzle-dazzle (Mr. Pennario somehow makes his modern Steinway sound as coolly crystalline as Gottschalk's famous Chickering's were supposed to). And to all this he adds a nice capacity for the kind of ringing and indeed heroic "large utterance" that the Romantic poets were so fond of.

ALL in all, what I am saying is that Mr. Pennario deliberately gives *The Union* the all-out, uninhibited, fully committed treatment. In the process, the hackneyed musical materials of the piece (*Yankee Doodle, Hail Columbia, The Star-Spangled Banner*) re-

veal a deeper expressive coherence than we suspected them of, and the parallel form of the piece discloses an inspired logic of its own. It turns out to be exactly what its early audiences *felt* it was—a knockout example of Civil War scenic art. I can't imagine anyone in his right mind wanting a note of it (or of Mr. Pennario's) changed.

Another of Gottschalk's bigger pieces, the exuberant *Bamboula*, has even more notes than *The Union* (it dates from the composer's youth in Paris). In particular, the *Bamboula* in some hands tends to wander and lose steam at the close. Not so in Mr. Pennario's version—and since this piece and *The Union* are the only ones that can present difficulties for modern ears in the matter of maintaining psychological tension, the rest of his program, given his feeling for it, is really home free.

FOR obvious reasons, Gottschalk's most successful pieces—*The Banjo, Danza, Pasquinade, Minuit à Seville*—have also become the most familiar items in the current revival. It is gratifying to be able to report that Mr. Pennario's sympathetic view of their composer has given us some delightfully fresh images of the pieces we can least afford to take for granted.

This is particularly important until such time as a few more American pianists lose their fear of the nineteenth-century musical establishment. We may then hope to hear recordings of less familiar material, including some unpublished small masterpieces in the vein of Gottschalk's best Cuban Dances. I catalogued these pieces in 1969, and at the same time I mentioned my expectation that still others then unknown were likely to turn up.

So guess what. One such did that very thing, just six weeks before *these* lines were written.

Anyone out there listening?

GOTTSCHALK: *The Union, Op. 48* (R.O. 269); *Danza, Op. 33* (R.O. 66); *Pasquinade, Op. 59* (R.O. 189); *The Last Hope, Op. 16* (R.O. 133); *Le Bananier* (R.O. 21); *Bamboula, Op. 2* (R.O. 20); *The Banjo, Op. 15* (R.O. 22); *Souvenir of Puerto Rico* (R.O. 250); *Creole Eyes* [sic], *Op. 37* (R.O. 185); *Midnight in Seville, Op. 30* (R.O. 170). Leonard Pennario (piano). ANGEL S-36077 \$5.98.

published rags and, in my opinion, not really one of his best.

The three most interesting selections, because they allow us to hear Joplin's musical voice in conversation with other voices, are the collaborations: *Lily Queen* (with Arthur Marshall), *Something Doing* (with Scott Hayden), and *Heliotrope Bouquet* (with Louis Chauvin). Marshall and Hayden were his students and protégés. The legendary Chauvin was ragtime's Marlowe to Joplin's Shakespeare. The romantic and tragic circumstances under which *Heliotrope Bouquet* came to be written (described on the album) are as irresistible as the work itself. Messrs. Grierson and Sponhaltz and the Southland Stingers deserve a bouquet. *Joel Vance*

**MAXWELL DAVIES: *Vesalii Icones*.** Fires of London: Jennifer Ward Clarke (cello); Duncan Druce (viola); Alan Hacker (basset clarinet in A); Judith Pearce (flutes); Stephen Pruslin (piano, autoharp); Barry Quinn (percussion); Peter Maxwell Davies cond. NONE-SUCH H-71295 \$3.98.

Performance: **Composer's own**  
Recording: **Sounds good**

Peter Maxwell Davies' *Vesalii Icones*, a rather involved piece conceived for cello solo, a small instrumental group, and a dancer, is based on the illustrations for Vesalius' *Anatomy*, which are somehow paired up with the stations of the cross. In the music there is a similar set of superimpositions: plainchant, popular music (mostly Victorian pop with a foxtrot or two), Davies' "own" music (the term and the quotation marks are his), as well as a few other musical quotes and references along the way. None of this is very apparent until almost halfway through, when a Victorian hymn and a foxtrot are rather self-consciously played on a very out-of-tune piano. A music box, a typewriter, a garbled tape of an earlier section, a bit of schmaltz, and a great deal of musical archness make a rather surprising series of appearances. Christ resurrected turns out to be the anti-Christ come to put a curse on Christianity. What started out as one kind of experience has turned into something quite odd and different. A strange, often moving, confusing work! It would, I imagine, be quite effective with the dancer. Simply as sound it does not quite hold together. I am no foe of inconsistency and stylistic superimposition—quite the contrary. I am an old advocate—but I do like to have some idea (intuitive? dramatic? even social?) of why things are done. Anyway, there is sufficient matter here to attract the attention of the curious. The performance and recording are excellent. *E.S.*

**MONTEVERDI: *Motets* (see GABRIELI)**

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**MYSLIVEČEK: *Abramo ed Isacco*.** Gianfranca Ostini (soprano), Isacco: Jana Jonášová (soprano), Angel; Anna Viganoni (alto), Sara; Shoichiro Tahara (tenor), Abramo: Gianni Maffeo (baritone), Gamari; Czech Philharmonic Chorus; Prague Chamber Orchestra. Peter Maag cond. SUPRAPHON 1 12/1021/2 two discs \$13.96.

Performance: **First-class**  
Recording: **Simple, excellent**

Josef Mysliveček, better known in his own day as Giuseppe Venatorini (an Italianization

of his impossibly Czech name) or simply as "Il divino Boemo," was born in Prague in 1737, studied in Italy, hit it big in Parma in 1764 with an opera called *Il Bellorofonte*, and followed it up with a series of successes in Italy and Germany. He composed music in a variety of genres, earning the friendship and admiration of Mozart. He died in 1781 in Rome, fading into an almost total obscurity that is hard to reconcile with contemporary enthusiasm for his work. Indeed, he would have been totally forgotten if not for his correspondence with Mozart, who refers to him and his music in terms of the highest praise.

*Abramo ed Isacco*—the story of Abraham and Isaac—was one of those oratorios written for performance during Lent, when actual theater productions were not permitted. It is, in short, an opera with benefit of clergy; it even features a libretto by everybody's favorite operatic libretto writer, the indefatigable Metastasio. This oratorio has at times passed for a work of Haydn or Mozart, and, in truth, it is not at all unworthy of those masters. One gets the impression that even the average level of skill and inspiration was particularly high in the eighteenth century; in actual practice this does not always turn out to be the case, but *Abramo ed Isacco* is a work that ranks with the best productions of a fertile epoch. Mysliveček has exactly that combination of Italian melodic invention, Central European harmonic and contrapuntal skill, orchestral invention, dramatic intensity, and Classical clarity that we admire so much in Mozart. *Abramo ed Isacco* is unquestionably a masterpiece (I won't even add the prefix "minor"); it is undoubtedly as good and sometimes even better than anything Mozart ever produced in the strict *opera seria* style.

This recording, part of Supraphon's Musica Antiqua Bohemica series, does the work full justice. The soloists are excellent, with the simple, flexible vocal quality and style that are absolutely essential to carry this music off. Three of the principals—Gianfranca Ostini, Anna Viganoni, and Gianni Maffeo—are Italian; the fourth, Shoichiro Tahara, a Japanese tenor, is a most unlikely but vocally attractive and stylistically convincing Abraham.

The Prague Chamber Orchestra is first-rate. Peter Maag's well-known skills in the music of this period are put to excellent use here; I question only a rather widespread mishandling of the required *apoggiature*, an ornamental detail in performance practice that certainly ought to present no problem to a specialist in eighteenth-century Italian-flavored music. Italian vocal music without proper *apoggiature* is like Italian cooking without oregano.

