

# Stereo Review

YOUNG PIANISTS

SEPTEMBER 1977 • ONE DOLLAR

## NEW AUDIO PRODUCTS: ANNUAL PREVIEW FOR BUYERS

Equipment Test Reports: Celestion 66 Speaker System • Empire 698 Record Player  
Luxman R-1050 AM/FM Stereo Receiver • Nikko Beta 1 Stereo Preamplifier  
Pioneer SA-9500II Integrated Stereo Amplifier



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Stereo Review

VISITS WITH BEN BAGLEY,  
KANDER & EBB

# WHY THE FIRST HIGH POWERED RECEIVER IS STILL THE BEST HIGH POWERED RECEIVER.



When Pioneer first introduced the 160 watt\* SX1250 last year, it prompted our competitors to hastily introduce a bevy of high powered receivers.

Unlike the others, however, the SX1250 wasn't a rush job. And the time and care that went into it can both be seen and heard.

### EVERY SECTION SHIELDED.

Unlike most high powered receivers, every critical section in the SX1250 is shielded. Enveloped in aluminum. So spurious signals from one section can't leak into another. And dirt and dust can't slowly build up to affect performance. So the receiver not only produces crisp, interference-free sound when it's new, but still sounds great as it grows old.

### A 22 POUND TRANSFORMER.

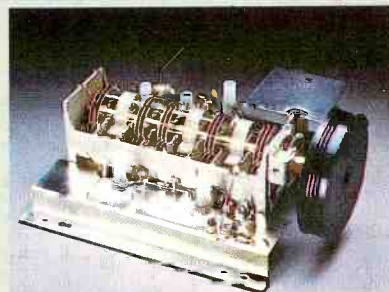
In our power supply, instead of finding a conventional transformer, you'll find a heavier, more advanced toroidal-core transformer. It's less susceptible to voltage fluctuations. And less likely to leak noise. Which means you get cleaner, clearer sound. And instead of finding the usual two electrolytic capacitors in the power supply, you'll find four. Because we've found that the two extra capacitors help improve low frequency response. And protect against tone burst distortion.

### THE FM SECTION: A FIVE GANG VARIABLE CAPACITOR.

The average high powered (and low powered) receiver comes with a three, or four gang variable capacitor for FM tuning. Not the SX1250. It comes with a *five* gang zinc plated variable capacitor that cleans up FM reception much better. And helps to pull in stations that some three or four gang capacitors can't touch.



An extraordinary power supply, for an extraordinary amount of power.



A five gang variable capacitor for FM reception that never varies.

This same kind of thinking even went into things like our heat sinks. They're massive, and located around the outside of the 1250 to dissipate heat away from the innards, instead of into them. (In the Technics SA 5760, by comparison, the heat sinks are located right in the middle of the receiver.) And where many manufacturers choose to solve the heat problem with fans, we choose not to. Simply because electrical fans can cause noise and vibration. While our heat sinks can't.



Massive heat sinks to keep the heat off delicate electronics.

### OTHER POWERFUL ARGUMENTS FOR THE SX1250.

Our pre-amp circuit was designed with an unheard-of phono overload level of 500 millivolts. Which means that no magnetic cartridge in the world can make it distort. It was also designed to follow the RIAA curve (the recording standard of the record industry), to within 0.2 decibels. A figure that competes favorably with even the costliest separate pre-amps.

And where some high powered receivers give you two or three tone controls, the SX1250 gives you four. Two for regular treble and bass, and two for extended treble and bass. They're calibrated in 2 decibel click stops; which give you a total of 3,024 ways to make the most out of your music.

Given all this, it should come as no surprise that the SX1250 even weighs more than most of our competitors' high-powered offerings.

So before you run out and buy just any high powered receiver, consider all the time and engineering that went into the SX1250. And weigh your decision carefully.

High Fidelity Components  
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WE BRING IT BACK ALIVE.

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# WHEN YOU'RE NOT IN A RUSH TO CATCH UP, YOU'VE GOT THE TIME TO BUILD THINGS RIGHT.



\*160 watts per channel minimum RMS continuous power output at 8 ohms, from 20 to 20,000 Hz, with no more than 0.1% total harmonic distortion.



**PIONEER'S SX1250.**



# It's the real thing $\pm 1$ dB.

"Phono-cartridge performance has come a long way in recent years, as can be judged from the 2000Z's measured frequency response. Including the effect of arm resonance in a typical tone arm, and combining the measurements from a couple of records, the response could honestly be described as  $\pm 1$  dB from 15 to 20,000 Hz. This is comparable to the flatness of most amplifiers, especially if the tone controls cannot be bypassed."

**Stereo Review**

"Finally the light dawned: This is a neutral cartridge — it's supposed to sound that way. The highs are not subdued; they are just smooth, rather than peaky and shrill. Instrumental timbres are reproduced in fine detail, but without being artificially pointed up. Thus one is able to hear soft inner voices and pastel shadings that are all but obscured by the bravura of some of the competition."

"The Empire 2000Z is truly impressive. It is well worth auditioning, even though that can't be done in a hurry if you are to hear — and savor — its quality."

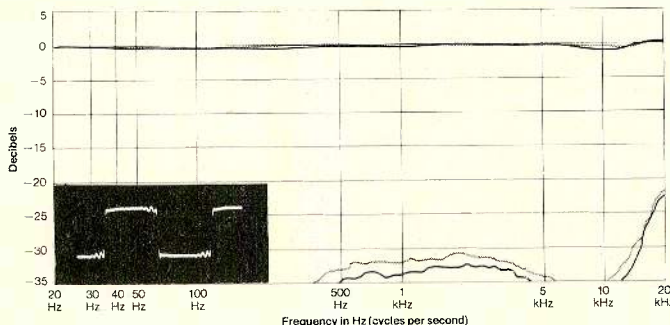
**HIGH FIDELITY**

"The Empire 2000Z offers extremely smooth response in the audible range and, even at the light tracking force (1.0 grams) at which our listening tests were conducted, never failed to track the grooves of even our most dynamically recorded musical test passages. Highs were silky smooth, never 'edgy' or raspy and there was not even a hint of 'peakiness' in the important 12,000 to 16,000 Hz range where so many other pickups often add distinct and easily identifiable coloration."

**Radio-Electronics**

"Frequency response was among the smoothest we have ever recorded for a stereo cartridge and actually did not deviate more than the plus or minus 1 dB specified over the entire audio spectrum. Resonance has been pushed way out beyond the audio range and we suspect that some of the stylus engineering developed for Empire's CD-4 (4000 series) cartridges has been brought to bear in this design to accomplish that feat."

**audio trade news**



In the graph frequency response was measured using the CBS 100 Test Record, which sweeps from 20-20,000 Hz. The vertical tracking force was set at one gram. Nominal system capacitance was calibrated to be 300 picofarads and the standard 47K ohm resistance was maintained throughout testing. The upper curves represent the frequency response of the right (black) and left (grey) channels. The distance between the upper and lower curves represents separation between the channels in decibels. The inset oscilloscope photo exhibits the cartridge's response to a recorded 1000 Hz square wave indicating its resonant and transient response.

For more information on the Empire 2000Z, and our free brochure "How to Get the Most Out of Your Records," write: Empire Scientific Corp., Department  $\pm 1$  dB, 1055 Stewart Avenue, Garden City, N.Y. 11530.

**EMPIRE**

CIRCLE NO. 21 ON READER SERVICE CARD

STEREO REVIEW

FORMERLY HI FI/STEREO REVIEW

# Stereo Review®

SEPTEMBER 1977 • VOLUME 39 • NUMBER 3

## The Equipment

NEW PRODUCTS	
<i>Roundup of the latest audio equipment and accessories</i> .....	16
AUDIO QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS	
<i>Advice on readers' technical problems</i> .....	LARRY KLEIN ..... 26
AUDIO BASICS	
<i>Tracking Force and Record Wear</i> .....	RALPH HODGES ..... 28
TAPE TALK	
<i>Theoretical and practical tape problems solved</i> .....	CRAIG STARK ..... 30
EQUIPMENT TEST REPORTS	
<i>Hirsch-Houck Laboratory test results on the Empire 698 record player, Pioneer SA-950011 integrated stereo amplifier, Luxman R-1050 AM/FM stereo receiver, Celestion 66 speaker system, and Nikko Beta 1 stereo preamplifier</i> .....	JULIAN D. HIRSCH ..... 38
NEW AUDIO PRODUCTS	
<i>A preview of the industry's upcoming equipment offerings</i> .....	RALPH HODGES ..... 56

## The Music

SONGS BY KANDER & EBB	
<i>"We'd do off-Broadway in a second...a children's musical in a minute"</i> .....	RICHARD LINGEMAN ..... 68
ALL THE YOUNG PIANISTS	
<i>A brief look at twenty-four candidates for greatness</i> .....	JAMES GOODFRIEND ..... 72
BEN BAGLEY VISITED	
<i>The saga of the man behind those Painted Smiles releases</i> .....	PAUL KRESH ..... 82
BEST RECORDINGS OF THE MONTH	
<i>Jazz: Woody Herman's 40th Anniversary Carnegie Hall Concert....</i>	
<i>Rock: 10cc's "Deceptive Bends"....Opera: a new "Flying Dutchman"....</i>	
<i>Orchestral: the D Major Symphony of Juan Crisóstomo de Arriaga</i> .....	87
POPULAR DISCS AND TAPES .....	94
<i>"Star Wars": the Soundtrack</i> .....	STEVE SIMELS ..... 95
<i>Marley &amp; Tosh: Progress Report on Reggae</i> .....	LESTER BANGS ..... 96
<i>Bagley Visits Youmans</i> .....	PAUL KRESH ..... 100
<i>Regress Report on CSN...and Y</i> .....	STEVE SIMELS ..... 108
<i>Liza Again: "New York, New York"</i> .....	PAUL KRESH ..... 110
<i>Let George (Jones) Do It</i> .....	NOEL COPPAGE ..... 116
CLASSICAL DISCS AND TAPES .....	124
<i>Verdi's Wonderful Calling Cards</i> .....	ERIC SALZMAN ..... 125
<i>Dvořák's A Major Quintet: Two Recordings to Make Lovers of Listeners</i> .....	RICHARD FREED ..... 126
<i>The Inexhaustible "Porgy and Bess"</i> .....	PAUL KRESH ..... 130
<i>Stunning Vivaldi</i> .....	STODDARD LINCOLN ..... 140

## The Regulars

EDITORIALLY SPEAKING .....	WILLIAM ANDERSON ..... 4
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR .....	8
INSTALLATION OF THE MONTH .....	RICHARD SARBIN ..... 34
TECHNICAL TALK .....	JULIAN D. HIRSCH ..... 36
THE POP BEAT .....	PAULETTE WEISS ..... 52
THE OPERA FILE .....	WILLIAM LIVINGSTONE ..... 54
ADVERTISERS' INDEX .....	146

COVER: Design by Borys Patchowsky; photo by Bruce Pendleton

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# Editorially Speaking

By William Anderson



## QUADCASTING

It is only fair to warn you right up front that, when it comes to the subject of quadraphonics, you are looking at a prejudiced observer. I was an enthusiastic convert from the time of my first experience with it in Vanguard's four-channel tape demonstrations in the summer of 1969 (at which time I commented in this column that "I have heard the future, and it works"), and I have remained a staunch if sometimes critical supporter through the years since, despite the hard times the concept has fallen on both in the laboratory and in the marketplace. I have, indeed, become so spoiled that I now listen to *pseudo*-quad (the stereo-difference signal playing through the rear speakers), whenever I can get it, in preference to ordinary two-channel stereo.

You can imagine, then, that I have not been at all pleased with what has happened to the art of quadraphonics thus far into the Seven-

ties. Columbia's "SQ-matrix" disc system was rushed to the market (by Sony) in 1971 when it was little more than a laboratory curiosity, RCA's "CD-4 discrete" system was cobbled up the following year as a hasty competitive countermove, and at least an ogdoad of "improved" matrix systems has subsequently been pressed against our ears and pocketbooks as the "last word." But since none of these words are in the same language, the result has been only another Babel, and the imposing edifice quadraphonics might have been has gone unbuild.

Since this is one of those cases in which a compromise simply won't work (there is no technological middle ground between "matrix" and "discrete"), and since neither of the warring giants is about to back down, only a miracle or a *deus ex machina* could possibly resolve the impasse. Such a *deus ex machina* is, in fact, just now hovering in the flies in the

guise of the Federal Communications Commission, and it looks like quad's last chance. To see why, it is necessary to digress a bit.

The FM broadcasting industry has for some time had stereo all to itself, a nice little competitive edge (in addition to signal quality) over AM broadcasting. Now, however, thanks to the FCC, stereo is about to become available to AM as well, and FM broadcasters have reawakened the dormant subject of four-channel broadcasting as a means of maintaining a bankable technological lead. The FCC has no interest in what goes onto the nation's phonograph discs (they are not, strictly speaking, "communications"), but it does care a great deal about what goes out over the nation's airwaves, not only domestically (broadcasters suffer from a whole catalog of bad habits), but internationally (radio waves recognize no national boundaries). Interested parties (Pacific FM, Inc., the General Electric Co., and CBS Inc.) have therefore petitioned the FCC to adopt a standard for quadrasonic broadcasting.

That sounds simple enough, but it gets rapidly more complicated. The FCC's response to such petitions is to publish a Notice of Inquiry "to determine whether there [is] sufficient public and industry interest to warrant adoption of standards for [in this case] quadrasonic broadcasting." In other words, do enough people care enough about it to deluge the Commission with postcards, telegrams, and letters? And that is where we come in. Whatever the FCC does—whether it endorses the discrete system, some one of the number of matrix systems, or even no system at all—it will effectively be determining the future of quadraphonics. If you are concerned about that future, let them know—a postcard will do. Just tell them you are in favor of the FCC's adopting a standard for quadcasting. Write: Docket No. 21310, Federal Communications Commission, 1919 M Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20554. And do it before September 15.

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Circulation Office

P.O. Box 2771, Boulder, Colorado 80323

EDITORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS must be accompanied by return postage and will be handled with reasonable care; however, publisher assumes no responsibility for the return or safety of art work, photography, or manuscripts.

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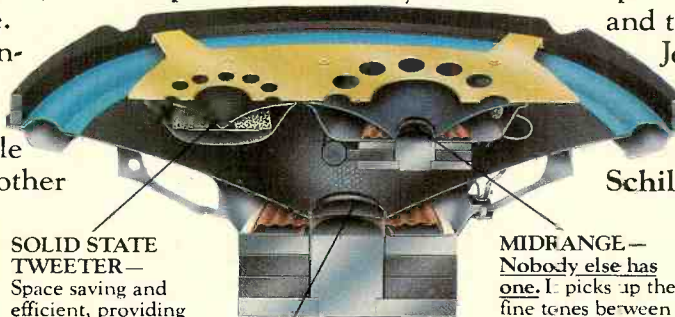
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# Now the world's finest tonearm starts at less than \$135.

## Complete with drive system.

You don't have to wait till someday to play your records with the world's finest tonearm. A gimbal-mounted Dual tonearm. You can afford one right now.

We have designed into our lowest-priced turntable, the new 1237, the very same tonearm (and drive system) formerly available only on our highest-priced models.

### **Advantages of the four-point gimbal suspension.**

If you're not familiar with the gimbal, it's understandable. Few other tonearms, at any price, have one—despite its widely acknowledged superiority.

A true four-point gimbal centers, balances and pivots the tonearm mass at the precise intersection of the vertical and horizontal axes. The tonearm maintains the perfect balance in all planes essential for optimum tracking.

The Dual gimbal employs identical pairs of tempered and finely-honed needle-point bearings, each set in miniature ball-bearings. During assembly, each gimbal is individually tested and adjusted to assure that bearing friction will be no more than 0.008 gram vertically and 0.016 gram horizontally. (If there were a cartridge that could track at forces as low as 0.25 gram, this tonearm would do full justice to it.)

Further, the straight-line tubular design (for maximum rigidity and lowest mass) and the settings for zero balance, tracking force and anti-skating are, like the gimbal, identical in every Dual tonearm. The tonearm establishes and maintains the correct cartridge-to-groove geometry, and allows the stylus to trace the groove contours freely, precisely and with the lowest practical force. In short, flawless tracking.

### **Advantages of the Vario-belt drive system.**

Another important inheritance is the Vario-belt drive system. This drive system comprises a high-torque synchronous motor, a precision-machined Vario-

pulley, a precision-ground belt and a machine-balanced, die-cast platter. The Vario-pulley simply expands and contracts for reliable fine-speed adjustments. There are no complicated mechanics or electronic circuitry, which add nothing but cost.

### **Versatility and reliability too.**

We've just described the qualities of the new Dual fully automatic line that will make your records sound better and last longer. But there's more. For versatility, you have fully automatic and manual start and stop, plus provision for multiple play. And cue-control damped in both directions. Plus pitch-control, rotating single-play spindle and multi-scale anti-skating.

Everything we've described applies to the 1237, which is, incredibly enough, our lowest-priced model. And where the 1237 ends, the 1241 and 1245 begin. With an even higher degree of performance. And very handsome, contemporary, low-profile bases.

One further point, all Dual turntables are ruggedly built. They need not be babied, by you or anyone else in your family. As any Dual owner can tell you, they are designed to last for years and years and years.

Now we suggest that you visit your favorite audio dealer and see first hand what Dual engineering is all about. You may then wonder why no other manufacturer puts so much care and precision into a turntable. The answer is simply this. For more than seventy-five years, craftsmanship of the very highest order has been a way of life with the Dual people in the Black Forest. As nowhere else in the entire world.

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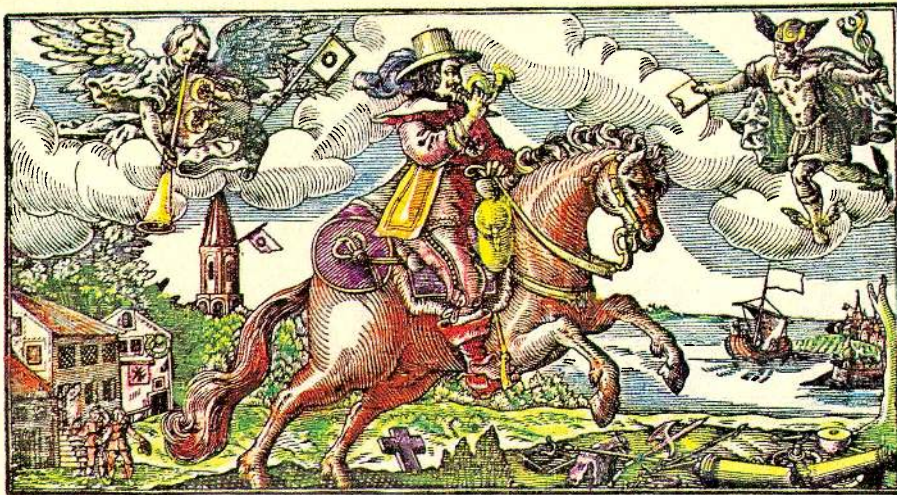
Dual 1237: less than \$135; base and cover less than \$30 additional.  
Dual 1241: less than \$200, including deluxe base and cover.  
Dual 1245: less than \$230, including deluxe base and cover.  
Other Duals to \$400. Actual resale prices are determined by and at the sole discretion of authorized Dual dealers.



**For the life of your records**

United Audio, 120 So. Columbus Ave., Mt. Vernon, NY 10553

CIRCLE NO. 50 ON READER SERVICE CARD



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Quadraphile

● I am one of the two million who own quadraphonic equipment, and I would never be happy to go back to stereo again. Please voice our concern to the software and hardware people for more products to be put on the market. If the public could hear a quadraphonic unit with the Tate System of SQ decoding, which is capable of separation in any direction in excess of 40 dB, it would soon become the standard and replace all others. The FCC should also be urged to adopt the SQ broadcast as a national standard, and you should also be ready to change your name to *Quad Review* as soon as the general public gets to hear this great, clear, new sound.

DON KAUFMAN  
Akron, Ohio

*For more on the Tate unit, see Larry Klein's Audio Q & A column this month; for more on quadraphonic broadcasting, see this month's Editorial. As for the name change, not necessary: "stereo" refers not to two channels but to "solidity," the illusion of three dimensions. Strictly speaking, we should therefore always say "two-channel stereo," "four-channel stereo," and "multi-channel stereo."*

### Importing Anomalies

● David Hall's remark (in his review in the July issue) about the discrepancy between the British and U.S. prices for Szell's recording of Tchaikovsky's Fourth brings several things to mind: (1) Saga and Oryx are the cheapest of the British budget labels, listing at the equivalent of about \$2.60, but as imports they list for \$6.98 here. (2) In the Peters classical import catalog, HMV's ASD series (\$6 in Britain) has a U.S. price of \$8.98, but the CBS 61000 series (about \$3.50 in Britain) is \$9.98. (3) Many LP's in the British catalog are available from U.S. import dealers only in their *German* versions (for instance, in Electrola/Odeon pressings rather than HMV). They usually have notes in both German and English, but why not import albums with all-English notes when these are available? (4) Why do U.S. companies wait so much longer than British ones to reissue early-stereo and pre-stereo LP's at budget prices? The Fürtwangler/Flag-

stad *Tristan und Isolde*, the Kleiber *Nozze di Figaro*, the Krips *Don Giovanni*, and Toscanini's *Falstaff* and *Otello* have all been available on budget LP's in England for years. (5) For that matter, a host of mono Toscanini LP's have been reissued in a special series in England and Germany, and the English ones are incredibly cheap; meanwhile the domestic RCA catalog is disfigured by omissions and fake-stereo offerings.

DAVID PIERCE  
Vero Beach, Fla.

*'Didn't we tell you it's a funny business?'*

### Marshall Tucker Band

● As a loyal follower of the Marshall Tucker Band, I must point out an error in Noel Coppage's July review of their "Carolina Dreams" album. MTB's earlier song *Can't You See* was not sung by Doug Gray, as Mr. Coppage states, but rather by the group's lead guitarist, Toy Caldwell. Mr. Coppage should therefore not use this song to judge Doug Gray's voice, since it is not his that appears on it.

Although I do not feel that "Carolina Dreams" is as good as some of MTB's earlier albums, I was nevertheless pleased to see it earn the "Recording of Special Merit" distinction. Such a relief from Steve Simels' repetitive glorifications of the New York groups that are serving to keep rock-and-roll's feet in the rut labeled The Sixties rather than letting it move on to new ground. Thank you, Noel.

BRAD MCGOWAN  
La Mesa, Calif.

● The Marshall Tucker Band never recorded a song called *Willin'*. Perhaps your man meant *Ramblin'*, a vivacious cut off their first album. Second, Doug Gray never sang *Can't You See*. The two versions of the song (the studio cut from their first album and the live version from "Searchin' for a Rainbow") are both sung by the author of the song, Toy Caldwell.

JAMES RENÉ  
Woodland Hills, Calif.

*Popular Music Editor Paulette Weiss replies:*

*Apologies to all those Marshall Tucker fans whose sharp eyes uncovered two errors in one review. Toy Caldwell did indeed provide the vocals for Can't You See. And Willin' is not a Tucker song, but a Lowell George composition for Little Feat's second album, "Sailin' Shoes."*

### Science Fiction

● I just finished reading "200 Years of Recording" in the July issue. I think Larry Klein has missed his calling; he ought to be writing science fiction. (Come to think of it, his "Audio Q & A" column does border on that field.) The last paragraph of this excellent article opens up all kinds of possibilities, and I urge him to write a complete novel on the subject.

JAMES H. KOGEN  
Vice President, Shure Brothers, Inc.  
Evanston, Ill.

*Larry Klein replies: Thanks (I think).*

### Karajan and the Nazis

● In his article on Herbert von Karajan (June), Roy Hemming referred to the continuing criticism of Herr von Karajan's wartime activities, and quoted Alexis Weissenberg as asserting: "I would not be able . . . to be involved . . . with anyone I thought was a Nazi during the war. I know that Karajan was not a Nazi. People who say he was don't know the facts or grossly misuse them. It's too easy to say of someone who remained in Germany during the war that he was a Nazi. One should not forget that Karajan was in his early twenties and relatively unknown when the Nazis came to power."

*Current Biography 1956* quoted *Time* as reporting on March 14, 1955, that "from 1933 to 1942 he [Karajan] was a member of the Nazi party." Karajan was twenty-five in 1933 and thirty-four in 1942.

*Current Biography* added: "At the end of the war the U.S. Occupation authorities in Vienna refused him permission to conduct, on the grounds of his Nazi party membership, and it was not until 1947 that he was permitted to resume his career. . . . On numerous occasions an old feud flared up between Karajan and Wilhelm Fürtwängler, which had originated during the war when Fürtwängler was supported in behalf of the Third Reich by Joseph Goebbels, and Karajan in behalf of the state of Prussia by Hermann Goering. . . ."

In his 1967 book *The Great Conductors*, Pulitzer Prize-winner Harold C. Schonberg wrote: "Strauss, Clemens Krauss, Karajan, Heinz Tietjen and some others were amorali-ists, able to accommodate to any regime as long as they could do their work. . . . During the war [Karajan] conducted at the Berlin Opera. A Nazi party member, he was directly supported by Hermann Goering, who set him in opposition to Fürtwängler, Goebbels' man."

May we now expect Mr. Weissenberg, a Jewish escapee from a concentration camp, to assure us that there was no such thing as the Nazi party?

GEORGE J. FRIEDMAN  
New York, N.Y.

*Roy Hemming replies: Herbert von Karajan has always openly admitted that he joined the (Continued on page 10)*

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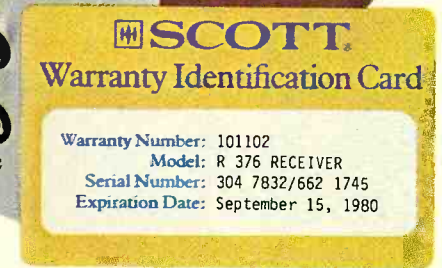
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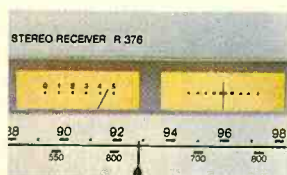


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Nazi party in 1933, at age twenty-five, and was nominally a member until 1942. This was indeed the principal factor in his being refused permission to conduct for several years after the war by the Allied Occupation authorities. In 1947 the Allied officials reviewing his case ruled that, while he had been a party member, he had never engaged in political activities that fell into the category of war crimes, and he was allowed to resume his career.

Since my article appeared in June, I have spoken with Henry Alter (now Dean of Adult Education, Cooper Union, New York City), one of the Allied officers who was directly involved in Karajan's case after the war. He has told me that Karajan's denazification proceedings brought out the fact that in 1942, the year Karajan was dropped from Nazi party

membership—and, it's important to remember, a year in which a Nazi victory in the war still seemed possible (even in the U.S.)—Karajan was divorced from his first wife and married Anita Guttermann, who was part Jewish. Also in 1942 (and apparently unrelated to the marriage), Karajan was fired from the Berlin Staatsoper on Hitler's direct orders because of a fluff during a Meistersinger performance attended by Hitler. Karajan was sent back to Vienna (he was Austrian-born) for the duration of the war.

Mr. Alter notes: "Unlike some others who at first tried to deny that they had ever been Nazi party members, Karajan admitted to us right away that he had. He knew exactly when and where he had signed up, and said he had done so in order to open doors to official musi-

cal positions. He told us that, at that time in his career, he would have signed anything in order to get a conducting post, but that he wasn't then nor was he ever interested in politics, that making music was the only thing he was interested in. He had signed up and paid his monthly party dues, he said, just as one does with a union when that is required for a job, as a formality. At the same time, he refused to use what at that time were two very good alibis to get himself cleared: being married to a part-Jewish wife and being cashiered from the opera by Hitler himself during the war. He told me: 'I want under no circumstances to base my case on my wife; that's a private affair. Nor do I wish to use my dismissal by Hitler; that was purely an artistic matter. I'll take my medicine.' And he did, by being banned by the Allies from public performances for several years.

"We who were involved in denazification work," Mr. Alter continued, "have always known that party membership alone didn't prove much one way or the other. A lot of party members were very convinced Nazis, and a lot joined strictly out of opportunism or other such reasons. Conversely, many of the worst 'Nazis' were never party members."

Within the context of my interview with him, I believe that Alexis Weissenberg was speaking in that sense when he said Karajan was not a Nazi. He was not, in other words, referring to mere membership in the German National-Socialist Party. Having previously interviewed Mr. Weissenberg about his wartime experiences (STEREO REVIEW, April 1974), I am sure he is quite clear in his own mind about what he means by "a Nazi."

I raised the question of Karajan's wartime years in my article because the matter still genuinely disturbs many Americans, and because I did not want to "sweep it under the rug" as some writers do nowadays. Without denying or glossing over this nine-year period in Karajan's life, I believe the emphasis should be on what Karajan has done in the thirty years since 1947 to help musicians of all national, ethnic, and racial backgrounds (as pointed out in my article) and on whatever assessment the world wishes to make of him on musical values alone.

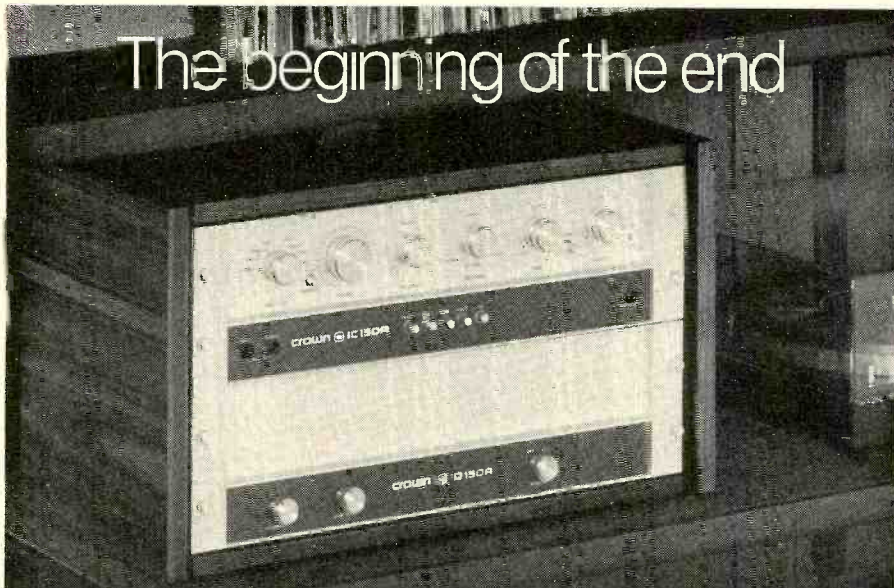
## RFI Caveat

● Following John McVeigh's suggestions for eliminating radio-frequency interference (detailed in the May issue) caused a problem for me. I connected shunting capacitors across the speaker outputs of my receiver, a Yamaha CR-800, and when I turned it on the fuse immediately blew. I am happy to report that my unit was not damaged. Nevertheless, Lee Purnell at Yamaha told me that when he tried using 0.01-microfarad shunting capacitors on a CR-800 on his bench some undesirable resonances were created that could cause fuse blowing.

As an alternative to the capacitors, I obtained some shielded two-conductor 18-gauge wire, and using that for speaker leads has reduced the level of interference almost to inaudibility. (The wire I found, after calling nearly every electronics and electrical supply store in Chicago, has a foil wrap. The coaxially shielded wire Mr. McVeigh recommends is made by Belden but is available, at least from these sources, only in 500-foot lengths.) I suggest that you reiterate Mr. McVeigh's caution

(Continued on page 12)

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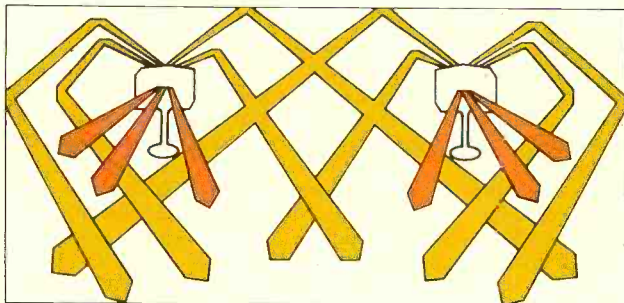
The spaciousness and presence so characteristic of the original 901 are even more extraordinary in the 901 III: sound seems to come, not from the speakers, but from a space in

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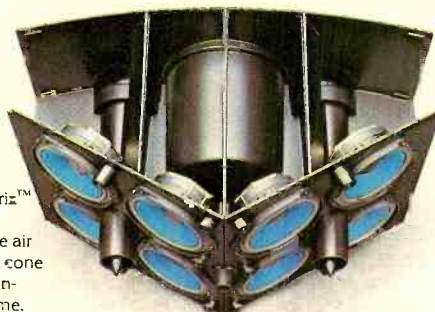
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to consult the manufacturer of a piece of equipment before installing shunt capacitors.

DAVID HOEKEMA  
Evanston, Ill.

*Technical Director Larry Klein replies: Consider the point reiterated, but I suspect that most equipment will not run into trouble with the capacitors.*

## Tape Dropout

● We note that in the Hirsch-Houck Laboratories test report on the Dual C919 cassette deck in the July 1977 issue several different tape types and brands were tested for performance with the deck. We were rather puzzled and dismayed to find the Scotch Master cassettes omitted from the listing, particularly since a Scotch Master cassette comes packed with each Dual C919 deck.

DEL EILERS  
3M Company  
St. Paul, Minn.

*Larry Klein replies: Nostra culpa—Julian Hirsch, Ralph Hodges, and I. Although our early sample of the Dual deck did not come supplied with the 3M tape, we should of course have included it (as a matter of consumer interest) with the other top brands in our evaluation of the Dual's performance. Since the tape now comes packed with the Dual machine, it seems safe to assume that it works with the C919 at least as well as the other top-of-the-line tapes we evaluated.*

## EL&P

● Whoever dishes out the assignments for reviewing records should apologize to the readers for asking Eric Salzman to write a critique in the July issue of "Works, Volume 1" by Emerson, Lake & Palmer. Despite what Mr. Salzman says, I feel that "Works, Volume 1" is, for the most part, an excellent and powerful album. While Mr. Salzman may have the intellect to review this album, I certainly don't feel that he approached it with the proper frame of mind, and that disqualifies his whole review.

Any reviewer of any album should always keep in mind the audience it was intended for, and that audience's taste should not be belittled or made fun of. A person's taste in music is a subjective quality that is not meant to be put through the moral rigors of deciding whether it is good or bad (although I admittedly would be the first person to lambast the music of Kiss). Having Mr. Salzman review this album is somewhat analogous to asking James Beard, the gourmet cook, to review a MacDonald's hamburger. He would not be impressed with the fact that twenty-two billion have been sold. Popularity may not imply preeminence in quality, but totally objective critics don't exist, either.

With Mr. Salzman's biases kept in mind, I must admit that he can write rather amusing prose ("Zap comics," indeed!); but really, to write off Carl Palmer's contribution in one short paragraph is to show an absolute disregard for what the group was trying to achieve. The last paragraph in the review is most revealing of Mr. Salzman's elitist attitude. His statement that "... the very title 'Works' implies a serious synthesis that is nowhere even attempted..." shows his hostility to-

ward Emerson, Lake & Palmer as well as proving that he barely paid any attention to the album.

ROSS C. YAHNKE  
Madison, Wis.

● Is Eric Salzman out of his mind? In the July issue he made two mistakes that are the worst things he's done since writing *The Nude Paper Sermon* for Nonesuch. First, he reviewed the newest Emerson, Lake & Palmer album in the classical section! Everyone knows that EL&P is a rock group, and he must be smoking dope to put them under classical. (If he ever reviews a Beverly Sills disc in the popular section, I'll tear it up—the issue, of course.) Second, he said that Rimsky-Korsakov's *May Night* is the second of his fifteen operas. Wrong! It was his third. And it is not based on a "collection of stories" by Gogol but on a single fairy tale by Gogol (my source is the Deutsche Grammophon ad for the recording in the April Schwann, page 17).

MIKE JAY SMITH  
Tenkawa, Okla.

*Mr. Salzman replies: Putting the review of Emerson, Lake & Palmer's "Works: Volume 1" in the classical section was, of course, an editorial decision and not that of the writer. (Who, me? I only work here.) But there's a double bind involved: wouldn't Mr. Smith (or some other ELP fan) have objected if this classical effort had appeared in the popular section? Keith Emerson's Concerto is a modern/classical piece of music without even a dab of pop character, and the set also includes arrangements of other modern-classical works (as well, certainly, as a little real pop/rock). I couldn't care less what department the review appeared in; I do care a lot, however, about ELP's musical ambitions. I think I take them extremely seriously, and I only wish they took their own musical potential (well, Keith Emerson's, anyway) as seriously as I do. What we want from ELP is the pop/classical synthesis they are capable of and not more undistinguished arrangements or yet another second-rate modern concerto indistinguishable from dozens of others. Does Keith Emerson really want to become the modern Sir Arthur Bliss?*

*In the matter of Rimsky's May Night, every reference source I can find (I do not include the Deutsche Grammophon ad!) says that this is the composer's second opera. It is based on a story from the Gogol collection called "Evenings on a Farm Near Dikanka."*

● I must compliment you on the fair and balanced review by Eric Salzman of Emerson, Lake & Palmer's "Works, Volume 1" (July). This is the best review of the album I have seen yet, and it is especially just given the spotty nature of the product.

J. M. RICE  
Charlottesville, Va.

## Publishable Letter

● Now comes a deluge, a cacophony if you will, of letters of CORRECTION, of letters of AMPLIFICATION (literary, not sonic), of COMPLAINTS (legitimate and lunatic), and certainly of DISAGREEMENT (while rarely entertaining, sheer quantity must count for something). The sundry authors of these letters, having duly subscribed to the editor's "FORMULA

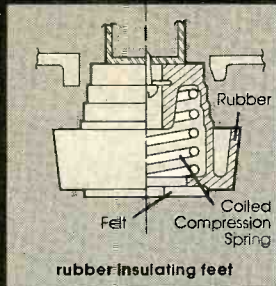
(Continued on page 14)

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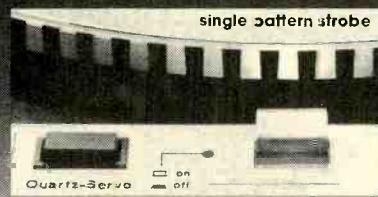
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CIRCLE NO. 45 ON READER SERVICE CARD

FOR ACCEPTANCE" (June) will have even greater anguish to voice than usual, remaining still unpublished. Which reminds me of that famous saying. "The truth will set you back."

JIM WEISSMANN  
El Toro, Calif.

Or, "You have nothing to lose but your chance."

## Best of the Worst

● I have been a fan of rock music all of my life. I read many record reviews, including the ones in your magazine. Among all the reviewers I have read, yours rank as the leading examples of the low quality of rock reviewers.

The standards set by your reviewers are arbitrary and capricious. They have no musicological basis but reflect only the unsophisticated and limited literacy of the self-appointed experts on your staff. Many outstanding, highly educated musicians, such as Stephen Hackett of Genesis, are ignored while your "experts" dribble on nauseatingly about the exploits of the overamplified, undertalented kindergarten dropouts who form the mainstream of popular music and who exist mainly on the publicity they receive from puerile journalists for doing the same things as everybody else.

STEREO REVIEW's reviewers cannot understand anything new, original, or sophisticated. They have no appreciation for music and literature as artistic undertakings. They are

merely followers who write "gobbledygook" for a living.

JEFFREY KEN SMITH  
Littleton, Colo.

Well, it's a living.

## Right Arm!

● Every month your Letters column includes one or two venomous letters from readers whose idols have been badly used by reviewers. Certainly I don't always agree with your critics' assessments, but as long as they realize that Harry Chapin is a starstruck hack, Earth Wind and Fire is a fake comic boogie machine, Elton John is Six Clichés in Search of a Justification, Tom Waits is a bad imitation of a put-on, and rock music in 1977 is heading nowhere but to the bank, they will have my continued enthusiastic support.

CHUCK ESTES  
Fullerton, Calif.

## Disc Quality

● In his letter in the July issue, George Androvette states that "... [returned records] play very well, without skipping, pops, or audible distortion." He also mentions that he plays these records on a "medium-price changer with a low-cost magnetic cartridge."

Too many times I have returned a defective record to the shop only to have the clerk throw the record onto some \$49.95 "de luxe" record changer (tracking at anywhere from 4 grams to 2 pounds) to "prove" to me that the record is fine. Usually, the ticks and scraping sounds are indeed not heard at all since his set has a high-frequency limit of maybe 8,000 Hz. I point out to him that I'm tracking these records with a \$110 cartridge at 1 gram, and he usually goes off in a huff mumbling something about "uppity stereo snobs."

It's high time these people realized that more and more people today are using higher quality equipment, and that "conclusive tests" conducted on bargain-basement-special "hi-fi's" are *anything but* conclusive.

CHRISTOPHER M. LONG  
Framingham, Mass.

## Other Doors

● In reference to James Goodfriend's "Other Doors" (June): I had periodically tried to get into classical music for several years, even going so far as to take a college course in music appreciation. I ended up feeling like the small child eating black olives and crying, "Daddy, you're getting all the good ones."