The recording is so simple, direct, attractive, and clear that one wonders how recordings—especially operatic recordings—ever get to sound any other way. The libretto that comes with the set is in Italian only. *E.S.*

**ORFF: *De Temporum Fine Comoedia (The Vigil): A Play About the End of Time*.** Colette Lorand, Jane Marsh, Kay Griffel, Sylvia Anderson, Gwendolyn Killebrew, Kari Lövaas, Anna Tomowa-Sintow, Heljä Angervo, Glenys Louis, Erik Geisen, Hans Wegmann, Hans Helm, Wolfgang Anheisser, Siegfried Rudolf Frese, Hermann Patzelt, Hannes Jökel, Anton Diakov, Boris Carmeli, Christa Ludwig, Peter Schreier, and Josef Greindl (vocalists); Rolf Boysen (narrator); Kölner Rundfunkchor; RIAS Kammerchor; Tölzer Knabenchor; Kölner Rundfunk Symphony

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Performance: **Not with a whimper  
but a bang**

Recording: **Excellent**

Carl Orff, the Munich-trained master, having dealt with carousing medieval students celebrating carnality in *Carmina Burana*, with the pagan poetry of Catullus in *Catulli Carmina*, with Aphrodite's own wedding night in *Trionfo di Afrodite*, and with the moon in *Der Mond*, has gone on in *The Vigil*—which had its premiere at the Salzburg Festival in 1973—to apply his famous neo-archaic style to an investigation of nothing less than the end of the world. Orff begins his latest pageant for the stage, which evidently was given quite a spectacular production in Salzburg, with "Asiatic chants and expressive melodies based on Grecian scales" as nine sibyls describe the terrors of the last judgment, shrieking a lament over the dreadful punishments awaiting mankind. Then a father of the church comes on to quell our fears: the world came into being because of sin, but matter is only the "stuff of love grown cold," and the spirits of living creatures will not perish in the end, but flow together in a final intermingling. But the sibyls shout out of the night that it will all end in hellfire. Not so, reply six hermits in the desert who have devoted their lives to meditation: each age must expiate its own sins; there will be no final hellfire. Instead, anonymous humans will roam the world, lost, down roads that lead nowhere, until the earth hurls its passengers into fearful space, and the faceless ones will "howl a Kyrie" to a heaven that will not answer. Never mind. Lucifer himself, once banished by God, returns to set existence in order and lead it to new shores in space.

With such a staggering libretto, any listener familiar with Orff's approach can imagine what he has made of it: mighty chords, great shrieks and chants in Latin and German, sudden lunges of sound and gigantic arabesques of luminous emanations that flame past like musical comets, verses alternately shouted and whispered in Latin and German—in all, as apocalyptic an Orffian drama as was ever loosed upon human ears. Theatrical and deliberately, vulgarly spectacular, to be sure—but what theater, what spine-tingling spectacle! Under Karajan's devoted and dynamic guidance, *The Vigil*, employing the same orchestral and vocal forces that made such an impact in Salzburg, is given a blazing, breathtaking, and appropriately relentless treatment in this recording, and the sound is never less than brilliant. There's no text, but a blow-by-blow description in three languages is provided.

P.K.

PAGANINI: *Violin Concerto No. 6, in E Minor, Op. Posth.* Salvatore Accardo (violin): London Philharmonic Orchestra, Charles Dutoit cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 467 \$7.98.

Performance: **Excellent**

Recording: **Good**

No wonder they called him a demon fiddler: Paganini has his ways of haunting us even now, from the beyond. In life he was obsessively secretive. He was known never to part with the solo sections of his concertos and other important manuscripts. Little of his output was published in his lifetime: even his

First and Second Violin Concertos were published posthumously, along with whatever other manuscripts the reluctant Paganini heirs were willing to share with the world. Eventually, the Violin Concerto No. 4 was published—in 1954—and subsequently recorded by Arthur Grumiaux and Ruggiero Ricci. The Concerto No. 5 was exhumed next, in 1959, and recorded by Franco Gulli (Musical Heritage Society DRM 110). With attendant publicity, Concerto No. 3 then made its appearance and was recorded by Henryk Szeryng in 1971 (Philips 6500 175). And now we have Concerto No. 6, which may be the last—but one never knows. In any case, DG assures us that this is really the "first" in chronology, since there is some documentation pointing to an 1815 performance—and the familiar D Major Concerto (officially No. 1) dates from 1818.

Now that everything has been made perfectly clear, we can turn to the new discovery. The first thing that strikes me is the work's impractical length: forty minutes. That is the length of the Brahms Concerto, too, as it happens, but the musical substance here is hardly on the same level. Paganini always favored lengthy opening movements, but this particular *Risoluto* outdoes them all—more than twenty-one minutes in length, capped here by a brilliant but excessively long cadenza by Mr. Accardo. In all three movements (a rather conventional Adagio and a catchy Rondo *ossia Polonese* round out the work) the musical ideas are attractive and skillfully worked out according to the rich and facile Paganini formulas. It is a virtuosic concerto, without a doubt, but not quite as outgoingly so as that other recent discovery, the E Major Concerto (No. 3). The third movement does not yield the expected Paganinian multiple stops, harmonic fireworks, and similar stunts in the usual abundance. It is an effective and likable piece of demanding but grateful violin music, and Salvatore Accardo plays it with a sweet tone, perfect assurance, pure intonation, and obvious sympathy.

Only the solo part of the concerto has survived: the orchestration is the work of Paganini scholar Federico Mompellio, who performed a similar task for the Fifth Concerto when it was discovered. The result is traditional in the sense that after the vigorous statement of the principal melodies, the orchestra recedes into a delicate and subdued backdrop for violin fireworks. Charles Dutoit elicits rich orchestral sounds probably undreamed of in Paganini's time, and maintains good definition and rhythmic precision throughout. The overall sound is unspectacular but enjoyable.

G.J.

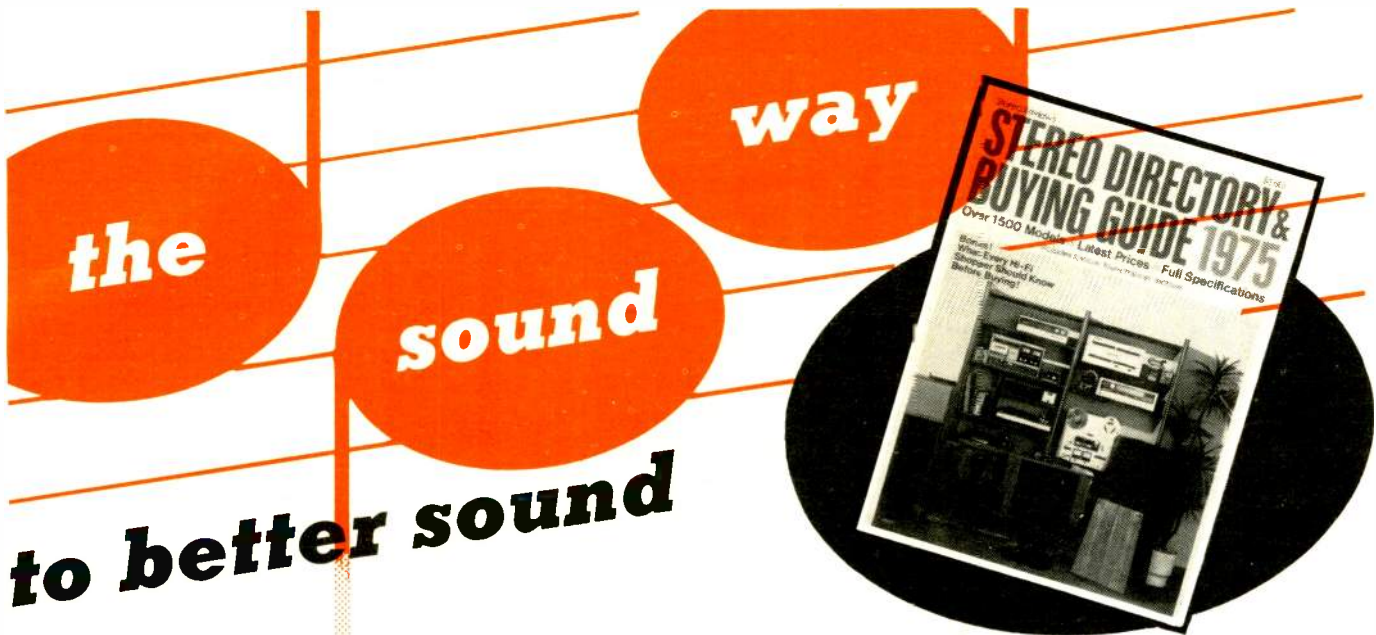
POULENC: *Sextet for Piano and Winds.* STRAVINSKY: *Octet; Pastorale for Voice and Winds.* Unidentified pianist: unidentified singer: Wind Quintet and Brass Octet [*sic*] of the Leningrad State Philharmonic. WESTMINSTER GOLD/MELODIYA WGS-8259 \$3.49.