What opened the door for me was John Steinbeck's *Cannery Row*. It took over six weeks to find an album of Gregorian Chant to listen to, but it was worth the wait. (Among other things, it is the best headache cure next to aspirin that I know of.) Since then I've tried a bit of everything, but find I like Bach (especially his harpsichord works) and classical guitar best. An aunt who is a classical music buff thinks I'm crazy and keeps pushing Beethoven symphonies at me. They're okay, but my attention tends to wander about a third of the way through. I have a similar problem with most of the louder rock groups.

ALAN EADLINE  
Roanoke, Va.

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# Sansui has just raised the standards for budget-class high fidelity: the new G-3000 stereo receiver.

Strikingly attractive new styling. Advanced engineering. State-of-the-art technology. Beautifully pleasing musical performance. The new Sansui G-3000 has it all. (And at less than \$280.)\* Because Sansui knows how important your high fidelity component music system can be in your life.

The new G-3000 brings a unique new look to receivers. You will be proud to have it in your home. The bright brushed aluminum face is highlighted by a rich gold dial. And the G-3000 is the first receiver available today that is totally symmetrical, with the tuning knob and volume control positioned accordingly.

A pleasure to look at, the G-3000 is also a pleasure to use. It offers an ultra wide frequency-linear dial; separate signal-strength and center-tune meters; an extra-sensitive, large flywheel-assisted tuning knob; stepped-attenuator volume control; two-system speaker selector; and mic-mixing input.

Above all, you'll love to listen to the amazingly clean sound of the G-3000. With total harmonic distortion of less than 0.15% over the entire audible range, you get musical quality and

performance usually available only in much higher priced models.

Signal-to-noise ratio is extraordinarily high, stereo separation extraordinarily wide, and distortion extraordinarily low for any receiver in this power class.\*\*

Go to your nearest franchised Sansui dealer. Touch the controls of a G-3000 and listen to its superb tonal quality. You'll know why it represents a tremendous advance in high fidelity developmental engineering.

## Sansui. A whole new world of musical pleasure.

Also available is the G-2000 at under \$230.\*

\*Approximate nationally advertised value. The actual retail price will be set by the individual dealer at his option.

\*\*26 watts per channel, m. n. RMS, both channels driven into 8 ohms from 20-20,000 Hz with no more than 0.15% total harmonic distortion.

G-2000: 16 watts per channel with no more than 0.2% total harmonic distortion under the same conditions.

Cabinets simulated walnut grain.



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CIRCLE NO. 46 ON READER SERVICE CARD



## Visonik Systems Are Ultracompact

□ The David line from Visonik consists of five very compact air-suspension speakers designed for use in high-fidelity systems. All speakers in the line have a high-end frequency response extending to 25,000 Hz with low-end response varying from 26 Hz for the top-of-the-line D-100 to 55 Hz for the D-30. The compact D-30 is a two-way system with a minimum impedance varying from 4 to 8 ohms. The crossover from the 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch woofer to the 3 $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch dome tweeter occurs at 2,200 Hz with a slope of 12 dB per octave. The recommended range of amplifier power for the D-30 is 8 to 30 watts per channel. The smallest speaker in the line, it measures about 6 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 4 x 4 $\frac{1}{4}$  inches and weighs about 4 $\frac{1}{2}$  pounds. It is available (as the D-30MO) with a mounting bracket suitable for mobile applications.

The largest speaker in the David line, the D-100, is a three-way system with a 100-watt continuous power-handling capacity; it measures about 14 $\frac{1}{4}$  x 9 x 9 inches and weighs 26 $\frac{1}{2}$  pounds. Prices for the David line speakers range from \$95.50 to \$259.

Circle 115 on reader service card



## Expander from dbx Divides Spectrum Into Three Bands

□ The 3BX is a new three-band dynamic-range expander from dbx. The unit divides the audio signal into three frequency ranges (high, mid, and low) and either amplifies or at-

tenuates the signal within a given band according to the energy content of the signal within that band. The unique three-band approach is intended to permit comparatively large degrees of expansion without such side effects as "pumping" and "breathing."

Gain/attenuation is adjustable on a relative scale from 1 (unity, or no expansion) to 1.5, and a row of LED's for each band serves to indicate the gain change. A slider switch on the front panel sets the transition "reference" level for the device. Signal levels falling below the transition level are attenuated; signal levels above are boosted. The 3BX is connected into the tape-monitor loop of the system. It has jacks and switching capabilities that permit it to accept any program source for expansion and provide for taping of expanded or unexpanded sources. Input impedance is 50,000 ohms. A connector for a remote-control unit is provided.

The frequency response of the 3BX is 20 to 20,000 Hz  $\pm 0.5$  dB for an unexpanded signal. Harmonic distortion is 0.1 per cent and intermodulation distortion is 0.15 per cent. Signal-to-noise ratio (A weighted) for a 1-volt input is 90 dB. Maximum output level of the 3BX is 7 volts into 5,000 ohms. The unit draws its power from the a.c. line. It measures about 4 x 18 x 10 inches and weighs about 8 $\frac{3}{4}$  pounds. Price: \$650.

Circle 116 on reader service card



## Dry-cleaning Device For Discs

□ The Pixoff is a new record-cleaning device designed in Great Britain and distributed by Sonic Research. It consists essentially of a roll of specially treated tape mounted on a roller frame. The roller is applied to the record surface tangent to (but not touching) the label and rolled toward the outer edge of the disc. The adhesive of the tape picks up dust and dirt on the record surface; in addition, the tape is said to be pliant enough to penetrate the grooves and remove contamination from them. The 3-inch-wide by 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch-diameter roller holds about 5 feet of tape; when a tape surface becomes dirty, the user peels it off to expose a fresh surface. Replacement rolls of tape are available. Price of the Pixoff: \$17.50 (\$3.00 for a tape refill).

Circle 117 on reader service card



## Budget-price Components From Heath

□ Heathkit is offering two new low-cost components, the AA-1219 stereo integrated amplifier and the AJ-1219 AM/FM stereo tuner. The AA-1219 amplifier, rated at 15 watts per channel continuous into 8 ohms, features input-level controls for matching the amplifier to the phono-cartridge output and pushbutton function switches. Total harmonic distortion and intermodulation distortion are both under 0.5 per cent from 20 to 20,000 Hz; the hum and noise level is -65 dB. The AJ-1219 tuner has an FM sensitivity of 11.2 dBf and a 60-dB alternate-channel selectivity. Capture ratio is 2 dB and AM suppression is 50 dB. A stereo channel separation of 40 dB is typical, 35 dB being the minimum. The AA-1219 amplifier has dimensions of about 4 x 12 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 12 inches; the AJ-1219 tuner measures about 3 $\frac{1}{2}$  x 13 x 11 inches. Both are available only as kits and are priced at about \$110 each (mail-order).

Circle 118 on reader service card



## Jensen Offers Four New Speaker Systems

□ Jensen is now offering the Spectrum Series of four new loudspeaker systems. The speakers, all air-suspension designs, vary in size from bookshelf to floor-standing; all feature level controls for their mid/high-frequency drivers. The top of the line is the Model 550

(Continued on page 20)

**His destiny was to die in poverty and disappointment.**

**Yet his genius gave the world some of the most beautiful music ever heard.**

By the age of 8, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart had composed four sonatas for clavier and violin and performed for the crowned heads of Europe.

Fame came early but fortune always eluded him—and when he died of kidney disease at 35, he was destitute and had to be buried in a pauper's grave.

Yet he left the fickle world an astonishing body of music, ranging, like his life, from lighthearted frolics to epic tragedy... as you will discover in TIME-LIFE'S magnificent boxed set on Mozart—the first in a book and record series called GREAT MEN OF MUSIC.

Here is a "connoisseur's choice" of Mozart's creations, recorded in finest stereo by artists who have no peer. You'll hear Leontyne Price singing from *The Magic Flute*... Van Cliburn's unparalleled rendition of Piano Sonata No. 11... Heifetz's interpretation of Violin Concerto No. 4 in D... Benny Goodman's superb performance of the Clarinet Concerto in A.

The boxed set on Mozart is only the beginning of GREAT MEN OF MUSIC—an unparalleled collection of the world's greatest music, performed by leading artists of our time. In future sets, each devoted to a different composer, you will thrill to the genius of Bach, Beethoven, Tchaikovsky, Brahms... 24 composers, 96 records, over 72 hours of listening pleasure!

And you'll listen with new understanding as well as enjoyment. Because each set is enriched with a color-filled booklet on the composer's life and times, plus program notes that tell you exactly what to listen for.

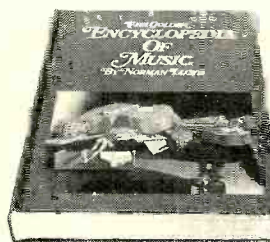
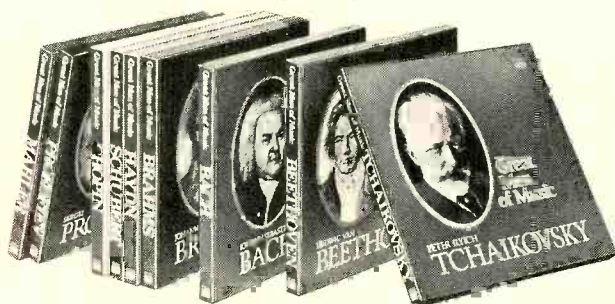
Start by auditioning Mozart for 10 days free. You'll receive four 12-inch LP stereo records (the kind which usually retail for \$6.98 each) in an elegant slipcase, the background booklet with Listener's Guide, AND the valuable deluxe edition of *The Golden Encyclopedia of Music*—yours as a gift if you purchase the Mozart set.

If after ten days you decide you'd like to own this \$45.87 value, it's yours for only \$17.95, plus shipping and handling. If however, you are not completely delighted, return the album and encyclopedia and owe nothing. Send no money. Just mail the attached card. Or write TIME-LIFE RECORDS, Time & Life Building, Chicago, Ill. 60611.

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# New Products latest audio equipment and accessories

(shown), a three-way system utilizing a 15-inch woofer, two 3½-inch cone mid-ranges, and a 1½-inch Mylar dome tweeter. The stated frequency-response range of the 550 is 20 to 25,000 Hz, and the maximum recommended continuous power input is 90 watts per channel. Nominal impedance is 8 ohms. Front-mounted tweeter and mid-range level controls are provided, allowing for continuously variable attenuation down to 20 dB below the maximum level. The 550 has a walnut-veneer particle board cabinet measuring 31 x 19½ x 15½ inches; the system weighs 30 pounds. Price of the Model 550: about \$300.

Circle 119 on reader service card



**EPI Speaker System With Passive Radiator**

□ The EPI 200, the company's most efficient speaker system, has an 8-inch woofer along with a 12-inch passive-radiator diaphragm mounted below the woofer in the cabinet. For the higher frequencies the system utilizes a 1-inch "air-suspension" tweeter. Magnetic damping fluid is used in the tweeter's voice-coil gap.

The frequency response of the EPI 200 is 34 to 20,000 Hz ±3 dB. At 45 degrees off axis, treble response (up to 15,000 Hz) is down an average of only 3 dB. The EPI 200 is said to be 3 dB more efficient than the typical EPI acoustic-suspension system. The nominal impedance is 8 ohms, and a minimum amplifier power of 15 watts per channel continuous is recommended; maximum power-handling ability is 125 watts on program material. A three-position switch adjusts the tweeter level over a range of 6 dB in 3-dB increments. The EPI 200's cabinet, finished in oiled walnut and trimmed with bronze-colored metal, measures 30½ x 17 x 11 inches; the detachable, acoustically transparent grille is of matte-black foam. The system weighs 58 pounds. Price: \$225.

Circle 120 on reader service card



**Improved Tape From Memorex**

□ Memorex Quantum is a ferric-oxide tape utilizing specially processed oxide particles that conform more closely to the ideal needle shape than those of conventional oxides. The Quantum tape has improved sensitivity and signal-to-noise ratio. In addition, the saturation level of the Quantum tape is higher than usual, providing an increase in dynamic range. The tape is also said to offer lower harmonic distortion. The Quantum tape is available in 7-inch reels (1,800- and 2,400-foot lengths) for \$7.99 and \$10.59 and 10½-inch reels (3,600 feet) at about \$20.

Circle 121 on reader service card



**New Line of Car Speakers from AFS**

□ A new line of loudspeakers for automotive and other mobile applications is available from AFS. The Kriket Klassic Series includes five full-range raw loudspeakers for mounting in vehicles: two 5¼-inch and two 6 x 9-inch (oval) drivers and a 5-inch driver. The 5-, 5¼-, and 6 x 9-inch drivers are available with whizzer cones; in addition, the 5¼- and 6 x 9-inch models come in coaxial versions with 2- and 3-inch cone tweeters, respectively. The 6 x 9-inch drivers are available with either 10- or 20-ounce ceramic magnets. All of the drivers have nominal impedances of 8 ohms. They are capable of handling continuous power inputs from 10 watts per channel for the 5-inch

speaker to 30 watts for the 6 x 9-inch speaker with the 20-ounce magnet. The Kriket Klassic speakers are available as pairs in kits that include mounting hardware and grilles as well as two 15-foot cables. Prices range from about \$50 for two 5-inch drivers to about \$80 for two 6 x 9-inch coaxial drivers.

AFS also offers the 5¼-inch and 6 x 9-inch drivers in air-suspension enclosures adaptable to either surface or flush mounting. Prices for the baffled speakers range from about \$35 for the 5¼-inch whizzer-cone model to about \$50 for the 6 x 9-inch coaxial model (10-ounce magnet).

Circle 122 on reader service card



**Optonica Speaker Has Ribbon Tweeter**

□ The CP-5000 is a three-way speaker system employing a 12-inch woofer, a 2-inch dome mid-range, and a vertically oriented ribbon tweeter. The lightweight ribbon is both the transduction element and the diaphragm for the tweeter; a shallow horn assembly surrounds it. The crossover frequencies for the system are 500 and 5,000 Hz, with crossover slopes of 12 dB per octave. There is a switchable high-frequency filter that sharply attenuates all frequencies above 30,000 Hz for tweeter protection. Separate continuously variable output-level controls are provided for the mid-range and tweeter.

The usable frequency range of the CP-5000 is from 40 to over 50,000 Hz, with full high-frequency response maintained up to as much as 30 degrees off-axis. A minimum continuous amplifier power of 10 to 20 watts per channel is the suggested input to the speaker, the nominal impedance of which is 8 ohms. Maximum recommended power is 63 watts continuous or 100 watts on program peaks. Terminals for use with a three-way electronic crossover are provided.

With its rosewood-veneer cabinet measuring 28 x 16 x 13½ inches, the CP-5000 weighs 44 pounds. Price: about \$400.

Circle 123 on reader service card

(Continued on page 22)

# ANNOUNCING THE SPEAKER NO ONE WAS WAITING FOR.



When people think of us, they think of receivers, tuners, amps, cassette decks and turntables. No one thinks of us for speakers.

But with the major advancements we've made in our components, we wanted to make sure they would sound the way they were supposed to sound.

We tested and listened to the best three-way speaker systems and found that almost all of them had remarkably inefficient mid-range speakers. And because 90% of the sound that you hear is in the mid-range, those inefficient speakers were making singers sound slightly nasal and applause sound like rainfall.

So we developed our new LS-408A. Our goal was to eliminate the nasal sound, and make sure an ovation sounded like applause instead of rain on the deck of Noah's Ark.

You, of course, had no idea we were up to this.

With the help of computers, holographic analysis, and the sensitive ears of our engineers we built an efficient mid-range speaker that could do those things. Then we put that technology to work building a woofer whose cone eliminates mumbling, along with

a tweeter whose higher output would reproduce the sound of the singer's lips and breath.

It's everything a \$325 speaker should be, except it costs less than \$250\*.

And, as crazy as this may sound, it was worth the wait.



For the Kenwood dealer nearest you, see your Yellow Pages, or write Kenwood, 15777 S. Broadway, Gardena, CA 90248.

\*Nationally advertised value. For information purposes. Actual prices are established by Kenwood dealers. Cabinetry is walnut veneered with particle board rear panel.



# KENWOOD

## Crown Announces New Test Record

□ Crown International is offering a new test record for determining listening-room response characteristics in order to indicate the nature and degree of equalization necessary in the listening room. The 45-rpm disc, pressed on CD-4 vinyl and conforming with the standard RIAA equalization curve, contains ten bands of various test signals. There are several pink-noise sources on the disc, including a mono broad-band source (20 to 20,000 Hz), a mono one-third-octave source centered at 1,000 Hz, and separate left- and right-channel one-third-octave sources centered on frequencies ranging from 20 to 20,000 Hz at intervals of one-third octave. There are also several sine-wave signals provided: a 1,000-Hz mono signal, a mono logarithmic sweep from 20 to 20,000 Hz, and left- and right-channel logarithmic sweeps from 20 to 20,000 Hz. The logarithmic sweep of the sine-wave signals can be synchronized with that of a B&K 2305 chart recorder. Price: \$20.

Circle 124 on reader service card



## Bigston's New Top-of-the-line Cassette Deck

□ The BSD-400 front-loading stereo cassette deck employs two permalloy heads and a d.c. motor. The six levers for the tape-transport controls include cue and review and a pause function as well as memory rewind (the memory is controlled with a pushbutton switch) and automatic playback. A three-digit tape counter is provided.

Separate controls for the a.c. bias and equalization are provided in the form of two three-position switches with settings for standard, ferri-chrome, and chromium-dioxide tapes. Activation of the Dolby circuitry, switched on by means of a front-panel lever, is indicated by a LED. Twin meters indicate the recording levels; recording signals higher than +6 dB register on a LED on the meter panel. Separate record- and playback-level controls are provided for each channel.

The tape-transport mechanism of the BSD-400 has 0.07 per cent wow and flutter (wrms) and can wind a C-60 cassette in 75 sec-

onds in the fast-forward mode. The signal-to-noise ratio is 58 dB with the Dolby circuits and 52 dB without. Frequency response of the BSD-400 is 30 to 15,000 Hz (chromium-dioxide tape) or 30 to 13,000 Hz (standard tape), both  $\pm 3$  dB. The total harmonic distortion at 1,000 Hz is less than 1.5 per cent for a 0-dB recording level. The unit is enclosed in a metal cabinet with dimensions of approximately 17 x 11 $\frac{1}{8}$  x 5 $\frac{1}{8}$  inches. Price: under \$250.

Circle 125 on reader service card



## Strain-gauge Transduction System From RAM

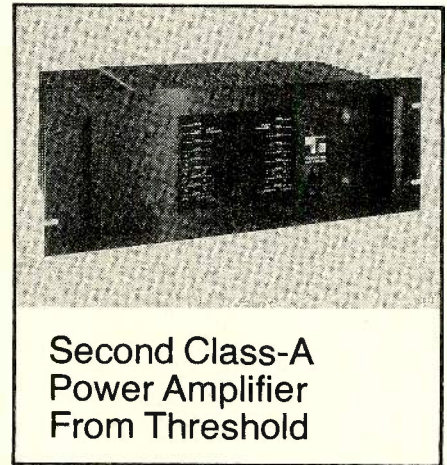
□ The RAM 9210SG Record Transducer System is a new phono pickup system consisting of a strain-gauge phono cartridge and a special preamplifier/power source for it. The strain-gauge pickup consists of two semiconductor elements (one for each channel) that are mechanically coupled to the stylus by a synthetic-rubber ring system; the electrical resistance of each element changes when it is subjected to mechanical deflections. A current source supplies the semiconductor elements with a constant current of about 6 milliamperes. The stylus excursions modulate the resistance of the strain-gauge elements to produce voltage variations at the preamplifier/power-source output. Since the pickup is sensitive to the amplitude of the stylus excursion rather than its velocity, RIAA equalization is automatically applied. The preamplifier included in the system accepts the pickup output and provides a voltage gain of 38 dB; rated output is 2.5 volts into 50,000 ohms, suitable for driving the auxiliary input of any regular stereo preamplifier. The 9210SG preamplifier/power source draws its power from the a.c. line.

The 9210SG cartridge system has a frequency response of 0 to 50,000 Hz  $\pm 2$  dB, with stereo separation of over 20 dB at 1,000 Hz and 15 dB at 30,000 Hz. It is equipped with a user-replaceable biradial diamond stylus. The tracking-force range is 1 to 3 grams with 2 grams the recommended setting. The net weight of the cartridge is 3.8 grams. The 9210SG preamplifier has a frequency response of 5 to 25,000 Hz  $\pm 0.5$  dB at rated output; total harmonic distortion is under 0.05 per cent from 20 to 20,000 Hz.

The overall frequency response of the

9210SG system is 5 to 20,000 Hz  $\pm 1$  dB with total harmonic distortion less than 0.1 per cent at rated output. The signal-to-noise ratio at rated output is better than 70 dB from 20 to 20,000 Hz. The preamplifier/power source, measuring 2 $\frac{1}{4}$  x 8 $\frac{1}{2}$  x 3 $\frac{1}{2}$  inches, has standard phono jacks for cartridge input and output. Price: \$299.

Circle 126 on reader service card



## Second Class-A Power Amplifier From Threshold

□ The Model 400A from Threshold is a new stereo power amplifier designed to operate in the "Class A" mode throughout its power range. Utilizing a patented "active-bias" system, the unit is said to be more efficient than conventional Class-A designs; it draws 250 watts of line power at idle. The average and peak power-output levels of each channel are indicated by four vertical columns of LED's that cover a level range of -21 to +3 dB in 3-dB increments. The 400A's protective devices include current limiters, circuit breakers, fuses, and thermal monitors; the amplifier can be safely shorted across its outputs while delivering full power.

The 400A is rated at 100 watts per channel continuous from 20 to 20,000 Hz into 8 ohms. It produces no more than 0.05 per cent harmonic or intermodulation distortion at rated power. Hum and noise are below 1 millivolt at the outputs. Slewing rate is a maximum of 50 volts, 25 amperes per microsecond, and the unit's rise time is three-fourths of a microsecond. The chassis and face plate of the 400A are smooth-finish black, and rack handles are provided. The faceplate measures about 7 x 19 inches and the unit is about 12 inches deep, including the foot extension at the rear of the chassis. Price: \$1,147.

Circle 127 on reader service card

NOTICE: All product descriptions and specifications quoted in these columns are based on materials supplied by the manufacturer.

Recent fluctuations in the value of the dollar will have an effect on the price of merchandise imported into this country. Please be aware that the prices quoted in this issue may be subject to change.

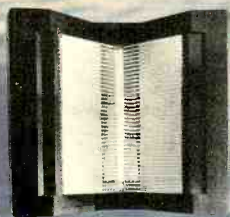
# UNMISTAKABLE EXCELLENCE.



**Audio system is only as good as its speakers. Not just because the loudspeaker is the final link between your electronics and your ears, but because the speaker is the weakest link. That's why application of the latest loudspeaker technology is so important.**

No one would think of using a 50 year old amplifier design. Yet people still buy loudspeakers based on 50 year old designs, re-packaged under the pretense of "new developments".

In contrast, ESS loudspeakers owe their breathtaking clarity to the most significant transducer design breakthrough in the past half-century: the Heil air-motion transformer. At the heart of the system is a featherweight pleated diaphragm, used for



**The reproduction of all real midrange and high frequencies. Suspended within a massive 12 pound magnet structure, the pleated diaphragm's "bellows" action squeezes air out at five times the speed of the vibrating diaphragm itself.**

**The Heil air-motion transformer has no heavy pole cone. No voice coil. No spring diaphragm compound. No sluggish push-pull action. No distracting resonances. Just a simple squeezing motion with instant acceleration, for sparkling transients.**

ESS manufactures and individually tests each and every Heil air-motion transformer to exacting tolerances. We also manufacture our own woofers, crossovers, finely finished cabinetry, and even our own machined metal work.

Only by fabricating every component ourselves can we maintain the highest standards of excellence. And keep costs down at the same time.

Not all manufacturers do their own manufacturing. Many are merely assemblers of components they buy from suppliers. If we were just another assembler, we wouldn't be ESS. And our products would lack that decided ESS feel of excellence.

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Oakhurst  
Sound Arts Co. Inc.  
Scotch Plains  
Audio International Corp.

**NEW MEXICO**

Albuquerque  
Hi Fi House  
Maynords

**NEW YORK**

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Seiden Sound  
Amherst  
Transcendental Audio Ltd.  
Buffalo  
Purchase Radio  
Unistage Inc.  
Hemstead  
Professional Sound Labs Inc.

Ithaca  
Stereo Shack of Ithaca  
Jamestown  
Transcendental Audio Ltd.  
Massena  
Michelle Audio  
Morris  
Boynton Studio Inc.  
New York City  
Harvey Sound Inc.  
Lyric Hi Fi Inc.  
Manny's Musical Instruments  
and Accessories Corp.  
Martin Audio/Video Corp.  
Rensselaer  
Cathedral Sound  
Rochester  
Maynards Sound World  
The Sound Chamber Inc.  
Roslyn, L. I.  
Audio by Zimet Inc.

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Sound Ideas  
Winston-Salem  
Long Engineering Corp.

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Chillicothe  
Appalachia Sound  
Cincinnati  
Swallens Inc.  
Columbus  
Custom Stereo Electronics Inc.  
Palmer Stereo Center  
Sound Advocate Inc.  
Dayton  
Dayton Communications Corp.  
Niles  
United Electronics  
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Youngstown  
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Stillwater  
Stillwater Music Center  
Tulsa  
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Music Sound World

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Electronic Control Co. Inc.  
Portland  
Rex Recording Co.

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Allentown  
Heifrich Recording Lab.  
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New Brighton  
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# Audio Q. and A.

By Larry Klein



## Black Disc Addenda

Regarding your answer in the July column on why records are black, the real reason has to do with the fact that carbon black is probably the cheapest available ultraviolet inhibitor. All plastics lose strength when exposed to sunlight, mostly because of the effects of the ultraviolet component in the sunlight. Other UV inhibitors—or ultraviolet stabilizers as they are sometimes called—are available, but they are more expensive, perhaps not as effective, and generally will affect the color or the finish of the product.

DAVID SHAKOCIUS  
Molding Foreman, Guardian Plastics  
Orange, Calif.

Thanks to Mr. Shakocius for his note on ultraviolet and its effect. However I remain unconvinced that ultraviolet inhibition is the reason for the black additive. For other obvious reasons it's not a good idea to leave naked discs lying about in the direct rays of the sun, though perhaps nowadays it is also necessary to protect records used in disco control rooms lit with "black"-light (UV).

To further tarnish (blacken) my image as an "expert," other readers have hastened to inform me that lampblack (1) aids the molding process, (2) lubricates the playing process, and (3) does nothing at all. Perhaps there are different effects for different people—as in other cases of black magic.

## UL Label

I've seen the UL label on many hi-fi and other products through the years. I know it has something to do with product safety—but what?

ARNOLD LAMBERT  
Chicago, Ill.

The UL symbol stands for Underwriters Laboratories, a nonprofit organization that has been testing products for safety since 1894. Within its six basic engineering departments, UL tests such diverse items as floor waxers, burglar alarms, life-preserver jackets, and, as you observed, stereo equipment.

Manufacturers submit products to UL for testing, but only in respect to their safety. If, under test, a component conforms to UL

safety requirements, the manufacturer is given permission to display the UL listing mark for that specific product. Audio equipment undergoes twenty-four separate test procedures. Two basic tests are for temperature rise (to determine that all parts are operating within their normal ratings) and for shock hazard. To keep their UL listing manufacturers must conduct certain tests as part of their production-line final-test procedure and UL inspectors are empowered to make surprise visits to assure that the product continues to meet the safety requirements set in the UL Standard. As far as the specifics of the Standard are concerned, the use and potential hazards of a product in a given category are studied and the design is judged against basic safety principles.

Some manufacturers feel that a few of the UL requirements are irrational—akin, say, to requiring that an amplifier be able to play safely under water. In any case, the opinions of both industry and consumer-interest representatives are solicited and the Standard is updated constantly in the light of new data provided by UL's engineers as well as industry and government-inspection authorities.

## Where's Quad?

Whatever happened to quadrasonic sound? Very little of the equipment and records I see reviewed in your magazine is four-channel. I have two more questions: how much does an SQ decoder system improve conventional LP's, and what are the prospects for the future?

PETER PURRELL  
Hicksville, N.Y.

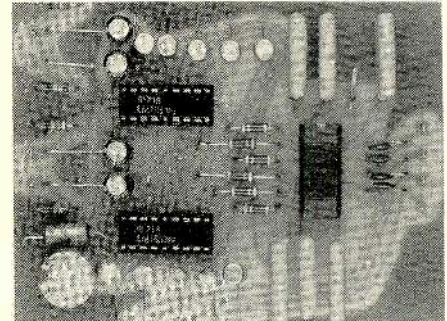
In respect to "what happened," everyone has different theories. From my perspective, there were several problems—the main one being the absence of the "oh, wow!" effect. If any of the competing four-channel systems had been really impressive to large numbers of listeners, quadrasonics would be with us in force today. However, even with carefully set-up state-of-the-art systems playing the best four-channel program material available, the spontaneous "oh, wows!" were few and far between.

The initial interest—however strong—in quadrasonics dissipated rapidly when listen-

ers found themselves restricted to a specific listening spot, straining to hear an enhancement of sonic reality while extraneous noises and shifts in perspective came through loud and clear. Consumers vote with their dollars, and the consensus seemed to be that the results achieved by quadrasonics did not, for most listening, justify the amount of time, effort, and expense required to set it up.

In addition, too much low-power, low-fi four-channel equipment was put on the market by companies that should have known better. Audiophiles, not the buyers of compacts, were the natural market for four-channel and they were alienated early in the game by inadequate demonstrations and equipment. STEREO REVIEW's stance at the time was: quadrasonics can sound great and can significantly enhance the illusion of a here-and-now re-created sonic reality, but there are still technical and commercial problems to be solved before four-channel achieves wide acceptance among audiophiles.

However, in our "Audio News" column for November 1974, I described my listening reaction to a prototype of the Tate SQ decoder. I wrote that if I hadn't known there was an SQ disc on the turntable I would have assumed I was hearing discrete four-channel



The new Tate chips are shown about half life size; not seen is the SQ IC matrix chip also required. The chips provide about 40 dB of separation and are available to licensees.

tapes—the separation and localization were that good. On some program material it was possible to stand alongside one of the four speakers and still hear the other three playing simultaneously. This meant that a "nailed-to-the-floor," precisely centered four-channel seat was no longer vital; one could hear a reasonably balanced four-channel effect throughout a wide listening area. And, as a large bonus, many stereo discs, when enhanced or synthesized by the Tate decoder, sounded at least as good as normal quadrasonic discs played through conventional decoders. The Tate decoder's performance was a significant step beyond anything I had heard up to that time—except some special binaural and four-track/channel open-reel tapes.

That was three years ago, and the Tate decoder never reached the market, thereby missing—for better or worse—the last several acts of the Four-channel Follies. Tate spent the intervening years not in further refinement of their decoding circuitry, but working with an integrated-circuit manufacturer to convert the complex Tate circuit into IC "chips."

During the recent CES, I spent an hour or so listening to the new chips at work on old and new SQ and stereo material. To put it mildly, I was impressed; they appeared to do everything at least as well as the prototype

unit I heard three years ago. Although I didn't get a chance to hear an A-B comparison, I suspect that in its audible performance Tate's unit is only marginally inferior to Peter Sheiber's state-of-the-art \$2,150 Spatial Decoder.

Now for the punch line: Tate says that the chips are cheap enough that add-on *separate* decoders incorporating them can sell for as little as \$75. Complete channel-balancing facilities will add perhaps \$50 more. I should have my own four-channel super-decoder sample to play with by the time you read this, and I'm looking forward to it eagerly!

## Worn Wires?

**Q.** *I was in an audio store recently helping friends pick out some equipment and happened to mention that the wires connecting my speakers to my receiver were the same ones I got with the speakers fifteen years ago. The salesman said it would be a good idea to install new wires, because mine may be excessively "worn" by now. I don't see it. Either a wire works or it doesn't; what's the point of changing it if it does?*

STEPHEN UNDERHILL  
Pittsburgh, Pa.

**A.** I'll give the salesman the benefit of the doubt and assume that he meant that the rubber or plastic insulation covering your speaker wires may be dried out and cracking. You can check that easily by bending the wires sharply. If the insulation cracks or comes off at the bend, you can avoid possible future short-circuits by prompt replacement. Use regular plastic-insulated lamp cord (#18 gauge) and not the #20 or #22 wire frequently sold for speaker use.

On the other hand, it may be that the salesman believes that all those audio-signal electrons flowing to and from your speakers for fifteen years have worn out the copper conductors of the leads. If so, I suggest that you think about shopping elsewhere henceforth.

## CB/FM Antennas

**Q.** *I live in a mountain area and the only cable available (mainly for TV) is not getting me a clean FM signal even with the best of tuners. I was told I could do better with an external FM antenna. I already have an omnidirectional CB antenna (used for emergency communication only). Are there special considerations concerning spacing of the two masts and the relative heights of these antennas? What about the possibility of using the same mast? I would like maximum efficiency without interference, if possible. I have no need for simultaneous use of the two antennas, so I'm concerned only with interference from the presence of each upon the other.*

SAMUEL NEIDITCH  
Wrightwood, Calif.

**A.** Considering the different polarizations used for CB and FM broadcasts, you should not experience interference between the antennas if one is at least 3 or 4 feet above the other. However, there are legal restrictions on the height of CB antennas. Your best bet therefore is to use separate masts with a directional FM antenna mounted as high as possible. An antenna rotator should be used if the signals you want to hear do not all come from the same direction.

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CIRCLE NO. 34 ON READER SERVICE CARD

By Ralph Hodges



## TRACKING FORCE AND RECORD WEAR

**N**EVER trust a cheap "record player" with an expensive record is one of the most enduring lessons an audiophile learns. The tendency of the cheap phonograph to maul its discs—scraping, gouging, and routing out the delicate groove detail—is universally recognized and deplored in high-fidelity circles. The reason for this destructive behavior is commonly believed to be the high tracking forces employed in mediocre machines. This, of course, makes a wonderful case for the modern high-fidelity record-playing instrument with its "feather-touch" tracking force of 1½ grams or less. But it also seems to suggest that tracking force, in and of itself, is an unmitigated evil. This is not really so. Certainly excessive tracking force results in record wear. But tracking force in insufficient amounts can also result in record wear. Let's see how this works.

Although tracking force (the weight of the set-up tone arm and cartridge as measured at the stylus tip) is the specification that gets all the emphasis, it is really tracking pressure (force applied per unit area) that does the damage. A tracking force of a gram or two may seem very small, but the area of the groove walls over which it is applied is minuscule. Even in the laboratory it is difficult to determine the precise dimensions of this area, but a major cartridge manufacturer estimates that a modern elliptical stylus resting on a stationary record with a 1-gram force applies pressures of several tons per square inch! Amazingly, the groove surface can generally sustain this without becoming permanently deformed (worn, in other words), but its endurance is not infinite.

As the record starts to rotate, additional pressures generated by the process of playing begin to take effect. The groove walls must push (accelerate) the stylus around to produce an output from the cartridge. Depending on frequency, the groove's pushes are resisted by (1) any stiffness in the stylus suspension and (2) by the inertia contributed by the effective mass of the stylus. For the extreme stylus accelerations produced by high-level frequencies, the forces (force being equal to mass times acceleration, according to Newton)—and therefore the pressures—become impressively large, and it is just here that record wear becomes a distinct possibility even with the finest cartridges.

It is here also that the *positive* aspect of tracking force comes to the fore. It is the job of the tracking force to oppose the dynamic forces generated in playing the record so that the groove's pushes and thrusts won't throw the stylus out of contact with its surface the way a bucking bronco unseats a rider. The use of too little tracking force thus invites loss of contact. And what then? The stylus takes to the air for a brief moment—and returns to the groove surface with stunning force. Frequently it will then take a second bounce over to the opposite groove wall, and then a third back again, and so forth. This caroming around causes one of the worst sorts of record wear, and almost anything—including an increase in stylus force (within reason) to prevent it—is preferable.

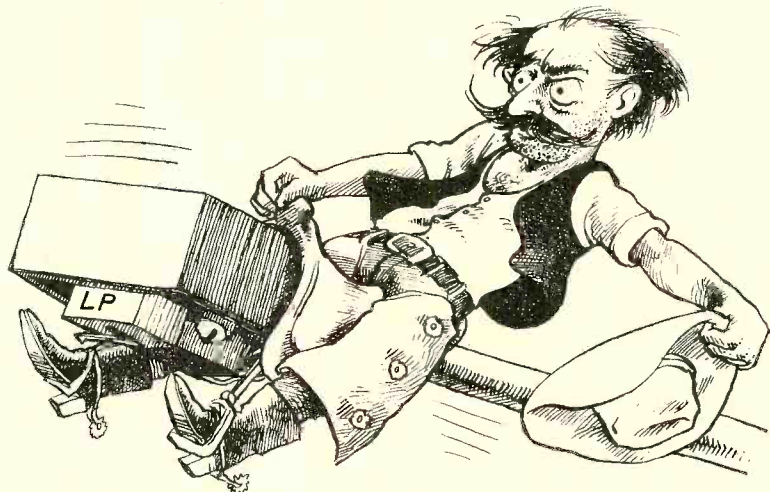
Severe loss of stylus/groove contact is heard as a particularly gruesome form of distortion: a brief rasping, tearing, buzzing, spitting, or something of that nature. Often it sounds like one of the more pernicious record defects, and that is precisely what it will become if the stylus is permitted to chatter around in this uncontrolled manner. Shure Brothers' TTR-110 "Audio Obstacle Course" test record is one of the better tools available for demonstrating stylus mistracking, and its instructions are helpful in adjusting tracking force for the best results. (Order from Shure Brothers, Dept. SR, 222 Hartrey Avenue,

Evanston, Illinois 60204. The price of \$3.95 includes postage and handling.)

To summarize, the tracking force necessary (and the pressures arising from it) with any reasonably good tone-arm and cartridge combination is a factor of the cartridge's overall performance limitations. If a cartridge requires 1½ grams of downward force to avoid mistracking, you cannot expect to reduce wear by operating it at 1 gram just because the stylus is able to remain in the groove at that force. In fact, you're likelier to *increase* wear.

Most cartridge manufacturers recommend a *range* of forces for their products instead of a single value; this is an attempt to anticipate the moment-to-moment variations in tracking force that are sure to take place when a disc is played. Record warps create a surface that rises and falls beneath the cartridge. Because any tone arm has inertia (the better ones have less), the tracking force will momentarily increase as the warp rises and decrease as it falls. The hope is that the arm can be set at some force within the recommended range so that even fairly severe warps will not cause the tracking force to drop below the manufacturer's minimum rated value at any time. Of course, the better the tone arm (that is, the better suited to the cartridge), the more likely it is to meet this condition when adjusted within the lower portion of the cartridge's tracking-force range. But usually it is safer to err on the high side of the tracking-force range—provided the cartridge's maximum recommended force is not exceeded.

**I**N recent years the relationship between tracking force and tracking pressure has been clouded by the introduction of special cartridges and styli (Shibata, Pramanik, and others) intended to play CD-4 four-channel records. Audiophiles were a little alarmed to find the first of these cartridges rated for tracking forces of about 2 grams instead of the 1 gram or so that was typical for other premium cartridges. But a plausible reason was given for this: the new styli were designed to contact the groove over a larger area, and hence the pressures generated by the tracking force and the dynamic aspects of record playing were correspondingly reduced. At least one manufacturer claimed that the pressures on the groove wall from his Shibata stylus tracking at 2 grams were actually less than those for a conventional elliptical stylus operating at 1 gram. This is another example of how the subject of tracking force and wear can be more complicated than it appears.



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The new 698 arm moves effortlessly on 32 jeweled, sapphire bearings. Vertical and horizontal bearing friction is a mere 0.001 gram, 4 times less than it would be on conventional steel bearings. It is impervious to drag. Only the calibrated anti-skating and tracking force you select control its movement.

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Electronic cueing has been added to the 698 to raise and lower the tone arm at your slightest touch. Simple plug-in integrated circuitry raises the tone arm automatically when power is turned off.

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Stylus force is dialed using a see-through calibrated clock mainspring more accurate than any commercially available stylus pressure gauge.

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# EMPIRE



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# Tape Talk

By Craig Stark



## Accessories and the Tape Jacks

**Q.** When you own several devices that are meant to be connected into the tape loop of a preamp (an equalizer, noise-reduction unit, etc.), how do you know what order to put them all in?

THOMAS E. LONGLEY  
St. Clair Shores, Mich.