Performance: **Very Russian**

Recording: **Okay**

If you tell your friends you want to play them the latest release from Russia and pop side one of this on your player, I'll bet you can persuade all but those in the know that this is another Shostakovich madcap romp. It's nothing of the sort, of course. When he turns on the lovely *adorable mauvaise musique*, Poulenc gives himself away. But it is curious

(Continued on page 136)



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CHARLES IVES' youthful Second Symphony and his mature Fourth may be poles apart in textural complexity, but they both make extensive use of the hymn tunes and popular song materials common to the Connecticut in which the composer grew up in the 1880's. In my opinion, the Fourth Symphony (1910-1916), together with the gigantic *Concord Sonata* for piano, represents the summation on a heroic scale of Ives' message as a creative artist, even though *Three Places in New England*, *New England Holidays*, the Second Orchestral Set, the *Robert Browning Overture*, and the Second String Quartet may present varied aspects of that message in more intense manifestations.

The history of the Fourth Symphony is reasonably well known—how a pioneering performance of the first two movements was essayed by Eugene Goossens at New

York's Town Hall in 1927, and how another quarter-century and more elapsed before the entire work was performed for the first time (and subsequently recorded) by the American Symphony Orchestra under Leopold Stokowski's direction. José Serebrier, who conducts the London Philharmonic in RCA's new recording, was one of Stokowski's associates with the American Symphony Orchestra and a participant in all the grueling work that went into unraveling the rhythmic and textural complexities of Ives' Fourth—the second and final movements especially—to make that first performance and recording feasible.

By turns dramatic and eerie, and the exemplary enunciation of the John Alldis Choir as it enters with Lowell Mason's *Watchman* hymn. Unlike Stokowski, Serebrier underlines very effectively the contrast between the purely sung and intoned or spoken elements of the hymn-tune setting, as in "Traveler, yes . . ." and the final line, "Dost thou see its beauteous ray?"

It is in the immensely complex second movement—inspired to some extent by Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Celestial Railroad* (I think of it as a kind of John Bunyan *Vanity Fair*)—that the advantages of modern recording technology are most apparent. With multiple ensembles playing in disparate meters and in sonorities contrasted both in timbre and relative distance from the hearer, it stands to reason that only multiple-channel recording and playback can achieve anything approximating the aural imagery

same function as the strings in *The Unanswered Question* with their endless "time-loop" chorale, providing, as it were, a constant backdrop of eternity, against which tonal evocations of the past weave their way to the fore, only to be absorbed once more into eternity. Stokowski and his collaborators were unable to achieve a wholly satisfactory realization of this movement because of the problems they encountered in clarifying the musical manuscript and the problems inherent in the recording situation itself, but Serebrier has had time to study the special hazards of the second and final movements. He has also been able in this recording to eliminate certain compromises Stokowski found necessary, such as the omission of the quarter-tone third piano in the second movement, which here plays a very effective role.

When it comes to the most heroic and



Yves must have had in mind in this extraordinary score. Although the visceral excitement of the Stokowski reading is missing here, a good deal more of the actual music in its multilayered textures becomes audible for the first time. The only outright failure in Mr. Serebrier's performance is the third-movement double fugue on *From Greenland's Icy Mountains* and *Coronation*—an expansion of the corresponding piece in the First String Quartet. His pacing is far too slow for my taste, and the organ outburst midway in the movement certainly does not make the effect it does in Stokowski's lush, ecstatic reading.

The uncannily cosmic, mystical finale—perhaps a kind of precursor to the "Universe Symphony" that Ives conceived but never put to paper—was the greatest challenge for Stokowski and his collaborators in the world premiere (not least because of the state of the then-unpublished score), and in this movement Serebrier has clearly made a special effort to achieve a vivid realization. In my opinion it is the most successful part of the entire venture. Crucial to all is the percussion ensemble, which is separate from the other two units (distant violins and harps, main orchestra with wordless choir). From the opening measures to the close, the percussion group, playing in its own solemnly measured rhythm, serves much the

complex Ives scores. I don't think one can speak of "definitive" performances. Ives addressed himself to this point in a discussion of the *Emerson* music he had not included in the *Concord Sonata*: "Some of the passages not played have not been written out, and I do not know as I shall ever write them out as it may take away the daily pleasure of playing this music and seeing it grow and feeling that it is not finished and the hope that it never will be—I may always have the pleasure of not finishing it." And thus we have the paradox represented on the one hand by the need for a critical edition of the complete Ives musical output—a hoped-for result of Ives' centennial year—and on the other the composer's own strictures against "freezing" his music in molds of musicological pedantry. Presumably the projected critical edition will provide the badly needed guidelines for performance without strait-jacketing the performer—at least I'm sure that is what Yale Ives Collection curator John Kirkpatrick and his colleagues have in mind. Perhaps, then, the Serebrier performance of the Ives Fourth Symphony could be called a kind of progress report. The Stokowski reading provided a vivid initial topographical map of the piece, the Serebrier recording a searching and illuminating further exploration.

So far as the recording is concerned, I

should like first to make perfectly clear that this RCA disc is an absolutely *legitimate* use of surround sound, as opposed to what I consider to be the foolhardy effort by Columbia with Boulez in the Bartók Concerto for Orchestra. Of course, it is the complex second and fourth movements that gain the most in four-channel, the weirdly phantasmagoric Scherzo coming through with an impact comparable to what—I imagine—a jolt of LSD might be like. Absolutely uncanny and incredible! Likewise the effect of the "music of time" percussion in the finale and the dissolution of the major climax. The CD-4 pressing I had for review was a trial pressing, and it presented certain problems of balance and distortion. I have been informed, however, that the disc has been rebalanced, remastered, and repressed, and presumably the problems are out of it. CD-4 disc processing can be tricky. The stereo pressing was a complete joy, being, apparently, a cleaner transfer from tape to disc than the quadrasonic (as heard in two-channel playback), with more dynamic contrast and a more apparent overall volume level at a given control setting.

**I**ves' Second Symphony (1897-1902), in which bits of Brahms and turns of Wagner jostle in sprawling amiability with *Bringing in the Sheaves*, *Materna*, and *Columbia the Gem of the Ocean*, is an oddly appealing piece, and anyone who still subscribes to the notion that Ives was a musical amateur will do well to lend a close ear to the beautifully crafted polyphony and metamorphosis throughout his Second's slow movement.

Leonard Bernstein's 1951 world premiere of this symphony (then nearly a half-century old) was a milestone in the discovery of Ives by the general listening public, and his 1955 recorded performance remains unique in its warmth and vigor. At the other interpretive pole is the recording made by Ives pioneer Bernard Herrmann for London Phase-4, in which Romantic exuberance gives way to a sharply etched, almost sculptural realization of the music. Even this easily accessible work is amenable to very different readings.

On the new RCA recording of the Second, Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra choose an interpretive path midway between Herrmann and Bernstein: the contrapuntal details emerge very nearly as clearly as in the Herrmann recording, but the pacing is more urgent and, not unexpectedly, the orchestral tone is considerably warmer. It seems to me, however, that Mr. Ormandy (as usual) goes in for rather too high a gloss in the string department, and his brass and percussion in the final pages seem a bit too genteel for the authentic Ivesian ambience. Like Bernstein, Ormandy extends the written note-value of the Bronx cheer dissonance with which the music ends (said to have been an Ives afterthought in the 1940's). The recorded sound is altogether splendid.

**IVES: Symphony No. 4.** John Alldis Choir; London Philharmonic Orchestra, José Serebrier cond. RCA ARL1-0589 \$6.98. □ ARD1-0589 \$7.98. □ ART1-0589 \$7.98.

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how much in common the Russian master had with the nose-thumbing music of *Les Six*.

One link is, of course, Igor Stravinsky, and, in spite of his anti-Soviet position (or, conversely, the anti-Stravinsky position of the Soviets), we see that there is more that unites the early twentieth century than divides it. The Stravinsky Octet is far subtler than the Poulenc with which it shares a witty Classicism. You can undoubtedly find better performances elsewhere, but I doubt that this version of the Poulenc Sextet can be surpassed in sheer musicality and high spirits. What an irony that neither the jacket nor the label identifies the excellent pianist.

The Stravinsky comes off a bit less smoothly, but the performance is still notable. Part of the interest lies in the fact that the work of

Russia's most famous musical exile is now accepted and performed in his native land. However, his particular brand of Twenties neo-Classical, city-slicker "cosmopolitanism" is missing from this vigorous, almost peasant-like performance. The trombone doesn't always play very well in tune, the dynamics are not very carefully shaded, and the brass sound is distinctly unrefined. And yet I don't find the proletarian version of this high-brow music at all unpleasant. Perhaps, indeed, there is a certain peasant vitality underneath it all, and our super-refined, elegant, ultra-classical performances have missed it or carefully glossed it over. At any rate, I thoroughly enjoyed this unlikely performance.

The early *Pastorale*—the most Russian of the music on the record—is effectively per-

formed here in the original vocal version. Good, clear recordings. *E.S.*

**RACHMANINOFF: *Evening Service, Op. 37.*** Johannes Russacenus Choir. Essen; Choir of the Papal Russian College, Rome; P. Ludwig Pichler dir. MUSICAL HERITAGE SOCIETY MHS 1823/24/25 three discs \$10.50 (plus 75¢ handling charge from the Musical Heritage Society Inc., 1991 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023).

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

Hard on the heels of a Melodiya/Angel set (SRB 4124) containing fifteen chants from Rachmaninoff's beautiful setting of the Vespers, Op. 37, comes this three-disc set offering not only the same chants but also the traditional psalms and litanies between them, the total adding up to the complete Resurrection Service according to the Russian Church. The tenor and mezzo-soprano soloists in the chants are unidentified: the prayers are intoned by a Priest, Franz Jockwig (tenor), a Deacon, Erwin Lohneisen (bass), and a Reader, Paul Blinzetzow.

The complete service is noteworthy from the liturgical point of view, but the present edition brings decreased dividends to the listener whose primary interest is musical. The ritual is quite lengthy and tends to lessen the impact of the musically more substantial chants. The performance, however, is quite good. Although neither soloists nor the choir reaches the exceptional level the Russian singers achieve in the Melodiya set, their precision, balances, and intonation attest to a high degree of professionalism. The recorded sound is also respectable, but I recommend the album to the specialist listener only.

*G.J.*

**RAVEL: *La Valse; Ma Mère l'Oye; Rapsodie Espagnole.*** New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein cond. COLUMBIA M 32873 \$6.98, Ⓣ MA 32873 \$6.98, Ⓞ MT 32873 \$6.98.

Performance: **Excellent**  
Recording: **Very good, but . . .**

These are all really first-rate performances—sumptuous, stylish, and very handsomely recorded. I suspected that *La Valse* and the *Rapsodie* might be the same ones as on Columbia MS 6011, since the timings are the same and a quadraphonic edition of the new disc has not been announced, but the sound is definitely richer and more open than on the earlier release, and Columbia assures us that everything here is really new. I am disappointed that Bernstein did not do the longer ballet version of *Ma Mère l'Oye*, but even if I did not miss the additional material I would not recommend this album, simply because I find its "sandwich" arrangement (one of the three works is split for turnover because no two of them fit together in full on a single side) a gratuitous and offensive violation of the long-playing principle. *Ma Mère l'Oye* as given here runs a little over seventeen minutes, the *Rapsodie* sixteen minutes and twenty-eight seconds, *La Valse* twelve minutes and twenty-three seconds. Nothing here is long enough to justify a break. If the two shortest pieces would not fit on a single side, why not save one for another disc and put something else of Ravel's on this one?

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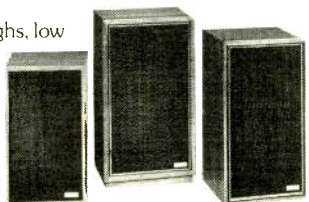
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Beaux Arts are laid out this way (with much less justification), and its marvelous Monteux performance of the full ballet version of *Ma Mère l'Oye* is similarly split for turnover between *Boléro* and *La Valse* on 835.258.LY—even though the twenty-eight-minute work was comfortably on one side when the same collection was pressed domestically as PHS 900-059! There is just no need for this sort of inconvenience, and I don't like to see it spread.

R.F.

**SAINT-SAËNS: Sonata in C Minor for Cello and Piano, Op. 32. FAURÉ: Sonata No. 2, in G Minor, for Cello and Piano, Op. 117.** Jerome Kessler (cello); Beverly Carmen (piano). ORION ORS 73124 \$5.98.

Performance: **Proficient but bland**  
Recording: **Good**

Even though the Saint-Saëns C Minor Sonata is totally unfamiliar to me, it is not hard to imagine it as being possessed of more personality than is disclosed in this performance. Jerome Kessler has a splendid command of his instrument, and Beverly Carmen partners him skillfully, but the music fails to come to life. It seems constantly on the verge of breaking through, but it never quite does. This impression is sustained in the overside Fauré, a work whose greater familiarity obviates any thought of laying the fault at the composer's door. There is no other recording of the Saint-Saëns, but Paul Tortelier's masterly performances of both of Fauré's cello sonatas, with pianist Jean Hubeau, are available from the Musical Heritage Society, either on a single disc (MHS 833) or in a five-record set of Fauré's chamber music (MHS 1286-1290).

R.F.

**RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT**

**SAINT-SAËNS: Symphonic Poems (complete).** *Le Rouet d'Omphale, Op. 31; Phaëton, Op. 39; Danse Macabre, Op. 40; La Jeunesse d'Hercule, Op. 50.* Orchestre de Paris, Pierre Dervaux cond. ANGEL S-37009 \$5.98.

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

The collective offering of all of Saint-Saëns' tone poems may pose problems of duplication in respect to the two familiar ones, but that is not likely to deter anyone who is interested in

*Phaëton* and *La Jeunesse d'Hercule*, neither of which has been available on records in this country since Dimitri Mitropoulos' similar package for Columbia (ML-5154, mono) was deleted more than a dozen years ago. And these are two eminently worthwhile discoveries—Saint-Saëns honoring Liszt, whom he so revered, by matching him and then some in works which crackle with imagination and brilliance and which benefit from the refinement and conciseness that were his own contributions to the Liszt pattern. *Phaëton* is a particularly effective piece, with a stunningly heroic theme and any number of magical touches in the orchestration. The essential element in its successful projection is a tempo that suggests impetuosity without itself being headlong. Dervaux understands this music down to the ground and gives it the very devil of a performance; indeed, he has never made quite so impressive a showing as in this galvanic *Phaëton* and exceptionally convincing *Jeunesse d'Hercule*. The latter piece is twice as long as any of its companion works, and it usually tends to ramble, but Dervaux keeps it beautifully on course without becoming the least bit inflexible. The overexposed *Danse Macabre* and *Rouet d'Omphale* are also extremely fresh-sounding here, if not quite in the Martinou or Beecham class, and the disc boasts the best orchestral sound I've heard on this label in some time. All in all, a knockout! (One point of curiosity: the concertmaster who plays the solo in the *Danse Macabre* is listed here as *Ruben Yordanoff*; on an earlier Angel of the same work his first name is given as *Luben*, which I suspect is the correct form.)