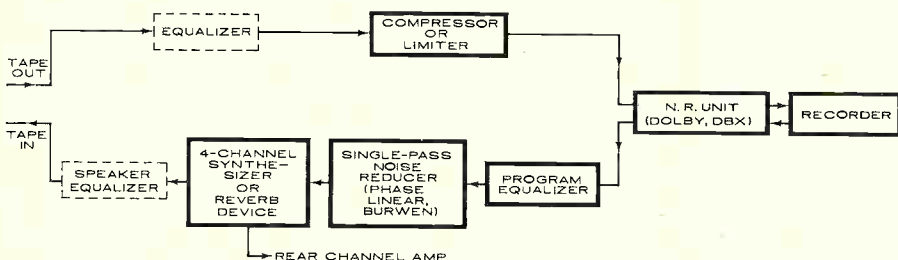
**A.** If you think of the "tape out" and "tape in" jacks as forming a "loop" in which certain kinds of signal processing (recording and playing back, for two!) can take place, you're off to a good start. The rest is simply a matter of figuring out which type of processing takes place in which device and whether that should be done before or after the signal reaches the next type of processing device. The accompanying flow chart illustrates the most logical hook-up scheme.

Start with the idea that the tape recorder should be farthest away from the preamp or receiver in the loop. Any noise-reduction device that encodes the signal to the recorder and decodes the signal from it (a Dolby B, ANRS, or dbx unit) should be connected directly to the recorder. That's because any form of signal processing (including equalization) that took place between the noise-reduction (NR) device and the recorder would confuse the encoding/decoding process.

In the normal home setup, there won't be anything in the signal path that goes from the "tape-out" jacks of your preamp, integrated

amp, or receiver to the NR unit (if used) and the recorder. The flow chart shows two possible exceptions. If you own a multiband equalizer and want its tone-shaping effects to be recorded, it obviously has to be in the "outgoing" path. I do not recommend this, for tapes should ordinarily be recorded "flat," and any deficiencies in the recording should be touched up with the tone controls later. For special effects, however, or if your recorder has a known treble deficiency, you might want to modify the signal before recording it, since turning up the treble control afterward will raise the hiss level as well. Normally, though, an equalizer should come after the recording, so I've shown its "up-front" position only in dashed lines in the diagram. Also, few home recordists have a compressor or limiter, but if you do, you will want its action to take place before the noise-reduction/recording processes and after any equalizing that might be used in the record path.

The signal coming back from the recorder must go first to the noise reducer (if used) as explained. Next along the return path is the normal position for a multiband equalizer that you use either to supplement or to supplant the regular tone controls in your amplifier. If you use a "single-pass" noise-reduction unit (such as the Phase Linear, Burwen, or the non-encode/decode dbx units), it comes next, since you want the signal to have been equalized before the dynamic filter is put into operation. If, on top of this, you use a four-channel synthesizer or reverberation device, you want the signal that goes to it to benefit from the noise reduction.



Last along the return path are those special "equalizers" that come with specific loud-speaker systems. Their normal location is between the preamp and the power amp (assuming the manufacturer's literature says so). However, if there is no access there, as may be the case with many receivers and integrated amplifiers, the tape loop is the only place they can be installed.

Obviously, any specific recommendations from a manufacturer should take precedence over the generalized scheme presented here.

## Double-speed Dubbing

**Q.** I have a large number of open-reel tapes that I recorded at 1 7/8 ips in Europe over a period of many years. I haven't been able to find a machine in this country that can play them. Can you help?

VIDKUNN ULRIKSSON  
Cocoa Beach, Fla.

**A.** Actually, while 1 7/8-ips open-reel decks may be an endangered species, there are still a number around. The 1978 *Tape Recording Directory & Buying Guide* (\$1.95 from Ziff-Davis Service Div., 595 Broadway, New York 10012) lists offerings from Revox, Sony, Tandberg, Toshiba, and Uher, and doubtless there are more.

However, if you don't want to get a new machine just for this group of tapes, here's a suggestion. Play the 1 7/8 ips tapes at the 3 3/4-ips speed you probably do have, simultaneously dubbing them onto a second machine running at 7 1/2 ips. When you then play the dubbed copies at 3 3/4 ips, the proper speed relationship will be restored. Some differences in equalization may be encountered, but considering the fidelity limits of the original 1 7/8-ips tapes, you should be able to get a satisfactory tonal balance with your amplifier's tone controls.

## Test-tape Error?

**Q.** I recently bought a cassette test tape at my local dealer, and I find that on the lowest frequencies the bass response of my machine is up by 3 to 4 dB. But the bass doesn't sound exaggerated; if anything, with prerecorded cassettes it seems a little weak. Could the test tape be wrong?

DANNY BLAKE  
Washington, D.C.

**A.** Actually, there's probably nothing wrong with either the test tape or your deck. Until a few years ago the cassette standards called for a bass boost during the recording that started at 100 Hz (1,590 μsec). When CrO<sub>2</sub> and other improved tapes made cassettes a viable hi-fi medium, Philips realized that this much bass equalization called for by the NAB open-reel standards, but even this much is normally omitted by large-scale duplicators—hence the slightly "thin" sound of their products. But for reasons known only to their makers (and their Maker), many test cassettes are still recorded with the original 1,590-μsec equalization, so an apparent rising response at the bass end (up to about 5 dB at 31.5 Hz) is normal for test cassettes played on modern decks.

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We build in what the others  
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*A New Version of This Country's Most Popular  
And Most Imitated Speaker System.*

# The New Advent Loudspeaker.

Over the past few years, the Advent Loudspeaker has gone into more people's homes in the United States than any other speaker system. It has been imitated over and over, and has been used consistently as a standard of performance (even by salesmen and companies trying to sell other speakers). It has also prompted an almost incredible number of unsolicited praise letters from satisfied owners.

The new Advent Loudspeaker sounds very much like the original. It should, since the frequency balance, clarity, and neutral, "open" quality that contribute to the sound-character of a really excellent speaker shouldn't need much alteration—and shouldn't be subject to change for the sake of change.

But the New Advent Loudspeaker is audibly different at the high end of the frequency range. The change has been made possible, and worth making, by improvements in the high-frequency capabilities of tapes, broadcasts, and—most of all—records.

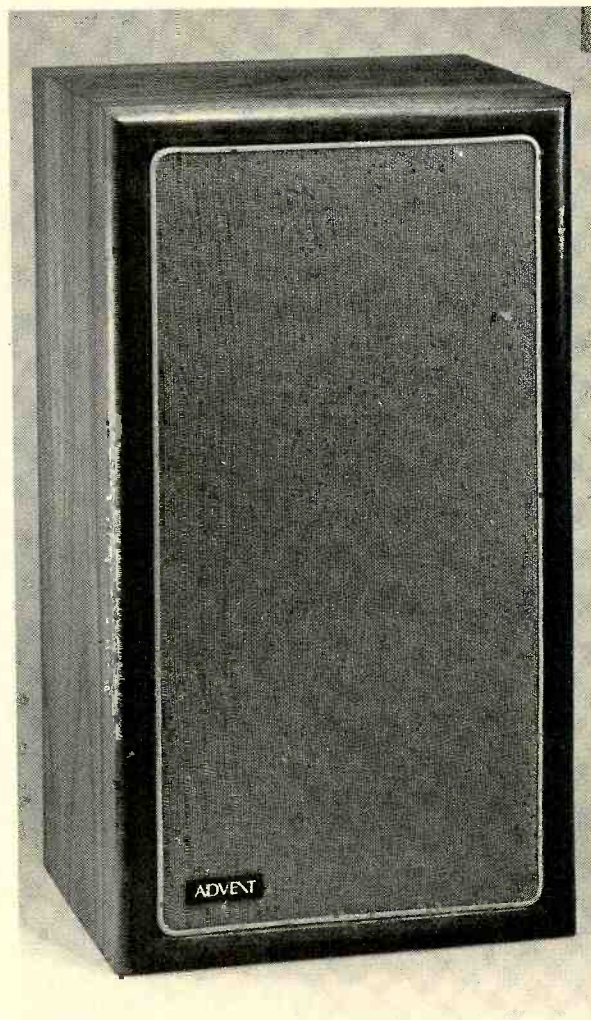
## **About Speaker Design.**

Despite all the advertising to the contrary, it is not hard to design a good loudspeaker. The necessary knowledge and materials have been available for quite a while, and any of many design concepts can produce excellent sound.

But the trick, to our way of thinking, is to produce a balanced product. One that doesn't lead the customer to pay unnecessarily for an overelaborate design concept, or for a "solution" to a nonexistent problem. And one that sounds good not just under "ideal" conditions or in an artificial laboratory environment, but under the widest range of actual conditions in people's homes.

Knowing that complexity has often been a substitute for good design in speakers, and that a great deal of speaker design doesn't have all that much to do with the requirements for *home* listening, we designed the original Advent Loudspeaker to fit at the lowest possible cost into the "best" category in speaker performance in a home. Its success has been underlined for us not just by the number of original

Advents sold (half a million), but by the *kind* of satisfaction people have continually reported—to us, and to their friends.









To suit the layout of his L-shaped studio, Wesley Turner of Columbus, Ohio, instructed local carpenters Sam and Peggy Hibbs to adopt a somewhat angular approach to the design and construction of his audio installation. Six feet tall, the maple-veneered plywood cabinet has an attractive, hand-rubbed tung-oil finish to harmonize with the Danish-modern style of its surroundings.

A group of three free-standing sections housing an array of stereo components forms the upper half of the console. Although right and left segments are securely bolted to the center unit, both can easily be unfastened and moved for possible repair or alteration. Each of the evenly spaced rectangular compartments within the complex are covered in reversed Naugahyde cut to conform to the various dimensions of the equipment. Three-quarter-inch plywood shelves are mounted behind each panel to provide the needed support for the components.

Occupying center position within the setup is a Revox A77 MkIV two-track remote-control tape deck, which is used in conjunction with the dbx II noise-reduction unit set directly above. The left section of the structure houses, from top to bottom, a Phase Linear

700B power amplifier, an SAE Mark 2700B half-octave graphic equalizer, a Yamaha C-2 preamplifier, and a Sansui QSD-1 four-channel decoder/synthesizer. Within the panels on the right side of the structure are a Phase Linear 200 power amp, a Harman/Kardon Citation 11 preamp, and a Sansui TU-7700 AM/FM tuner.

Resting on the central platform below is a Technics SL 1200 turntable equipped with a Shure SME 3009/S2 tone arm and an Ortofon MC20 phono cartridge. To the right, a Discwasher brush and stylus cleaner sit close by to provide proper record maintenance. Two sturdy base cabinets (just visible in the photo) not only serve as a foundation for the installation but also furnish twenty-seven cubic feet of storage space for a collection of stereo records and tapes, predominantly jazz and r-&-b, as well as an assortment of tools, audio accessories, and extra phono cartridges (including the Shure V-15 III, Stanton 681EEE, ADC XLM MkII, and Empire 2000Z).

All two-channel sources are patched into the QSD-1 to provide synthesized four-channel sound reproduction. Two JBL 200B Studio Master speakers placed on adjacent sides of the equipment complex and driven by the

Yamaha C-2/Phase Linear 700B combination furnish the sound for the front system. The rear system features a pair of smaller JBL 166 bookshelf speakers driven by the Phase Linear 200 and Citation 11.

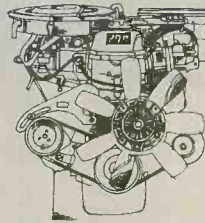
The entire assembly of stereo apparatus is controlled by a master power switch located behind the console. Since the center platform is mounted on locking heavy-duty slides attached to the storage cabinets below, it can easily be slid forward, carrying with it the bulk of the installation and providing convenient access to the power switch and the rear section of the component panels. The physical design also permits the operator of the system to sit comfortably on an elevated desk chair with all controls within easy reach.

Mr. Turner is special assistant to the director of Ohio's Department of Mental Health and an instructor in accounting at a local university. At home, when not enjoying his equipment, he finds time to operate a part-time financial consulting firm. As his system has expanded, so have his musical tastes, and he is pleased to acknowledge a new-found appreciation of what he calls "the clean, dynamic sound of the classics."

# THE HOT ONE.

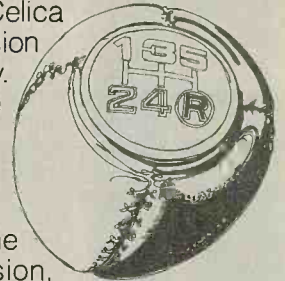


That's the 1977 Toyota Celica. Hot because of the way it looks, and the way it moves. Hot because there are three models, including the racy '77 GT Liftback. Hot because the Celicas are built with Toyota's famous toughness and durability. Their welded unitized-body construction eliminates body nuts and bolts to make them three of the most durable cars on the road.



**Hot Performer.** The '77 Celicas are powered by the revolutionary 20R engine—a 2.2 liter overhead cam design. Built from the ground up to give power, durability, and great gas mileage. In 1977 EPA tests the Celica GT with 5-speed overdrive transmission got 37 mpg highway, 22 mpg city.

These mileage figures are estimates. The actual mileage you get will vary depending on your driving habits and your car's condition and equipment. California and EPA designated high altitude ratings will be lower.



**Hot Items.** A lot of hot features come standard on the 1977 Celicas. Like MacPherson strut front suspension, steel-belted radials, power front disc brakes, electric clock, tachometer, reclining bucket seats, tinted glass, and much more. We're proud of the '77 Celicas. In fact, we're proud enough to say, if you can find a better built small car than Toyota...buy it.

# YOU GOT IT.



1977  
Celica GT  
Liftback

1977  
Celica GT

# THE TOYOTA CELICAS

# Technical Talk

By Julian D. Hirsch



● **HARMONIC VS. IM DISTORTION.** Many people, when referring to harmonic and intermodulation (IM) distortion, treat them as different phenomena. Of the two, IM is usually thought to be "more serious" in its audible effects, and certain harmonics (usually the odd ones, and especially those of higher order) are generally felt to cause more audible irritation than others.

These statements are true as far as they go, yet they lead the unsuspecting reader into the semantic trap of confusing cause and effect. The various kinds of "distortion" whose names we bandy about so casually are almost all manifestations of the same quality, known in general as *nonlinearity*.

"Linearity" refers to the relationship between the output of a device and its input. Ideally, the amplitude of the output is supposed to be directly (linearly) proportional to the amplitude, or level, of the input signal. If a 1-volt input to an amplifier produces 10 volts output, and a 5-volt input results in 50 volts output, the amplifier is said to be *linear* between those limits (the limits of linear operation are always finite, and must be stated).

If we extend this hypothetical case slightly downward, so that the amplifier is linear from zero input (and zero output) to the full level of 5 volts in and 50 volts out, we have an ideal nondistorting amplifier (we are here considering only steady-state sine-wave conditions; transients are another matter). Regardless of the composition of the input signal, within the frequency and amplitude limits of a truly linear amplifier the output will contain only those frequency components present in the input, with their original amplitude relationships preserved. There will be no added harmonics, no IM products, and no distortion.

A plot of the input/output relationship for a linear device is (not surprisingly) a straight line. In the real world, absolute linearity does not exist, although one can approach it very closely. In general, the input/output plot for any practical device will have some departure from linearity, and the shape of this departure can take almost any form. The examples shown in Figure 1 (page 38) are greatly exaggerated in order to illustrate the effect (for actual amplifiers of reasonable quality, a graph drawn to this scale would not show any visible departure from linearity).

If a single-frequency (sine-wave) signal is

passed through a nonlinear device, the output will resemble the input except that there will be some malformations in the amplified output waveform resulting from the nonlinear "curvature" of the amplifier's characteristics. In a frequency spectrum of the amplifier's output (Figure 2), these aberrations would appear as (or result in) harmonics (designated  $2f$ ,  $3f$ , etc.) of the input signal's fundamental frequency.

Now, let us pass sine waves of two frequencies (designated  $f_a$  and  $f_b$ ) through the same nonlinear amplifier. The output will contain a large number of spurious frequencies in addition to the original  $f_a$  and  $f_b$ . For example:  $f_a \pm f_b$ ,  $2f_a$ ,  $2f_b$ ,  $2f_a \pm f_b$ ,  $2f_b \pm f_a$ , and so on. Any nonlinear device can produce an enormous number of distortion components from even a fairly simple input signal. Needless to say, even more of these components will result from a *complex* music signal. However, for audio-testing purposes the use of more than two simultaneous signals produces such complex results that little additional useful information can be derived.

The nonlinearity of an amplifier (I am using "amplifier" for convenience, but this discussion applies to *any* device that has an input and an output) can most easily be defined in terms of its effect on a single-frequency signal. If we drive the device with a 1,000-Hz signal, and if the output contains measurable amounts of energy at 2,000 Hz, 3,000 Hz, and other harmonic frequencies, the nonlinearity of the amplifier can be described (but not defined) in terms of the harmonic structure of the output signal. With a spectrum analyzer, the level of each of the spurious harmonics

can be measured separately and evaluated in terms of possible effect on the audible sound of the amplifier. More commonly, however, all significant harmonics are "lumped" in a single measurement—which usually includes any noise that may be present—and expressed (in a percentage) as total harmonic distortion (THD). Such data are less informative, but they are much more convenient to deal with (both in measurement and presentation) than a multitude of individual harmonics each at a different level.

What about IM distortion? Most IM measurements are made with the SMPTE (Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers) method in which the test signal consists of a low frequency (usually 60 Hz) and a higher frequency (typically between 4,000 and 7,000 Hz) mixed in a 4-to-1 amplitude ratio. The measurement is made at the output of the amplifier by separating the high-frequency component and demodulating it within the IM analyzer so that the degree to which it has been modulated by the stronger low-frequency signal can be measured. In a linear system there will be no such modulation, and hence no IM distortion.

The SMPTE method was originally developed for measurements of motion-picture optical-sound systems. There is little to recommend its use in high-fidelity sound systems except its convenience. Note that the composite IM test signal actually measures an amplifier's nonlinearity only at the *low* test frequency (60 Hz). In the days of tube amplifiers, when output transformers set the limits of low-frequency performance, an IM measurement could provide additional insight into the amplifier's limitations. However, transistor amplifiers behave no differently at 60 Hz than at 1,000 Hz, so the IM test adds little to our knowledge of their capabilities.

In spite of this, an IM measurement is so convenient to make that it enjoys wide popularity. We use it regularly partly for that reason (a complete set of IM measurements can be made in a fraction of the time required for the equivalent test using a single-frequency signal), though we know it tells us little that harmonic measurements would not.

There is another type of IM measurement, little used, that *will* reveal something more than harmonic measurements. Let us take a

(Continued on page 38)

## Tested This Month

Empire 698 Record Player  
Pioneer SA-9500II Amplifier  
Luxman R-1050 AM/FM Receiver  
Celestion 66 Speaker System  
Nikko Beta 1 Stereo Preamplifier

# "I was a victim of turntable hype."

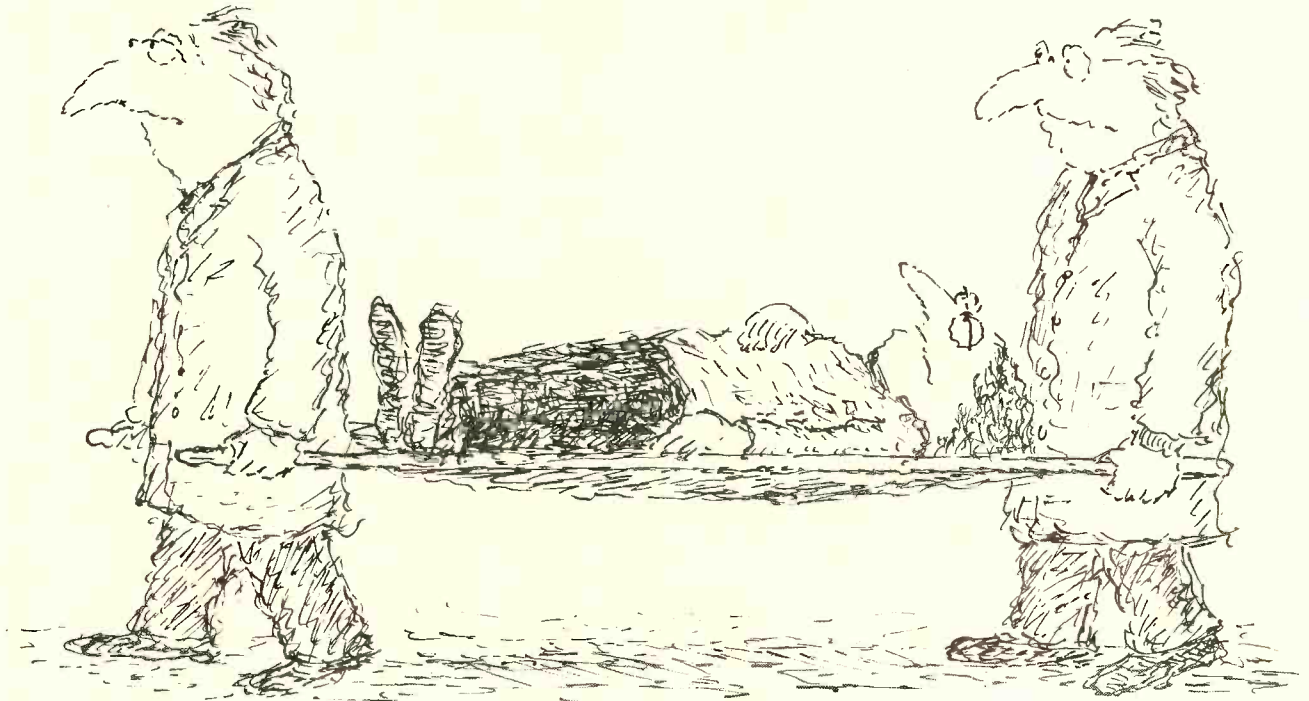
"It was the same old con you've heard before. Only a single play turntable can give you best performance.

And I believed it all until I started shopping for a new turntable.

What I discovered was that B·I·C has re-written all the old rules.

It's built in the USA so you're not paying for import duties, an ocean voyage, or currency fluctuations.

And, it's been engineered with fewer parts which not only saves money, but improves performance.



*Korren*

Plug a B·I·C into your system and you have a terrific single play unit, a great changer when you want it, and a precision instrument that's a joy to behold.

It was only a matter of time till someone re-wrote the rules, and brought you a first-class turntable from about \$85 to about \$289.

If you're sick of compromising, ask your hi-fi salesman about a B·I·C."

**B·I·C**<sup>™</sup>



"BEE-EYE-CEE" TURNTABLES SELL FROM ABOUT \$85 TO ABOUT \$289. FOR DETAILS AND SPECS GET OUR "5 TURNTABLES" FOLDER FROM YOUR DEALER OR WRITE US, B·I·C, WESTBURY, LI, NY 11590. ©1977 BRITISH INDUSTRIES CO. A DIVISION OF AVNET INC.

CIRCLE NO. 2 ON READER SERVICE CARD

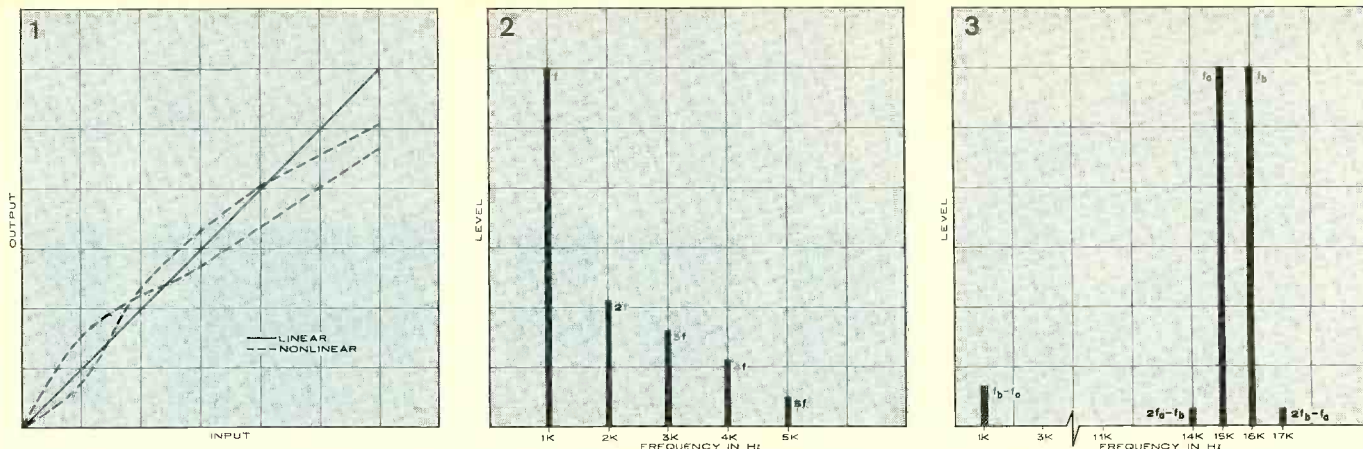


Figure 1: The two dashed lines show transfer characteristics for two nonlinear devices; solid line is linear. Figure 2: For an input  $f$ , the output of a nonlinear device will contain harmonics ( $2f$ ,  $3f$ , etc.) not pres-

ent in the input. Figure 3: In the CCIF IM test, an input of two closely spaced high frequencies ( $f_a$  and  $f_b$ ) can produce a spurious difference frequency ( $f_b - f_a$ ) at a much lower (and audible) frequency.

case where the harmonics of the input signal fall outside the passband (frequency range) of the device. These spurious harmonics will thus never appear in the measurement, and the THD may seem to be quite low. Nevertheless, we must assume that the device under test is nonlinear, and hence some undesirable effects are to be expected. How can these effects be measured?

The CCIF or difference-tone IM test employs two closely spaced high-frequency signals instead of one high and one low as in the SMPTE test. As an example, input signals at 15,000 and 16,000 Hz, with equal amplitudes, can be used to drive the unit under test. Then, with a spectrum analyzer or equivalent instrument, the amplitude of the 1,000-Hz difference frequency ( $f_a - f_b$ ) in the output can be mea-

sured as in Figure 3. In this way, nonlinearity can be measured anywhere in a system's bandwidth.

Furthermore, devices having limited output above the audio range—FM tuners, many phono cartridges, and loudspeakers, for example—can be checked for linearity right up to their high-frequency limits. Whether the CCIF test results correlate better with subjective effects than those of other types of measurements, as has been claimed, is still debatable. But there can be no doubt that it extends our ability to measure the steady-state nonlinearity of an audio component to frequencies beyond the range of other techniques.

My point in all this, aside from presenting a little background on the distortion-measurement process, is to emphasize that all of these

measurement techniques (and many others as well) are merely different ways of measuring exactly the same thing—namely, the nonlinearity of a device. This is a property of the device itself, and it is not affected by the type of test used to evaluate it. On the other hand, all distortion measurements reflect the properties of the test signal and instrumentation, as well as those of the device being tested. Keep in mind that distortion measurements (like IQ tests) test only the behavior of the "system" under the particular set of test conditions provided by the test instruments. Different types of test setups will provide different numbers for exactly the same nonlinearity. Test numbers do give some guidance, but obviously it's best not to be overly hung up on them.

## Equipment Test Reports

By Hirsch-Houck Laboratories



### Empire 698 Record Player

THE Empire 698 record player is a direct descendent of the company's Model 598. The latter was a very basic, superbly constructed belt-driven turntable combined with a tone arm that was equally well made but rather massive—as were most tone arms of that period. The packaging of the platter and tone arm (which were rigidly mounted on a "Y"-shaped casting and floated on a unit on springs) was visually distinctive.

Recognizing that the tone arm of the 598 was not ideally suited to today's highly compliant cartridges, Empire undertook a complete redesign of the arm. Since the turntable was already about as good as anything on the market, it was left essentially unchanged, as was the basic styling. The result is the Model 698, still unmistakably Empire, yet fully updated to today's performance standards.

The two-piece cast platter, which is almost 3 inches thick, is belt driven from a hysteresis synchronous motor at 33½ or 45 rpm. Speed change is accomplished by removing a protective cover, held in place by a thumbscrew, and manually shifting the drive belt to a different diameter on the motor shaft. The speeds are fixed, but a slight adjustment is possible by means of a screw that tilts the motor axis. If this speed-change system seems archaic, consider how seldom you change speeds or find it necessary to move the speed from its exactly correct value. Weighing this rather slight loss of convenience against the potential reliability benefits, Empire's judgment seems quite sound.

The new tone arm is about the same length as the old one—9 inches from pivot to stylus. It looks much lighter, however, and this is no illusion. A newly designed removable head shell is claimed to have a mass comparable to a fixed-head design. The counterweight is elastically decoupled to damp the low-frequency arm resonance. Vertical tracking force is applied, as before, by a coiled spring in the pivot structure, and it is adjusted with a calibrated wheel on its side. It is calibrated from zero to 4 grams at intervals of 0.5 gram. The anti-skating dial is located on top of the pivot support.

The Empire 698 does have some automation in the form of a solenoid-operated arm lift; its action is initiated by a touch of the finger on one of two pairs of contact points near the front of the motorboard. The activated pair is lit in red to show the UP or DOWN status of the arm. A photocell sensor in the arm base operates at the end of a record to raise the arm. However, the arm must be returned manually to its rest and the motor shut off by the rocker switch that controls all power to the unit.

Two plug-in cables, mating with a socket under the arm, are supplied with the 698. For stereo use, the longer (5 foot) cable has a ca-

pacitance of 180 picofarads to ground. If a CD-4 cartridge is installed, a shorter (4 foot) cable is used, giving a capacitance of only 70 picofarads.

The Empire 698 is supplied on a wooden walnut-finish base. The hinged cover, which remains open at any angle, is made of tempered glass set in walnut strips. All metal parts, including the motorboard, arm, and platter, are finished in satin gold. The overall dimensions of the Empire 698, with the cover down, are 17½ inches wide by 15½ inches deep by 8¼ inches high. It weighs about 30 pounds. Price: \$400.

● **Laboratory Measurements.** We tested the Model 698 with Empire's finest stereo cartridge, the 2000Z, installed in its arm. As often happens, balancing the tone arm in a horizontal plane produced a tracking-force error. With the weight adjusted to balance the pickup at the plane of the turntable instead of in the horizontal plane, the tracking-force dial calibrations were exactly correct.

Setting the stylus overhang accurately takes some care because of the considerable distance between the stylus and a reference line on the head shell. When it is done correctly, the tracking error is very low (zero at radii of 3 and 5 inches and less than 0.4 degree per inch elsewhere). The anti-skating calibration was reasonably accurate.

The arm lift and descent were slow and well damped, with little outward drift of the pickup during its descent. A complete lift or descent took about 3 seconds. However, there was a considerable delay between the time the contacts were touched and the time the arm began to move. The measured capacitance to ground of the two signal cables was 185 and 85 picofarads, including the internal arm wiring. The isolated counterweight distributed the low-frequency arm/cartridge resonance over a wider frequency range while reducing its amplitude, so that we measured two reso-

nances, one at 5.5 and another at 8 Hz, the latter having the larger (6 dB) amplitude.

The turntable speeds were exact and did not vary with extreme line-voltage shifts. The unweighted wow and flutter, combined, were a very low 0.04 per cent. The unweighted lateral rumble was a very good -36 dB, improving to -57 dB with ARLL weighting. The immunity of the 698 to acoustic feedback was slightly better than average.

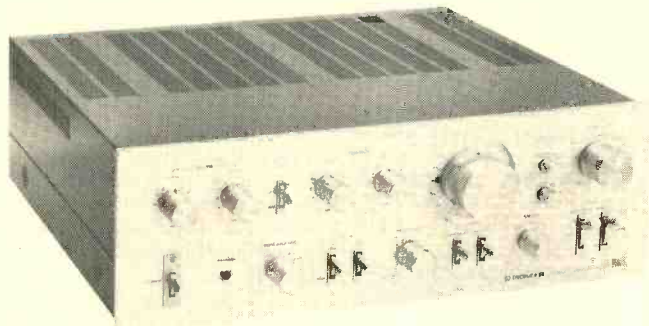
● **Comment.** At one extreme of record-player packaging is the so-called "module," complete with installed cartridge and essentially ready to play as it comes from the carton. At the other extreme is the Empire 698, whose arm must be mounted and carefully adjusted for it to function properly. While not a difficult procedure, it does require care—as does the mounting of the cartridge for correct overhang. The visibility of the tracking-force dial, located on the "inside" of the pivot support, could be improved and the 0.5-gram calibration intervals are rather wide considering the limited range of forces recommended for some of the top cartridges. The use of an external stylus-force gauge would solve both problems.

If the setup sounds like a bit of a chore, be assured that the results are worth the effort. The Empire 698 is surely one of the most rugged and handsome pieces of hi-fi equipment available. Its flutter is on a par with that of the best turntables we have tested, either direct-drive or belt-driven. Its rumble is, for all practical purposes, inaudible, consisting mostly of subsonic material in the vicinity of 5 Hz, a much weaker component at 30 Hz, and little else.

The handling characteristics of the 698 are on a par with its construction and appearance. All in all, it is evident that the overall quality of the Empire 698 makes it a worthy successor to the 598.

Circle 105 on reader service card

## Pioneer SA-9500II Integrated Stereo Amplifier

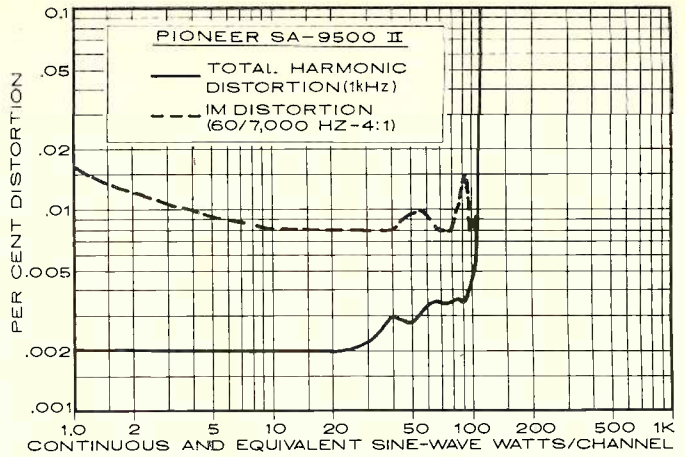
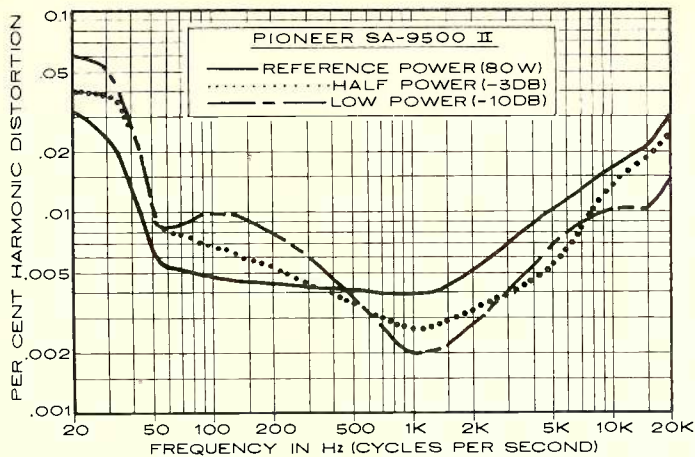


IN its 1977 product line, U.S. Pioneer has retained the basic identity of many of its models but added the suffix "II" to indicate that certain improvements have been made. A good example is the new Model SA-9500II integrated stereo amplifier, which replaces the

SA-9500. The basic circuitry and specifications of the Pioneer SA-9500II are similar to those of its predecessor. It is rated to deliver up to 80 watts per channel to 8-ohm loads from 20 to 20,000 Hz with less than 0.1 per cent total harmonic distortion.

The front panel of the SA-9500II, though in unmistakable Pioneer style, sports a new layout and some changes of control functions. The large volume-control knob has acquired ten more detented settings, making transitions more gradual than in the earlier model. Instead of single bass and treble tone controls each with three selectable turnover frequencies, the "II" has two separate bass and two separate treble controls. The pair of bass controls, marked 50 Hz and 100 Hz, boost or cut the response at those frequencies in 2-dB calibrated steps. The treble control knobs, marked 10 kHz and 20 kHz, also operate in 2-dB steps. This arrangement makes possible very subtle modifications in sound quality and affords a high degree of flexibility to the discerning listener (their effects are by no means as obvious as those of conventional tone controls). A separate lever switch removes the

(Continued overleaf)



tone controls entirely from the circuit path.

Other front-panel controls include a SPEAKERS switch, which connects either, both, or neither of two pairs of speakers to the amplifier outputs, and two lever switches for the low and high filters. These have gradual 6-dB-per-octave slopes with -3-dB points at 15 and 8,000 Hz. The BALANCE control is center-detented. A pair of lever switches control the LOUDNESS compensation and the MUTING (a 20-dB reduction in audio level). The MODE switch provides stereo operation with either normal or reversed channels, mono (L + R), or either channel alone through both speakers. There are two tape-function switches, one for interconnecting two tape decks for dubbing from either machine to the other and the other for switching between the original signal and the tape playback.

The input selector offers a choice of PHONO 1, PHONO 2, TUNER, and AUX program sources. The two phono inputs are identical. There are also two small knobs that provide a useful and rarely found facility: they separately adjust the resistive and capacitive loads presented to a phono cartridge by the two phono inputs. The capacity switch has positions for 100, 200, 300 and 400 pF. Since most record players have between 100 and 200 pF of capacitance and most stereo cartridges require 200 to 500 pF, this switch permits the amplifier and cartridge to be matched to obtain the flattest frequency response. The second knob changes the resistive termination presented to the cartridge, with a choice of 10, 25, 50, and 100 kilohms. Almost all stereo cartridges are designed to operate with 47 kilohm loads, but sometimes it is possible to modify the high-frequency response to one's taste by appropriate combinations of resistance and capacitance. Having the controls on the front panel simplifies this process.

In the rear of the amplifier are insulated spring clips for the speaker connections, plus the various signal inputs and outputs. These

include separate preamplifier outputs and power-amplifier inputs, normally joined by external jumper links. There are four a.c. outlets, two of them switched.

Although the basic amplifier circuits of the SA-9500II are quite similar to those of the SA-9500, the power-supply sections are completely different. Each channel now has a completely separate power supply to prevent any interaction between channels resulting from a common power-supply impedance. The Pioneer SA-9500II is about 16½ inches wide, 14¾ inches deep, and 5⅞ inches high. It weighs about 35 pounds. Price: \$450. An optional walnut-veneer wooden cabinet is available for \$35.

● **Laboratory Measurements.** The Pioneer SA-9500II became only moderately warm during the one-hour preconditioning period at one-third of its rated power output. The amplifier outputs clipped at 102 watts per channel into 8-ohm loads at 1,000 Hz. The power at clipping into 4-ohm loads was 145 watts per channel, and into 16 ohms it was 62 watts.

The total harmonic distortion (THD) of the SA-9500II at 1,000 Hz was at or near the residual of our test equipment over much of its power range. It measured about 0.002 per cent up to 30 watts output and varied between 0.003 and 0.005 per cent from there to 100 watts just before clipping occurred. The intermodulation distortion (IM) was a nearly constant 0.008 per cent, and never more than 0.016 per cent, from about 1 watt to 100 watts output. At very low power levels, the IM rose slightly (to 0.075 per cent at 80 milliwatts and 0.27 per cent at 8 milliwatts).

The THD was between 0.002 and 0.01 per cent from 50 to 5,000 Hz at rated power or less. It rose to between 0.03 and 0.06 per cent at 20 Hz and 0.015 to 0.032 per cent at 20,000 Hz depending on the power level.

To develop a reference power output of 10

watts, the amplifier required an input of 47 millivolts (AUX) and 0.86 millivolt (PHONO). The respective unweighted signal-to-noise ratios were about 76 and 71 dB, referred to 10 watts. The phono preamplifier did not overload until the unusually high input level of 370 millivolts was reached.

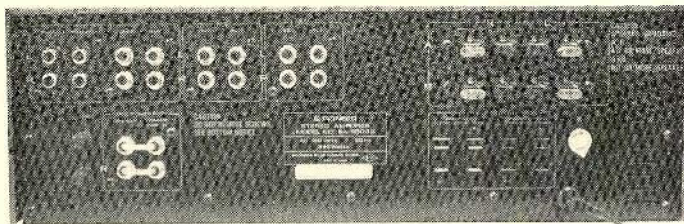
The normal or main tone controls of the SA-9500II had good, though conventional, response characteristics with their control range limited to about ±10 dB. The bass turnover frequency shifted from below 100 Hz to about 400 Hz as the control was advanced; the treble curves were hinged at about 4,000 Hz. The 50-Hz bass sub-control had a range of turnover frequencies from 20 to 70 Hz, and the 20,000-Hz treble-control characteristics were hinged at about 8,000 Hz.

The 6-dB-per-octave slope and 8,000-Hz cut-off frequency of the high-frequency filter made it virtually useless (it is an almost exact duplicate of the 20,000-Hz tone-control response). In any case, it had negligible effect on either program material or noise. The low-frequency filter may indeed reduce subsonic rumble, but it certainly had no effect on the audible program, with its response being down only 2.5 dB at our lower measurement limit of 20 Hz. The loudness control boosts both high and low frequencies. We usually preferred to use the 20-dB attenuation of the muting switch in conjunction with the loudness compensation; this permits the volume control to be set in the upper half of its range and avoids the excessive bassiness of most loudness-compensation systems.