R.F.

**SCHÜTZ: Motets (see GABRIELI)**

**RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT**

**SCRIABIN: Preludes, Op. 11, Nos. 1-24; Op. 13, Nos. 1-6; Op. 15, Nos. 1-5; Op. 16, Nos. 1-5; Op. 17, Nos. 1-7; Op. 22, Nos. 1-4; Op. 27, Nos. 1-2; Op. 31, Nos. 1-4, Op. 33, Nos. 1-4; Op. 35, Nos. 1-3; Op. 37, Nos. 1-4; Op. 39, Nos. 1-4; Op. 48, Nos. 1-4; Op. 67, Nos. 1-2; Op. 74, Nos. 1-5. Egoroff Variations (1887). Allegro Appassionata, Op. 4. Allegro de Concert, Op. 18. Polonaise, Op. 21. Fantasia in B Minor, Op. 28.** Michael Ponti (piano). Vox SVBX 5462 three discs \$9.95.

Performance: **Good to superb**  
Recording: **Good**

The eighty-three preludes and five miscellaneous pieces in this album make up the second volume of a four-volume Vox set (SVBX 5461, 5463, and 5474 are the others) of the complete piano music of Alexander Scriabin, with the indefatigable and seemingly infinitely versatile Michael Ponti at the keyboard.

I would say, straight off, that if this volume is an accurate gauge of the whole enterprise, Mr. Ponti has really done his Scriabin homework, for, with almost no exceptions, every one of the performances here shows signs of careful study. Indeed, many of them display pianistic poetry of the highest level, especially in the handling of subtle, quiet dynamic gradations and in the realization of the echo effects scattered throughout the various pieces, as in Op. 35, No. 2, and Op. 39, No. 2.

As I have indicated frequently in past reviews, I am no particular advocate of the Scriabin aesthetic. But there can be no question that, whether he was writing in the derivative manner (Chopin-Liszt-Schumann) of the

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early works or using the very personal speech of the later ones. Scriabin's command of the pianistic idiom was absolute. The best of his music surely ranks with that of Chopin, Liszt, and Debussy in fulfilling the potential of the pianoforte as a vehicle of tonal communication. The works contained in this particular album are too many for individual comment here, but heard in one sitting and in chronological order, they make for a fascinating listening experience simply in terms of stylistic variety and harmonic-rhythmic resource, ranging in length and texture from the almost Weberian-aphoristic Op. 39, No. 3, and Op. 37, No. 3, to the grandiosities of the Op. 28 Fantasia. The crowns of the series, for me, are the Op. 67 and Op. 74 Preludes.

When I made a direct comparison between

Ponti and Ruth Laredo (on Desto) in the Op. 11 and Op. 74 Preludes, I found Ponti by no means inferior from a musical or technical standpoint: in general, though, Miss Laredo's readings tend to be more expansively poetic as well as more sumptuously recorded. The Vox recording is good, with a sonic quality that is almost ideal for the earlier pieces, but its decidedly more intimate ambiance tends to dilute some of the more subtle overtones of the later work.

A major plus for this Vox Box series is Donald Garvelmann's remarkably comprehensive and informative program annotation, which offers not only a complete biographical chronology and a list of works keyed to the various albums, but a thematic catalog as well. This alone is worth the price of the se-

ries for the dyed-in-the-wool Scriabinist or the serious piano student. *D.H.*

**SHOSTAKOVICH: *Symphony No. 3, in E-flat Minor, Op. 20 ("May Day")***. Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra and R.S.F.S.R. Russian Chorus, Kiril Kondrashin cond. *Faithfulness, Op. 136*. Estonian State Male Chorus, Gustav Ernesaks cond. MELODIYA/ANGEL SR-40245 \$5.98.

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

Of all the symphonies of Shostakovich, the Second and Third, both written in his early twenties and both with choral finales, are the ones least known to us, and both have fascinating things to tell us about certain directions the composer might have taken more fixedly. RCA filled this gap seven years ago with a recording of both works in strong performances by the Royal Philharmonic under Morton Gould (LSC-3044). Since then Melodiya/Angel has brought out two Soviet recordings of the Second which are somewhat more impressive: Kondrashin's pairing of that work and the First on SR-40236 is a distinguished release. His version of the Third, offered now, is no less distinguished, but even Shostakovich's most devoted admirers are unlikely to play side two a second time. The author of the eight adulatory ballads about Lenin is the same Yevgeny Dolmatovsky who provided the embarrassing text for Shostakovich's oratorio *Song of the Forests*: that music deserves a better chance (and a better recording than it has so far received), but there is little that is memorable in these *a cappella* settings. I do recommend the record, heartily, for the Third Symphony, but those who balk at the idea of buying a record to enjoy only half of it might be happier with Gould on RCA. And, since the Second and Third Symphonies are perhaps more valuable as details in the overall Shostakovich picture than in themselves, Boris Schwarz's outstandingly comprehensive annotation for the RCA release is a considerable factor, too. *R.F.*

**STRAVINSKY: *Concerto in D Major for Violin and Orchestra*** (see WALTON)

**STRAVINSKY: *Octet; Pastorale for Voice and Winds*** (see POULENC)

**STREET: *String Quartet 1972*** (see DAVIDOVSKY)

**TRYTHALL: *Coincidences*** (see DAVIDOVSKY)

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**VERDI: *Simon Boccanegra***. Piero Cappuccilli (baritone), Simon Boccanegra; Ruggero Raimondi (bass), Jacopo Fiesco; Katia Ricciarelli (soprano), Maria/Amelia. Placido Domingo (tenor), Gabriele Adorno; Gianpiero Mastromei (baritone), Paolo Albiani; Maurizio Mazzieri (bass), Pietro; Piero de Palma (tenor), Captain; Ornella Jochetti, Maid-servant. RCA Italiana Opera Orchestra and Chorus. Gianandrea Gavazzeni cond. RCA ARL3-0564 three discs \$17.94.

Performance: **Good, with reservations**  
Recording: **Very good**

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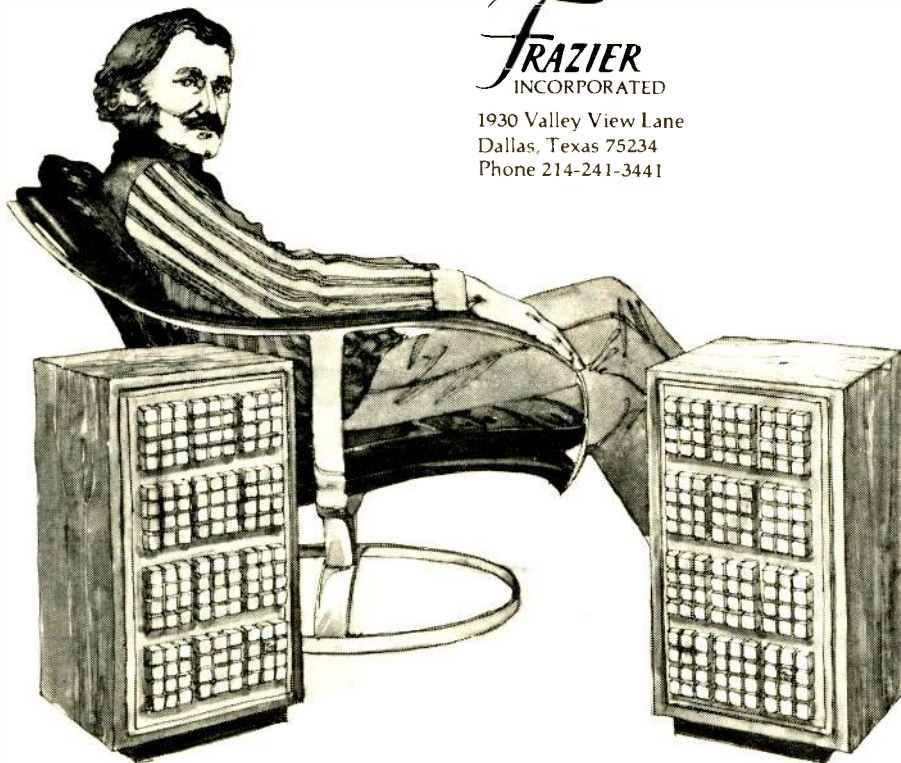
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version—the composer's full maturity superimposed on his middle-period self—that we know and admire today. We admire it for the magnificence of virtually all its music, despite certain stylistic clashes and such un-Verdian miscalculations as the predominance of deep male voices among the protagonists.

*Simon Boccanegra* may not be a box-office opera, but it never stays away too long from any major theater, and there have been three more-or-less complete recordings of the work so far. Like its two predecessors, the current RCA set offers a respectful and idiomatic performance; unlike them, it really is complete, conforming to the Ricordi vocal score. It is also the opera's first recording in stereo.

The conductor is the veteran Gianandrea Gavazzeni, who again reveals a kind of inconsistency I have found puzzling in his previous work. The turbulence of Verdi's score finds a responsive interpreter in him; the conspiratorial scenes and the powerful Council Chamber Scene come off stirring. But the lyrical moments sound indifferent and prosaic. He literally throws away the languidly atmospheric orchestral introduction to Act I, finds no heartbreak in the orchestral postlude to "*Il lacerato spirito*," and fails even to render the great Recognition Scene its requisite emotional commitment. Aside from the fact that he is not a stickler for nuance, Gavazzeni keeps the music under firm control, but his leadership is noted more for power and momentum than for refinement of orchestral sound.

Piero Cappuccilli's portrayal of the corsair-turned-Doge is admirable in its dignity, pathos, and variety of vocal coloration. The role is one of his specialties, and, whether he is turning on the warring factions with ringing power or engaging in a tender dialogue with his daughter, the authority he reveals is unquestioned. I listened to his *Boccanegra* with mounting admiration: still, the tonal image of the ideal Doge that lingers with me is not his but Tito Gobbi's (Angel 3617, mono).

Equally unforgettable in that older (1958) Angel set is the *Fiesco* of Boris Christoff, an interpretation moulded in granite. Ruggero Raimondi easily surpasses him here in the production of tones of liquid smoothness, but Raimondi's essentially bass-baritone voice lacks the proper weight and menace for *Fiesco's* tessitura. His singing as such cannot be faulted, but it is Christoff who conjures up the image of the powerful Genoese noble—albeit with suggestions of Slavic forebears.

The new set is unchallenged in its lead tenor. The role of Gabriele Adorno is hardly a stellar one, but Plácido Domingo gives pleasurable substance to every moment of it with the vibrancy of his healthy sound and with the unflinching artistry with which he uses it. Far less satisfying is the *Amelia* of Katia Ricciarelli. Gifted with a voice of exceptional warmth and roundness comparable to that of a Ponselle or a Caballé, this young soprano remains a frustrating performer. She surprises you once in a while with some exquisite pianissimos, but more frequent are the instances of uncertain attack, graceless phrasing, and unsteadiness of both rhythm and intonation.

Gianpiero Mastromei is a forceful and resonant Paolo Albiani of no startling individuality, the Pietro of Maurizio Mazzieri is adequate, and the veteran Piero de Palma can still be counted on for a sterling comprimario turn. Technically, this is the best *Simon Boccanegra* without question. I recommend it, but, unless stereo is the main criterion, the Angel set must not be forgotten. *G.J.*

**WALTHER: *Six Concertos After Italian Masters. F Major After Albinoni; A Major After Gentili; B Minor After Vivaldi; B-flat Major After Taglietti; A Minor After Torelli; D Minor After Torelli.*** E. Power Biggs (Challis pedal harpsichord). COLUMBIA M 32878 \$6.98.

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

Johann Gottfried Walther (1684-1748), second cousin of Johann Sebastian Bach, was organist of St. Thomas' in Erfurt and subsequently town organist in Weimar, but he is best remembered today as being the author of the first bio-bibliographic dictionary of music (it was published in Leipzig in 1732). Walther and Bach were good friends, and both did a fair share of transcribing Italian concertos for keyboard. Perhaps because he was less adventurous in his harmonies and embellishments, Walther wrote concertos that must take a definite back seat to those of Bach. But as examples of transcription and indications of the infiltrations of the popular Italian models were making into Germany during the first few decades of the eighteenth century, they are of considerable interest.

There is a justifiable feeling of *déjà vu* about E. Power Biggs' latest release, for not much more than a year ago Columbia issued a recording of him playing these very same Walther concertos on the Gottfried Silbermann organ in the Cathedral of Freiburg (Columbia M 31205). The pedal harpsichord version presents the music in a less grandiose light, perhaps as an organist of that period might have played them at home (if he had been well off enough to afford a pedal harpsichord). The result is a bit drier and far less colorful than the organ version, but that may just as well be the fault of the rather conservatively constructed Walther originals which with a few exceptions (notably the Torelli concertos) just do not sound as meaty as Bach no matter what the instrument. The performances here are clean, accurate, and, perhaps because of the material, a bit stolid, and the pedal harpsichord has been very effectively recorded. *I.K.*

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**WALTON: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra.***  
**STRAVINSKY: *Concerto in D Major for Violin and Orchestra.*** Kyung-Wha Chung (violin); London Symphony Orchestra, André Previn cond. LONDON CS 6819 \$6.98, Ⓜ M8 6819 \$6.98, Ⓞ M5 6819 \$6.98.

Performance: **Just right**  
Recording: **Excellent**

William Walton's neo-Romanticism does not attract me at all, despite Kyung-Wha Chung's impressive performance. But the Stravinsky Violin Concerto on the other side of this disc is almost a landmark. This must be close to the ideal performance of this brittle, arch piece of music. The whole thing has vitality and high style; it almost struts! Yet Miss Chung's playing is not without a certain warmth and poetry, laid in with a perfect sense of measure and proportion. The violin sound is simply beautiful, but the bite is there. Previn and the English musicians catch just the right rhythmic edge while resisting any temptation to camp it up. The whole thing is simply delicious. *E.S.*

(Continued overleaf)

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**JUSSI BJOERLING:** *The Art of Jussi Bjoerling*. Meyerbeer: *L'Africaine: O paradiso*. Ponchielli: *La Gioconda: Cielo e mar*. Gounod: *Faust: Salut! demeure chaste et pure. Roméo et Juliette: Ah! lève-toi, soleil!* Verdi: *Rigoletto: Questa o quella; La donna è mobile. Aida: Celeste Aida. Il Trovatore: Di quella pira*. Bizet: *Carmen: La fleur que tu m'avais jetée*. Massenet: *Manon: Le Rêve; Ah! fuyez, douce image*. Donizetti: *L'Elisir d'Amore: Una furtiva lagrima*. Puccini: *Tosca: Recondita armonia; E lucevan le stelle. Turandot: Nessun dorma*. Jussi Bjoerling (tenor); Stockholm Concert Association Orchestra, Nils Grevillius cond. SERAPHIM 60219 \$3.49.