Pioneer emphasizes the accuracy of the RIAA phono equalization, which is derived from precision resistors and capacitors. We measured an excellent overall phono response of ±0.5 dB from 20 to 20,000 Hz and, given the range of error inherent in our pre-equalizing test jig and response-plotting system, it appears that Pioneer's claim of 0.2-dB equalization accuracy is justified. When the phono response was measured through the inductance of a phono cartridge, there was a slight rise at high frequencies (instead of the usual drop) amounting to about 1.5 dB in the 10,000- to 15,000-Hz range. This can be expected to vary somewhat with the choice of termination (we used 200 pF and 50 kilohms as representative values, which, in any case, can be adjusted to the cartridge's requirements).

● **Comment.** The Pioneer SA-9500II is certainly one of the top-ranking integrated  
(Continued on page 46)

Below the inputs and the tape jacks of the SA-9500II are the ground posts and the preamp-to-power-amp jumpers.





LIGHTS: 3 mg. "tar", 0.9 mg. nicotine  
av. per cigarette, FTC Report DFC 76;  
LIGHT 100's: 13 mg. "tar", 1.0 mg. nicotine  
av. per cigarette by FTC method.

# For me it's low tar, not low taste.

Most low tar cigarettes are a tasteless version  
of something else. Not Winston Lights.  
Winston Lights have low tar. But they also have  
taste. If you're sacrificing taste for low  
numbers, you're smoking the wrong cigarette.



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

Winston Lights. Winston Light 100's.

# 250 watts per channel

(minimum RMS at 8 Ohms, 20-20,000 Hz)

with no more than 0.05% THD\*!

*Model 2500*

VERT

CENTERING

HORIZ

LEVEL

TOROIDAL DUAL POWER SUPPLY

TAPE COPY  
1→2 2→1

TAPE MONITOR  
1 2

ON SCOPE  
AUDIO

FM 25μS

1-PHONO  
2

REVERSE STEREO  
L+R

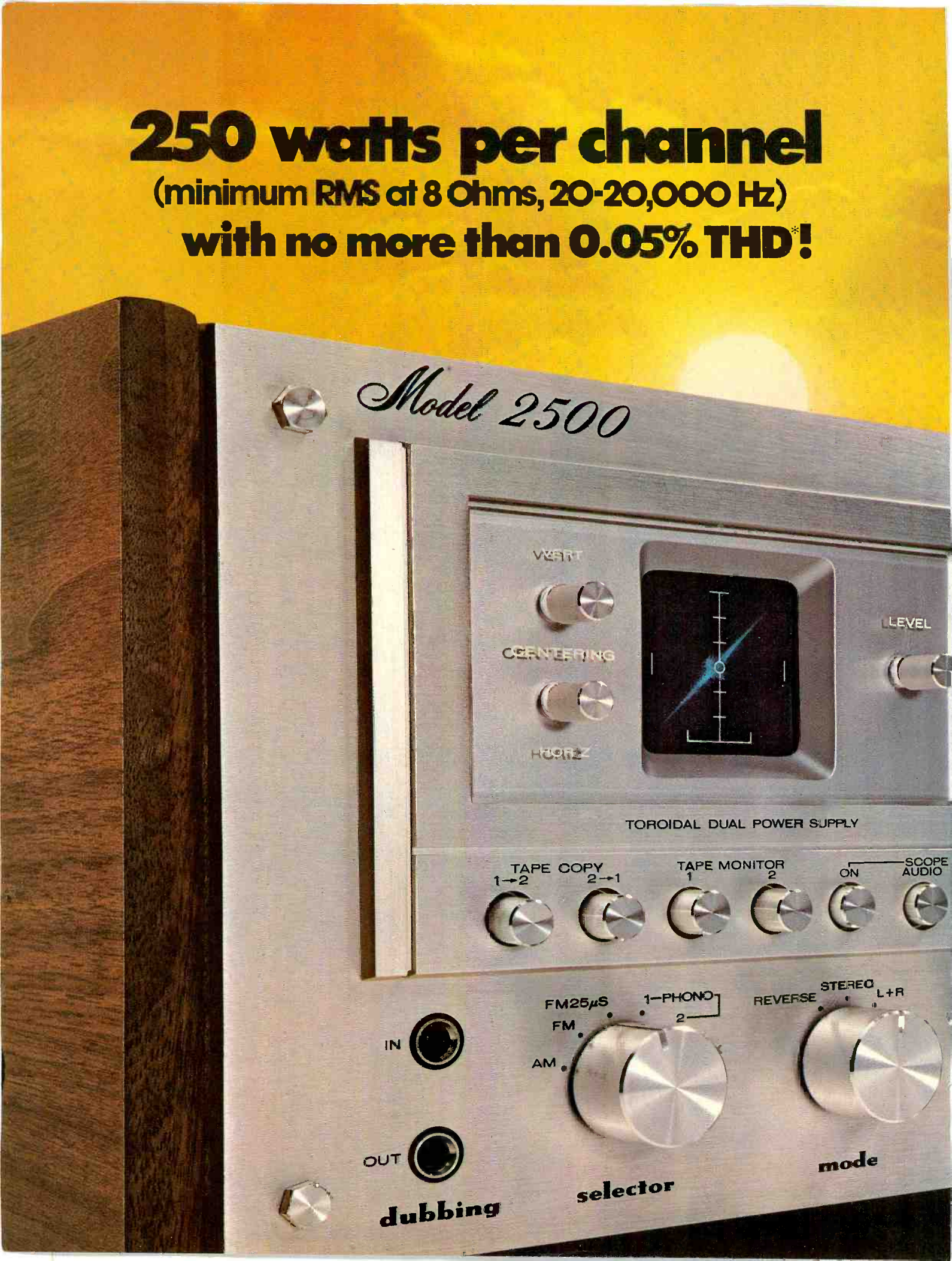
IN

OUT

**dubbing**

**selector**

**mode**



# The Marantz 2500 is the most powerful receiver on the face of the earth.



amplifiers on the market. We have seen few other amplifiers, in any price range, whose distortion was low enough to tax the measurement capabilities of our Radford and Hewlett-Packard test equipment. And its ability to terminate a phono cartridge correctly is a definite advantage for those phonophiles who can hear the resulting modifications of cartridge frequency response.

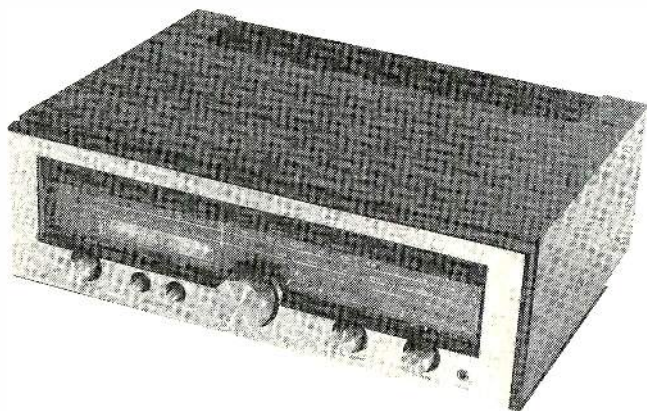
The tone controls of the SA-9500II deserve special praise. We might describe them as "tone controls for people who don't usually use tone controls," in which category we include ourselves. They do more of what a tone control *should* do, and less of what it should *not* do, than most such controls you are likely to encounter.

One of the most attractive new features of

the Pioneer SA-9500II is its lower price. Without sacrificing any basic qualities, and with the addition of the probably more expensive power-supply system, Pioneer has still managed to price the new amplifier 10 per cent under the old one. How many new models of other consumer products do you know about which the same could be said?

Circle 106 on reader service card

## Luxman R-1050 AM/FM Stereo Receiver



**M**OST of today's stereo receivers follow established styling trends and tend, at a quick glance, to look very much alike. But for those who prefer something visually distinctive, there are a few "different" products to choose from, including the new Luxman R-1050 AM/FM stereo receiver.

The R-1050 has the handsome rosewood vinyl-clad cabinet and sculptured panel edges featured on other Luxman products. Much of its front panel is taken up by the glass-covered dial section, which is colored deep brown to contrast with the pale gold panel and knobs. The lower edge of the dial window bisects the large tuning knob that visually dominates the receiver's controls.

Also on the brown dial-scale sub-panel are two illuminated meters reading relative signal strength and center-of-channel FM tuning. To their left, red LED indicators glow when a stereo FM broadcast is received and when the receiver's (optional) Dolby decoder is switched on. The lower right portion of the dial area is devoted to two groups of six LED's. These are peak-power indicators for the two channels. The lights come on successively at levels of -18, -15, -12, -9, and -6 dB as well as at 0 dB. (The 0-dB point is established at the rated output of the amplifier, which is 55 watts per channel into 8-ohm loads, from 20 to 20,000 Hz, with less than 0.05 per cent total harmonic distortion.)

Five smaller knobs are visible across the lower portion of the panel. The INPUT SELECTOR has positions for AM, FM, PHONO 1, PHONO 2, and AUX sources. The two rather small tone-control knobs have no calibrations or index marks but are center-detented. At the right of the panel are the VOLUME control, the SPEAKERS switch (which connects either,

both, or neither of two pairs of speakers to the outputs), and the headphone jack.

The upper portion of the front panel carries a row of twelve miniature controls for the receiver's other functions. At the left is a small pushbutton for the Dolby FM decoder (when the optional plug-in decoder is installed). The MODE button parallels the channels to produce a mono signal from any source. The TAPE MONITOR button connects the receiver's audio inputs to the playback outputs of a tape deck, and the adjacent button transfers that monitor function to either of two tape decks. Dubbing is possible from either deck to the other.

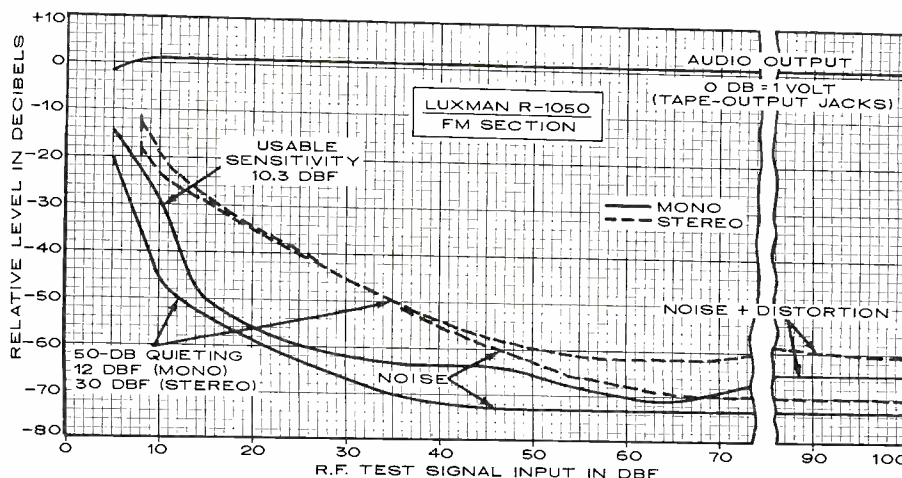
Continuing to the right, there is a small knob serving as the BALANCE control, detented at its center setting. A group of four small

pushbuttons defeat the FM MUTING, connect the LOW CUT and HIGH CUT audio filters, and turn on the LOUDNESS compensation. A small button increases the sensitivity of the peak-power indicator LED's by 12 dB so that the first light flashes at -30 dB (about 50 milliwatts). Finally, there is a larger pushbutton POWER switch next to an unmarked red LED that monitors the operation of the output-protection circuit. A short-circuit or other malfunction in the output stage causes a relay to open, disconnecting the speakers, and the light then flashes at the rate of about once per second until the fault is corrected. This circuit also provides a turn-on time delay of about 8 seconds, during which the LED also flashes.

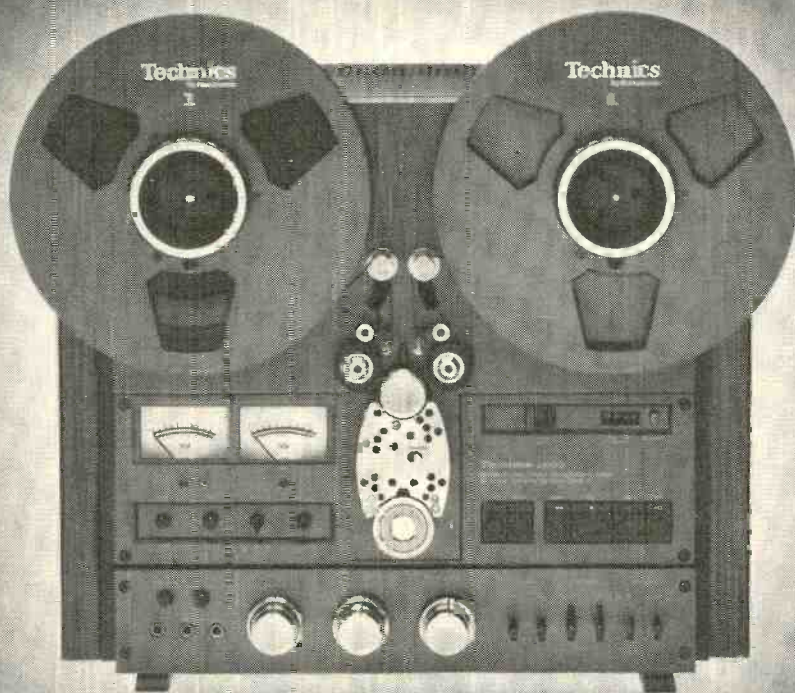
In the rear of the receiver are insulated binding posts for speaker and antenna connection, a dual row of phono jacks for the signal connections (plus a DIN socket for one of the tape decks), and two a.c. sockets, one of which is switched. There are no externally accessible fuses, and the AM ferrite-rod antenna is inside the cabinet.

The specifications of the FM-tuner and audio-control sections of the Luxman R-1050 are on a par with its audio power and distortion ratings. In other words, it is offered as a high-quality, medium-power receiver with the distinctive styling and construction for which Lux is well known. The Luxman R-1050 is about 19¾ inches wide, 14 inches deep, and 7¼ inches high. It weighs just under 30 pounds. Price: \$595. The optional plug-in Dolby FM decoder is \$55 additional.

(Continued on page 48)



# How to get a three-motor, direct-drive, isolated-loop deck. And save \$5,500.



"Ingenuity of design can be fascinating for its own sake, but when it results in a product of demonstrable excellence, as with this tape recorder, one can only applaud."

The review is from *Modern Recording*. The tape deck is Technics RS-1500US. And the ingenuity of design that *Modern Recording and Audio* have praised in recent issues is Technics' advanced "Isolated Loop" tape transport with a quartz-locked, phase-control, direct-drive capstan.

By isolating the tape from external influences, Technics has minimized tape tension to an unprecedented 80gms. Eliminating virtually all signal dropout. While reducing modulation and wow and flutter to a point where conventional laboratory measurement is seriously challenged. A considerable achievement when you realize Technics RS-1500US is priced substantially below its professional counterpart. \$5,500 below.

Electronically, too, Technics has provided the ultimate in professional control and performance. A separate microphone amplifier. Record amplifier. Mixing amplifier. And three-way bias/equalization. While IC full-logic function controls permit absolute freedom in switching modes.

Compare specifications and prices. Then you'll realize there's no comparison. TRACK SYSTEM: 2-track, 2-channel recording, playback and erase. 4-track, 2-channel playback. FREQ. RESPONSE: 30-20,000Hz,  $\pm 3$ dB (-10dB rec. level, at 15ips. WOW & FLUTTER: 0.018% WRMS at 15ips. S/N RATIO: 60dB (NAB weighted) at 15ips. SEPARATION: Greater than 50dB. RISE TIME: 0.7 secs. SPEED DEVIATION:  $\pm 0.1\%$  with 1.0 or 1.5mil tape at 15ips. SPEED FLUCTUATION: 0.05% with 1.0 or 1.5mi tape at 15ips. PITCH CONTROL:  $\pm 6\%$ . SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE: \$1,500\*

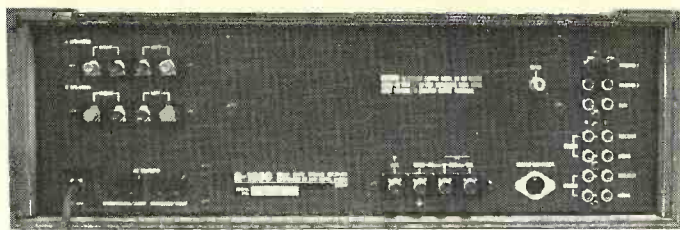
Technics RS-1500US. A rare combination of audio technology. A new standard of audio excellence.

\*Technics recommended price, but actual retail price will be set by dealers.

**Technics** Professional Series  
by Panasonic

CIRCLE NO. 56 ON READER SERVICE CARD

Connectors on the R-1050 are closely grouped; binding posts are used for speakers and antennas, phono jacks elsewhere.



• **Laboratory Measurements.** During the one-hour FTC-mandated preconditioning period at one-third power, the ventilating grille over the output-transistor heat sinks became very hot to the touch (in normal operation, the receiver runs completely cool). With both channels driven with a 1,000-Hz signal into 8-ohm loads, the outputs clipped at 63 watts per channel. The 4- and 16-ohm clipping levels were 83 and 43 watts. A special internal fuse protects the output transistors from sustained external shorts. We would have preferred to have it more readily accessible to the user.

The total harmonic distortion (THD) at 1,000 Hz was measured at the 0.002 per cent residual of the test instruments up to 1 watt output, increasing to 0.01 per cent at 30 watts and 0.014 per cent at 60 watts, slightly above rated output. The intermodulation distortion (IM) was about 0.012 per cent from 1 to 10 watts and 0.047 per cent at 60 watts. It rose at very low output levels to 0.15 per cent at 5 milliwatts.

At most frequencies and power levels, THD was typically 0.02 per cent or less. A 63-millivolt input to the high-level (AUX) jacks drove the amplifier to a reference output of 10 watts with a signal-to-noise ratio (S/N) of 75.5 dB. The phono sensitivity was 1 millivolt with a 73-dB S/N, and phono overload occurred at a very safe 175-millivolt input.

The tone controls had conventional characteristics, with the bass-turnover frequency shifting from 200 to 400 Hz as the control was advanced and the treble response hinging at 3,000 Hz. The loudness compensation applied considerable boost to both low and high frequencies as the volume-control setting was reduced. The filters had gradual, somewhat ineffective, 6-dB-per-octave slopes with -3-dB response at frequencies of 70 and 8,000 Hz. The RIAA phono equalization was extraordinarily flat—beyond the ability of our test instruments to resolve any departure from the ideal response at frequencies above 40 Hz. When the phono response was measured

through the inductance of typical phono cartridges, the response was essentially flat over the audible range with a very slight increase at high frequencies—less than 1.5 dB at 20,000 Hz.

The FM tuner section had a usable sensitivity of 10.3 dBf (1.8 microvolts, or  $\mu\text{V}$ ) in mono and 16 dBf (3.5  $\mu\text{V}$ ) in stereo. The 50-dB quieting sensitivity was 12 dBf (2.3  $\mu\text{V}$ ) in mono with 1.1 per cent THD, and 30 dBf (35  $\mu\text{V}$ ) in stereo with 0.33 per cent THD. The FM distortion was very low—well under 0.1 per cent at signal levels exceeding 25 dBf (10  $\mu\text{V}$ ) and dipping to a mere 0.028 per cent at the 65-dBf (1,000  $\mu\text{V}$ ) level used for establishing a distortion rating. In stereo, the distortion was only 0.077 per cent. The FM quieting was also better than we have measured on many tuners: 73 dB in mono and 70 dB in stereo. Stereo distortion, with L - R modulation, was 0.45 per cent at 1,000 Hz, and 0.2 per cent at 6,000 Hz.

The FM frequency response was flat within  $\pm 0.5$  dB from 30 to 15,000 Hz without the usual loss of high-frequency response caused by the multiplex filter. In spite of this, the 19-kHz pilot carrier in the audio was suppressed to -76 dB. Channel separation was both wide and uniform; it was between 37 and 43 dB over the full 30- to 15,000-Hz range and typically better than 40 dB.

The FM capture ratio was 1.4 dB and AM rejection was a very good 70 dB. Image rejection was also good at 86 dB. The i.f. passband was somewhat asymmetrical, giving alternate-channel selectivity readings above and below the signal frequency of 63 and 80 dB for an average of 71.5 dB. The adjacent-channel selectivity was 7.1 dB. All these figures, when they miss being outstanding, are certainly adequate.

The muting and stereo-switching thresholds were identical and unusually low at a mere 8 dBf (1.4  $\mu\text{V}$ ). In spite of this, the muting action excluded noise very effectively, and noisy stereo reception could always be con-

verted to mono with the front-panel control. The AM frequency response was quite restricted—down 6 dB at 140 and 3,800 Hz.

• **Comment.** The excellent audio-distortion ratings of the Luxman R-1050 obviously place it among the cleanest of the currently available receivers. And its FM tuner is also well above average in respect to distortion, S/N, and stereo performance. All in all, there is little to criticize in the performance, and nothing at all in the sound of this receiver. The Dolby FM decoder (which was installed in the unit we tested) automatically changed the de-emphasis time constant from 75 to 25 microseconds when the Dolby was switched in, and the sound was first-rate. In addition, the R-1050 is as versatile as any current receiver except for the absence of separate preamplifier outputs and power-amplifier inputs.

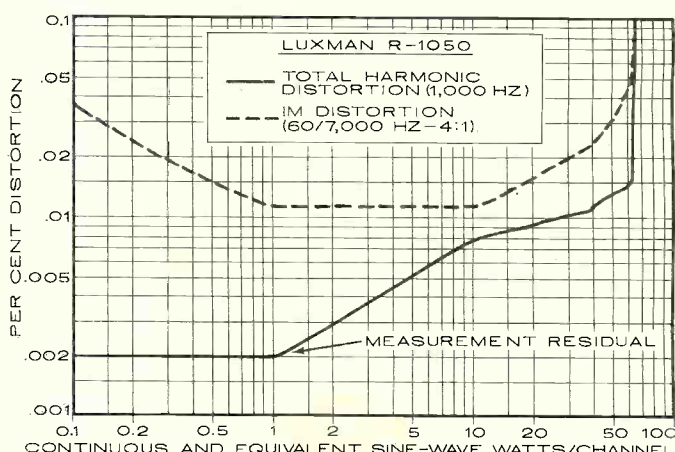
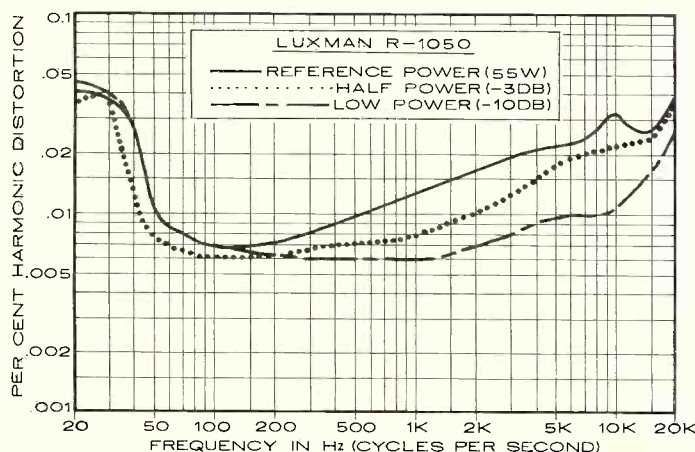
The inconspicuous controls along the top of the panel are rarely used, and the receiver's styling benefits from their semi-concealment. However, we would have appreciated greater visibility for knob index markings and readouts. The tape-recording outputs, where we make our measurements of tuner and phono-preamplifier performance, should not be used to drive a recorder, accessory, or speaker equalizer with an input impedance of less than 50,000 ohms or so. (The coupling capacitor from the phono-preamp section has a low value, causing a loss of low-frequency response when the tape-output jack feeds too low an impedance. Most accessories will not cause trouble, but it's worth checking in advance. The tuner section's coupling capacitor is large enough to avoid such problems.)

The FM tuning was silky smooth and completely free of noise. In fact, every aspect of the receiver's operation and handling was as smooth and bug-free as its fine appearance would suggest. The LED peak-power indicators should help prevent distortion from overdriving the amplifier. The calibration of the lights is rather approximate, but on our unit they were all accurate within 2 dB of the indicated levels.

The Luxman R-1050, in terms of its watts-per-dollar ratio, is an expensive if very fine receiver; its elegant, distinctive styling will doubtless have strong appeal for potential buyers. All in all, it seems fair to say that, given its features, appearance, and performance, this is no mere run-of-the-mill receiver.

Circle 107 on reader service card

(Continued on page 50)



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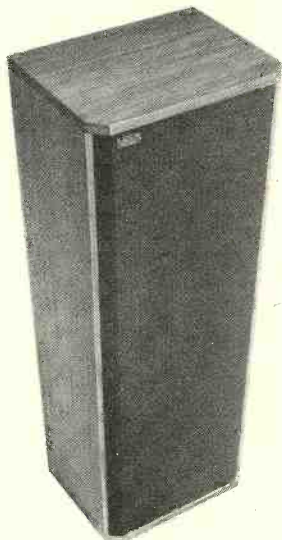


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**FUJI**

## Celestion 66 Speaker System



**C**ELESTION loudspeakers, though well known to British and Canadian audiophiles, have had limited and sporadic distribution in this country in the past. With the establishment of the Massachusetts-based Celestion Industries, Inc., this situation will presumably be corrected.

Heading the Celestion line is the Ditton 66, which is said to have been developed to serve as a monitor speaker for the British recording industry. It is an upright column 39½ inches high, 15 inches wide, and 11 inches deep; it weighs about 75 pounds. The front, sides, and top of the cabinet are finished in walnut, although the front is normally concealed by a black cloth grille on an expanded metal form.

The Celestion 66 is a three-way system that also has a passive radiator to augment the woofer at very low frequencies. Both the woofer and the passive radiator (which Celestion refers to as the ABR, or Auxiliary Bass Radiator) are 12 inches in diameter. The portion of the ABR that is visible when the grille cloth is removed is a flat disc of a damped plastic material with a central disc of a harder, perforated plastic. Directly above it is the woofer, whose cone is heavily plasticized to damp resonances.

The middle and high frequencies are radiated by two soft-dome drivers installed near the top of the cabinet directly above the woofer. The mid-range dome is 2½ inches in diameter and handles frequencies from 500 to 5,000 Hz. Above 5,000 Hz, the sound is radiated by an 0.8-inch dome. The relative outputs of the

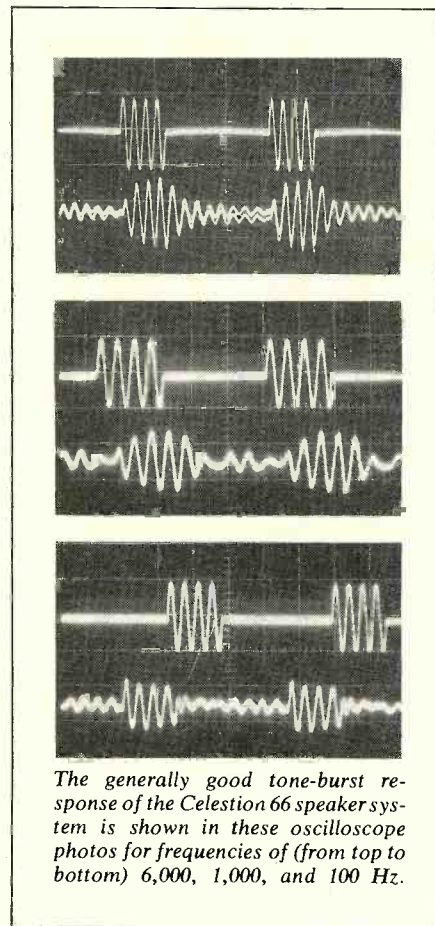
drivers are balanced at the factory, and there are no user-operated controls on the speaker. The Celestion speaker line comes with a five-year limited warranty. Price: \$499.50.

● **Laboratory Measurements.** The integrated room response of the Celestion 66 was reasonably smooth and uniform from about 300 Hz to our upper measurement limit of 15,000 Hz. The high-frequency dispersion was outstanding—better than we can recall having measured from any other system using a single forward-radiating dome. From its maximum output point at 55 Hz, the woofer response dropped off with increasing frequency. It also decreased at lower frequencies, where the contribution of the ABR became significant (below about 35 Hz). Matching the close-miked woofer-response curve to the integrated room-response curve, we obtained a composite frequency response that showed a significant low-bass emphasis, with the output dropping about 6 dB between 55 Hz and 200 Hz. It was constant within  $\pm 4.5$  dB from 200 to 15,000 Hz, and over the full 20- to 20,000-Hz range variation was only  $\pm 7.5$  dB.

The bass distortion of the Celestion 66 was very low. The measurement, made close to the driven cone, does not include the major contribution of the ABR at very low frequencies. Nevertheless, the distortion at 1 watt was typically about 0.3 per cent down to 70 Hz, 1 per cent at 40 Hz, and only 4.2 per cent at 25 Hz. Increasing the drive to 10 watts increased the distortion only moderately over most of the bass range, to between 0.8 and 2 per cent from 100 to 45 Hz and only 4.3 per cent at 30 Hz. (At 25 Hz, the speaker was overdriven by a 10-watt level.)

The efficiency of the Celestion 66 was fairly high. An acoustic sound-pressure level of 90.5 dB at a 1-meter distance was produced when the speaker was driven by 1 watt of random noise in the octave centered at 1,000 Hz. The impedance was about 3 to 4 ohms between 15,000 and 20,000 Hz and between 5 and 10 ohms over the rest of the audio range except for the 25-ohm peak at the bass resonance of 41 Hz. The tone-burst response was fairly good with slight to moderate ringing at low and mid frequencies, although the high-frequency burst was excellent.

● **Comment.** With program material having above-average high-frequency content, the Celestion 66 gave a fine account of itself. For example, the Sheffield direct-to-disc recordings sounded superb through the Celestion speakers. Nevertheless, in our simulated



The generally good tone-burst response of the Celestion 66 speaker system is shown in these oscilloscope photos for frequencies of (from top to bottom) 6,000, 1,000, and 100 Hz.

live-vs.-recorded test, the 66 was slightly lacking in high-frequency output compared with the original sound source. Triangles, wire brushes, and cymbals were somewhat dulled. Overall, the speaker seemed a bit on the warm side with a degree of bass emphasis detectable on some program material. It sounded best kept away from room corners.

The high-frequency dispersion, as we have noted, was excellent, and the smoothness of the speaker's response made it feasible to add a moderate treble boost. We were then able to achieve a fully balanced, widely dispersed, and very low distortion output in our rather "dead" listening room. In a more "live" environment, even this slight assistance might not be necessary.

Circle 108 on reader service card

## Nikko Beta 1 Stereo Preamplifier



In the past, the Nikko brand name was associated principally with low- to medium-price audio components that offered excellent value. Nikko has now entered a different part of the audio market with a de luxe high-per-



formance preamplifier and power amplifier. The "value for the money" philosophy has been retained in the new units, which are very competitively priced.

The Beta 1 preamplifier uses FET's exclusively in its signal-handling circuits. The instruction manual refers to them as "high-voltage resistant," which suggests to us that they are operated at a relatively high d.c. supply voltage so that large signals can be handled without distortion or (presumably) slew-rate limiting. The Nikko Beta 1 is somewhat novel in its external characteristics as well. It is a "flat" package, with a front panel 19 inches wide and 2½ inches high, slotted for rack mounting (although the 2½-inch height is not a "standard" dimension for a rack-mount panel). The depth behind the panel is 13 inches, and the unit weighs 11.6 pounds.

On the satin-finish panel are the bass and treble tone controls flanked by lever switches for power and TONE (control) DEFEAT. Each tone control has eleven detented settings. The volume control is a twenty-two-position step-switch attenuator using precision resistors for close gain-tracking between channels, and it has lower noise than is typical of ordinary variable potentiometer controls. The volume changes in 2-dB steps down to -30 dB, and in successively larger steps down to -60 dB, before the signal is shut off entirely in the last position.

A small BALANCE knob, lightly detented at its center, is followed by the five-position TAPE control which provides complete tape-monitoring and dubbing functions for two tape decks. To the right of the TAPE control are three small brown knobs that relate to phono operation. Two of them adjust the level from the PHONO 1 and PHONO 2 sources, and the third sets the cartridge terminating resistance (for both inputs) to 22k, 47k, or 100k ohms. (We would prefer this sort of control out of the way at the amplifier's rear.) Finally, a large knob at the right of the panel is the input SELECTOR, with positions for two phono inputs and two high-level inputs.

On the rear panel of the Beta 1 are the various inputs and outputs, including a DIN socket for one tape circuit. Two of the three a.c. outlets are switched, and they are rated to handle 300 watts each (which is too low for many power amplifiers). The preamplifier itself is protected by a pushbutton-reset circuit breaker. Price: \$299.95.

● **Laboratory Measurements.** The output of the Nikko Beta 1 clipped at 11 volts rms into a load resistance of 10k ohms or greater and at 3.3 volts into a 1,000-ohm load. All our measurements were made with a high-impedance load. The harmonic distortion at 1,000 Hz (through high-level inputs) was difficult to measure within the rated output-level range of the preamplifier, since it was below the noise level (less than 0.005 per cent) up to more than a 1-volt output. At a 3-volt output the distortion was only 0.0053 per cent, and at 10 volts, just before clipping occurred, it was still a very respectable 0.057 per cent.

For a reference output of 1 volt, a high-level input of 0.11 volt (or a phono input of 1.9 millivolts) was required. The noise level through the high-level inputs was below our measurement capability (better than 80 dB below 1 volt), and through the phono input it was 75 dB below 1 volt. Phono overload occurred at an extraordinarily high 500 mv.

The tone-control characteristics were conventional, with a sliding bass-turnover fre-

quency and a treble response hinged at about 2,500 Hz. The RIAA phono equalization was accurate within  $\pm 0.5$  dB from 150 to 20,000 Hz, rising to a maximum error of about 3 dB at 45 Hz. There was virtually no interaction with cartridge inductance, and the response changed by no more than 0.5 dB in the 10,000- to 20,000-Hz range when measured through the coils of typical phono cartridges.

● **Comment.** Despite its rather unconventional design, the Nikko Beta 1 is actually close to being a "bare bones" preamplifier. However, we judge that it has enough input and control flexibility for most people (although there are many preamplifiers with quite a few more control features). It has no filters or loudness-compensation circuits, neither of which are of much value to anyone interested in really fine sound. But where flexibility is called for, as in its interface with tape decks, the Beta 1 is well equipped.

There is one universal preamplifier feature that is missing from the Nikko Beta 1, however. Anyone who enjoys listening to preamplifier noise will be disappointed in the Beta 1. Our measurements show that its noise level is very low through either the high-level or low-level inputs. What the measurements do *not* show is the almost unbelievable subjective quietness of the Beta 1. When the preamplifier was connected to an amplifier capable of delivering more than 200 watts per channel, we found that only a barely audible hiss emerged from speakers of normal efficiency at *maximum* volume (and with *maximum* phono-level settings). This test was performed with an open-circuited phono input; with the input shorted, no trace of sound could be heard unless an ear was placed against the speaker. At any usable setting of the various gain controls (typically 30 or more decibels below maximum volume), the preamplifier was truly dead silent.

Many preamplifiers are claimed to have very low noise levels, but in many cases, including this one, the low noise figure is based on a measurement with the input terminal shorted; we consider this totally unrealistic. In other cases, the measured noise may be quite low, yet some trace of hiss or hum can still be heard at very high gain settings. The Nikko Beta 1 has the distinction of *sounding* as quiet as it measures.

Otherwise, the preamplifier performed as we would have expected in view of its rather impressive measurements. So far as we are concerned, a preamplifier that operates without audible distortion, noise, or other undesired effects under the most severe—even unreasonable—conditions is as good as it has to be. Given those qualities (which well describe the Beta 1), it is difficult to see how any further "improvement" could be detected, either by ear or instrument.

Ordinarily, we would expect these qualities only in an exotic, high-price product. We will not judge the "exotic" character of the Beta 1 (which, we suppose, would depend on how one viewed the exclusive use of FET's and whatever other atypical devices and techniques were employed in the design of the unit). There is no doubt, however, that the Beta 1's price is in a very comfortable middle bracket, and that it is affordable by any serious audiophile. Its unusually compact dimensions and neat, functional appearance make it still more attractive, and its performance, as we have already said, is unexcelled.

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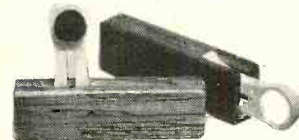



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# The Pop Beat

By Paulette  
Weiss

Ex-Moody Blues member John Lodge, publicist Barbara Pepe, and Pop Music Editor Weiss (photo by Randy Masser)



## EVERYTHING OLD IS NEW AGAIN

THE notion that over thirty is over the hill is no longer accepted as an absolute fact of life in rock. Young audiences now flock to performances by rockers ten or more years their senior, and this development has made possible, for many musicians, a kind of longevity that was unknown in rock music as recently as ten years ago.

And speaking of the number "ten," there have been so many tenth anniversaries this year that it has seemed to pop up everywhere—on album jackets, in press releases, in conversations with friends, and in announcements from concert stages. Although no supergroup other than the Who has survived ten years of performing and recording with *all* original personnel intact (Led Zep has one more year to go), several of them that are still going strong have maintained for ten years enough of the nucleus of the original group to be considered coherent units that have survived a decade. In this category fall the Stones, Jefferson Airplane/Starship, the Hollies, the Beach Boys, Fleetwood Mac, and a considerable number of others. Many solo rockers have also reached the ten-year mark, surviving by creating an individual identity while passing through several groups. Eric Clapton, for example, became a famous solo performer by working his way through the Yardbirds (that short-lived hotbed of creative talent), Cream, Derek and the Dominoes, and finally Blind Faith. Others such as Rod Stewart, Jeff Beck, and Neil Young have similar histories, and the list of individual "old-timers" still pursuing successful careers is far longer than you might think.

But this year it's for the *groups* that the round number ten keeps coming up. And I think what made me aware of the flurry of activity from artists who have survived a decade or more was the announcement last June 2 of the tenth anniversary of the release of the Beatles' "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band." Coincidentally, I happened to hear the announcement on WNEW/FM, a New York radio station which in the same month celebrated *its* tenth anniversary of broadcasting rock full time.

Jefferson Airplane/Starship marked its tenth year of recorded musical madness with the two-disc album "Flight Log" (Grunt CYL2-1255), a kind of aural map of the musical terrain they've covered in a decade. I

credit the longevity of the Grateful Dead to the loyalty of their fans, nicknamed the Deadheads, who have clung to their favorite group with the tenacity of a particularly stubborn bulldog working on a particularly delectable bone. Although the group's famous \$450,000 sound system is gone and their corporation and their own record company have been junked, the Dead lives on. Like the Airplane, they have spanned ten years as recording art-



THE GRATEFUL DEAD  
*Living on in the movies*

ists, although they existed as a performing unit before the release of "Grateful Dead" (Warner Bros. 1689) in 1967.

Their new album "Terrapin Station" (Arista AL 70010), their first on the Arista label, was scheduled for release in July, too late for review in this issue. According to rumor, it will be of much higher technical quality than previous Dead efforts, since it was recorded by an honest-to-God producer, Keith Olsen, called in to make an album that will (gasp!) sell. I can't vouch for the disc yet, but I can attest to the fanaticism of the group's followers, who packed the recent New York City concerts and will be swarming to their movie,

titled simply *The Grateful Dead*. The movie is rather like a Dead concert: a peppy, exciting first half wilts and fades into a meandering self-indulgence that can't be rescued by a final spurt of energy. It is paced for tripping, and those who don't indulge may find the movie overlong, though not as rigorous as the Dead's notoriously lengthy four-hour concerts. There's some excellent footage from their 1974 Winterland concerts and tantalizing glimpses of backstage activity featuring a cast of uncharacteristically docile Hell's Angels and groupies galore. The sound is excellent, which is of great importance to Dead freaks, and at the advance screening I attended their loudest cheers were brought forth by shots of the Dead's towering bank of speaker systems.

The Moody Blues made it to their tenth year in 1974 and then burst apart, propelling the members into solo careers. I talked with ex-member John Lodge recently, and he had some firsthand insights into the phenomenon of rock longevity and made a few telling points about the demise of a giant. You will recall, of course, that despite the rousing success of their world tour in 1974, the group agreed shortly afterward to call it quits.

"The Moodies were getting ripped apart," John said. "We were only *passengers* on this express train where we had been the drivers. The last tour took five lawyers, ten accountants, fourteen road managers, and twenty thousand other personnel, all of them arranging *our* lives to earn *their* livings." It is likely the Moodies would have survived had they been able to keep control over their business affairs, for they were attracting loyal young fans.

"At Fort Worth in 1968 there's this knock backstage, and it's this young couple still in their wedding clothes," John said. "Two years later, same place, another knock, and they're back with a kid this time. On our very last tour, who's out there in the front row but *the whole family*, four or so kids worth!"

This year fans got a double Blues album that is a belated souvenir of their tenth anniversary. "Caught Live + 5" (London 2PS 690/1, reviewed in this issue) captures the excitement of the Moodies together in concert. And there's even *better* news for pining Moodies fans: the band is reuniting this fall for their eighth London album, and a supporting tour will probably follow.

"HERE at Last . . . Bee Gees . . . Live" (RSO RS-2-3901) is a two-disc, live recording by a group that is still functioning after a decade together. The Bee Gees' career effectively began in this country and Europe ten years ago with the release of "The Bee Gees First" (Atco SD 33-223) in 1967. Despite ups, downs, squabbles, and breakups, the Bee Gees are still a going concern. They are currently working on the soundtrack of a forthcoming film, *Saturday Night Fever*, after which they will move on to co-star with Peter Frampton in the film version of *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* in the fall.

If the current trend of longevity continues, the Who may still be together to play a fortieth anniversary concert in 2007. Roger Daltrey's hair will probably be white by then, but I wonder if he will still appear in the punk-rock regalia (safety-pin-pierced nostril and all) that he wears in the promotional film for his latest solo album, "One of the Boys" (MCA 2271). I also wonder what I will think of it all if I'm still around to write about it thirty years from now.

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# The Opera File

By William Livingstone



## VOICES FROM THE PAST

READING Henry Pleasants' book *The Great Singers* (Simon and Schuster, 1966) made me long to hear such titans of the past as the castrato Farinelli (1705-1782) and the soprano Maria Malibran (1808-1836). This year, when we are celebrating the centennial of the phonograph, it seems a bit ungrateful to bemoan the lack of recordings of singers from previous eras since so many great treasures have been preserved from the early days of cylinders and discs.

In 1902 the young Enrico Caruso, on the brink of a spectacular career, made his first records. Within the next few years so many more famous singers consented to record their voices that in its second quarter-century the so-called "talking machine" became a singing machine. The prestige of the world's greatest vocalists conferred artistic credibility on the phonograph, which had been considered a curiosity or toy, and the phonograph was able to preserve their work in a way that it could not yet preserve that of conductors and instrumentalists.

The enterprising young American producer Fred Gaisberg, who recorded Caruso, had a knack for luring reluctant opera stars into the studio. Francesco Tamagno (who created the title role in Verdi's *Otello*) was recorded in 1903, and the following year Gaisberg persuaded the Australian prima donna Nellie Melba to make a few records. Extremely demanding, Melba insisted that her records have a label of a color that would be used for no other artist and that they be sold for a shilling more than Tamagno's, the extra shilling being added to her royalties, of course.

The success of Melba's records when they were released in 1905 may have helped Gaisberg land the greatest catch of them all, the soprano Adelina Patti, who recorded for him in 1905 and 1906, just before she retired. Almost all of the recordings from Patti's sessions have been carefully transferred to LP and are available on a two-disc set (Electrola C147-01500/01) at import shops or from Peters International (619 West 54th Street, New York, N.Y. 10019). This generous sampling of Patti's repertoire is reason enough for serious vocal fans to celebrate the invention of the phonograph.

The daughter of Italian singers, Patti was born in Madrid in 1843 and while still a child was brought to the United States, where she

received her musical training. She made her first public appearance in 1850 and her last in 1914. For forty-five years she reigned not as the Queen of Song, but as its Empress, and her domain included the major operatic capitals on three continents. Sixty-two years old when she made these records, Patti was, of course, past her prime. George Bernard Shaw



ADELINA PATTI  
*No technical difficulties*

had written of her fifteen years earlier: "Time has transposed Patti a minor third down." But listening to these twenty-eight bands one can hear that her voice retained an amazing freshness, and one can understand why it was said that technical difficulties did not exist for her.

Despite needle scratch and the acoustic sound, the records are quite listenable, and it is fascinating to hear Patti's interpretations of familiar arias and songs. Her style, quite different from that of singers today, was marked by frequent *portamenti*, sudden shifts into chest register, and pronounced *ritardandi*.

Her fabulous trill is well illustrated in Lotti's *Pur Dicesti* and other selections.

The liner notes explain that the rather "white" (vibratoless) quality of her tone here is a fault of primitive recording technology. The shortness of breath evident in "*Casta Diva*" is attributed to the fact that time had amplified her figure, and (a diva to the end) at the sessions she refused to loosen her corset strings. Whatever its limitations, the album gives me an eerie satisfaction when I sit in my living room and listen to one of the most phenomenal singers of the nineteenth century.

Unlike Patti, Nellie Melba (1861-1931) was still at her zenith when she made her first records, and she made many others. Her career on disc is admirably documented on a five-record set, "Nellie Melba, The London Recordings 1904-1926" (EMI RLS 719), widely distributed here in Capitol Records' new import series. The set includes practically everything she recorded in England, with alternate takes and many previously unpublished items.

As Henry Pleasants points out in *The Great Singers*, Melba may have been surpassed by some of her contemporaries as an artist or as a personality—she was not a great singing actress—but none of her competitors became the institution that she did and few had her longevity. She was famous for the great beauty of her voice, which is usually described as silvery. Among the many songs and arias here the most revealing bands for me are the excerpts from *La Bohème*, which were recorded live (by the then new electrical process) at her Covent Garden farewell in 1926. At sixty-five she still had that silvery, girlish timbre.

Both of these albums are "limited editions," which will not be available for long. Another that you should acquire while you can is "L'Exquise" Maggie Teyte," a four-disc set from EMI (RLS 716) distributed here by Capitol. A British soprano, Maggie Teyte (1888-1976) was a specialist in the French repertoire. She made her stage debut in Monte Carlo in 1907 and still appeared occasionally in opera in her sixties, but she made few operatic recordings. She was best known, especially on records, as an incomparable interpreter of the French art song, or *mélodie*. The recordings included here, made mostly in the 1940's, are her best of that repertoire. She performed it with immense charm and an unarguable authority that derived from having worked with Debussy, Fauré, Reynaldo Hahn, and their contemporaries. Her teacher, the golden-age tenor Jean de Reszke, dubbed her "exquisite," and it would be hard to argue with him.

UNLIKE some vocal fans, I don't think all the great singers died or retired before I was born. So, although I find historic recordings instructive and pleasant to listen to, I don't really yearn for an invention that will reach out into the universal ether and pluck back the voices of Farinelli and Malibran, but in a sense that is what the Metropolitan Opera is doing in its series of recordings of the best Saturday matinee broadcasts of past seasons. This year's offering is an exciting performance of Verdi's *Otello* from February 24, 1940, sung by Giovanni Martinelli, Elisabeth Rethberg, and Lawrence Tibbett, conducted by Ettore Panizza. It is available only as a bonus to donors of \$100 or more to the Metropolitan Opera Fund (Lincoln Center, New York, N.Y. 10023); like last year's *Tristan*, it is worth every cent of the price.

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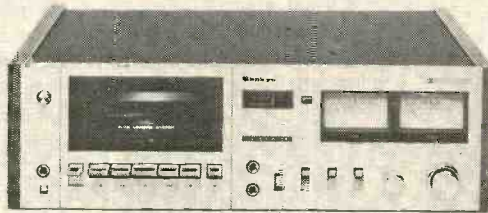
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Technical Editor Ralph Hodges reports on the wealth of new equipment shown at the Summer Consumer Electronics Show in Chicago this June

**T**HERE can hardly be any more impressive proof of the tremendous growth of the audio-component market in these United States over the past few years than the continuing expansion of the industry's principal showcase, the Summer Consumer Electronics Show in Chicago. The dates this year were June 5 to 8, and the event was bigger than ever. For the first time the show's organizers spread the audio exhibits beyond the limits of the enormous McCormick Place convention complex into additional space in the nearby McCormick Inn. As a result, some individual manufacturers showed some of their products at the "Place," other units at the "Inn," and maybe an early prototype or two at a "hospitality suite" in one of Chicago's downtown hotels. Further, at some of those same hotels, additional audio manufacturers not officially connected with the CES were holding their own concurrent "minishows" as well.

This three-way stretch made the logistics of covering the whole show more complex than ever, and STEREO REVIEW consequently had to expand its reportorial staff in order to cope. Still, the difficulty of fitting every manufacturer and every product into a four-day schedule was exceeded only by the difficulty of discovering just where all the equipment was. And so, though we file our report this year with the uncomfortable feeling that more than the usual number of worthy products from among the many hundreds on display may have escaped us, we console ourselves with the knowledge that we probably could not have found space for them all anyway.

You will notice in the columns following that, with the exception of the loudspeaker category, the amplifier and record-player sections occupy the greatest amount of space this year. We think this reflects the realities of the market this far into 1977 and suggests the direction for next year as well.

## Receivers

This year, the answer to the ever-popular question "Will receivers get even *more* powerful?" was once again "Yes." At 250 watts per channel (8 ohms, 20 to 20,000 Hz), the Marantz Model 2500 (\$1,600) has pushed past its "little" brother, the 185-watt Model 2385, to capture the heavyweight title. The new receiver shares the optional plug-in Dolby module system for FM, and it adds a built-in front-panel oscilloscope. The styling accents that set off these two top models have been extended downward in the Marantz line to update four previously existing receivers; distortion specifications have also been extended downward in three receiver models.

The high-power mark for Technics by Panasonic was set this year by the SA-5770 at 165 watts per channel. Descending from that figure are six other new Technics receivers that range from the 85-watt Model SA-5570 to the 15-watt SA-5070. Lux, in a departure from its separates-only product philosophy, has now entered the receiver field with three models the manufacturer refers to as "tuner/amplifiers" (a common overseas term for receivers). The Lux R-1120 (\$895) is rated at 120 watts per channel, the R-1050 (\$595) at 55 watts, and the R-1040 (\$445) at 40 watts. Six LED's for each channel indicate peak-power output level on all three models.

The "G" series of receivers from Sansui introduces a new styling concept for this company; both the G-2000 (\$230) and the G-3000 (\$280) have large volume and tuning knobs, but all other controls are very much subsidiary to the full-width tuning dial, with the result that the receivers tend to resemble de luxe tuners. Other styling innovations were represented by the 15-watt-per-channel Harman Kardon 230e, with a tuning dial readable from both in front and above, and the similarly equipped \$1,170 Citation receiver, which Harman Kardon describes as the ultimate receiver for the carriage trade.

Priced at under \$750, the STR 7800SD is Sony's most powerful stereo receiver; Dolby circuits for decoding Dolbyized FM broadcasts are built in. Kenwood has added the 40-watt KR-4070 (\$300) to the middle of its line, while Fisher's newest model, smallest in the company's line, is the 10-watt MC2000 with a price of approximately \$180.

Tandberg's latest receiver models, both rated at 27 watts per channel, are the \$429 TR-2025 and the \$599 TR-2025 M/B. The difference between them is that the latter provides short-wave and other multi-band reception facilities along with the usual FM and AM.

The third in the series of products using Hitachi's "Class G" amplifier configuration is the SR-2004 receiver, which has a continuous-power rating of 200 watts per channel but, thanks to the Class-G approach, is said to be capable of 400 watts per channel on a short-term basis.

One of the show's most novel receivers, the Bang & Olufsen 2400 (\$595), pursues the

Danish manufacturer's low-silhouette styling scheme in which only the most frequently used controls are directly accessible; it also adds a wireless remote-control unit that duplicates those same controls. Rated power is 50 watts per channel at 1,000 Hz.

In sheer numbers of new receivers, Nikko (seven), Akai (six), and Sherwood (five) were among the show's biggest plungers. The 175-watt NR 1415 (\$800) is now Nikko's largest receiver, while the 10-watt NR 315 (\$160) is their smallest. The high-power point in Akai's all-new receiver line is 120 watts per channel from the \$650 AA-1200, while the 15-watt AA-1115 brings up the rear of the line at about \$190. Sherwood's new receivers are based on the concept of "Certified Performance" (CP). If you buy any one of the five CP-series receivers, you will get with it a notarized document certifying the important performance specifications for that particular unit. The Sherwood CP line begins with the 20-watt S-35 CP and ends with the 125-watt S-150 CP.

Two up-and-coming manufacturers are breaking into the receiver business this year. Optonica, known for its innovative cassette decks, introduced the 65-watt SA-4141 and the 85-watt SA-5151 at the show. Prices are approximately \$400 and \$500, respectively. And Setton, whose recent introductions included its first two receivers, has added the top-of-the-line RS-660, which provides a minimum of 100 watts per channel (125 watts is said to be more typical) and extremely elaborate control facilities for \$800.

The JVC receiver line is undergoing updating, with the latest three models offering generally improved specifications and bearing a "Series II" designation. The Models JR-S600II, S400II, and S300II all employ the manufacturer's five-band SEA equalizer in place of tone controls; they range in power output from 120 to 50 watts per channel. Approximate prices are \$600, \$500, and \$400 in the above order. The H.H. Scott receivers have been similarly updated, with the line now consisting of five models (\$200 to \$550) ranging in power from 18 to 75 watts per channel.

Panasonic and Philips showed two receivers apiece in the moderate power-output category. The Panasonic RA-6500 (12 watts per channel) has a built-in cassette deck with Dolby noise-reduction circuits, while the RA-6800 (25 watts) has an eight-track recorder/player. The first receivers from Philips, the Models AH 784 and AH 785, will have power outputs of 18 and 30 watts.

**T**HE marketing might of Japan seems to promote several new brand names with every show. Sanyo, for example, now offers three receiver models, led by the JCX2400K with 50 watts per channel. Wintec, a new name in the field, starts at the same high-power point with the cleanly styled Model 888 (\$450) and works its way down to the 12-watt Model 222 (\$250). And, speaking of power, the giant 180-watt Rotel RX-1603 introduced last year is now available with an optional kit that permits detaching the power-amplifier section from the rest of the receiver and locating it up to 10 feet away. The influence of the big receiver is also seen in an extension of the general styling

scheme through six of Rotel's smaller models ranging from 120 to 10 watts per channel.

## Amplifiers

The two buzz-words most frequently applied to amplifiers around the show this year were probably "more" and "less": *more* power, *more* impressive specifications, *more* frequency range, *more* features, knobs, and meters, *more* amplifier classes (A, B, D, G, and now H), and certainly *more* models at every conceivable price point. Contrasted with these were *less* active and passive circuitry in the signal path, *less* in the way of costly superfluous features, *less* (potentially troublesome) negative feedback, *less* frequency range, and even *less* power (if the choice is presumed to lie between *more* power and somehow "cleaner" power).

This year's MORE award goes indisputably to Rotel for the RB-5000 stereo power amplifier and its 500 watts per channel (8 ohms, 20 to 20,000 Hz, under 0.009 per cent harmonic or intermodulation distortion), every milliwatt of which is visible in the so-called "triple" power supply with filter capacitors and power transformers (three of them) that are almost as big as bowling balls. Phase Linear also has a 1,000-watter coming up with protection circuits said to make it suitable for disco and PA use besides the normal audiophile applications. The LESS award, as we shall see, is still being hotly contested.

New products rounding out the Rotel amplifier line include the matching RC-5000 preamplifier (containing an octave-band equalizer plus a huge variety of other controls), the RZ-8 preamplifier/mixer (with built-in reverberation "chamber" and percussion synthesizer), and four integrated amplifiers ranging from 60 to 25 watts per channel.

Pioneer's new Series Twenty components tend toward the "less" school of thought, with high-quality parts used in the most straightforward, conservative applications. The M-22 stereo power amplifier is large, ruggedly built, and Class A throughout, and it provides 30 watts per channel for \$650. Its chaste companion (controls for input selection, level, phono-cartridge loading, and very little else) is the C-21 preamplifier at \$350. A stereo four-way electronic-crossover network (\$600) and a switching console (\$200) complete the current Series Twenty line. Pioneer's remaining amplifier introduction is the SPEC-4 power amplifier at 150 watts per channel and \$700.

Back for a moment to the "more" side with the new 250-watt Soundcraftsmen MA5002 "Class H" stereo power amplifier: it follows hot on the heels of Hitachi's 200-watt HMA 8300 Class-G power amplifier (first shown at the January CES) and appears to involve similar goals and techniques. However, instead of employing the two sets of output transistors operating from separate power-supply voltages as in Class G, this Class H unit has a single set of



output devices with two supply voltages switched between them in such a way that the higher voltage is "in" only when it is required. Once again, the major advantage seems to be improved efficiency and a reduction in the size of the heat-dissipating structures that add to an amplifier's cost and bulk. The Soundcraftsmen MA5002 is intended to sell for just under \$700. A smaller Class-H amplifier, the EA5003 (\$350), is surely the only power amplifier in the world with a built-in equalizer—an octave-band device with separate slide controls for the two channels.

Technics' major amplifier introductions of the year are part of the "flat" component series—"flat" not only in frequency response but in shape. The units are of a nominal 19-inch rack-mounting width, but they are only a few inches high. The SU-9070 preamplifier has simplified control facilities, although it does contain a "head amp" for direct connection of low-output moving-coil phono cartridges. The companion SE-9060 power amplifier (70 watts per channel) is also relatively spartan, with a similar painstaking emphasis on reduced noise and distortion of all types. Both are priced at about \$400. In addition, Technics has added a new integrated stereo amplifier, the SU-8080, to its Professional Series (specifications and price not final at press time), and 50-watt (SU-7700, \$250) and 41-watt (SU-7300, \$200) models to its "standard" line.

Marantz showed five new integrated amplifiers, the 1260DC, 1180DC, 1152DC, 1122DC, and 1090, spanning a per-channel power-output range of 130 to 45 watts. (The "DC" suffix generally stands for "direct coupled," and indeed the majority of new amplifiers at the show were DC.) There was also a new Marantz preamplifier, the 3250, which should handsomely match the new 170DC power amplifier rated at 85 watts per channel.

As mentioned above, Harman Kardon has embarked on another styling change, and the result in its amplifier line approaches the ultimate in clean, pleasing simplicity. The Citation 19 power amplifier, 100 watts per channel at just under \$500, has a prominent LED display to register output levels, but the rest of the front panel is a virtually unbroken expanse of smooth brushed metallic or black finish. The Citation 17s (\$425), a redesign of the Citation 17, eliminates all equalization and tone controls to concentrate on the bare (and beautiful) essentials.

In contrast, the front panel of the Crown DL-2 is notably "busy," with numerical LED readouts showing the relative gains of the two channels, tone controls and filters offering unusual variability in turnover frequencies, variable loudness compensation, pushbuttons to advance or retard gain at slow or fast rates, and a great deal more. Although the DL-2 has the appearance of a complete preamplifier, Crown refers to it as a "switching module," since the power sup-

ply and phono preamplifier are both contained in separate outboard sub-chassis (to combat hum and improve phono-cartridge loading). Its apparent complexity notwithstanding, the DL-2 is designed to provide the simplest possible signal path. All special processing functions are completely out of the signal path unless "punched in" via digital control circuitry.

Also from Crown comes a new stereo power amplifier, the SA-2, combining 221 watts per channel with completely new protective circuitry. A new power amplifier, the M-60, graces the Accuphase line as well—mono this time, with a rated output of 300 watts. And a just-introduced power amp from Spectro Acoustics provides 250 watts per channel.

The Model 410, the latest stereo power amplifier from the BGW people, boasts 200 watts per channel and has a ten-element LED display for each channel, with the LED's arranged in arcs like meter scales. A suitable companion preamplifier, the Model 203, has also been introduced. Prices are \$700 and \$650, respectively.

The "Ultimate Stereophonic Preamplifier" (Model P-303) and "Ultimate Stereophonic Power Amplifier" (Model M-505) are Onkyo's designations for its most prestigious separates. Again, bare-bones external simplicity and great internal conservatism and sophistication are the dominant themes. The P-303, which has the barest minimum of switching (and of course no tone controls), will shortly be augmented by the E-30 equalizer and U-30 switching complex.

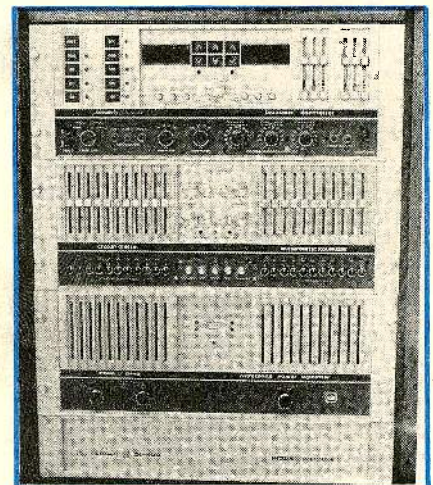
Dynaco's top-of-the-line Stereo 400 power amplifier and PAT-5 preamplifier are considerably altered this year. The power amp, now the Stereo 416, has twice as many output transistors as its predecessor, LED level displays instead of meters, and several other new features. The preamp, now the PAT-5/FET, has a FET-input operational amplifier in place of the older IC, improved parts in key places, and appreciably lower distortion. Silver front panels have replaced the traditional Dynaco gold on both units, which will be available in kit or wired form.

Meanwhile, the founder of Dynaco, David Hafler, has begun a new company bearing his own name. His first product is the DH-101 stereo preamplifier kit. Once again, Hafler's emphasis is on a minimum of frills, a maximum of audible performance, and the best possible price (\$200 for the kit, \$300 factory-wired). Dunlap Clarke also has a new, similarly straightforward and quality-conscious preamplifier, the Model 10 (\$600; \$75 extra for a built-in moving-coil-cartridge "head amp"), as well as a new 125-watt-per-channel power amplifier, the Model 250. At \$3,500, the Setton RCS-X-1000 Control Center seems likely to become the "impossible dream" preamplifier for many. Actually it is much more, containing a true frequency-synthesizing digital tuner (manual tuning plus six pushbutton presets) and enough control facilities and LED indicators to satisfy the most jaded soul. More "conventional," in Setton's words, is the AS-5500 amplifier, consisting of essentially separate preamplifier (PS-550) and power-amplifier (BS-5500) chassis intended to "dock" together, one above the other. The complete ensemble, expected to provide

well in excess of 100 watts per channel, is now priced at just under \$1,100.

The Control Module 120 from Jennings Research is a novel preamplifier with what is called an "input override" function. When the input signal from the selected program source ceases, the preamplifier (after a "decent" interval) reverts back to the previously selected source, thus providing virtually continuous music. Price: \$400.

One of the new names in the show was A&E Technical Research, now being imported by Osawa & Co. Among its products are two power amplifiers (200 and 60 watts per channel), a preamplifier, and a unique phono-only preamplifier with numerous level, cartridge-loading, and balance adjustments. Quality is said to be very high, with prices to match: \$800 to \$3,250. Dayton Wright's latest preamplifier is the SPA, with physically separate power supply and an optional built-in moving-coil preamplifier that is also available separately. If you need to ask its price, you probably can't afford it.

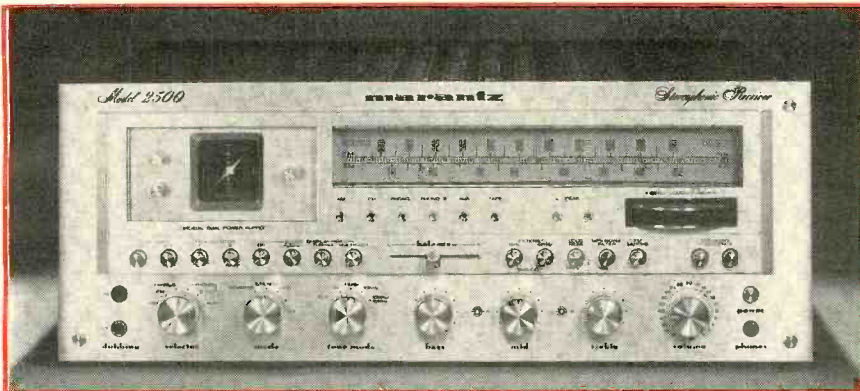


**CROWN:** The DL-2 "Digitalogic Controller" (top) crowns Crown's new equalizer and power amplifier.

Another product fitting that category is Mark Levinson's ML-2 massive power amplifier, seen last year as a prototype. These days \$1,600 is not exorbitant for an "ultimate" amplifier, but in this case the sum buys only 25 watts of mono, although they should be among the cleanest Class-A watts available. Audio Research's SP-5 (\$595) is a "cut-down" version of the successful SP-4 preamplifier, lacking tone controls and a few other features, but providing internal accommodation for the \$150 MCP-1 moving-coil-cartridge preamp, also new from the same manufacturer.

Threshold has a matching preamplifier, the NS 10, for its recently introduced Class-A power amplifier. Believers in wide frequency bandwidth, the Threshold folk have designed for a response down only 3 dB at 50 MHz! And they were not alone. Elsewhere, Van Alstine Audio Systems entertained show-goers by routing the video portion of a color TV signal through their





**MARANTZ:** The Model 2500 250-watt-per-channel receiver has a front-panel oscilloscope that can be switched to display the audio signal or serve as a tuning and multipath indicator. An optional Dolby module for FM can be inserted in the rear.

Model One preamplifier with no perceptible degradation. They also demonstrated the audible virtues of their Double 400 power amp.

On the other hand, Apt Corporation's Tomlinson Holman, known for his writings on phono-preamplifier testing and design in various technical journals, favors an intelligently restricted frequency bandwidth, and the new Holman preamplifier is obviously the product of a lot of thinking along these lines; it is attractively priced as well (projected cost is in the neighborhood of \$400).

Among other amplifier developments of note: RAM Audio Systems, which began with a power amplifier, has introduced the Model 200 preamplifier (\$1,000) with plenty of control facilities and indicators plus direct plug-in of moving-coil cartridges. And Analog Engineering Associates, which began with a preamplifier, has added the Model 555 power amplifier (55 watts per channel) with great emphasis on the precision of internal electrical parts. Rappaport, whose PRE-1 preamplifier continues to gather strength among hypercritical audiophiles, has added such niceties as a moving-coil-cartridge preamplifier. And DB Systems has a new tone-control module (\$375) to be used along with the DB preamp (which lacks tone controls). The company will soon announce specifications on its first power amplifier.

Bryston, a Canadian manufacturer with three power amplifiers of 50, 100, and 200

watts per channel, was much in evidence in certain areas of the show. But only at the Audionics suite could one see the startling 200-watt BA-150 stereo power amplifier (under \$2,000), a hybrid with a transistorized input section and a vacuum-tube output section, the latter being dynamically adjusted in bias and operating voltages by means of digital circuits to maintain surprisingly high efficiency and reasonable operating temperatures for such a design.

A few names were new to us: Professional Systems Engineering, with a gracefully styled preamp and 80-watt power amp; HH Electronic from England, with a compact and clearly well-engineered 210-watt-per-channel power amplifier, the S500-D; and Electrocompaniet from Norway, whose 50-watt power amplifier and preamplifier are just beginning to attract favorable notice in the audio underground. Finally, England's Monogram Professional Audio, which we had heard of, is about to introduce a line of power amplifiers that will operate in Class A at low levels, Class AB at medium levels, and Class B at highest outputs.

We come at last to the show's integrated amplifiers, still continuing their remarkable recent growth in consumer popularity. Added to the Lux Laboratory Reference Series is the Luxman 5L15 80-watt integrated stereo amplifier (\$995) as well as a meterless version of the 100-watt-per-channel 5M21, the 5M20 (also \$995). The KA-9100 (\$500),

now at the top of Kenwood's integrated-amplifier line, has separate power supplies for its two output sections as well as an additional supply for its preamplifier section. Rated output is 90 watts per channel, and the phono inputs are said to be sensitive enough to accept a moving-coil cartridge directly. JVC's de luxe JA-S41 (\$280) also has separate supplies for its preamp and its 60-watt-per-channel power-amp section. Both companies also introduced smaller integrated amplifiers: the Kenwood KA-7100 (\$300) at 60 watts per channel and the JVC JA-S11 (\$140) at 30 watts per channel.

Sansui's latest integrated units, the AU-717 (\$450) and AU-517 (\$370), have twin power supplies and are said to have power-amplifier sections with the widest frequency bandwidths of any integrated amplifiers available. Rated outputs are 85 and 65 watts per channel, respectively. At \$250 and \$200, Nikko's NA 850 and NA 550 carry power-output ratings of 60 and 45 watts. However, the greatest expansion took place in Nikko's Professional Series, with two new power amplifiers (the \$400 Alpha II with 110 watts per channel and the \$3,000 all-Class-A Alpha V with 100 watts per channel) and two matching preamplifiers (the \$200 Beta II and the \$750 Beta V, said to be the world's thinnest preamplifier).

Fisher's new integrated amplifiers this year are the CA2110 (\$250) and the CA2310 (\$350) at 70 and 55 watts per channel, respectively. Akai's one new model, the 20-watt AM-2200, is priced at \$150. The Optonica SM-4646 is an 85-watt-per-channel unit rather attractively turned out and costing \$450, while the debuting Wintec line sports two units rated at 30 and 50 watts per channel. Finally, the H.H. Scott integrated amplifiers have apparently been updated completely, with four models now available ranging in power from 15 to 60 watts per channel and in price from \$120 to \$250.

## Tuners

This was not a banner year at the Summer CES for significant innovations in FM tuners. However, there was one feature of note: the 19-kHz pilot-carrier cancellation technique first seen in the Pioneer TX-9500II introduced earlier this year (it eliminated conventional 19-kHz filters and their potentially detrimental effects on the audible frequencies) has now found its way into a few other products. There is also a proliferation of built-in oscillators that will feed a test-signal equivalent of a fixed per cent of modulation to a tape deck to permit presetting of off-the-air recording levels.

With a total of three new products apiece, Marantz, Rotel, and Technics led in the introduction of new tuner models. The Marantz Models 2120 and top-of-the-line 2140 share such features as switchable i.f. bandwidth and built-in oscillators for presetting tape-recording levels. And along with the less expensive Model 2100 they have provision for the optional Marantz Dolby-FM decoding module. Rotel's three new units—the

**KENWOOD:** The KA-9100 integrated stereo amplifier is the largest such product from this manufacturer, with a rated output of 90 watts per channel. Like other "DC" amplifiers at the show, it has a frequency response down to 0 Hz (d.c.).



# CES

RT-925 (\$340), RT-725 (\$200), and RT-425 (\$170)—descend in logical order from the RT-1024 introduced last year.

Two of the new Technics offerings fall within the company's Professional Series. In the new low-silhouette "flat" group is the ST-9030 (\$400), with pilot-carrier cancellation and a switchable circuit that automatically adjusts i.f. bandwidth to reception conditions. The Model ST-8080 (price not available at press time) has a built-in oscillator for recording-level adjustment. The ST-7300 (\$180) is the latest introduction to the "standard" Technics line.

At just under \$600, the FM-only Citation 18 is Harman Kardon's new entry in the "super-tuner" competition. Its comparatively simple control facilities include interstation-noise muting switchable between two thresholds, provision for connecting an external Dolby processor, and a built-in

atically completes the fine tuning of any FM station that has been approximately tuned by hand. And Wintec also offers a tuner, the Model 6005X, that is admirably restrained in styling.

## Phono Cartridges

This year Stanton moved beyond its famed 681 series to make the newly conceived 881 its top phono cartridge. The 881S (\$150) employs the "Stereohedron" stylus-tip configuration introduced in the Pickering cartridge line last year to improve tracing and reduce stylus pressure. Recommended tracking force is in the neighborhood of 1 gram, and written verification of specifications is individually packed with each cartridge. Meanwhile, the 681 line continues with the new 681 Triple-E (S-Type), also with a Stereohedron tip, priced at \$115.

Two new cartridge lines have been created by Audio-Technica. The first, the "Professionals," is made up of three

ered carbon-fiber shafts and viscously damped cueing mechanisms. Three counterweights are provided for an optimum match with any phono cartridge.

The new \$90 2000T cartridge from Empire is said to fill a gap between that company's top 2000Z model and the 2000E/III. The new cartridge will share the laminated-pole-structure design of the 2000Z. Another cartridge intended to fill a void where considerable demand exists is the Nakamichi MC-500, a moving-coil design that at \$110 provides an attractive alternative to their \$250 MC-1000. In addition, with an output of almost a millivolt for a standard lateral recorded velocity of 5 centimeters per second, the MC-500 will be able to drive many phono preamplifiers directly, eliminating the expense of transformers or head amps.

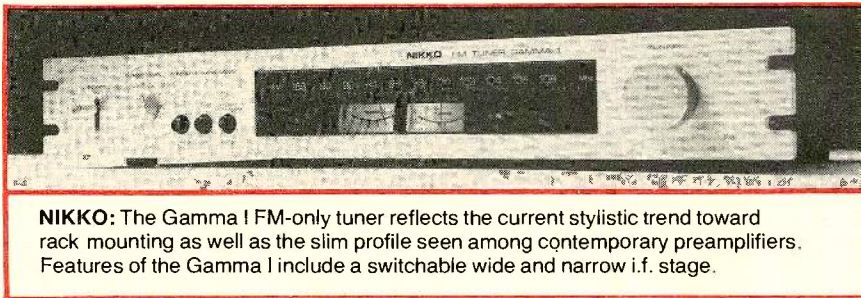
Satin, another manufacturer of moving-coil cartridges, has announced the introduction of the M-18 series of three models: the M-18BX (\$325) with a Shibata tip; the M-18X (\$240), also with Shibata tip; and the elliptical M-18E (\$195). All the Satin cartridges have exceptionally high outputs for moving-coil designs (on the order of 2.5 millivolts for a 5-centimeter-per-second recorded velocity), and they are unique for moving coils in having user-replaceable styli.

The strain gauge is a mode of cartridge transduction that has been mostly ignored in recent years. A strain gauge is a device whose internal resistance is altered when it is subjected to stress from—in this instance—a stylus cantilever. This changing resistance can be used to modulate the current from a suitable d.c. power supply and provide an output from the cartridge. In addition to the strain-gauge pickup from Win Labs (now several years old), there is a recently introduced new design, the Model 9210SG, from RAM Audio Systems. Overall frequency response is rated at 5 to 25,000 Hz  $\pm 1$  dB, and recommended tracking force is 2 grams. A "line-contact" elliptical stylus is used. (More details can be found in this month's "New Products," page 22.)

Finally, Micro-Acoustics has a new \$200 cartridge, the 530-mp, which will have its styli ground, polished, mounted, and aligned right in the Micro-Acoustics manufacturing facility in order to maintain direct control of tolerances and performance parameters.

## Record Players

One of the conspicuous stars of the show's record-player circuit this year was the Accutrac +6 from ADC. Ostensibly a changer version of the Accutrac 4000 with a six-record capacity, the +6 goes a bit beyond the usual changer concept. Instead of the usual record-drop system, the +6 has a small platform that spirals up around the changer spindle until it contacts the bottom of the record stack. It then engages the next record in the sequence and lowers it slowly to the platter surface. What is particularly interesting is that the platform can also *return* records from the platter to the stack, so that even records that have already been



**NIKKO:** The Gamma I FM-only tuner reflects the current stylistic trend toward rack mounting as well as the slim profile seen among contemporary preamplifiers. Features of the Gamma I include a switchable wide and narrow i.f. stage.

headphone amplifier with front-panel jacks for two headsets. It also has an optical system associated with the tuning pointer that is meant to eliminate parallax (implying a carefully calibrated tuning dial), plus Harman Kardon's highly acclaimed "Quieting" tuning meter.

Elsewhere, the Nikko Gamma I FM-only tuner (\$350) was introduced to complement the new Nikko power amplifiers and preamplifiers, and Sequerra announced production readiness on the Model II tuner (about \$2,000), identical to the Model I but for the lack of the oscilloscope display. Also, Sherwood released final specifications on the Micro/CPU 100 tuner with special memory functions introduced last year and presented advance data on the Model HP 5500, a more conventional design with similar excellent performance. And Sansui exhibited a new tuner with i.f. bandwidth switching, the TU-717.

From Fisher came two new tuners to join the "Studio Standard" series: the FM 2110 (\$160) and the FM 2310 (\$250), the latter featuring a multipath-indicating meter function. Setton's TUS-600 is identical to the tuner section in the RS-660 receiver and is priced at \$380. Optonica's \$300 ST-3636 has what is called an "Opto-Lock" feature that auto-

"ruggedized" cartridge models intended for studio and disco work or heavy-duty home applications where tracking forces are likely to run between 2 and 5 grams. Styli are either spherical (Model ATP-1), elliptical (ATP-2), or nude elliptical (ATP-3). Audio-Technica's "Compass" line also comprises three models for stereo (as opposed to CD-4) applications. Particular emphasis is laid on high stereo separation achieved through precise tolerances and alignment. The three models span a tracking-force range of 2½ to 1 gram and employ the same variety of stylus tips as the other series.

ADC is another company with a new top-of-the-line cartridge, the ZLM. The new pickup employs what is called an "Aliptic" stylus shape, providing a degree of vertical groove contact somewhere between that of a conventional elliptical tip and a Shibata. The tip is bonded to a tapered trapezoidal cantilever said to be responsible for a 50 per cent reduction in mass. In addition, ADC has updated all its previously existing cartridges to a "MK III" designation.

Another new ADC product is the LMF tone arm, available in versions with or without detachable cartridge shells (the non-detachable shell results in a decrease in effective mass). The LMF arms have tap-

played and buried by succeeding discs in the sequence are accessible for automatic replay. Like the 4000, the +6 can be programmed to play or ignore bands on a record in any sequence. And it also has a wireless remote-control unit with which the band sequence and the lowering and raising of records can be controlled from the listener's chair. A further bonus is the price, given as approximately \$300. The Accutrac +6 is a two-speed, belt-drive machine equipped with the ADC LMA-3 phono cartridge.

Another new record player attracting a more rarefied sort of technical interest was the Fisher MT-6225 semi-automatic turntable employing a new type of direct-drive motor. Instead of taking its drive signal directly from an internal oscillator, the Fisher mechanism arranges things so that the platter's rotational speed (the platter itself constituting a 120-pole rotor) modulates the amplitude of a 60-kHz oscillator's output, and this AM component becomes the drive signal. A motional feedback signal picked up by the motor's field coils is referenced to a fixed d.c. voltage to provide close servo regulation of platter speed. Advantages claimed for the technique are reliability, good torque and speed-stability characteristics, and simplicity—this last resulting in an attractive price of \$200.

But, then again, for \$1,300 you can buy the obsidian-base Technics SL-1000 Mark II, consisting of a turntable quite similar to the SP-10 Mark II introduced last year and the new EPA-100 tone arm. The arm features what is called "Dynamic Damping," a system made up of a spring, magnets, viscous silicone oil, an oil-damping cylinder, and a rubber membrane, all put together in a configuration too complex to describe here. The object is to reduce the "Q" of the arm-cartridge resonance with any cartridge the user is likely to select. The damping is adjustable through variations in the spacing of two magnets. The turntable is adjustable (precisely) for 33½, 45, and 78 rpm.

But the above should not overshadow Technic's other direct-drive introductions this year, amounting to seven (!) new models. Three of these, the SL-1500, 1400, and 1300, all designated Mark II, have digital speed readouts that also indicate any speed errors (digitally) within ±9.9 per cent, and they feature quartz-crystal oscillators. The other four have various automatic features and are governed by a single Technics/Panasonic IC. The SL-1900 (\$180) and SL-2000 (\$150) are single-play machines, while the SL-1950 (price not available at press time) and the SL-1650 (\$300) are direct-drive changers in the tradition of the SL-1350.

Harking back to the 78-rpm issue, the new Micro Seiki DD-100 suggests that this antiquated record speed is about to see a major revival. The DD-100 features a vastly oversized platter (it appeared to me to have at least a 14-inch diameter), an outboard power-supply/control module, enormous vibration-isolating feet at each corner, and speeds of 33½, 45, and 78 rpm. Fourteen inches happens to be the diameter of some master discs used in cutting 12-inch LP's. Do you suppose someone out there may be planning to produce a 78-rpm microgroove record, for which the DD-100 would be an ideal lacquer-checking machine? Wow!

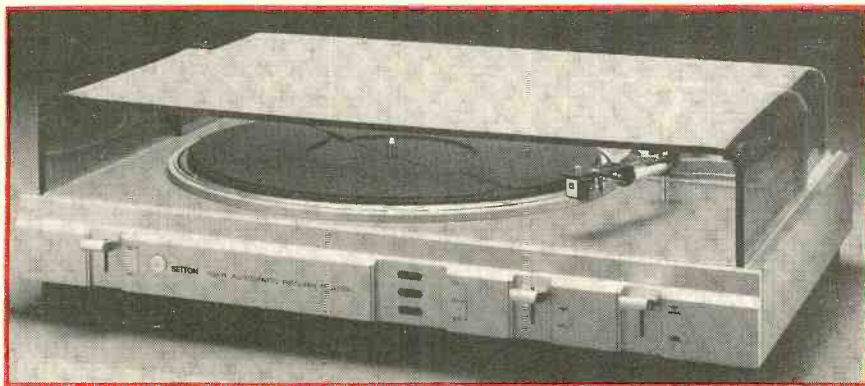
Back in the world of immediate reality, Garrard announces a new line of turntables with considerable attention paid to cosmetic details. The tangential-tracking GT55 and the direct-drive DD75 are retained as the premier models (updated with rosewood bases and matte-silver accents), but below them are five new belt-drive automatic turntables (\$200 to \$95) with S-shaped tone arms and similar styling schemes. The automatic cycles of all these machines have been enhanced in smoothness through the use of moving parts molded of Delrin, a special low-friction plastic.