Performance: **Outstanding**  
Recording: **Fairly good**

There are no surprises on this disc: the recordings, made in Sweden during the years 1936 to 1947, are all familiar. They come to us in a different (and more logical) sequence, however, eight selections having been remastered from the deleted Angel COLH 148, seven from the deleted COLH 150.

The eleven years these recordings represent were bountiful years in a career that never knew any lean ones. It is always a bracing experience to re-encounter Bjoerling's gleaming tone, his silken legato, and the healthy resonance and security of his top register, to say nothing of his unflinching taste and his ability to communicate passion without tearing

away at the musical fabric. And there are always new nuances to discover, like the diminuendo coming off the high C in the *Faust* aria on the final "d'une âme innocente et divine." As we know from experience, even Bjoerling records can be deleted from the catalog in this unpredictable industry—so no lover of good singing should let this treasure get by him. G.J.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**PAUL ROBESON:** *The Essential Paul Robeson*. Moussorgsky: *Monologue, from Boris Godunov; The Orphan*. Bach: *Christ lag in Todesbanden*. Schubert: *Lullaby*. Dvořák (arr. Fisher): *Going Home*. Parry: *Jerusalem*. Robinson-Latouche: *Ballad for Americans*. Kern: *Old Man River*. Alexandrov: *O Thou Silent Night*. Robinson: *Joe Hill; The House I Live In*. Nineteen other folk songs and spirituals, and spoken monologue from Shakespeare's *Othello*. Paul Robeson (bass); Alan Booth and Harriet Wingreen (piano); chorus and orchestra. Milt Okun cond. VANGUARD VSD 57/58 two discs \$6.98.

Performance: **Unique**  
Recording: **Good**

This two-disc set combines, at a reduced price, highlights from various Vanguard releases, including all of VSD 2015, the memorable 1958 concert at Carnegie Hall that marked Robeson's first concert appearance after an absence of eleven years. To call the contents of these two discs "varied" is quite an understatement. Spirituals, folk songs from the British Isles and from Russia and China,

Bach, Schubert, spoken Shakespeare—all these and more follow here in a sequence that defies logic, yet is somehow made acceptable by the commanding stature of the performer.

Robeson's programs, live or recorded, cannot be judged by conventional yardsticks. Isn't it pointless to mention that singing Bach or Schubert in his manner (one verse in English, one in German) is unorthodox, if this is the way Robeson thinks his public should hear this music? This unique artist sets his own rules and compels your attention through a special combination of exceptional vocal gifts and uncommon dignity. What is communicated by that remarkable voice—deep, solid, and rolling—is alternately tender, touching, rousing, severe, and commanding. It is most artistic when allowed to serve a song like *Deep River*, *Londonderry Air*, or *All Through the Night* with straightforward delivery, relying on the ample resources of rich sound and model enunciation; it is less artistic, but still impressive, when encumbered by commercial arrangements.

The presence of *Ballad for Americans* (the original Victor recording of more than thirty years ago) will spell nostalgia for some and sure embarrassment for others with its dated mixture of slickness and naïveté—but that too is part of a living and quite powerful legend. Robeson's brief but immensely effective delivery of *Othello's* final monologue, a proud and imperious utterance, makes me wish that more of his Moor had been included in place of, say, *The House I Live In*, but it is not for me to say what constitutes "the essential Robeson." What we have here is a vivid, well-engineered package. G.J.

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## Introducing the Staff...

Since readers from time to time understandably display a natural human curiosity about the backgrounds of the writers and editors who bend their ears each month in these pages, we are inaugurating with this issue a series of capsule biographies designed to satisfy that expressed need and at the same time to circumvent the hazards of speculation.

—Ed.



Managing Editor

## William Livingstone

"AT HEART I'm still just an overgrown kid from an Appalachian mountain town trying to get ahead," said Bill Livingstone when I asked him how he got to be Managing Editor of the world's largest music magazine. "Actually, I owe it all to Texaco, Firestone, Bell Telephone, Lucky Strike, and the other companies that sponsored musical programs on the radio when I was growing up in the South during the Depression. Radio did a better job of presenting music than TV does, and it was via radio that I got my musical education. By my early teens I was hooked and began buying records; I've been at it ever since."

Bill was born in Atlanta, Georgia, but his family soon moved to Asheville, N.C. At seventeen he went to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where in three years he picked up a Phi Beta Kappa key and a B.A. degree—a major in Spanish, a minor in French, and some intensive work in Portuguese. (He later acquired Turkish at the Army Language School and Danish at the University of Copenhagen.)

Armed with Spanish, he set out to see the world and got as far as the Caribbean, where

he taught English, journalism, and phonetics at the University of Puerto Rico. In his spare time he worked as a classical-music disc jockey on a Spanish-language station in San Juan and as a lighting technician for a local ballet company.

Next followed a year with the State Department in a cultural program in Mexico City. Three army years ended when he received a Fulbright scholarship to Denmark. After two years of further linguistic study in Copenhagen, Livingstone returned to the United States and became a member of the editorial staff of the *Encyclopedia Americana* in New York.

"All I wanted to do was find a job that would permit me to live in this country for a while before looking for another foreign assignment. I'd never decided to settle in New York, but they hired me at the *Americana* because of my linguistic background, and I've been too busy editing since then to give much thought to what I'm going to be when I grow up.

"After five years with the *Americana* I went to the Crowell-Collier Publishing Company as Senior Editor in Humanities for the *Merit Students Encyclopedia*. The offices were just a few blocks from those of *STEREO REVIEW*, and I used to have lunch with an old friend, William Anderson, who was then managing editor of this magazine. When he took over the editorship, he turned to me as the successor to his old job. I still love it after nearly ten years."

LIVINGSTONE continues to write occasional encyclopedia articles on music, recordings, and the dance, which is one of his major interests. He has been a contributor to *Dance Magazine* and *Ballet Review* and is now preparing a Basic Library of Ballet Music on records for *STEREO REVIEW*.

Of his tastes in music Bill says, "If forced to choose, I suppose I'd say opera is my favorite kind of music—I spend a lot of time at the Met and other opera houses. The first record I ever bought was Jussi Bjoerling's "*Che gelida manina*," and operatic recordings are the largest single category in my collection now."

I asked if it wasn't strange that an opera fan was also one of this magazine's resident writers on Latin popular music. "Not at all," he answered. "Our reviewers are specialists, but everyone connected with this magazine has a wide variety of musical interests, and my fondness for Latin pop goes back to my childhood, when boys in the South were sent to dancing school to be couthed up at the age of twelve. In addition to the waltz and foxtrot we were taught the rumba and tango. And my high school Spanish teacher very craftily used popular song lyrics to drill certain grammatical constructions into us. I've never forgotten those songs, and Latin music has given me so much pleasure that I have a missionary zeal in writing about it."

Although he has two articles in this issue (see pages 52 and 84), writing is a sideline for Bill. As Managing Editor he is responsible for realizing the Editor's goal of making *STEREO REVIEW* a cohesive package for music lovers of all kinds. "A former publisher of this magazine once described the Managing Editor as the assistant to everybody else on the staff," he says, "and that's a full-time job."