The Model 604 (under \$250) was Dual's new machine for the show. The semi-automatic single-play turntable employs a new direct-drive motor with a digital circuit serving as a speed-accuracy reference. The tone arm has the dual mechanical-resonance filter system that is an exclusive with this manufacturer.

Another exclusive, the electronic speed control that first distinguished the B.I.C. 1000 belt-drive turntable, has been incorporated into the new B.I.C. 981, which also has illuminated stroboscopic markings on the platter rim as well as all the other features of the B.I.C. multiple-play automatics.

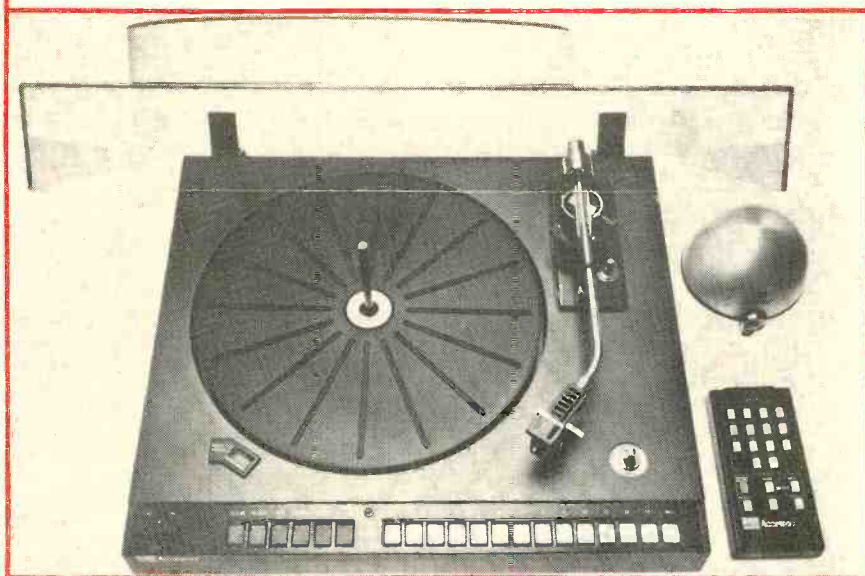
New direct-drive machines are the latest offerings from Pioneer and Marantz. The Pioneer PLC-590 (\$550) has a quartz-crystal phase-locked-loop motor employing Hall-effect devices and a meter instead of a strobe pattern to show any deviation from its 33½- and 45-rpm speeds (speed adjustments up to ±6 per cent are possible). Choice of arm is left to the user, with precut mounting panels for SME arms and others optionally available. The Marantz 6150 does have an arm (with viscous-damped cueing) and a platter-edge strobe display visible only through an illuminated view window.

JVC has three new direct-drive turntables for this year, as well as two single-play belt-drive units. The foremost model, the QL-7 (\$300), is the least expensive JVC unit to use a quartz-crystal phase-locked-loop motor. Rotel's latest offerings number two direct-drive machines, the RP-3000 (\$180) and the RP-5300 (\$170), plus three belt-drive units. The GA437 (\$120) is the latest in the Philips line of belt-drive turntables. BSR has instituted an entire new line of multiple-play belt-drive automatics, the "Quanta" series, with four new models, all of which come equipped with the ADC QLM cartridge. Scott has five new turntables, three belt-



**SETTON:** The front half of the TS-11's dust cover slides back to provide access to the platter and the tone arm, and all operating controls are on the front edge of the turntable base. Only 6 vertical inches are needed for installation.

**ACCUTRAC:** The +6 is the first Accutrac changer from ADC. By pressing the appropriate pushbuttons on the base or the remote controller (right) the user can return to any record in the stack and play its bands in any order.



# CES

## Tape Equipment

drive and two direct-drive, and Sanyo has three (two belt, one direct).

The entire Sony line of three turntables has phase-locked-loop, quartz-oscillator, direct-drive motors, and one of them, the PS-X7, has a fluid-filled turntable mat! Also, Sony amazed and amused passersby with a prototype turntable that automatically turns the record over—a product the like of which has not been seen for many years. Reportedly this machine is still some years from the marketing stage, however.

Equally amazing was the Infinity Black Widow "Air-Table," which uses a small volume of air under pressure as a platter bearing. The source of the air is a silent pump in a small outrigger unit. The turntable is belt-drive, and it uses Infinity's Black Widow arm. Meanwhile, Seton has come to the rescue of us poor wretches who allot what seems to be adequate space for a turntable and then discover there is no room to raise the dust cover. The Seton TS-11 has a two-piece dust cover, the front half of which slides directly back over the rear half to provide access to the platter. Furthermore, all the controls for the semi-automatic machine are on the front edge of the base.

Audio Retroflex and Environmental Sound have demonstrated once again that turntable platters needn't be platter-shaped. Both manufacturers use distributed circular masses—three for Audio Retroflex, six for Environmental Sound—clustered around a central spindle.

At under \$150, Hitachi's HT-350 is a notable bargain amongst direct-drive turntables; for even less (under \$120), there is the belt-drive HT-320. Visonik's leader in its new line of five record players is the direct-drive DD-8200 (\$247) with all controls on the front edge of the base. The other four Visonik machines are belt-drive. A similarly apportioned line is the new Lenco quartet, with two direct-drive and two belt-drive machines. The top-of-the-line L-833 DD (\$300) and the \$240 L-830 DD have gloriously colored and elaborately calibrated antiskating adjustments.

Not surprisingly, the bulk of new tape-equipment introductions at CES this year were in the cassette format. Except for Fisher's ER 8130, a new \$300 record/play deck with Dolby noise reduction, eight-track was scarcely heard from. Open-reel, as we shall see, has all but completely moved up into the semiprofessional stratum. And the Elcaset format, while it is definitely on the move, still has a very long way to go.

As Teac suggests, of its four new cassette decks this year, the least expensive—the \$230 A-103—could easily be mistaken for the most expensive addition to the line, which is the \$550 A-640. All are two-head, front-loading machines; the A-640 has a two-motor transport. Another new Teac product, the AL-700 (\$1,100), is an Elcaset deck with three heads, three motors, and all-solenoid transport switching.

Pioneer's \$600 CT-F1000 is the company's most advanced cassette deck, combining three heads with a two-motor transport and separate Dolby circuitry for recording and playback. All transport functions are switched by means of solenoids. A less expensive (\$225) deck, the CT-F4242, has two heads, a single motor, and a mechanically switched transport.

Dual's C-939 (under \$550) is an auto-reversing machine in both recording and playback, and it has no meters. Instead, twelve LED displays for each channel indicate peak or average recording levels. The deck also has a unique "fade/edit" by which the erase head can be activated during playback (with the strength of the erase signal continuously variable) to fade out, fade in, or completely eliminate information already recorded on the tape.

Technics' most prominent cassette offerings are a pair of portable stereo recorders, the RS-646DS (\$300) and the RS-686DS (\$600). The latter is actually the smaller unit, and it features three heads, bias and equalization switching, and a weight of no more than 10 pounds with batteries. The Technics line was further expanded with two new front-loading decks priced at \$200 and \$250.

Marantz and Superscope brought three new cassette decks each to the show. All of the Marantz machines are front-loaders, as is one of the Superscope decks. The Marantz 5030 and 5025 have master level controls that override the two sets of recording-level controls for both microphone and line inputs.

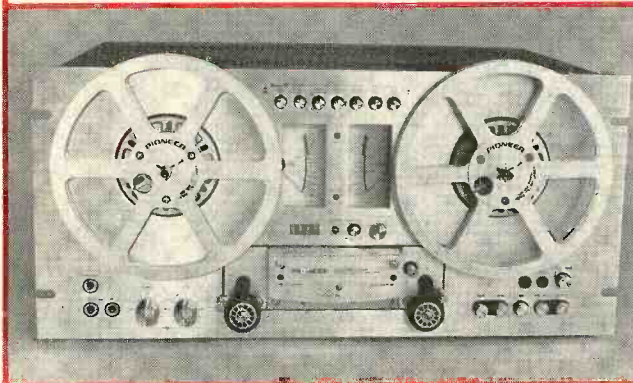
New JVC cassette decks continue to feature the "Super ANRS" noise-reduction system, which is similar in principle to Dolby processing though different in operation. The "Super" aspect provides distortion processing of the high frequencies. The two machines so equipped this year are the \$500 KD-95, with two motors, and the \$380 KD-75. The KD-35 (\$260) and the KD-15 (\$200) both employ Dolby noise reduction.

Two new units from Akai complete the manufacturer's conversion to front loading in all its cassette models. The three-head GXC-725D is priced at \$425. The two-head GXC-709D is \$350. Both of Rotel's new cassette decks are two-head machines; the RD-20 loads from the top while the RD-10F is front-loading. Aiwa's rather extensive cassette line has its latest additions in the Models AD-6550 and AD-6800. A prominent feature is a meter function (employing one of the recording-level meters) that reads the tape's remaining minutes of recording time. In addition, the \$450 Model 6550 has a continuously variable bias adjustment on its front panel so that virtually any tape can be "dialed in" precisely. The 6800 (about \$650) has dual-pointer meters; one pointer shows peak levels, the other average levels.

Among other cassette introductions were Scott's two new decks (\$230 and \$350), one of them, the more expensive CD87, equipped for rack mounting, and Sharp's \$200 RT-1165, which permits input mixing. Also, Tandberg has redesigned and restyled the TCD-310, providing extended frequency response and microphone inputs. It is now the TCD-310 MK II, priced at \$530.

Onward to open-reel, where we immediately encounter the rather stunning 700 series from Pioneer. These machines—two at present—have been deliberately designed for rack mounting: height is less than 10 inches, nominal width 19 inches. Both take 7-inch reels and employ dual-capstan tape drives. The RT-707 (\$575) has four heads and features automatic reverse. The \$525 RT-701 is a conventional three-head, three-motor machine.

**PIONEER:** The RT-707 is a unique auto-reversing open-reel tape deck whose low profile lends itself to rack mounting. The machine takes 7-inch reels and features a pitch control.



**TECHNICS:** The Model RS-686DS is an eminently portable stereo cassette recorder with three heads, Dolby, and bias and equalization adjustments for chromium and ferric tapes.



Sony has brought out two new machines, the quarter-track TC 765, with a top tape speed of 7½ ips, and the half-track TC 766-II, intended for semiprofessional applications at 15 ips. Philips plans to introduce two open-reel machines to the U.S. market. One, the N 4506 (\$650), is referred to as a preamplified "recorder," and it is equipped with inputs for phono and other program sources as well as tone controls. The N 4504 (\$450) employs the same transport in the more familiar deck format. Uher, meanwhile, has kept on with refinements on the SG-630 "Logic" open-reel deck with its pinch-rollerless Omega tape drive. Half- and quarter-track head assemblies are now available, and the retail price is expected to be just under \$1,300. A 15-ips version is reported to be on the way.

Technics' impressive RS-1500US "isolated loop" tape deck can now be had with a carrying case and a battery adapter for those intrepid souls who would like to take to the woods with the monster. The Teac/Tascam 40-4 is what would have been called a four-channel machine a few years ago; now it is commonly known as a four-tracker, with track synchronization on all four tracks, 10½-inch reel capacity, and speeds of 7½ and 15 ips. You can tote it too, but you'll have to bring along a microphone-preamplifier module (MA-4) and possibly a dbx noise-reduction module (DX-4) as well. Teac/Tascam hopes ultimately to interest you in the 90-16, a sixteen-track recorder employing 1-inch tape at a speed of 15 ips. You won't be able to carry that any place other than to a recording studio, where it is sure to feel right at home.

## Loudspeakers

If all the new and old speaker systems exhibited in Chicago this year were laid end to end, I'm sure they could have made a path of walnut-vinyl veneer reaching clear back to our New York offices. So, as usual, there is an enormous number of speakers to be discussed and limited space in which to discuss them. Apologies in advance for any oversights and for the necessary brevity of the descriptions.

For years ESS has been saying that a full-range Heil speaker system would be available, and *this*, the company promises, is the year. The Heil woofer has now evolved into five Lexan diaphragms working into a number of front-and-back wedge-shape cells. The diaphragms are driven from a common voice-coil/magnet assembly by means of carbon-fiber rods. A large, solid, flat baffle provides front-to-back acoustical isolation; atop it is the latest version of the Heil air-motion transformer for mid and high frequencies. ESS strongly recommends its Eclipse current-source amplifier for driving the woofer, which brings the overall cost of a stereo "Transar/atd" ensemble up to something near \$3,000. Some critical listeners have said they thought it was a bargain!

JBL made the CES the official launch site for its new L212 "three-element" speaker

system, with two almost-full-range floor-standing driver arrays and a self-powered sub-woofer commode operating in a common-bass mode (see *last month's* "New Products," page 20). The show also brought the introduction of two smaller systems: the three-way L110 and the two-way L40, said to be JBL's finest two-way system.

Pioneer has continued to develop the design and applications of the high-polymer film tweeter, and this year it introduced the HPM-150 (\$500), a four-way floor-standing system with a 15¾-inch carbon-fiber woofer and a horn-loaded HP film tweeter. The horn is actually a multisectional tweeter diaphragm and mounted atop the enclosure.

Some new developments in the Marantz speaker-engineering department have led to a new line of speaker systems (the "Design Series"), some extensive updating of the pre-existing "High Definition" line, and a new group of inexpensive systems designated "MK II." The Design Series presently numbers four models, of which the floor-standing 940 is the top of the line.

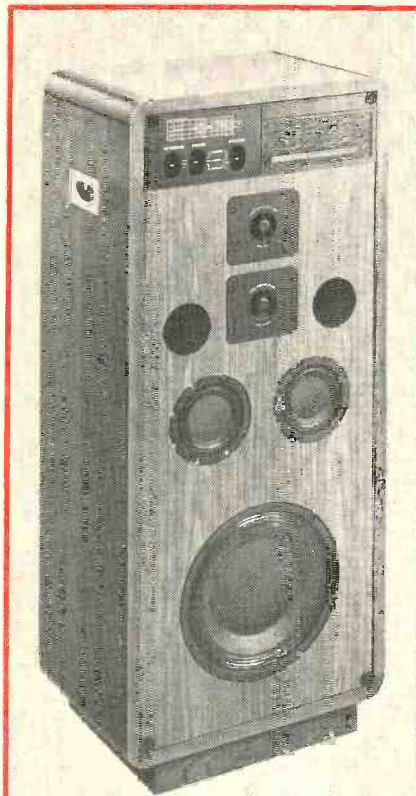
In a significant expansion of its line, Acoustic Research has added three new two-way systems this year. The AR-15 is \$130, the AR-17 (sold only in pairs) \$95 each, and the AR-18 (in pairs) \$65 each.

Koss is dipping a toe into the waters of dynamic speaker systems (the fully electrostatic Model Ia and the *almost* fully electrostatic Model II are doing nicely at present) with three new designs ranging in price from \$395 to \$195. The rationalized vented-box alignments of Thiele and Small have been largely responsible for the low end (the smallest system, the CM 1010, uses a passive radiator), while an innovative dome tweeter takes care of the highs.

The first U.S. company to seize on the Thiele/Small analysis techniques was Electro-Voice, and this year takes that manufacturer well into its second generation of speaker systems designed according to the T/S alignments. The Interface:A and Interface:B now carry "Series II" designations, and they have been joined by the Interface:C, Interface:D, and Interface(s) 1, 2, and 3. The smaller systems all use passive radiators (or "vent substitutes," as E-V prefers to call them), while the larger C and D systems employ ported enclosures along with the horn-loaded tweeter that has been a fixture in Electro-Voice professional speaker systems. And Acousti-phase has recently added a new floor-standing unit dubbed the "Tower" to its current line of five bookshelf-size systems.

Bose Corporation has followed up its successful 901 Series III with the 601, a non-equalized floor-standing system with four cone tweeters angled in various directions and two 8-inch woofers in a vented enclosure. The 601 keeps the Direct/Reflecting approach of its predecessors, and a large portion of the top of the enclosure is acoustically "open" to permit free radiation of the tweeters.

The Kenwood LS-Series-A line, new this year, is made up of three- and two-way systems in ported enclosures with a high degree of structural rigidity. All the drivers are cone types, some employing novel modes of construction. Four models initiate the line; a



**KOSS:** The dual-ported CM/1030 is among three dynamic speaker systems that are firsts for Koss.

**DYNACO:** The Model 80 is largest in the new Phase III line of time-corrected loudspeaker systems.





fifth "budget" system is also scheduled for immediate introduction.

The three top systems in the B.I.C. "Formula" line now bear a "Spec II" designation, but the most recent design of them all is the Formula 6, a four-way system with a horn-loaded tweeter and mid-range driver in the B.I.C. "T-slot" configuration plus another mid-range driver (a 5-inch cone) mounted coaxially in front of the 12-inch woofer. Another new speaker system, the Formula 3, has an 8-inch woofer, a horn-loaded mid-range, and a small cone tweeter with a prominent domed dust cap.

Yamaha's NS-690 II (\$290) is a bookshelf design using soft-dome mid-range and tweeter drivers. The manufacturer believes it to be one of the few systems in its size and price range that is capable of uncompromised performance.

The success of Infinity's electromagnetic film tweeter (the EMIT) and of the \$1,200 Quantum Line Source speaker system has encouraged the company to pursue the same approach with lesser models. New for this year are the Quantum Jr. (\$260), replacing the Monitor Jr., the Quantum 5 (\$320), and the Q<sub>a</sub> (under \$150), all of which use drivers descended from the development of the Line Source. Altec is also finding new applications for its proprietary technology. Such developments as the Altec "Tangerine" radial phase plug and the company's carefully worked out analog models for loudspeaker behavior are being applied to speaker systems suitable for home use—such as the Model 19 and the A7-X, an updated version of the famed Voice of the Theater system.

Advent has followed up the New Advent Loudspeaker (featuring a more extended high end) with the Powered Advent Loudspeaker, a two-way system containing its own bi-amplification electronics. Price: \$500. Dynaco's Phase III speaker systems, of which three models (80, 60, and 45) have been announced so far, are phase/time-corrected designs. All are three-way systems.

EPI/Epicure's latest introductions include the Model 200, the Epicure 20+, and the I-B, a new Microtower with a suggested price of \$110. Audioanalyst's PhaseMatrix Group consists of four models (approximately \$150 to \$350) designed to provide superior stereo imaging. The 200A from ADS is a revised version of the diminutive Model 200, with a 4-inch woofer and a 1-inch dome tweeter. Price is \$105. Ohm's latest, the Model L, is a ported two-way bookshelf system employing two tweeters: a phenolic ring device and a 2-inch cone.

The Jensen "Lifestyle" speaker systems—five models priced from \$80 to \$290—are all distinguished by readily accessible controls for adjusting the frequency balance in a highly controllable way. The Fisher "AirDyne" systems—three models from \$80 to \$100—are all distinguished by 8-inch passive radiators.

Rank HI FI manufactures the Leak and Wharfedale speaker lines in England. As of this year it will be selling these lines in the U.S. Old-timers may recall the days of Wharfedale sand-filled enclosure panels and Leak sandwich-construction woofer cones. However, the present offerings under these brand names are all new computer-assisted designs ranging in price from \$85 to almost \$800. KLH's latest system is dubbed "The Pistol," which it doesn't resemble in the slightest: it is actually a two-way, four-driver system in a columnar enclosure with oak veneers. There are also three new bookshelf additions to KLH's popular "Dedicated" line.

From Bolivar come three new models, one a two-way at \$90 and the others three-way, priced between \$114 and \$165 depending on finish. Avid has a new Model 80 (\$100), and so, coincidentally, has Technical Sound Industries. In addition to some new motion-feedback speaker systems, Philips has added a line of conventional systems selling from \$110 to \$300. Celestion retains the Ditton 66 as its top model.

One interesting new trend has been the creation of "super systems" by combining a pair of the popular mini-speakers from ADS, Braun, or Visonik, among others, with one or more sub-woofers such as those made by Janis and Bottom End. Visonik has gone so far as to offer its own sub-woofer, the Sub-1, intended to be used with the new "David" 502 mini-speakers. The same idea has been seized on by 3a, whose sub-woofer takes the form of a coffee table and contains its own amplifier. The 3a "Triphonic" system, as it is called, can be used with any mid-range/tweeter "satellite" speaker systems the purchaser desires.

The Bozak Celestovox is an abbreviated column system meant to reproduce ambience signals generated by the manufacturer's Celeste reverberation simulator. A pair of Celestovox systems can be used in approximately the same way as the rear speakers in a four-channel system.

Among Cerwin-Vega's latest designs is the S-1, a gas-suspension rather than air-suspension system. The inert gas, sealed within the enclosure in place of air, results in a lower system resonance than air would, and it is also said to provide superior damping characteristics.

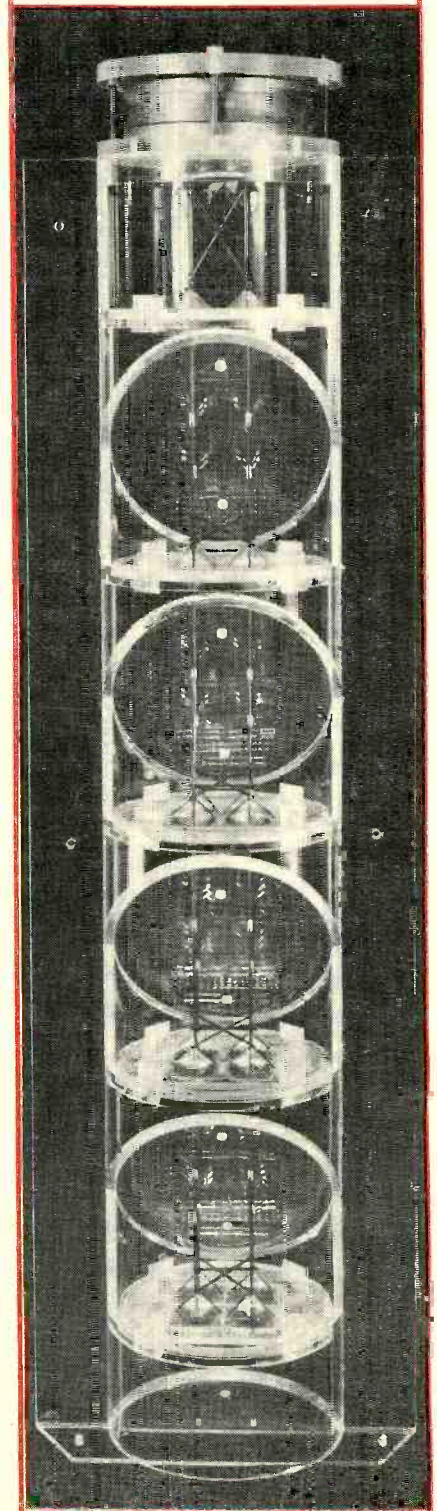
Jennings' five new models include three additions to the Vector line, a Contrara "Tower," and a "Tour de Force," which is (logically enough) the top system in the Jennings column series. The SP-L series of speakers from Sansui (\$600 to \$1,000) makes extensive use of horn loading along with dual woofers having staggered resonant frequencies. Another new Sansui series, the SP-X (\$300 and \$350), is made up of more conventional systems. And Frazier has what is referred to as a "semi tower" (\$900) as one of its new products.

A new company, Burhoe Acoustics, is debuting with four models, the Green, White, Blue, and Silver, ascending from \$110 to \$450. Not quite so new is Fulton Musical Industries, this year introducing three freshly created designs to make up the Nuance Series. Martin (Eastman Sound) has gathered virtually all its loudspeaker products (some twelve systems) together to form the Gam-

ma Series. Paradox (E. M. Long Associates) hasn't named an official series, but the "Time-Align" systems continue to appear; this year there were the ported TA-10 and the TA-10F with a passive radiator.

Electrostatic speaker systems are usually prominent at the show, and this year was no exception. The Dayton Wright full-range electrostatic with its unique gas-filled chambers is now into its fourth generation with

**ESS:** The remarkable ESS/Heil low-frequency driver in essentially the same form shown at the CES.



the Model XG-8 Mk 3 Series 3. The Beve-ridge Model 2 electrostatic with its novel acoustic lens has been joined by the Model 2SW, again a complete stereo array with the addition of two dynamic sub-woofers powered by amplifiers incorporated in the electrostatic units. Symdex is the name for a new speaker line of two models, one of which is a hybrid employing an array of electrostatic panels for extreme high frequencies and dynamic drivers for the rest of the range. The RTR DR-1 is also a hybrid, with a cylindrical electrostatic array for frequencies above 375 Hz; it is driven by its own self-contained amplifier without intervening transformers or other devices. Certainly the best-known electrostatic-dynamic hybrids are the Janszens, which now constitute a line of more than a half-dozen models, starting with the columnar Z-50 and Z-40.

The Snell Type A is a brand-new dynamic design with the objective of achieving flat axial frequency response and flat power response under real-room conditions. Careful attention is paid throughout to placement of the three drivers within the enclosure and to diffraction and reflection effects. Another system in which driver placement is a paramount consideration is the Innotech D24, which features a deliberately asymmetrical array of woofers and tweeters.

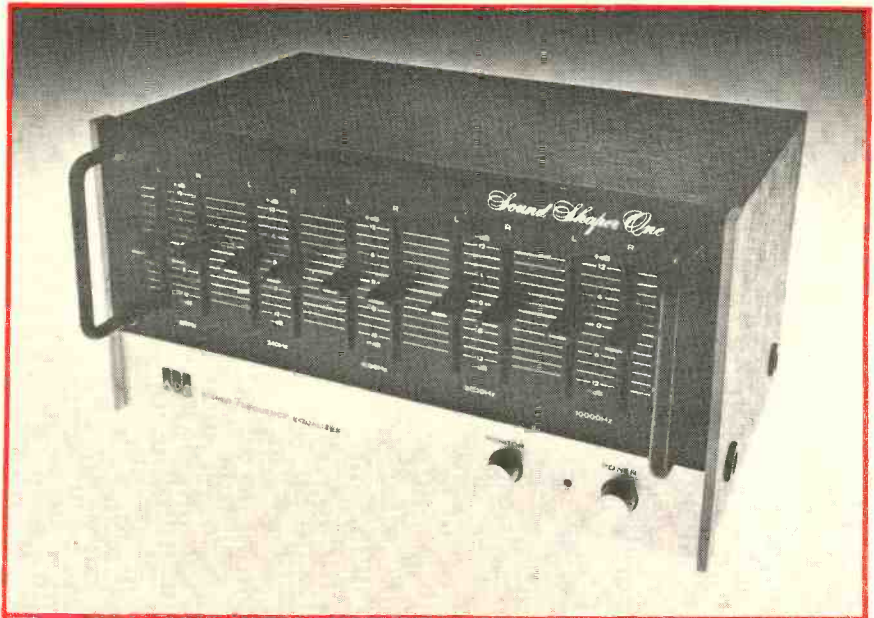
Among the latest developments from Fried Products is yet another "satellite" stereo speaker system with a single common-bass enclosure and two outboard units in much smaller enclosures. The ensemble is available as a kit for \$750 or assembled for \$1,900.

The two prominent English manufacturers KEF and B&W both have new phase/time-corrected models. The top-of-the-line KEF 105 is a floor-standing system on casters with a sloping grille that conceals the three staggered subenclosures that actually make up the system. The B&W DM7 has a pedestal stand that contributes to a strikingly modern appearance.

Magnepan has new additions to its series of film-diaphragm electrodynamic loudspeakers at both the top and the bottom. The MG-III at \$895 per pair is now the premier model, while the MG-I (\$495 per pair) occupies the bargain basement. The Audionics TL52 is a 4-foot column design incorporating a three-way system. And the IMF group from England is made up of a number of systems, many of which approach the proportions of columns and all of which employ transmission lines in one configuration or another.

Sanyo's "Evaluator" is the latest speaker system to employ (presumably under license) a version of the Heil air-motion transformer for high frequencies. Scott's S-197 (\$200), a three-way system, has a control panel below its grille area on which level controls for the mid-range and tweeter are mounted. At \$170, the CP-2121 is the second speaker system to be brought out by Op-tonica. And at price points ranging from \$110 to \$260, the four passive-radiator Mesa systems are the first loudspeakers from this manufacturer.

That's all we have room for, I'm afraid. Your local dealer will be pleased, I'm sure, to fill you in on the hundred or so (!) models we missed.



**ADC:** The Sound Shaper One is a stereo equalizer operating in two-octave bands. The slider controls allow the user to apply up to 12 dB of boost or attenuation for each channel at each of the five center frequencies.

## Accessories

I believe it was Jon Kelly of Audio-Technica who first stated in print that the one essential accessory for a high-fidelity system is a decent recording. He is not alone in his view. Along with Sheffield's celebrated direct-to-disc recordings, we now have the fine Umbrella d-to-d recordings distributed by Audio-Technica, their opposite numbers from Crystal Clear and Direct Disk, and the Telarc d-to-d production (distributed by Discwasher) of the Cleveland Orchestra. And we will soon have the Sound Environment Recording Series, the Burwen Indirect-to-Disc recordings, and the Gale Maximum Fidelity recordings. These three outfits will all use tape as their initial recording medium, and their producers are convinced they can stand up sonically against the direct-to-disc process with no trouble at all. Disc mastering and pressing, still vital elements, will of course be subjected to the closest control.

Taken collectively, these three recording series will span pop, jazz, and classical repertoires. Sales will be handled exclusively by selected audio-equipment dealers. It is clear that the concerned listener now has a better-than-good chance of getting a flawless record when he wants one. He'll also have someone knowledgeable (his hi-fi dealer) to bicker with when a record falls below his standards of technical integrity.

Another bit of good news: the Tate SQ four-channel decoder that has aroused so much interest among readers in past years is finally just around the corner (see this month's "Audio Q & A" column for more

details). The decoder sounded at least as good to us as we remember its being in past auditions—meaning better than anything else around except Peter Sheiber's professional SQ decoder.

Some years ago, in JVC's research facilities on the outskirts of Tokyo, I heard through headphones a binaural recording of such realism that it had my hair standing on end. This is not particularly surprising. However, this year I heard some of the same recorded material through four *speakers*, and it startled me in just the same way. The JVC "Biphonic" system is an attempt to bring the realism of binaural sound through headphones into the realm of speaker listening through painstakingly controlled phase and interchannel-amplitude relationships. At the moment it exists in two forms: biphonic and quad-biphonic. But what is more interesting is that the system has given rise to a product, the JVC BN-5 Biphonic Processor (about \$250), which can be used with binaural and conventional stereo recordings. The degree to which the processor can enhance stereo material beyond what is available from a four-channel decoder in its "synthesize" mode remains to be seen (or heard). But with the right program material it's clear that you'll be able to startle the life out of yourself.

Parametric equalizers with tunable frequencies and bandwidths are beginning to break into the audio mainstream. Technics' SH-9010 (\$450) is an outstanding example. The unit has four bands per channel, each with its center frequency tunable over an approximate three-octave range. As part of the new "flat" Professional Series, the device is rack-mountable and surprisingly compact. (Another Technics introduction within the same series is the SH-9020, a module containing two meters that can be switched to register peak or average levels

# CES

or to "hold" the highest peaks encountered over any time period.)

Soundcraftsmen's TG2209-600 (\$550) is a two-channel octave-band equalizer intended for professional and semipro applications. All inputs and outputs are at 600 ohms and are balanced. ADC's Sound Shaper 1 is a two-octave, two-channel equalizer; price was not officially announced, but it is said to be very attractive. The Klark-Teknik equalizers, shown at CES for the first time, are made in England, and from all reports they are made very well indeed.

Phase Linear has joined the ranks of those producing audio delay/reverb devices. The Phase Linear unit (still a prototype) is a "bucket-brigade-plus" device with extensive controls to vary initial delay intensity, recirculation, crossfeed, and delay bandwidth. Meanwhile, Sound Concepts has introduced its second such device, the SD-550 (\$675), which is said to have benefited greatly from the company's already considerable experience with reverberation simulators.

In keeping with the renewed interest in moving-coil cartridges (and in record playing in general), Accuphase has introduced the C-220 Stereo Disc Equalizer. The unit can serve as a precision phono preamplifier for any cartridge, and it incorporates a pre-preamplifier (head amp) for moving-coil cartridges, volume and balance controls, and switchable input impedance. A new head amp is also offered in two versions by Analog Engineering Associates. The more elaborate Model 515 has gain and frequency-compensation adjustments.

The Burwen Transient Noise Eliminator (Model 7000) is intended to quash occasional ticks and pops on phonograph records. The Burwen device is designed to concentrate on comparatively small-amplitude signals rather than the severe aberrations of deep record scratches. A very brief "blanking" interval is said to keep any audible side effects to a minimum.

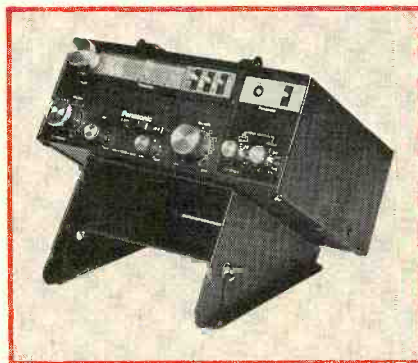
The Nakamichi DS-200 digital clock and timer slides readily into the Nakamichi 12¼-inch-wide equipment rack, where it can be preset to turn a sound system on and off at any desired time. It also permits unattended recording with many of the Nakamichi cassette decks. Those who do not have a Nakamichi equipment rack might instead consider the three new Kenwood equipment cabinets, the largest of which has smoked-glass doors and space for three Kenwood components plus records.

In headphones, Koss has updated the Model PRO/4 to the Triple A (\$70), with considerable alterations in external construction. Burwen has created five headsets (\$40 to \$100), two of which use electrodynamic film drivers. Beyer continues to add to its ultra-lightweight line of headphones and has now officially introduced a series of cordless headsets that receive their inputs from infrared-light transmitters; they are available in mono and stereo versions.

In microphones, Nakamichi announced four new models: two electret-condensers and two dynamics. Audio-Technica's new microphone line contains three electret-condensers and two dynamics. Audio-Technica's offerings span a price range of \$50 to \$75. The Nakamichi units are priced between \$75 and \$150.

In accessories for your speaker system (in case you haven't considered all the possibilities that are open), the Janis Interphase 1 (under \$400) will enable you to put together a stereo system consisting of two mini-speakers and a sub-woofer with a minimum of fuss. The Interphase is a 100-Hz electronic crossover plus a 70-watt mono amplifier for the woofer.

New record- and tape-care appliances are now part of extensive lines that have been created by Bib Accessories and Vor Industries. Empire has brought out its first record-care product, an electronic static neutralizer. Another means of combating static, the



**PANASONIC:** The new automotive "components" fit into a specially designed bracket for installation.

D'Stat-II record mat (\$7.95), has been introduced by Discwasher.

Russound has several new products this year, among them a selector switch suitable for use with high-power stereo and four-channel amplifiers that can control up to four pairs of speakers. A remote level control for speaker systems or headphones is also usable with high-power amplifiers. Meanwhile, Polk Audio has been concerning itself with potential problems in speaker cables. The product that has resulted, Cobra Cable, is said to provide a superior impedance match between amplifier and speaker and also to correct inductance and reactance problems that might arise.

Mobile sound systems are advancing rapidly. Panasonic Auto Products is now offering separate tape players and tuners for in-dash or under-dash installation, together with several one-way and coaxial loudspeakers. Setton has a 15-watt-per-channel stereo power amplifier and a three-way speaker system (CS-25) for mobile applications. Sanyo's car speakers are two- and three-way designs in coaxial configurations. Kriket's (Acoustic Fiber Sound Systems) are two-way coaxials or single drivers with whizzer cones. Fosgate's mobile amplifiers are now rated at 50 and 35 watts per channel. And soon to be available is the ADS

"Compu-Tuner," an awesome microprocessor device that digitally displays station frequency and other information, stores up to twenty preselected FM and AM stations in its memory, and operates under total pushbutton control. The built-in preamplifier section (with bass, treble, and volume controls) interfaces with the ADS mobile sound systems and similar products. Manufacturer's projected price: \$695.

KLH's first speakers for automobile installation made a conspicuous debut at the show. And Advent will also have a car speaker system in short order, this one powered by its own equalized amplifier for a projected price of \$150.

Finally, for those who have had it with amplifiers and loudspeakers, there is now a cassette—or rather several hundred of them—that will play a piano instead of an audio system. The Superscope Pianocorder is the most advanced form of player piano to date. Under the guidance of a specially designed cassette player, the Pianocorder's electromechanical mechanism will render an in-home "live" performance on any piano you happen to have sitting around. Tapes in the Superscope repertoire go back to performances by Rachmaninoff and Paderewski. The model for use with upright pianos also records, so that you can test your own skills against Rachmaninoff's on the C-sharp Minor Prelude and, if you win, preserve the document for posterity. The various versions of the Pianocorder are not cheap (\$1,250 for upright pianos, \$1,400 for grands, including installation). But if you can manage to keep your instrument in tune, you'll certainly never hear a more realistic rendition of piano music from any hi-fi system you're likely to encounter.

## Caveats

We'd like to make it clear that all prices quoted above are highly approximate. In many cases they are the "nationally advertised value" of the product in question, and this is subject to alteration by the individual dealer in any fashion he chooses.

We cannot guarantee the immediate availability of any of the products mentioned above. In many instances they are not as ready for you as you may be for them, and several further years of development will be necessary before they actually reach the marketplace. And a few of them, at least, will never be carried beyond the prototype stage. Watch the "New Products" column for future developments.

Further information about these products is best obtained directly from the manufacturers; it will be a while before we can test any significant number of them, and in the meantime any remarks we could make on their presumed merits and shortcomings would be no better than guesswork. To obtain addresses of all the manufacturers mentioned, send a stamped, self-addressed long envelope to STEREO REVIEW, Dept. CES, One Park Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10016.

And happy listening. □



# THE PLATTER IS THE MOTOR.

Fisher introduces a major advance in audio technology: the linear motor 120 pole, direct drive turntable.

One of the problems in improving direct drive turntable performance is reducing wow & flutter due to cogging action of the motor.

With its limited number of poles (usually 12) and its relatively slow operating speed, most conventional direct drive systems also have an inherent problem of low starting torque.

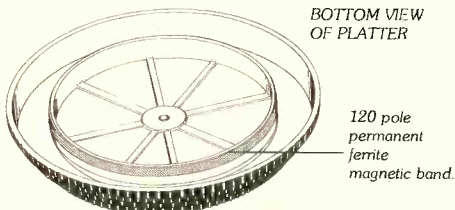
To solve these problems, Fisher has engineered the linear motor, direct drive system. The new Fisher MT6225.

In effect, the platter becomes the turntable's motor. And Fisher's 120 pole design practically eliminates cogging action, and lowers wow & flutter to a totally inaudible 0.03%.

The linear motor direct drive system further reduces turntable rumble to an extremely low -70 dB, far below hearing level.

## HOW IT WORKS

A continuous band of ferrite material, containing 120 magnetic poles, is attached to the inside bottom rim of the platter. To start platter rotation, each pole opposes one of the electromagnetic drivers on the base top. Each of the 120 poles is attracted or repelled as it passes the driving electromagnets for smooth, stable operation.



An electronic sensing device monitors the platter's speed, and acts as a servo-feedback control to maintain

practically perfect speed accuracy. Built-in strobe and pitch controls are provided.

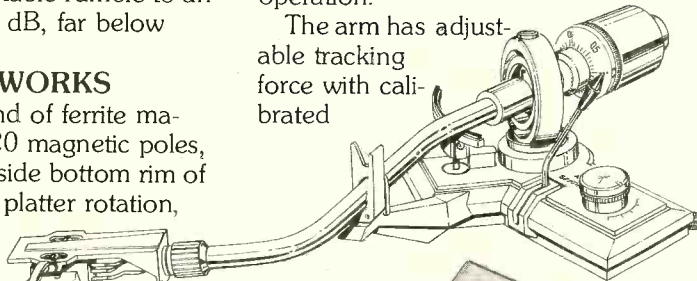
The speed accuracy of the system is independent of line voltage fluctuations.

## THE ARM

The Fisher MT6225 is equipped with a professional-type gimbaled tone arm for performance to equal its technically advanced motor design.

The arm accepts all standard cartridges. The auto-return system, which returns the arm to rest at end of a record, is designed with no restraints on its lateral or vertical motion during operation.

The arm has adjustable tracking force with calibrated



settings from 0.6 to 3.5 grams. There's also precise variable anti-skate, and viscous damped cueing. The MT6225 also has a heavy cast-aluminum platter, and a massive integrated

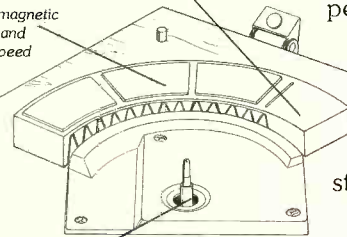
base to absorb vibration.

In all, there is no other turntable available that comes closer to the perfect performance . . . or the ultimate in reliability.

See the new Fisher MT6225 now at fine audio stores and the high fidelity section of department stores.

Electromagnetic drivers and servo-speed control sensors.

Drive signal generator sensing coils



Spindle

TOP VIEW OF BASE

Motor	Linear Direct Drive
Wow & Flutter	0.03% WRMS
Tracking Force Range	0.6 - 3.5 grams
Rumble	-70 dB (DIN B)
Maximum Tracking Error	± 1.5°
Auto Stop	Yes
Auto Reject	Yes
Cueing	Viscous Damped
Anti-Skate Control	Adjustable
Platter Weight	2.2 lbs.
Speed Selector	33/45 rpm



# FISHER

The first name in high fidelity

Fisher Corporation,  
21314 Lassen St.,  
Chatsworth, Calif. 91311



MT6225

# SONGS BY



# KANDER & EBB

By Richard Lingeman



REVIEWING the Broadway musical *The Happy Time*, drama critic Clive Barnes said, "After a period of 'composer musicals' (one used to refer to the 'new Cole Porter musical' or the 'new Rodgers and Hammerstein'), we have definitely passed into a period of 'director musicals.'" Thus, he continued, we now speak of the "new Harold Prince" or the "new Bob Fosse" or the "new Gower Champion." (*The Happy Time* was a new Gower Champion.)

Barnes is probably right in his Broadway *auteur* theory (with the exception of Stephen Sondheim, of course), and many others have traced the power shift back to the late Fifties when choreographer Jerome Robbins directed *West Side Story*. But, for all the advances in musical comedy wrought by the new breed of director-choreographers, the genre is still called "musical," and unless we have reached the point where directors send out for songs, like coffee, the services of composers and lyricists are still required. And if we leave the theater whistling, we are not whistling Bob Fosse or Harold Prince.

As it happens, the composer and lyricist of the previously mentioned *The Happy Time* were the team of John Kander and Fred Ebb, who have worked together for thirteen years, are still highly productive, and are still speaking to each other. Their most recent Broadway show, *Chicago* ("a Bob Fosse musical"), is a hit approaching the magnitude of the work that made them famous ten years ago: *Cabaret*. These days sales of 85,000 are considered respectable for the original-cast recording of a Broadway show; the *Cabaret* album (Columbia KOS-3040) sold more than 500,000 copies. And the *Chicago* album (Arista 9005) was selected for a STEREO REVIEW Record of the Year Award last year.

Kander and Ebb are not only in the top handful of Broadway words-and-music men, they also contribute prolifically to other media. It was Ebb (with Cy Coleman) who wrote the script and songs for the much-acclaimed Shirley MacLaine TV special *Gypsy in My Soul*, and together they have composed songs for the films *Funny Lady* (Arista 9004), *Lucky Lady* (Arista 4069), *A Matter of Time*, and the recently released *New York, New York*. The last three were tailored for Liza Minnelli, with whom they have been associated since their tripartite Broadway debut in *Flora, the Red Menace* in 1965. They also worked with Miss Minnelli on her TV special *Liza with a Z* (Columbia KC-31762) and her triumphant 1974

Chicago: photo courtesy the Merrill Group Ltd.

show at the Winter Garden in New York.

Their songs are in steady demand among adult, mainstream, non-rock performers. For use in various media they have written special material for such performers as Barbra Streisand, Chita Rivera, and Frank Sinatra. As a result they have won laurels in the Tony-Emmy-Grammy sweepstakes as well as Drama Critics Circle awards—in fact, just about all the available honorific hardware except an Oscar, and the movie version of *Cabaret* (ABC DS-752) won eight of those.

Like most Broadway marriages, Kander and Ebb's was made not in heaven but in a song publisher's office. The matchmaker was their mutual publisher, Tommy Valando, who, with a prescient "I think you guys will like each other," arranged a meeting back in 1963. The meeting went well (it was "instant communication, instant songs," recalls Kander) and that was it. Ebb says that when he meets someone for the first time he occasionally has a feeling that he will know that person for the rest of his life; with Kander he had that feeling. Soon thereafter, they wrote a pop hit called *My Coloring Book*. But Broadway was their goal from the start. Both of them had already apprenticed off-Broadway; Kander had composed the music for a show written by James and William Goldman called *A Family Affair*, which lasted sixty-five performances, while Ebb had done the lyrics for a Phoenix Theater production, *Morning Sun*, which expired after eight. "We came to each other fresh from our failures," Ebb recalls.

**E**XCEPT for the common bonds of their professional ambitions, the two were (and are) contrasting personalities. Kander, who was born in Kansas City, took a master's degree in composition at Oberlin College and went on to study with several classical teachers in New York. Although his home listening remains classical (mainly opera), he did write shows in college and all along felt a growing tug toward Broadway. Ebb grew up in New York City, attended N.Y.U. and Columbia, and has a master's in English literature. He learned the lyricist's craft on his own, mainly through "determination and will power," supporting himself with odd jobs while writing material for reviews, night-club acts, the satirical TV show *That Was the Week That Was*—indeed, for "anybody who would work with me, if there was a dollar to be made." Perhaps because of their disparate backgrounds, each found some-

thing in the other not present in himself. Ebb, the irreverent one, puts it, "Our neuroses complemented each other." Kander volunteers, "We are such opposites that we never had a bad time."

A good idea of their temperamental differences can be gleaned from the fact that Ebb is shattered by bad notices (which seem to seek him out), while Kander simply doesn't read them. Ebb admits, in fact, that well-meaning friends invariably send him nasty reviews from out-of-town papers he has missed, and that during out-of-town tryouts drunks unerringly hunt him down and denounce the show to his face. Once, he recalls, while hiding in a theater men's room, thinking himself safe because the show was in progress, he saw a man enter who looked "filled with hate." Seeking to fend off the inevitable onslaught, Ebb said hastily, "Before you say anything, I should tell you I'm with the show." The man glowered, then spoke: "You're in trouble."

Regardless of how the two respond to criticism, both men are united in their professional dislike of critics, specifically the Broadway high court, from whom there is no appeal. "I hate

Just about the time you decide what the Broadway audience wants, they want something else."

them," Ebb says simply. Typically more temperate, Kander suggests that the Broadway audiences who slavishly heed their dictates are equally culpable. They recall how the preview audiences for *Cabaret* were restive, occasionally hostile. At one \$100-a-ticket society benefit, the show closed to one-fourth of its original house. Yet, after the critical raves were filed, it played to enthusiastic overflow crowds.

One might say that in the case of *Cabaret* the critics performed an educational function; one could also cite recent musicals such as *The Wiz* and *Shenandoah* which survived indifferent notices. Of course, critics are not really the issue; they function merely as heralds of failure, and it is failure, not a critic's barbs, that really wounds. A case in point was the Kander-Ebb musical *70-Girls-70*, which had a short,

unhappy run of twenty-eight performances. Preview audiences cheered it, says Ebb, but once the reviews appeared the public turned to stone. For Ebb, the show's failure was a particularly crushing blow. "I was a basket case," he admits. He haunted the box office, scrutinizing the receipts like an I.R.S. man auditing Al Capone.

After the show closed, Ebb rewrote it as a movie, then as a television series, taking it around to agents and producers like a mother carrying a terminally ill child from doctor to doctor. He now realizes that he let himself become too involved in the project, though it remains the show dearest to his heart: "*70-Girls-70* was very important to my maturing as a person and as an artist for what it taught me about dealing with failure," he says. Out of the agony came his personal credo—as he expressed it to his close friend Liza Minnelli, then depressed about some bad notices she had received for *Lucky Lady*—"Forget your successes, forget your failures. Keep working. Get on with it." Seconding this advice, Kander recalls that on the opening night of *Flora, the Red Menace* (which was only a modest success), Harold Prince reminded them that they were scheduled to meet with him at 4 P.M. the next day to begin work on a new show. They got on with it. The show was *Cabaret*.

**K**ANDER and Ebb are, of course, professionals, and they do not lay all the blame for their shifting fortunes at the feet of the critics. "You can be a witting accomplice to your own murder," Ebb says. "And sometimes you invent the means yourself," Kander adds. Broadway shows are collaborative efforts, a mix of many talents that can simply fail to jell through the fault of no single individual. The happiest times for the pair are when they're writing, the times when the "great living-room numbers" issue forth, newly minted. But along the road from the living room to the stage, many things can happen to a song—a bad performance, the wrong orchestration; a song can "walk away from you," lose the purity of its original intention and be altered out of all recognition. Presumably, in this day of director musicals, this is the fault of the director, but Kander and Ebb have nothing but praise for those they have worked for—especially Harold Prince—and lament instead the pressures of the Broadway Hit Syndrome, which infects modest projects with elephantiasis of the budget. For example, *70-Girls-70* was originally conceived as an off-Broadway effort, but it "suddenly got optioned, got pro-

duced, got bigger and bigger." Similarly, *The Happy Time* got caught up in an expensive physical production. Yet, Ebb reiterates, "We were accomplices in all this," adding that the two shows might have met similar fates even if they had been done with a cast of twelve and a piano.

For all their involvement in what Ebb calls the "Broadway crap game," the team's work has remained unpredictable, each new show being a departure of some kind from the last. "Just about the time you decide what the Broadway audience wants," Kander says, "they want something else." No one, they feel, can calculatedly create a big show-stopping number; indeed, such calculation can be harmful. Better to let the song "proceed naturally from the material. The ideal musical song carries the plot forward," comments Ebb, and they do seem to have a special talent for integrating their songs into the mood and structure of a given show; one somehow can't conceive of a splashy *Hello, Dolly!* or *Mame* kind of number from them.

In *Cabaret*, for example, the title number is a rousing show-stopper, but it is also a wrenching character study that makes a plot point and encapsulates the show's theme ironically. Another song from the score—*Tomorrow Belongs to Me*—makes an altogether different kind of statement. Sung in the Broadway version by the waiters at the Kit Kat Klub, and in the film by a handsome Hitler Youth member at a beer garden, it begins sweetly, evoking edelweiss, linden trees, and rosy-cheeked frauleins, but gradually it becomes more ominous, and the repetition of the phrase "fatherland, fatherland" takes on darker connotations. Originally, Ebb recalled, Harold Prince had suggested some kind of number that would be innocent and lovely on its first hearing but would, when reprised later, take on an entirely different meaning in the light of the events of the drama. In the actual show and movie, *Tomorrow* worked in a single hearing, though out of context the song might still be a lovely air recalled from a happy European childhood.

Walter Kerr summed up Kander and Ebb's contribution to *Cabaret* succinctly when he wrote: "The jangle of cabaret music made harshly tinkling and sweetly seductive by composer John Kander and lyricist Fred Ebb constitutes the fundamental beat of the entertainment, just as the garish images

of the Kit Kat Klub Kittens and a pushy, lipsticked, sinuous M.C. become the distorting mirror through which we peer at the actual world . . . in effect it is a brightly glazed window—with a musical staff scrawled all over it—through which we can perceive the people and the emotional patterns of the plot."

For *Chicago*, their current hit, the team transmogrified the Germanic cabaret framing device of the earlier show into an American equivalent, and the vaudeville ambiance illuminated equally well the carnival of yellow journal-



The inimitable Gwen Verdon created the role of the murderous Roxy Hart in Kander and Ebb's *Chicago*.

ism and legal corruption of the period in which the play is set. As a result, *Chicago*'s initial reception was a bit more mixed than *Cabaret*'s, some observers feeling that the show's cynicism and dazzling staging overwhelmed the dated vehicle upon which it was based. But, if nothing else, it broke ground in that it dared to be an unromanticized musical about truly unredeemable people.

With *Chicago* in the bank, Kander and Ebb have penciled in many off-, on-, and extra-Broadway projects. At the moment they are at work on *Shinin' On*, a new musical headed for Broadway this fall (it stars Liza Minelli and opened in Chicago July 5). And of course they can be heard coast to coast

right now in the songs they contributed to the movie musical *New York, New York* [reviewed in this issue]. There will undoubtedly be more film and television work, and Ebb says, "We'd do off-Broadway in a second. We'd do a children's musical in a minute."

Ebb's greatest dream, however, is to do a "serious musical" of an operatic nature along the lines of Frank Loesser's *The Most Happy Fella*. He is still looking for the right work to adapt, and there is also the matter of convincing Kander, who, for all his love of opera, is not entirely confident of his ability to write one. Similarly, Ebb, who loves contemporary music, has long wanted to do a musical in a contemporary idiom—all their shows but one have been set in the past—but Kander, who admires several rock composers, doubts his ability to bring that off as well.

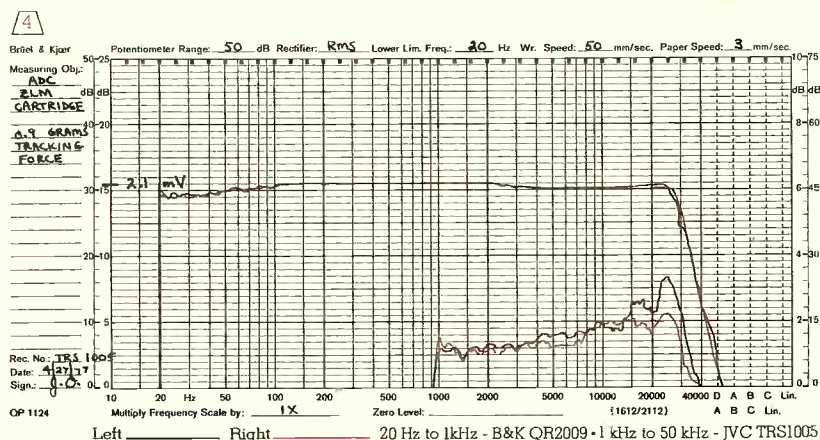
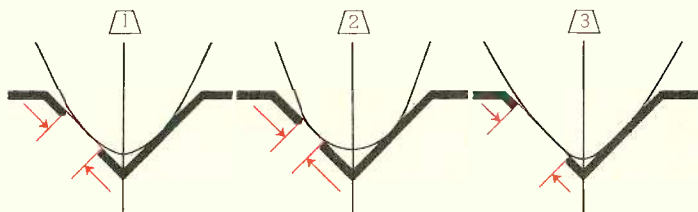
Kander has been widely praised for his chameleon-like ability to take on in his music the coloration of other times and places—Chicago in the Twenties, French Canada at the turn of the century, or the pre-war Greece of Zorba. To do this he "takes a bath" in the musical style called for—listening to German popular music of the Twenties for *Cabaret*, for example—then sits down to compose, at which point his own melodic ideas spring forth. He explains this preoccupation with the past by an analogy to opera: "The great operas were not set in the composers' own time, but looked backward twenty-five years or more, which gave them a point of view on the subject matter." Interestingly, it does appear that musicals with topical, contemporary settings tend to date faster; many bright, up-to-the-minute Jerome Kern musicals are curios today, while his *Showboat*, set in the past, remains timeless.

ONE suspects that both Kander and Ebb have deeper, more personal impulses they would like to tap in their work; perhaps, if Ebb can find that contemporary theme and Kander can be talked into it, someday they will. In the meantime, given the brilliance of the work they have already done in the area they have staked out for themselves, they will assuredly continue to get on with it, two consummate Broadway pros who happen to genuinely like each other and whose philosophy is simple: "The thing is to work hard and work well," says Fred Ebb. "And to like what you're doing," adds John Kander. □

Richard Lingeman, who is on the staff of the *New York Times*, keeps a very particular eye on the Broadway musical scene.

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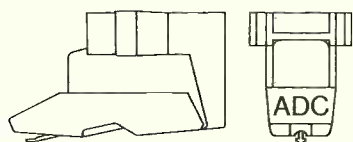
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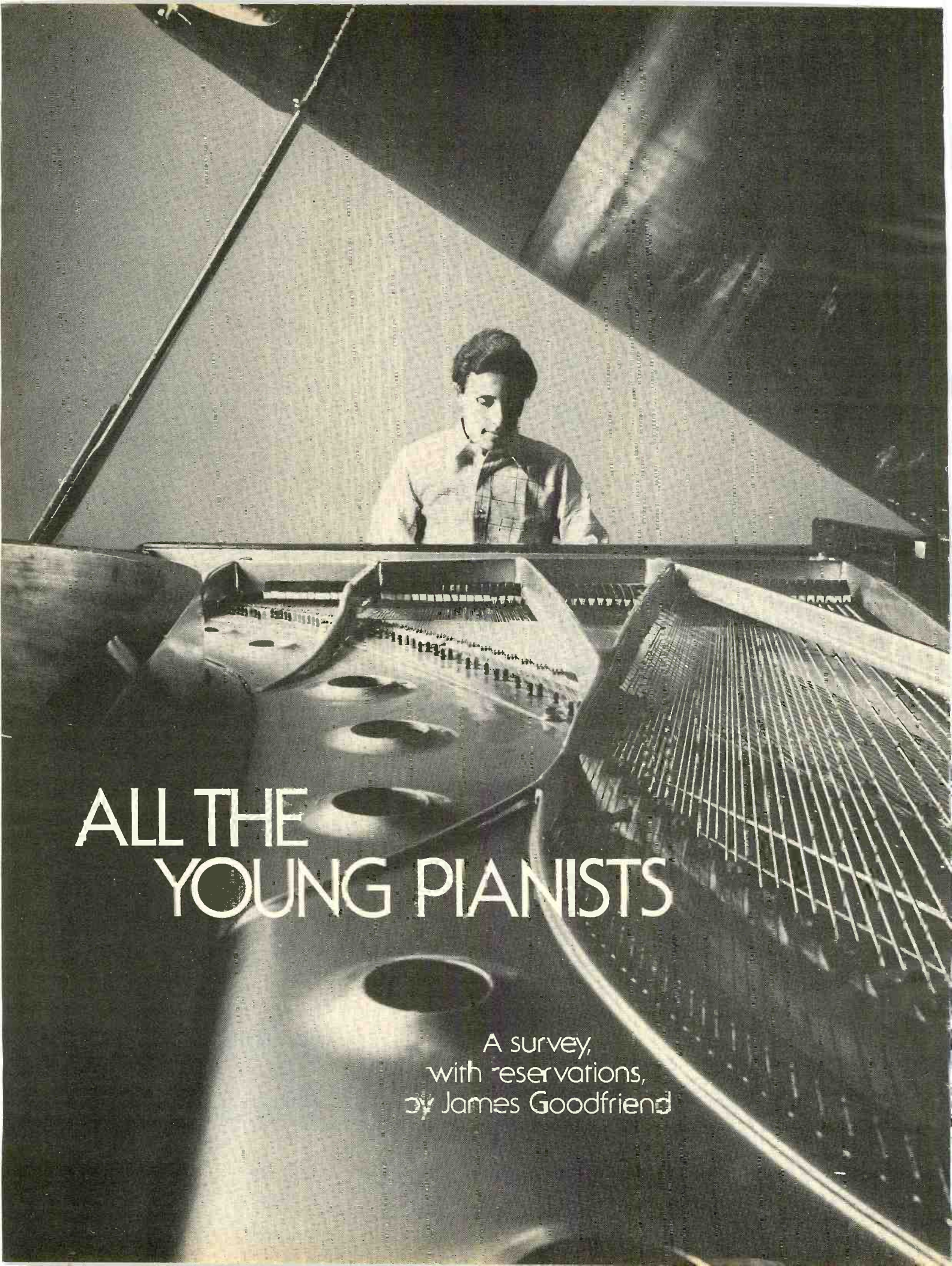
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# ALL THE YOUNG PIANISTS

A survey,  
with reservations,  
by James Goodfriend

A "YOUNG" pianist is one under forty. If forty seems rather late to be coming of age in a profession where public debuts at the age of nine are not uncommon, it is still close to the truth. A one-year success stemming from victory in some competition is not a career. Pianists seldom really establish themselves before thirty-five, and a five years' grace period after that seems little enough. There are also great pianists *over* forty who, for one reason or another, do not yet enjoy the international careers they deserve, but this article is about the young ones.

We live in a pianistic age. There are brilliant talents arriving virtually every day, and it is unfortunate that the world is not big enough to appreciate and nurture them all properly. This is a critical survey of *some* of the young ones, a sort of program guide to let you know who is playing and what, how the careers, particularly the recording careers, are shaping up, and what this one practicing critic thinks of each of them.

There are several cut-off lines for this survey. Pianists over forty are not considered here (though I've fudged a *little* on that point); neither, as it has turned out, are those under twenty. Those who are under forty but really *are* established—Stephen Bishop (*né* Kovacevich), Martha Argerich, Christoph Eschenbach, André Watts, and

others—are also not included. The world either knows them well already or their careers are so set that the world unquestionably *will* know them any day now. Also omitted are those who cannot readily be heard—such as Grigory Sokolov and Staffan Scheja, whose few American-released records have been deleted, and the Russian *émigré* Mark Zelzer, who has not even made a record yet, though from the incredible reports about him he soon should. Of those included, I have heard all on record and many in live performance as well, though this is not always specifically noted. My final boundary line excludes those whom I have not heard sufficiently to make a judgment about and those I simply consider to be out of the running. Perhaps it is best to keep that category purposely vague.

The pianist hierarchy is now arranged as follows. There are the great established names: Horowitz, Serkin, Michelangeli, Richter, and so on, all in their sixties or seventies. Then there are the more recently established (or still getting established) figures: Ashkenazy, Moravec, Brendel, Berman, De Larrocha, Bishop, and others, a few in their thirties, most in their forties or fifties. Finally, we have those with whom this article is concerned. That some of them will be the Horowitzes, the Richters, the Rachmani-

noffs of the future there is no doubt, though of course they will be different as performing personalities. It would not be unwise to get to know them now, and they are presented here in neutral alphabetical order.

FOR all the listening and relistening, evaluating and re-evaluating involved in it, this article remains an informal survey and not the sort of study from which to draw general comparisons or conclusions. Too many factors are involved in the building of a career to be able to say here that this pianist is going to make it big and that one is not. But a certain number of observations can be made, mostly having to do with repertoire. Of the two dozen pianists discussed here there is no Beethoven specialist, something of an oddity, for there has always been at least one. There are three, on the other hand, who play the works of Messiaen in addition to other modern music, and that is unprecedented. Several play Scriabin, indicating that his music is no longer a fad, and there is indication to show that Prokofiev too is solidly ensconced. It is evident that the repertoire is broadening, and this in itself may indicate there is room for more "big pianists" than there was in the past. I hope so, for there are too many who are worthy for so few to be chosen.

## EMANUEL AX

□ Ax is obviously, in RCA's eyes, their new Rubinstein, as Joselson is their new Horowitz, as Serkin is their new . . . well



. . . Serkin. This is not without sense. In Ax's case, not only was he the winner, in 1974, of the first Artur Rubinstein International Piano Competition in Israel, but he shares with Rubinstein a particularly ineffable musical characteristic: charm. Much has been made of his technique, his virtuoso abilities, his impulsiveness, but Ax is really a colorist and a charmer from the word go, the sort who will seduce an audience rather than hit them between the eyes. At his best—and he is not always at his best because he is too young to know everything even about his own repertoire—he has an uncanny sense of

rhythm and balance; nothing is abrupt, everything comes out, as Mozart once said it should, "like oil." His Chopin *Andante Spianato* and *Grande Polonaise* (RCA ARL1-1569) is never really hair-raising, but it is incredibly consistent in interest (which the music really isn't), and it builds as inexorably and enchantingly as a magical spell. His new Dvořák Piano Quintet (reviewed on page 126) is a dream; Ax fits into ensemble playing with as much grace as Rubinstein did. About Mozart and Beethoven he still has something to learn, but a recent concert performance of Ravel's *Valses Nobles et Sentimentales*, a work he is scheduled to record, underlined not only his coloristic abilities but his incredible feel for the subtleties of rhythm. He is individual. He makes his points with little exaggeration—but just enough.

Born in Poland twenty-seven years ago, Ax is by training and by choice an American pianist. Lucky us.

## ANTONIO BARBOSA

□ Barbosa is probably the most natural Chopinist of his generation. There is daring in his playing and a willingness to take chances; this is rare today, but it is much like earlier Chopinists, who played to the galleries and to the heart. Impetuosity is a mark of youth, but it is also the mark of a true romantic. Barbosa is impetuous, fiery, youthful, and romantic, and he obviously feels the music to be as relevant to him as it was to the old masters. Like

them, he has the technique and temperament to make it so.

His set of the Chopin waltzes (Connoisseur Society S-2036) cannot be equated with Lipatti's or Cortot's; it is a totally individual thing, as expressive of *his* personality and musical understanding as theirs was of their own. His Chopin Sonatas 2 and 3 (Connoisseur Society S-2026) are stunning performances of the sort that provoke excited guesses when played for people anonymously. It is all the more fascinating, then, that Barbosa also shows a decided flair for Beethoven (Sonatas 21 and 30, Connoisseur Society S-2068) and even for ensemble playing.



Barbosa was born in Brazil in 1943 and studied there with Arnaldo Estrella (himself a pupil of Cortot) and at Juilliard with the late Mieczysław Munz. At thirty-three he is still at the beginning of what ought to be a fabulous career. (Overleaf)

## MICHEL BÉROFF

□ Béroff has made his considerable musical reputation through the most difficult of means, that of playing the music of his own century. His American debut was with the Bartók Second Piano Concerto, a tough nut to crack but one with which he impressed everyone within earshot. His best solo record thus far is of Messiaen's *Vingt Regards sur l'Enfant Jésus* (Connoisseur Society S-2133, two discs), which received a couple of *grand prix* in France in its original Pathé-Marconi release. It is about as convincing and powerful a representation of that strange, strangely fascinating, and finger-busting music as one could imagine. He has recorded the complete Prokofiev concertos, but unfortunately only two of them (Nos. 3 and 5, Angel S-37084)



have been or will be issued here. He also has a marvelous Stravinsky record (Angel S-36875), an oddly unsatisfying one of Debussy, and a Moussorgsky *Pictures* which, to my ears, just doesn't work.

Béroff was born in France in 1950. He studied with Pierre Sancan at the Paris Conservatory where he won a first prize, and he earned another first prize, in common with Jean-Rodolphe Kars, in the Messiaen International Competition. He is unquestionably a pianist of the modern school, but the dazzling and exhilarating recording of the Brahms *Hungarian Dances* he made with Jean-Philippe Collard proves that he is not limited to music of this century. Béroff is probably a more versatile pianist than either his records or his American concerts have thus far shown.

## MICHEL BLOCK

□ The son of French parents, Block was born in Antwerp and raised in Mexico City, where he made his debut at the age of nine. His later studies were with Beveridge Webster at the Juilliard School in New York. He has been the recipient of several awards, including the specially created Artur Rubinstein Prize at the 1960 Chopin Competition in Warsaw and the Leventritt Award in 1962. The latter marked his "graduation" from all such competitions.

For some reason, it has taken a considerable number of years for his recording career to develop. It can be said really to have begun just recently with a performance of Albéniz's *Iberia*, recorded for Pathé-Marconi in Paris and released here by Connoisseur Society (S-2120/1, two discs). It is a performance that has been widely and roundly praised and ranked by several critics as superior to that of



Alicia de Larrocha—which rather puts it into the category of a *ne plus ultra*. Whether or not one goes along with *that* judgment, it is a rendition of remarkable quality, both personal and idiomatic, filled not only with technical mastery but with myriad rhythmic and coloristic subtleties, and it is an object lesson in the "you don't have to be . . ." category. We would be wise to follow Block's future recording career and see if he can be as persuasive in Schumann and Scriabin (which he is scheduled to record next) as he is in Albéniz.

## JEAN-PHILIPPE COLLARD

□ The musical world has a constant need for a French pianist in the mold of Alfred Cortot and the late Robert Casadesus. Certainly the most likely candidate for that honor at present is the twenty-nine-year-old Collard, winner of the Gabriel Fauré Award, the Albert Roussel Award, the Marquerite Long-Jacques Tribaud Competition, and the Cziffra International Competition. A "French pianist" is not merely one who plays French music—though that is obviously part of it—but one who, like Cortot and Casadesus, brings to all the music he plays certain French qualities of logic, clarity, color, and emotional restraint. Cortot played marvelous Schumann and Chopin, Casadesus fine Mozart and brilliant Scarlatti, in



addition to their French connections. Collard follows the same path, playing wonderfully musical Rachmaninoff and lucid and effective Schumann in addition to his idiomatic Fauré and Debussy. Also, like his predecessors, he is a fine chamber-music pianist.

There is a real spontaneity about Collard's playing. Even when he is giving the most traditional of performances, it all sounds quite new. But he is not a slave to tradition, for his approach to Fauré's marvelous *Theme and Variations*, despite its long and honorable tradition as a charming "ladies' piece," is large-scale and powerful, and he may well be the first to have given this music its real due. That performance is coupled with what is certainly the best rendition of the Fauré Nocturnes (complete) on record (Connoisseur Society

S-2072, two discs), and a companion disc (S-2078) offers the complete Barcarolles, performances which, in their subtle way, can break your heart. His Brahms *Hungarian Dances* with Michel Béroff (Connoisseur Society S-2083) was voted one of the best records of last year. Enough said. He has a great future.

## NELSON FREIRE

□ Any acquaintance with Freire's concert performances of recent years shows him to be no more than a hair's breadth away (if that) from being a great pianist. Intelligence, flair, musicianship, personality, poetry, and versatility are obviously all there in quantity. His records, though, for a number of reasons, are by no means consistent evidence of this. Most of Freire's records were made in Europe, and their American release has sometimes come years later. So, while a concert performance demonstrated an exquisitely poetic *Kinderszenen*, a contemporaneously released Columbia recording of the work was a considerable disappointment; it had been recorded years before and his current playing was way beyond it.

This is not to say that all Freire's records are unrepresentative. His first American release (of the Tchaikovsky, Grieg, and Schu-



mann concertos and the Liszt *Totentanz*, Columbia M2X-798, two discs) is still an astonishing tour de force, and his Telefunken record (641299) of the solo piano music of Villa-Lobos shows him as the master interpreter of that attractive and too-little-known repertoire. One only wishes some of his concert performances could have been preserved on disc, for they were of the sort that are remembered and talked about for years afterward. He is, however, still in his mid-thirties and has a long, brilliant, and perhaps luckier future ahead.

Freire was born and lives in Rio de Janeiro, one of the unprecedented group of brilliantly talented pianists to come out of Brazil in recent years.

## HORACIO GUTIÉRREZ

□ Gutiérrez is a man of great good humor and immense virtuoso accomplishment. Both qualities are evident in his so far only recording, the Tchaikovsky B-flat Minor and Liszt E-flat Major concertos (Angel S-37177), and not least at those moments when he hits the accelerator where most pianists would go for the brake. As much as playing the music, he plays *with* it, no disrespect in two such obvious virtuoso vehicles, but a mark of total





technical mastery and old-line virtuoso temperament. There is plenty of color, lyrical phrasing, and musical intelligence in his playing, but what one notices first is the sheer gusto and accomplishment of the piano playing as piano playing.

Gutiérrez was born in Cuba in 1948 and brought up in California. A graduate of Juilliard, he was the silver medalist in the 1970 Tchaikovsky Competition. Just what he will do in other areas of the repertoire remains to be seen, although his concert notices would make one sanguine on that point. He is, certainly, an exciting pianist of extraordinary abilities.

#### TEDD JOSELSON

□ Joselson is one of the few outstanding young pianists in whose careers competitions played no part. He has never had to impress the pianists who judge competitions for the reason that he has so impressed the conductors with whom he has played concerts. He made his orchestral debut at twenty-two and has not lacked for engagements since. Joselson, now twenty-seven, was born in Antwerp and raised in New York, where he studied at Juilliard with Adele Marcus.

He has a knockout technique, solid musicianship, temperament, and the intelligence to know and do the right thing. His debut disc of the Tchaikovsky First and Prokofiev Second concertos (RCA ARL1-0751) is still an astonishing case in point. In the former he is all the passionate romantic—big, singing lines, pregnant pauses, dramatic anticipations, and the real virtuoso roar. In the latter he is demonic, biting, and sensual, and he never sentimentalizes a phrase. He plays a lot of Prokofiev these days (he is recording all the sonatas), and his way with the music, neither steel-fingered nor wrongly romantic, is both individual and successful. He is one of the very few who can make the Eighth Sonata (RCA ARL1-1570), to me a very iffy piece, really work, and his disc of the *Visions Fugitives* is both beautiful and subtle, marred only by an unsuccessful Moussorgsky *Pictures* on the reverse. Joselson has played Bach, Mozart, and much of the standard repertoire in concert, and it will be interesting to see what he records after he finishes Prokofiev. He *could* be the new Horowitz.

#### JEAN-RODOLPHE KARS

□ Kars is a pianist who seemed to slip almost silently into the American record catalogs in 1970 with an unusual disc made up of

equal parts of Franz Liszt and Olivier Messiaen (London CS 6604, deleted), a disc made even more unusual in that there was only a single nod toward the sort of repertoire one might expect from a young pianist making his recording debut (*Wilde Jagd* from the *Transcendental Etudes*). That Kars could really play

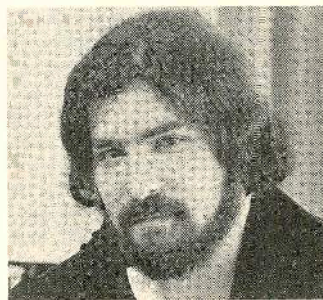


the music—both the Messiaen and the Liszt—was incontrovertible. Kars seems to be almost totally convincing in whatever he chooses to play, and his choices are original. In addition to Liszt/Messiaen he has brought out a pairing of the Debussy *Fantaisie* and the Delius Piano Concerto (London CS 6657), and, perhaps more conventional, a recording of the complete Debussy Preludes. Obviously, the range of his sympathies is broad.

His background is similarly varied. Born in Calcutta in 1947 of Austrian parents, he grew up in the *Massif Central* of France. Phonograph records were among his earliest musical experiences, and he began piano lessons only when he was seven. Although he did well in several piano competitions, he won first prize at the Messiaen Competition for Contemporary Music at Royan—not the sort of prize most budding virtuosos vie for. Clearly, Kars is of the intellectual type, “too much the musician ever to be a pianist,” as was once said of the young Artur Schnabel. It would be nice for *that* to happen again.

#### RADU LUPU

□ The young Roumanian pianist Radu Lupu is probably the most *musikalisch* of all the European crop of young pianists. That is to say, he exemplifies the Central-European ideal of the pianist who is equally at home, and equally convincing, in a Mozart concerto, a Beethoven sonata, Schubert, Schumann, Grieg, and Brahms, solo and concerted, and who can fit into a chamber ensemble with ease and



grace. Lupu is certainly all of this, as his recordings prove. He won the 1966 Van Cliburn Competition but put off a professional career until three years later when he won first prize

at the Leeds Piano Competition. He seems now to be London's “house pianist,” following in the steps of Clifford Curzon. Not bad.

On records, Lupu's pianism is always accomplished and sure, he rarely misses a musical point, and his interpretations are of the satisfying sort that one comes back to again and again. He is not in the competition to be the world's number one young virtuoso, but his performances of standard repertoire are already taken as seriously as those of established pianists many years his senior. His pairing of the Grieg and Schumann concertos (London 6840) is the most satisfying since Lipatti's, his Mozart Concerto No. 21 (London 6894) is on a par with Bishop's, Barenboim's, or Rubinstein's, and his contribution to the Mozart Violin Sonatas with Szymon Goldberg does as much for that series (London 2243, 2244, and more to come) as Goldberg's knowing violin playing. Lupu has provided no surprises so far, but he exemplifies the best in a traditional mold.

#### YEVGENY MOGILEVSKY

□ There is no doubt in my mind (nor in my gut) that the next great Russian pianist, after Berman, is Yevgeny Mogilevsky. In 1973, Melodiya/Angel released his recording of the Rachmaninoff Third Concerto (S-40226) to ecstatic critical praise, and a recent rehearing shows that performance to be everything it first seemed—and more. Mogilevsky's piano appears at time to fly over the orchestra, the kind of fantastic aural illusion one gets from great violinists but hardly ever from pianists. He sings with both hands, finds inner voices, conveys the most astonishing delicacy, builds up to a storm of virtuosity, and, in short, gives the listener all he has a right to expect



from the Rachmaninoff Third. To my ears it is the performance of a lifetime.

Mogilevsky, who was born in Odessa in 1945 and studied with Jakov Zak and Heinrich Neuhaus in Moscow, was the winner of the Queen Elizabeth Competition in Brussels in 1964—when he was nineteen. He has never appeared in the United States, and since that 1973 recording nothing further has appeared in the American record catalogs. But investigation of his Russian recordings (some Melodiya records are available here on direct import) show that musically he is far more sophisticated and catholic than any of his Russian contemporaries. The discs include a brilliant and idiomatic Schumann *Kreisleriana*, a technically superb (if not quite so idiomatic) *Gaspard de la Nuit* of Ravel, effective and quite unmannered performances of Beethoven's Opp. 54 and 111, and a performance of

Busoni's rather free transcription of Liszt's Variations and Fugue on *Ad Nos* that is a virtuosic knockout. Through all, even when he is idiomatically working in the dark, Mogilevsky is technically overpowering, musically fascinating. He is a personality as well as a pianist and musician and he ought to be "discovered"—fast.

#### GARRICK OHLSSON

□ Ohlsson's competition efforts were crowned when he became the first American winner of the Chopin Competition in Warsaw in 1970. His playing on that occasion can still be heard on two Connoisseur Society discs (S-2029/30), but it is no disparagement of his



triumph to say that he has become a far better pianist since.

Ohlsson is a big man, six-foot four, and he has the power that goes with such a frame. Temperamentally he is not a firebrand, and in his chosen repertoire (on records so far, Liszt, Chopin, and Rachmaninoff) his performances are unfailingly musical and sensible; they are not sober, but neither do they astonish. If he has a failing it is that in *this* repertoire he is not enough of a charlatan. Much of this music is in the nature of a vehicle for showmanship, and though one can easily overdo the legerdemain, one can also be too honest. A touch more rubato, a stronger accent, a rhythmic anticipation, a little "taffy pulling"—these can be all-important.

Although his Chopin is both estimable and more abundant, Ohlsson's Liszt solo record (Angel S-37125) is his best to date. If it lacks the last edge of fury, he more than makes up for it in intelligence, something not always out of place in Liszt. His new record of Rachmaninoff transcriptions is a joy on its own terms, but comparing it with Rachmaninoff himself, or with others of that generation, reveals that though the oldsters may not necessarily have been better pianists, they were better showmen.

#### CRISTINA ORTIZ

□ Cristina Ortiz, Brazilian born and in her mid-twenties, began to play the piano when she was two. She gave her first full-length recital at nine and proceeded to win competitions with almost monotonous regularity, finishing with the first prize in the 1969 Van Cliburn Competition. One of her earlier victories resulted in a scholarship to study with Magda Tagliaferro in Paris, and, after her triumph in Texas, she went to Rudolf Serkin for further study. Wise.



Ortiz is a fluent, incredibly graceful pianist whose primary musical characteristic is understatement. She is technically assured, musically sophisticated, but she never seems to play a note louder than absolutely necessary nor give a phrase more than its just due. Much of her recorded repertoire—concertos by Poulenc and Shostakovich, Constant Lambert's *Rio Grande*—is of the sort that requires stylistic know-how while giving the soloist little pianistic meat. Ortiz plays them all ideally, serving the music if not herself. She gets more opportunities on her solo recording "Alma Brasileira" (Angel S-37110), which shows her as a Villa-Lobos player second only to Freire, and on her pairing of Dohnányi's *Variations on a Nursery Tune* and Rachmaninoff's Paganini Rhapsody (Angel S-37178)—which is the giveaway. No one could really fault her renditions, but rarely have the big romantic moments been so understated. She is not, to my ears, the "exciting" pianist one critic called her, but she is one whose playing I would like to hear a great deal more of.

#### MURRAY PERAHIA

□ Perahia is the American version of the traditional European "musical" pianist, but he has reached that status through highly untraditional means. Born in the Bronx, he



showed ability early and studied piano with Jeannette Haein until he was seventeen. At that point he began to study conducting and composition and became pianistically an autodidact—standard procedure for a future conductor-composer, but quite the opposite for someone whose stated ambition was to be a concert pianist. He spent a great deal of time studying the recorded work of such pianists as Curzon, Schnabel, and Horowitz, and he became a mainstay (in the presence of Serkin, Schneider, and Casals) at the Marlboro Music Festival, dividing his time between solo and chamber playing. At twenty-five he appeared as soloist with the New York Philharmonic and in 1972 became the first American to win the Leeds International Piano

Competition. He has plenty of technique, but he is not a virtuoso; he plays with ample expressivity, but he is not really a poetic interpreter. He is one hundred per cent musical, a conscientious and serious interpreter who can, when the music warrants it, play with grace and spirit. His Schumann *Fantasiestücke* lack a certain, well, fantasy, but his Mozart concertos (Nos. 14 and 24, Columbia M-34219) are admirable, and in the two Mendelssohn concertos (Columbia M-33207) he is quite marvelous: fluent, elegant, spirited, and, of course, musical. A pianist for the long, long run.