Drummond McInnis

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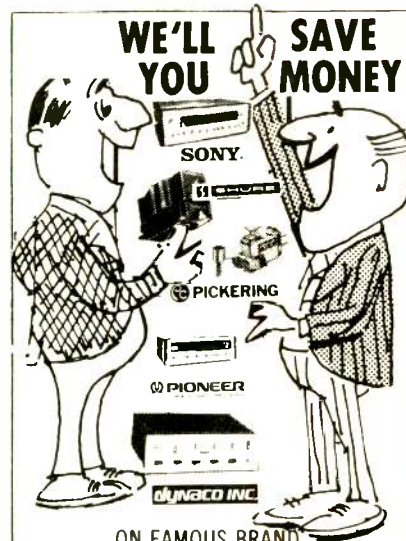
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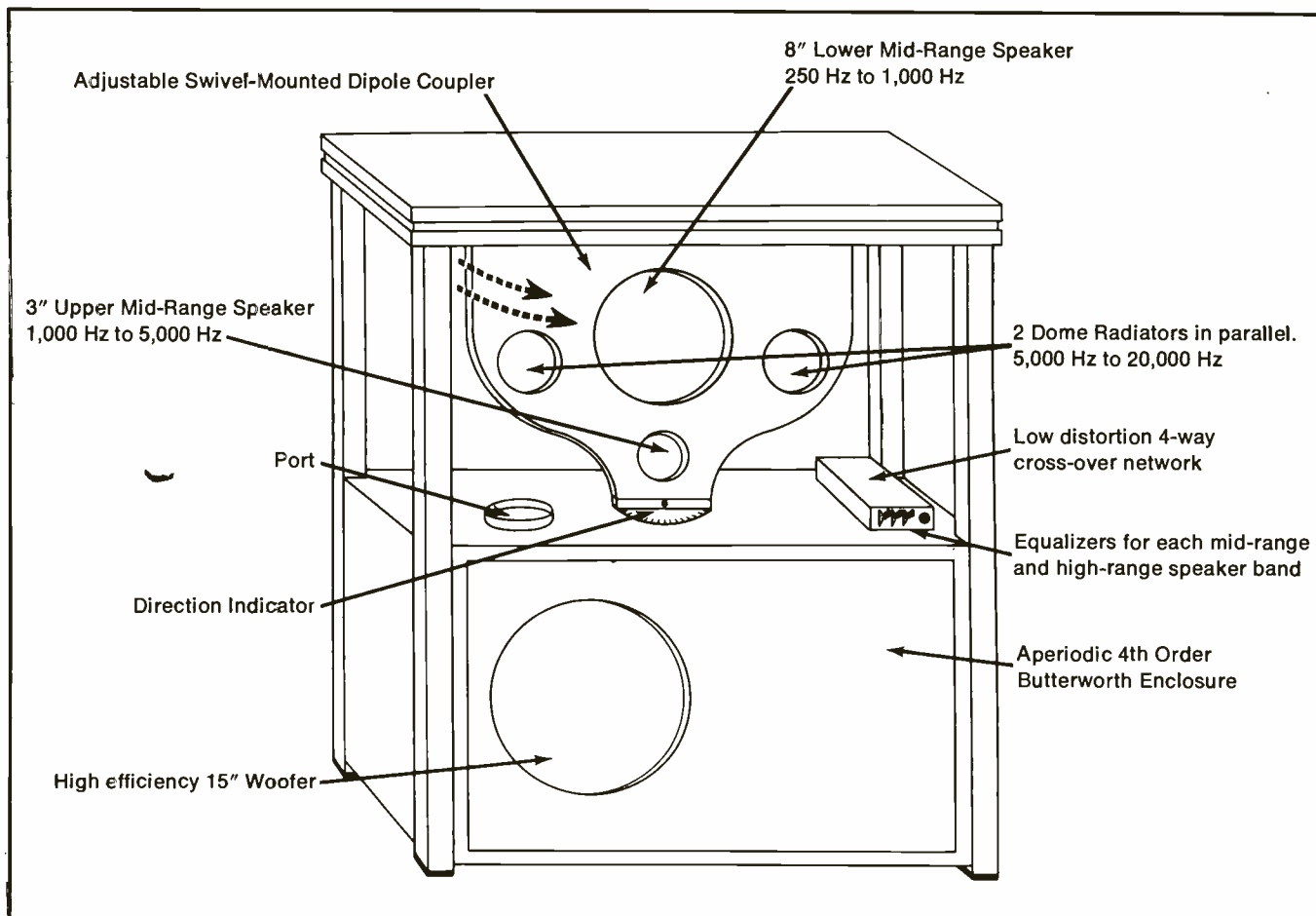
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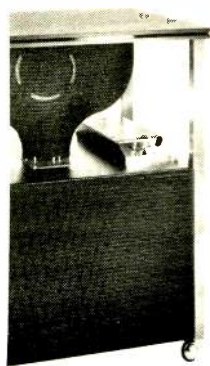
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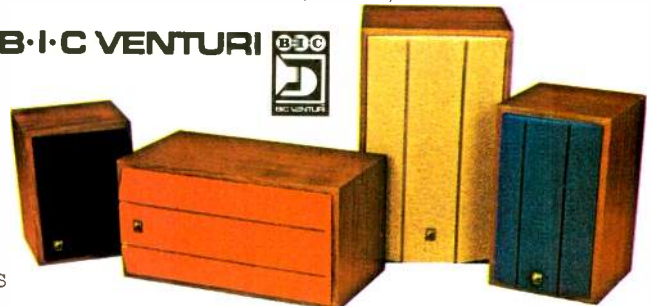
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# TAPE HORIZONS

By CRAIG STARK



## ON THE RIGHT TRACK

ONE of the most frequent questions asked by readers of this column concerns tape-track formats and their compatibility with different tape heads. It might be phrased, as it indeed was recently, "Will a two-track tape head play a four-track, four-channel tape without loss of information?" Or, "Will a two-track, four-channel tape head play a two-track stereo tape?"

Before dealing with the questions directly, we should clear up a few points of terminology. Recorded audio tapes carry one or more lengthwise strips of magnetic information (called *tracks*), each of which ordinarily constitutes one channel of a multichannel recording. Open-reel 1/4-inch tapes may have up to four such parallel tracks. The most common track formats are *half-track* (two tracks occupying virtually the entire tape width and providing two mono programs in reverse directions, or one two-channel stereo program) and *quarter-track* (four tracks spaced across the tape width, for four mono programs, two stereo programs, or one four-channel program). Obviously the tracks of the quarter-track format must be narrower to fit on the tape. And for each format, the head gaps must have the right width and spacing to engage the tracks properly, or the head will be incompatible with these tapes.

The possibility of confusing terms arises when we realize that a two-track (or two-gap, or two-channel) head can be either a quarter-track or a half-track head, depending on the width and location of its gaps. Together, the gaps of a half-track head span almost the entire tape width, so they tend to pick up everything on the tape. Two quarter-track tape gaps sweep only about half the total tape width. Furthermore, quarter-track *stereo* tapes contain two two-channel programs running in opposite directions, with tracks of different direction alternating (think of two divided highways side by side, with southbound traffic at the far left, then northbound traffic, and so forth). Therefore, the gaps of a quar-

ter-track stereo head are spaced one track width apart to avoid the intervening reversed track.

It should be clear from this that these heads, although both are technically two-track devices, are far from similar in the way they pick up signals from the tape. Getting finally to the questions that brought up this discussion, a half-track, two-channel head will indeed give a satisfactory *two-channel* rendition of a quarter-track, *four-channel* tape. Since the tracks of such tapes are all recorded in the same direction (in the order of left front, left rear, right front, right rear), one gap of the head will pick up both left channels, the other both right. However, a *quarter-track*, two-channel head will pick up only the two front channels of the same tape, and ignore the other two (rear) tracks.

As for the second question, if the quarter-track head is also a *four-channel* (four-gap) head, it will play virtually any tape, since there's always a gap in a position to intercept any track of the various formats. In this particular case, it might be best to use the outermost gaps of the head to play a half-track tape, because the inner gaps are beginning to verge on the unrecorded "guard band" separating the tracks on the tape.

When all the possible head and track-format combinations are considered, there are only two that present serious incompatibilities. One is a quarter-track stereo tape with a half-track head; the head picks up the program in the reverse direction as well. The other is a half-track stereo tape with a quarter-track stereo head; one channel is usually noisy, weak, or inaudible because its gap is getting into the guard band.

In order to keep these distinctions as clear as possible, STEREO REVIEW has adopted a standard terminology. Track and gap *widths* are now designated by the labels "quarter-track" and "half-track." "Stereo" or "four-channel" indicates the *number* of tracks or gaps. I hope this helps.

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