#### PASCAL ROGÉ

□ Rogé, now twenty-six, made his recorded debut at the age of eighteen with a magnificently played recital of the music of Liszt (London CS 6693) which included the Sonata in B Minor and the *Vallée d'Obermann*. He has a natural affinity for Liszt, a musical and personal sympathy, as well as the technical ability to handle all the difficulties. Indeed, Julius Katchen, with whom Rogé studied for some years before the former's lamentable



early death, remarked on Rogé's "apparent inability to play a wrong note." Admirable as that may be, a virtuoso needs something more. Rogé has youth and flair and ferocity, all of which stand him in good stead in certain areas of the repertoire. Where they seem to have been of little help to him is in his recording of the complete piano music of Ravel—in retrospect, at least, a rather ill-advised project. Obviously, there is no question of Rogé's ability to get the notes, but rather of the temperamental ability to present them effectively. A projected set of the piano music of Debussy would seem to carry Rogé still further down the wrong path, and the project may have already been reconsidered. But that Liszt record is a winner and there is a sparkling talent here. What he needs, it seems, is guidance—of the sort Katchen might have been able to give him.

#### CAROL ROSENBERGER

□ Because of an extended battle with paralytic polio, Carol Rosenberger is about ten years behind in her career, and it is only because of her truly powerful spirit that she was able to resume a pianistic career at all. Apart from the time lag, though, no evidence of the illness is to be found in her playing. She has been endowed with beauty, brains, and all the fingers she needs, as well as an estimable sense of musical curiosity and courage. Her recording of the Chopin Preludes (Delos 15311), while never less than competent,



was an unwise attempt to compete with some of the greats too early in the game. But her records of the very beautiful piano music of Szymanowski, the Etudes and *Masques* (Delos 15312) and the Mazurkas (Delos 25417, see review in this issue) show real and sympathetic understanding of the musical personality involved. She is not a great colorist, but there is an element of fantasy and of "swing" in her playing which, never wayward, is eminently satisfying.

Born in Detroit and living in California, Miss Rosenberger studied piano with Webster Aitken, music theory with Nadia Boulanger and Franz Eibner, and Baroque music (!) with Eta Harich-Schneider. Her intellectual studies add an extra dimension to her playing and are sure to pay still larger dividends in the long run.

#### PETER SERKIN

□ There is no pianist quite like Peter Serkin, whose musical sympathies are broader than those of virtually any musician of recent memory. He is a stunning Mozartian, an excellent Bach player, a leading proponent of Messiaen, a brilliant interpreter of Bartók and Schoenberg, and the pianist in one of the best of all recordings of Schubert's *Trout Quintet* (Vanguard 71145). It is doubtful that he would enter a Rachmaninoff competition, but he obviously has a deep understanding of the



way music itself works, and that enables him to tackle almost anything.

Serkin studied at the Curtis Institute for six years with three different pianists (one of them named Serkin) and made his Philadelphia Orchestra debut at fourteen. He began concertizing regularly at seventeen. He is not a "sensational" pianist. With Serkin one doesn't talk of technique, virtuosity, or even comparative interpretation; it is his musical ideas that are important. He is not *musikalisch* in the traditional way but in a new way. Perhaps more than any other pianist he sees a new ordering of "the repertoire," selecting what he deems valuable from all ages and disregarding even the most established

pieces if they do not seem relevant to his understanding of music. His Mozart Concertos Nos. 14-19 (RCA ARL3-0732, three discs) and his Messiaen *Quatuor pour le Fin du Temps* (RCA ARL1-1567), the latter with his own chamber group Tashi, are indispensable. Everything he plays is interesting.

#### ROBERT SILVERMAN

□ Silverman, in his late thirties, is an established major pianist in his native Canada, but he is best known here through several recordings issued by Orion. He is unusual in that his work at the Eastman School of Music earned him not only the expected artist's diploma but also a doctorate, and that is symptomatic of his musical and intellectual outlook. He won various prizes in the Rio de Janeiro, Van Cliburn, Busoni, and Viana da Mota competi-



tions, but his real breakthrough on the Canadian scene came through his triumph in the *Concours Jeunesses Musicales* in his own country.

A good deal about Silverman can be divined simply from the repertoire he has recorded: Bartók's *Dance Suite* and Bagatelles (Orion ORS 74152); Schumann's Third Sonata and *Bunte Blätter* (ORS 7146); Copland's Sonata, *Passacaglia*, and *Four Piano Blues* (ORS 7280). Somewhat like Kars, though with a totally different repertoire, he is a musician first, a pianist second. Above all, and appropriately for one who idolizes Solomon and Lipatti and admires Moravec, he is a man who directs his immense technical and intellectual abilities to getting-out of a piece of music exactly what, and everything that, the composer put into it. Charm, virtuosity, showmanship are beside the point. The music to him is not the vehicle but the goal.

#### ALEKSANDER SLOBODYANIK

□ Slobodyanik, a Soviet pianist born in Kiev, is no stranger to America, having completed



no fewer than five concert tours of the U.S. He studied at the Moscow Conservatory with Neuhaus (who taught Richter and Gilels) and with Vera Gornostayeva. He was among the winners in the 1966 Tchaikovsky Competition, but such contests are obviously not to his taste. His career has been built slowly and surely through extensive concertizing.

Although he plays Stravinsky, Beethoven, Mozart, and Haydn, Slobodyanik's recorded repertoire has concentrated on Chopin (Etudes, Melodiya/Angel S-40204 and S-40205, taken from live performance), Prokofiev (Sonata No. 6, Melodiya/Angel S-40109, deleted), and Liszt (Sonata, Columbia/Melodiya M-33119). His technique, while more than adequate to the demands of the music he plays, is not the sort that by itself makes one gasp with admiration. In general, he seems neither a glittering virtuoso nor a highly poetic interpreter, but rather a tremendously capable pianist, somewhat phlegmatic, who feels most at home with straightforward musical problems. His Chopin Etudes, for all their direct musicality, show him oblivious to any expression that might be engendered by extra-musical connotations of the works, and he gets less purely musical expression out of Op. 10, No. 3 at a slow tempo than Ashkenazy does at a faster one. He plays Liszt well but Prokofiev better, understanding both the music's lyricism and its irony, neither overstating nor understating, and walking the line like the most assured tightrope artist.

#### ROBERTO SZIDON

□ Roberto Szidon, the mixture of names deriving from his Hungarian parentage and his Brazilian birth, is still another of the astonishing crop of talented pianists of his generation to come out of Brazil. He was a prodigy, but, in addition to studying piano with various teachers, he also prepared himself for a career in medicine and received a commission as a medical officer in the Brazilian army. He has been very much of an independent in how he has chosen to study (on the basis of his recorded repertoire, he still is), and there is more than one contradiction in his musical personality.



Szidon is a bravura pianist with formidable technique and flair, amply evident from his records. In concert, however, he has occasionally played well below his recorded standard. Liszt is natural repertoire for a virtuoso, and Szidon has recorded an estimable set of the *Hungarian Rhapsodies*, together with the *Spanish Rhapsody* (Deutsche Grammophon 2709 044, three discs). His performances are knowing, his rhythmic sense acute, and his

fingerwork hardly open to criticism. His Villa-Lobos recording is also an understandable project, and also praiseworthy, though he does not have either the architectural sense or the delicacy of Freire. But one wonders why a pianist of his particular abilities also chooses to record such works as the Gershwin Concerto in F and the Ives *Concord* Sonata, music that requires technique but does not show it off and that depends entirely upon the understanding and conveyance of a particular idiom. Szidon's performances are not bad, but they are not idiomatic. Unquestionably a talent, perhaps even a big talent, Szidon is still finding himself. He is thirty-six and that gives him some time yet.

#### ILANA VERED

□ Vered is a pianist of formidable technique and what might be called a post-Romantic temperament, which is to say that she seems more convincing in the larger and generally



shallower gestures of Rachmaninoff and Moszkowski than in the complex subtleties of a Chopin, Fauré, or Schumann. There does not seem to be a great deal of intellectual content to her playing and, though she is by no means a machine, she is most musically satisfying when her fingers have a lot to do. Ilana Vered was born in Israel of Polish-Russian descent, her mother a pianist and her father a violinist. Something of a child prodigy, she graduated from the Paris Conservatory with a first prize at fifteen and subsequently studied under the late Rosina Lhevinne at Juilliard, but her real career, both on records and off, has been somewhat late in blooming. She has achieved considerable success in a relatively short time.

Her recently released solo recital (London Phase 4 SPC 21156) is an abominably programmed record, but it does give a good idea of her strengths and weaknesses (brilliant Liszt and Rachmaninoff, not bad Chopin, leaden Schumann). Much more consistent are her records of the Rachmaninoff Second Concerto and Paganini Rhapsody (London SPC 21099), both of which performances are in the running with the best, and the Moszkowski Virtuoso Etudes (Connoisseur Society S-2023), which takes the full measure of the music in dazzling renditions.

#### VIKTOR YERESKO

□ Yeresko was born in the Ukraine and studied at the conservatories of Lvov and Moscow with, among others, the great Chopinist Jakov Flier. In 1963 he won the Marguerite



Long-Jacques Thibaud Competition, after which Mme. Long wrote that she envisioned in him "another Rachmaninoff." Perhaps his records are unrepresentative, for if she meant Rachmaninoff the pianist, I fail to hear anything of the kind.

There are only two records of Yeresko in the American catalog. The first offers the Grieg A Minor Concerto, with a Russian orchestra, together with the six *Poetic Tone Pictures*, Op. 3, for solo piano (Melodiya/Angel S-40193), and the second Moussorgsky's *Pictures* plus a few short Rachmaninoff pieces. It is evident from the concerto that Yeresko can command a grand, sweeping, dramatic style, applied even where it may be out of place—in the slow movement, for example, which he Rachmaninoffizes (R. the composer) unmercifully. The third movement is filled with expressive ritards in odd places and straight-ahead playing where one expects the expressive underlinings. But the first movement has to be among the most exciting on records. Grieg's Op. 3 is dull and Yeresko gets nothing more out of it than that. What we have here, it seems to me, is parochiality, an obvious talent whose musical growth has been stunted by lack of exposure to Western performances and traditions. Even his *Pictures* is a more stolid affair than one would expect, though capable and with a personal and rather modern-sounding "clang." If Yeresko travels more, hears more, he could develop into something more important than he is now.

#### CHRISTIAN ZACHARIAS

□ Zacharias is a young pianist in his mid-twenties who was a second-prize winner in



the Van Cliburn Competition in 1973 and the winner of the Ravel Prize in Paris in 1975. His playing was totally unknown to me, however, until the release of his first record, the Schubert Sonata in G Major (Seraphim S-60285, reviewed in this issue). Zacharias, like many of his colleagues, has an international back-

ground, having been born in India and raised in West Germany. He studied in Germany with a Russian teacher and in Paris with Vlado Perlemuter. Whatever effect his training has had on him, and whatever other abilities and affinities he may have, he is a born Schubertian. To be so means to have not only an instinctive feeling for the style, but a powerful and comprehensive technique without the overpowering desire to show it off, to have the ability to sustain a tempo and a line over a long period of time and the ability to discern the differences between song-like, dance-like, and dramatic elements and give each its due, and a host of other things. The Schubert pianist is quite a different animal from the Chopinist, the Lisztian, or even the Beethoven interpreter.

Zacharias has all these abilities. His performance of the G Major, not an easy work, is simply the best I have ever heard. I look forward to more Schubert from him, and I am tantalized by the question of just what repertoire and what sort of playing won him that Ravel Prize.

#### KRYSTIAN ZIMERMAN

□ Zimerman, at twenty the youngest pianist considered here, is the first Polish winner of the Frederic Chopin International Piano Competition in Warsaw (1975) since Adam Harasiewicz twenty-odd years ago. His sole recording thus far (Deutsche Grammophon 2530 826, reviewed in this issue) consists of his performances from that competition, a mixed blessing since we are afforded the op-



portunity to hear him in a concert situation but are denied knowing what he would approve as his best in a studio recording. A competition has its own ambiance, and comparing contest performances with a more normal concert can be misleading.

All that said, Zimerman is impressive if not totally convincing. He makes less of the *Andante Spianato* than a fine Chopinist should, but more of the ensuing *Grande Polonaise* than many others can, playing out with real fire and abandon and carrying it off splendidly. Obviously, he can be exciting. He plays the three Op. 24 mazurkas with considerable success too, and his F Major Etude, Op. 10, No. 8, has not only the flashy fingerwork but the kind of brilliance that is often lacking even in pianists who have the requisite fingers. Zimerman has a lovely and varied tone, and, though he does not score all the musical points possible, he gets quite a number of them. Since he was just signed by an American manager as well as by Deutsche Grammophon we should be hearing a good deal more of him. □

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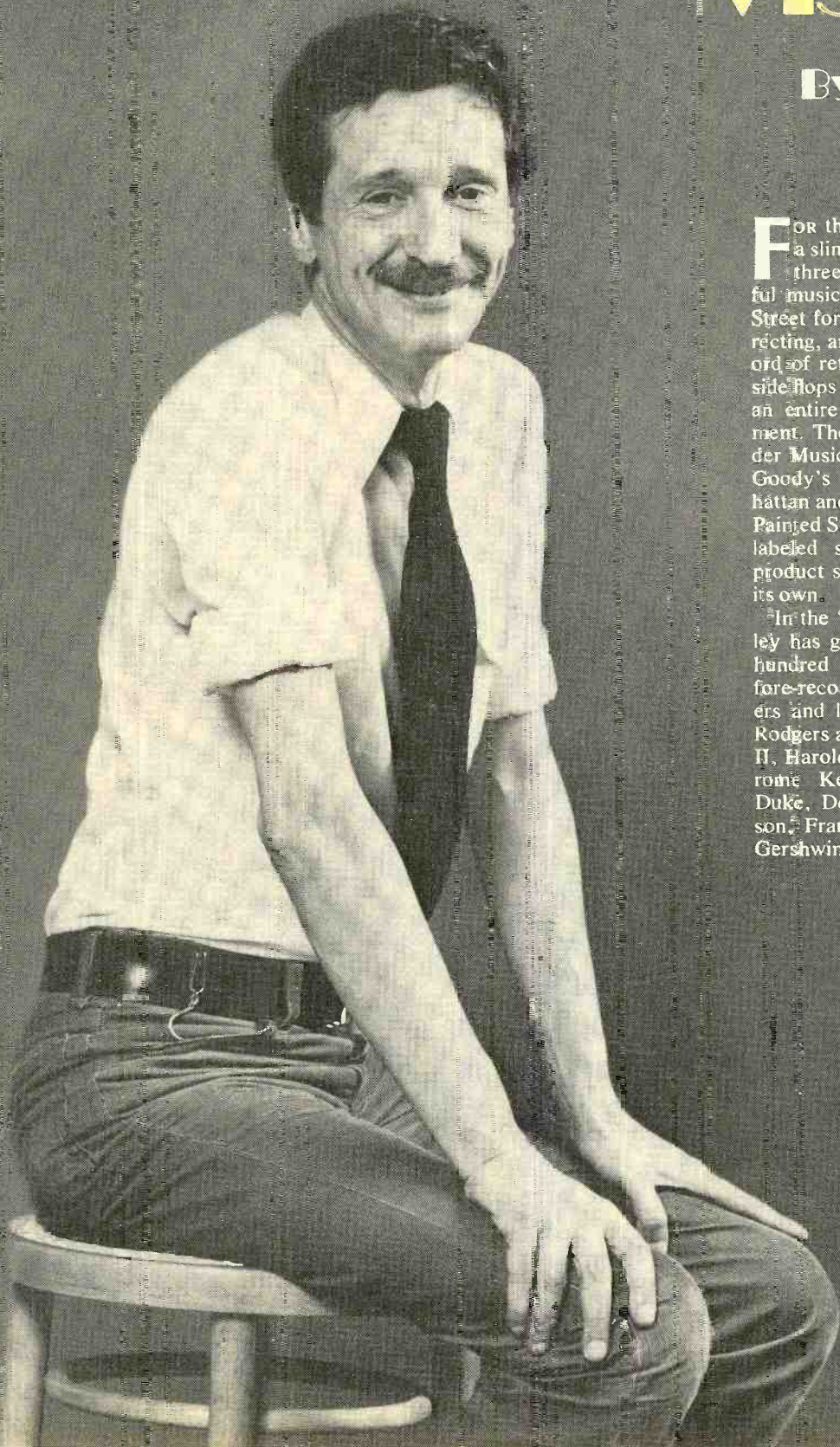


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# BEN BAGLEY VISITED

By Paul Kresh



For the past ten years Ben Bagley, a slim, soft-spoken fellow of forty-three, has been working the colorful musical-comedy side of Nostalgia Street for all it is worth, producing, directing, and packaging record after record of refurbished dusty hits and flip-side flops that have now burgeoned into an entire library of period entertainment. The album covers say "File under Musical Comedy," but go to Sam Goody's on West 49th Street in Manhattan and you'll find a whole bin of his Painted Smiles records behind a divider labeled simply "Ben Bagley." The product seems to create a category all its own.

In the "Revisited" series alone Bagley has given new life to more than a hundred half-forgotten or never-before-recorded songs by such composers and lyricists as Alan Jay Lerner, Rodgers and Hart, Oscar Hammerstein II, Harold Arlen, Arthur Schwartz, Jerome Kern, Noël Coward, Vernon Duke, DeSylva, Brown, and Henderson, Frank Loesser, Cole Porter, the Gershwins, and—most recently—Vin-

cent Youmans (see review on page 100), with apparently no end in sight. He has rescued the tapes of his own celebrated *Shoestring Revues* of 1955 and 1957 and *The Littlest Revue* of 1956 (actually the biggest of the three) and reissued them on discs that seem to start making scintillating sounds even before you get them out of their jackets. He has produced a whole record of ballet music from the heyday of the Broadway musical ("Ballet on Broadway"), and he's probably the only producer in the business to have put out an "original-cast" recording of a show that hasn't opened—"Unpublished Cole Porter" from his still-forthcoming musical revue, *Painted Smiles of Cole Porter*. (Bagley hasn't yet raised enough money for this one, planned as a sequel to his highly successful *The Decline and Fall of the Entire World as Seen Through the Eyes of Cole Porter*, which packed them in at off-Broadway's Square East Theatre in 1965.)

Bagley has a good eye for budding talent. Early on he discovered such winners as Arte Johnson, Beatrice Arthur (TV's Maude), Chita Rivera, Dody Goodman, and Paul Mazursky—all performers in the *Shoestring Revues*. His *Littlest Revue* featured Joel Grey, Tammy Grimes, and Larry Storch. His writers have included Sheldon Harnick and Jerry Bock (*Fiddler on the Roof* and *Fiorello*), Charles Strouse and Lee Adams (*Bye Bye Birdie*, *Golden Boy*, *Applause*), Mike Stewart (*George M.*, *Hello Dolly*, *Carnival*), Tom Jones and Harvey Schmidt (*The Fantasticks*), and Dorothy Greener (a splendid comedienne who died a few years back without ever achieving the stardom she deserved). But his taste is not infallible. Bagley also turned down such stars-to-be as Carol Burnett, Steve McQueen, Warren Beatty, Shelley Berman, Mike Nichols and Elaine May (he says he liked her, but Nichols' toupee was "too obvious"), Rod McKuen, and Phyllis Diller—as well as a couple of sketches by Pulitzer Prize playwright Edward Albee.

To sing on *Painted Smiles* releases, Bagley has managed to secure (for remarkably low sums) the services of such celebrated and unexpected personalities as Anthony Perkins, Estelle Parsons, Rex Reed, Hermione Gingold, the late Laurence Harvey, Maureen Stapleton, and (having at last seen her charms) Phyllis Diller—along with such recognized vocal talents as Blossom Dearie, Charles Rydell, Dorothy Loudon, Harold Lang, Cab Calloway, and Mary McCarty, among others. Also in his loyal, low-paid troupe are arranger Norman Paris and arranger-conductor Dick Hyman.

Bagley cajoles first-rate lyricists into

writing new words for orphan tunes he has discovered. He also writes a few of these himself, as well as all the liner notes for his records—which tend to be enjoyable but unreliable mixtures of show-business history, gossip, and sheer fantasy (leading Rex Reed to call them the "inside jokes" of the entertainment business). The album covers are drawn by Harvey Schmidt. Critics love the records (John S. Wilson of the *New York Times* called the "Revisited" albums "invaluable") and the public seems to be buying enough of them to keep *Painted Smiles* afloat and at least wanly grinning.

**B**EN BAGLEY was born in the little Vermont town of Hardwick on October 18, 1933 ("I'm a Libra"), the grandson of the conductor of the Vermont Symphony Orchestra in Burlington (who,

**"Just turned twenty, he set out to raise money for his first *Shoestring Review*; two years later it opened—to raves."**

when the orchestra failed during the Depression, was forced to give up music and try to make a living as a tailor and clothing designer). Ben's mother was a pianist and music teacher; he learned about music from her. But "I was my mother's worst student," he says. "I was too impatient. I wanted to sit down and play Chopin right away, not Chaminade."

Ben's father was a farmer who later sold his small vegetable farm and bought a movie theater, where Ben spent all the hours he could spare watching movies like *Cover Girl*, which had Gene Kelly and Rita Hayworth singing (well, her lips moved, anyway) and dancing to songs by Jerome Kern and Ira Gershwin. Ben's father taught him how to fight, a skill that came in handy since he was born with outsize ears that led derisive classmates to nickname him "Dumbo." "Never run away from a fight," his father advised, and little Ben obeyed the maxim. He often came home with a bloody nose until he was able to defend himself so well ("I was a dirty fighter") that nobody called him "Dumbo" any more.

Today, Ben Bagley is a slender, agile, leprechaunish man with a small moustache, tousled brown hair, straight features, and restless brown eyes. The "Dumbo" ears are gone and

he has had several other surgical revisions of his physiognomy as well. Not long ago, when he came across his old protégée Beatrice Arthur (during a Broadway preview of the current hit musical *I Love My Wife*) she refused to believe he was the same person she had worked for back in the *Shoestring Revue* days. "She practically denounced me as an imposter," he reports.

Over dinner in a modest Manhattan French restaurant in the West Fifties, Bagley, a trace of New England still in his treble voice, talked quickly and quietly about his life, tossing in unprintable bits of scandal about the many celebrities he has known in the course of a career still rife with adventure as well as promise.

"When I was eleven," Ben recalls, "my parents took me down to New York to see *On the Town*. It wiped me out." The World War II musical about three sailors on leave in the big city—with Comden and Green's bright lyrics, Leonard Bernstein's intricate, sparkling score, and Sono Osato's spectacular dancing—is even now his favorite, and first set him to daydreaming about producing musical shows himself. But first he had to get out of Hardwick. The opportunity came when Ben was sixteen, in 1949. He threw a set of schoolbooks at a tormentor and the buckle on the belt holding them together put out one of the boy's eyes. After that, it was thought best for Ben to leave town, so he willingly boarded the first convenient bus for New York City.

Bad luck continued to plague him in New York. He broke a chandelier at the firm where he worked and lost his \$27.50-a-week job as an office boy. But he remembered his grandmother's advice about "the magic of deception" and decided to pass himself off as a high school graduate. This got him a job as a file clerk for an advertising agency—at \$35 a week. He also started buying his clothes at Brooks Brothers and took to wearing Ivy League ties and horn-rimmed glasses. Later he awarded himself three years of college and added a couple of years to his age. This sort of creativity won him a post as a writer on a trade paper, the *Engineering News Record*.

In his spare time in those days Ben could generally be found leaning over a balcony to get a better look at one of the dazzling spectacles presented by the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo or up in some cheap seat straining to see and hear a Broadway musical. Since nobody called begging him to produce a hit musical at the Winter Garden, he took to making his own calls on theatrical writers and composers, claiming to be a wealthy young producer—with money about to burst into flames in his

pocket—ready to put on a series of clever, tuneful, and irreverent revues. Just turned twenty, he set out to raise money for his first *Shoestring Revue*; two years later, in 1955, it actually opened—to raves. Ben Bagley's fictions were coming true. *The Littlest Revue* followed in 1956 and another *Shoestring Revue* in 1957. There would have been a third, in 1958, but Ben came down with tuberculosis and had to spend the next two years at the Will Rogers Hospital in Los Angeles.

Back in circulation, healthier but more sparing of his energies, Ben got together with Arthur Siegel—a pianist and singer who also composed such once-famous ballads as *Love Is a Simple Thing*—and started collecting material from old musicals. One day a writer named Michael McWhinney heard some of the tapes Siegel and Bagley had put together, and as a result he became Ben's co-producer for the first "Revisited" record, devoted to Rodgers and Hart. This was issued on the RIC label, which had been started by a former RCA executive, Joe Csida. "Cole Porter Revisited" followed, and this led to the much-acclaimed *Decline and Fall* show.

Meanwhile, RIC went bankrupt, as little record companies will, and Columbia picked up the series. But after "Jerome Kern Revisited" was put together, there were disagreements between Columbia and Bagley, who took his business over to MGM. Then, right in the middle of the production of "Alan Jay Lerner Revisited," MGM changed its top management in a bloodless coup and Ben moved on to Crewe Records, where Bob Crewe signed him up to do five albums a year. When Crewe also went broke, Ben took the master tapes of his series "in lieu of the money" he was owed.

That was in the Sixties, when *Decline and Fall* was still playing to packed houses. One evening at the Square East Theatre, an ill-shaven man in rags kept climbing up on chairs to take flash pictures, to the horror of the cast. When Bagley went over to throw this disturber of the peace out, the man brazenly insisted he was a friend of Ben Bagley. The producer had never seen him before, but even so they somehow wound up having a drink together. The seedy photographer turned out to be a millionaire named Jerome Hill. Bagley soon persuaded him to put up the money to start a new record company

to keep the "Revisited" series going, and that's how Painted Smiles was born. When Hill died in 1972, Ben inherited the company—along with \$10,000 in unpaid bills for full-color covers and various other printing costs.

**I**N recent years, still struggling toward solvency, Bagley has been trying to buy back his old records from the companies that originally released them. He wrote to the late Goddard Lieberson, then president of Columbia: "I have no children. These records are my children. You own two of my children." The "children" are now back in Ben Bagley's custody.

Painted Smiles has only one other staff member besides Bagley: Steve Grant, a fan who moved in to wrap records, work on sales, and spotcheck stores to make sure the product is in the bins. "I do all the creative stuff myself," Ben explains, talking at the speed of a radio announcer trying to work a two-minute text into a one-minute spot. "I record at whatever studio offers the cheapest price. I set up

"I have met hundreds of people who have bought my records; they are all pleasantly superior people."

the rehearsals and all the recording sessions. This can take days. I also call box companies, looking for bargains in containers to ship in. I write the liners, read the proofs, measure the type. I spend hours—sometimes whole days and nights—editing and mixing the material."

In addition to the records and the revues, several of which have toured out of town, Bagley has also been involved in producing night-club material. Early in his career he supervised the entertainment at the famed Blue Angel in New York and produced a number of variety evenings at the Upstairs at the Downstairs, a rendezvous for cabaret addicts of the Fifties and Sixties. Last October he put together a concert at Town Hall in which some of his favorite performers sang show tunes of yesteryear, while Ben himself intoned a saucy commentary as comic slides of show-business personalities were flashed on a screen. Once again, the reviews were glowing.

Even Bagley's night-club shows have a kind of genial innocence about them. He consciously avoids the know-

ing putdown, the lyric or skit with malicious satirical intent. The fun his programs generate can be bawdy, but it is good-humored. This helps make him much in demand on college campuses, where he has several times directed musical productions for student audiences. He never did get around to finishing his formal education (and his grammar and spelling are rather on the shaky side as a result), but out of his knowledge of the world of the performing arts he has sifted several talks on the history of theater music that he plans to take on the lecture circuit. Most of his time these days, though, is devoted to trying to make Painted Smiles thrive.

Why does he keep at it? The money, of which there has been little to show for the effort, is only one motivation. On the back of every Painted Smiles record appears the disarming statement, "These albums are my way of reaching out and touching you." He earnestly invites correspondence, and says that through it he has made thousands of friends all over the country.

The owner of Painted Smiles considers himself not merely a producer but a crusader for good musical entertainment. He thinks that the rest of the country has become more sophisticated than New Yorkers and other big-city dwellers care to realize. "I have met hundreds of people who have bought my records; they are all pleasantly superior people, and they are all out-of-towners. A man in a small town will buy one of my records, like, say, 'Irving Berlin Revisited.' He'll take it home and be disappointed because he hasn't heard on it the familiar songs he knows. Then he'll play it again, and—well, pretty soon I've made another friend."

**D**ESCRIBING himself as living "in abject poverty in the borough of Queens" with an alley cat named Fogarty that he adopted as a kitten three years ago (from the Bide-a-Wee Home for homeless animals), Ben, who has never married, finds he is too busy to be lonely. He has always led a complicated personal life and has traveled widely both in this country and abroad. He loves foreign movies, and he does some reading, but music is his principal hobby. He can listen for hours to Italian movie scores by such composers as Nino Rota, and he is also fond of the classics, with a preference for sweepingly romantic works. But he hates hard rock and is convinced that melody will one day regain its ascendancy on the Broadway musical stage. If that ever happens, Ben Bagley's "revisitations" to our musical-comedy past may well have helped bring it about. □





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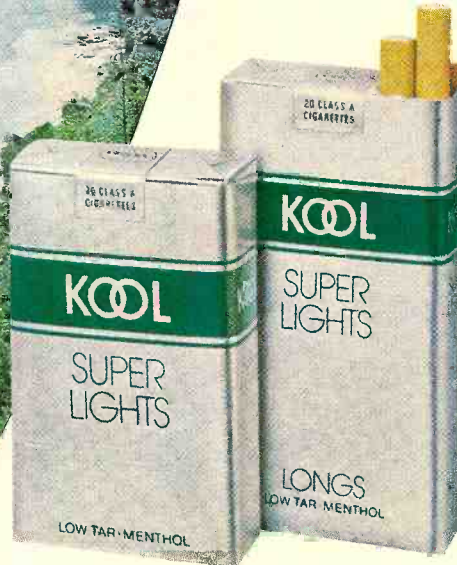
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# STEREO REVIEW'S SELECTION OF RECORDINGS OF SPECIAL MERIT BEST OF THE MONTH



At the post-concert party are (l. to r.) Mrs. Charlotte Herman, RCA Records president Ken Glancy, Woody himself in a well-practiced pucker, and Columbia Records president Bruce Lundvall.

## Woody Herman's Fortieth-Anniversary Carnegie Hall Concert on Two Treasurable Discs

NOVEMBER 20 of last year was a memorable date not only for Woody Herman, who was celebrating his fortieth anniversary as a bandleader, but also for those of us who filled Carnegie Hall that night to hear such old Herman's Herd members as Stan Getz, Jimmy Giuffre, Flip Phillips, Al Cohn, and Zoot Sims (to mention just the reeds) thunder with their old boss again.

A double-disc album documenting the event has just been released by RCA, and it captures the spirited atmosphere vividly, from the fiery opening on *Apple Honey* to the familiar, slightly chaotic *Caldonia*, which had alumni and current Herd members battling it out in jam-session style. What the album does not give us is the visual thrill

of seeing so many of the old group together again on stage, a thrill that prompted one enthusiastic (and presumably well-fixed) fan to throw hundred-dollar bills at their feet! Nor does the album or its notes tell of the unusual tribute paid to Woody Herman after the concert, when RCA and Columbia Records—old, sometimes bitter rivals—got together and threw him a lavish party at New York's elegant Essex House.

I'm sorry if you missed the concert or the party, but you should *not* miss this album, which, besides the nostalgic sounds of vocalist Mary Ann McCall and the fifteen top instrumentalists from Herds past, features some fine numbers by the current, youthful New Thundering Herd. I have not al-

ways liked the Herman bands of recent vintage, but the presence of distinguished predecessors obviously made the incumbent team rise to the occasion. The latter-day Herman band has an important asset in saxophonist Gary Anderson, who solos with perhaps too much fervor on *Penny Arcade* but really proves his worth as an arranger: his treatment of Aaron Copland's *Fanfare for the Common Man* will probably have the purists climbing the wall as high as the recent version by ELP did, but as a modern orchestral piece in the jazz idiom it works very well. In it, Herman solos on soprano saxophone, injecting a bit of *Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen* (after all, the common man *does* carry his burden, I suppose). It is memorable even though his



The Flying Dutchman, Act I: Daland bids a temporary farewell to his prospective son-in-law



The Flying Dutchman, Act III: a forlorn Senta flings herself into the seas as her lover departs

Culver Pictures

technique falters somewhat (it does on most of his solos these days, but that is, I hasten to add, more in the nature of an observation than a criticism; Woody is, after all, sixty-four, and there is certainly much more to music than mere facility).

This is not, then, a perfect album; that would be too much to expect with so many musicians playing live under conditions that were, to say the least, a bit on the turbulent side. But it is a very special album whose merits go far beyond mere nostalgia value. Some of the music may lack polish, but the spirit that prevails throughout is quite ample recompense. —Chris Albertson

**WOODY HERMAN: *The 40th Anniversary Carnegie Hall Concert.*** Woody Herman (clarinet, soprano and alto saxophones); the New Thundering Herd; Conte and Pete Candoli (trumpets); Al Cohn, Stan Getz, Jimmy Giuffre, Zoot Sims, and Flip Phillips (saxophones); Ralph Burns, Jimmy Rowles, and Nat Pierce (piano); Billy Bauer (guitar); Chubby Jackson (bass); Don Lamond and Jake Hanna (drums); Mary Ann McCall (vocals). *Apple Honey; Sweet and Lovely; Four Brothers; Brotherhood of Man; Early Autumn; Wrap Your Troubles in Dreams; Everywhere; Bijou; Cousins; Penny Arcade; Crisis; She's Gone; Fanfare for the Common Man; Blues in the Night; Blue Serge; Blue Getz Blues; Caldonia.* RCA BGL2-2203 two discs \$13.98, © BGS2-2203 \$14.95, © BGK2-2203 \$14.95.

## "Deceptive Bends" From 10cc: Technical Brilliance and Relaxed Horseplay

THE rock group known as 10cc is one of the most imaginative and resourceful bands now operating, and I am delighted to say that the recent split in the group's personnel has affected the quality of their work not a jot or tittle. The original four-man group—Kevin Godley, Lol Creme, Graham Gouldman, and Eric Stewart—was reduced by two when Creme and Godley departed to work on a special project, a three-disc album employing the Gizmo, a device that gives a rich orchestral sound to the standard electric guitar.

In the meantime, Gouldman and Stewart have written and produced the new Mercury release "Deceptive Bends," and its caliber is as high, its content as colorful as anything we have had from the group before. *The Things We Do for Love*, already a hit single, is a charming, foot-tapping song with sentiments almost anyone can appreciate. It derives its charm in part from its construction: the bridge lyrics ("Ah, you made me love you/Ah, you've got a

way") come as a refreshingly airy release of the tension built up by the lyrics of the melodic theme.

The slightly mystifying (even kinky) *Honeymoon with B Troop* is another example of Gouldman and Stewart's arranging skills, here used with effective satiric effect. *I Bought a Flat Guitar Tutor* is a musical joke presented as light, happy jazz, the lyrics composed of references to musical notation. *You've Got a Cold* is hilarious—especially delivered as it is with all the stuffed-up resentment most of us feel when we catch one of the bloody things.

The mixture of technical brilliance and relaxed horseplay that 10cc has brought to each of their albums makes the appearance of a new one something of a musical event. The band is still miles ahead of almost any other in both conception and execution. They are, in short, one of the most heartening things on the current pop-music scene.

—Joel Vance

**10cc: *Deceptive Bends.*** 10cc (vocals and instrumentals). *Good Morning Judge; The Things We Do for Love; Marriage Bureau Rendezvous; People in Love; Modern Man Blues; Honeymoon with B Troop; I Bought a Flat Guitar Tutor; You've Got a Cold; Feel the Benefit (Parts I, II, and III).* MERCURY SRM-1-3702 \$7.98, © 81-3702 \$7.95, © 41-3702 \$7.95.

## The "Chicago Sound" Stars in London's New Recording of Wagner's *Flying Dutchman*

**S**IR GEORG SOLTI and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Chorus are clearly the stars of London's new *Flying Dutchman*, and their supercharged "Chicago sound," brilliantly captured by the visiting London engineering team, overshadows all previous recorded efforts on behalf of Wagner's highly theatrical music drama. Comparison with London's earlier, Dorati-led version (OSA 1399), a sonic triumph in its day, demonstrates the new set's superiority in terms of orchestral detail and registered impact.

But this new *Dutchman* is no mere engineering feat. Solti paces the music with unflagging momentum, starting with the powerful Overture and moving on to a remarkably firm and incisive orchestral support behind the Dutchman's opening monologue. His is an approach that can sustain an impressive weight in the orchestral tone without encumbering the lighter episodes: there is a lusty swagger to the sailor's merrymaking, and the outstandingly

sung girls' choruses have a properly playful aura.

If the four singing principals had been operating on the same masterly plane, this would have been a nearly miraculous performance. But only one of them, Martti Talvela, with his dramatically telling, vocally imposing characterization of Daland, scales those heights. Norman Bailey interprets the title role intelligently and movingly, but his sound is not firmly centered and lacks the richness and tonal beauty preserved in the historical interpretations of Friedrich Schorr and Joel Berglund. (In fairness to Mr. Bailey, however, I doubt that anyone singing today could do the role any better than he.)

Janis Martin has a lighter timbre than we are accustomed to in the role of Senta, and the characterization she offers is not yet fully formed. She is quite secure vocally, however, and at times very impressive indeed. Her Ballad is taken at an unusually fast tempo, but it is effective once we get past that initial surprise. All those Siegfrieds and Tannhäusers have taken their toll on René Kollo's never too solid vocal equipment; he is an adequate Erik, but no more. Werner Krenn delivers the Steersman's music with a small but sweet sound, and Isola Jones is a satisfactory Mary.

The essentials are vividly conveyed

in this recording, but producer Ray Minshull and his associates favor a concert-hall approach over opera-stage realism. There is therefore little in the way of illusion of distance, storm



MARTTI TALVELA: vocally imposing

effects, sounds of docking ships, and the like, nor is there any great differentiation between the choral sounds of the "lusty" Norwegians and the Dutchman's "eerie" crew. This may bother others more than it bothers me.

(Continued overleaf)

ERIC STUART

GRAHAM GOULDMAN



Certain vocal limitations notwithstanding, this is a thrilling performance of an opera that deserves to be heard more often.  
—George Jellinek

**WAGNER: *The Flying Dutchman*.** Norman Bailey (baritone), the Dutchman; Janis Martin (soprano), Senta; Martti Talvela (bass), Daland; René Kollo (tenor), Erik; Isola

rate Rossini, and the model for his intriguing *Symphony in D Major* may well have been the one in the same key by Cherubini (who admired Arriaga's work when the young Spaniard was a student at his Paris Conservatory). A composer whose entire life span was a little short of twenty years (1806-1826) is hardly to be faulted for relying on

vividly or so fully in any previous recording. None of López Cobos' predecessors in recording the symphony has shown his happy feeling for ideal tempos throughout its four movements; none has realized so much of the substance beneath the surface charm of this music, or so infected his associates with his enthusiasm for it.



Jesús López Cobos conducting the English Chamber Orchestra

Jones (mezzo-soprano), Mary; Werner Krenn (tenor), Steersman. Chicago Symphony Chorus and Orchestra, Sir Georg Solti cond. LONDON OSA 13119 three discs \$23.94, © OSA-13119 \$23.95.

## Music of Arriaga: About as Near to Perfection as A Record Can Be

**W**HILE Juan Crisóstomo Jacobo Antonio de Arriaga y Balzola is known as "the Spanish Mozart," his splendid string quartets suggest Schubert as the most apt parallel, the enchanting overture to his opera *Los Esclavos Felices* (*The Happy Slaves*) is a piece anyone might mistake for first-

models, after all, but a composer of any age whose music shows the polished craftsmanship and rich inventiveness of Arriaga's is no everyday phenomenon, either.

Actually, it would seem that Cherubini's symphony served him not so much in the manner of a direct model as in the more general sense of providing an encouraging example, for the individuality so brilliantly apparent in the now-familiar quartets is certainly no less evident in the symphony. All the masterly qualities of this work and the aforementioned overture are more abundantly clear than ever in the English Chamber Orchestra's performances under Jesús López Cobos in a stunning *Ensayo* recording just released here on the new HNH label.

López Cobos is a Spanish conductor who has been building a solid base of admirers in England and Europe in the last few years, and his work on Arriaga's behalf suggests he is a musician blessed with real insight and an instinctive flair for the orchestra. Surely neither of these works has come to life so

The recording itself is of the same exceptional quality as the performances, and it has been impeccably preserved in Robert Ludwig's mastering on one of the finest discs pressed in this country: not a single pop or click, not even a hint of surface noise. It is a little irritating, though, to have a twenty-seven-minute symphony interrupted for turnover between movements. Hans Bauer's performance with the New Philharmonia is complete on a single side of EMI import CSD-3769 (with Franz Schmidt's *Variations on a Husar Song* overside), but it is not in the same league as López Cobos', either musically or sonically—and HNH does sensibly place the overture first on the disc. Aside from this one quibble, the whole production strikes me as about as near to perfection as a record can be.  
—Richard Freed

**ARRIAGA: *Los Esclavos Felices*, Overture; *Symphony in D Major*.** English Chamber Orchestra, Jesús López Cobos cond. HNH 4001 \$7.98 (from HNH Distributors, Ltd., P.O. Box 222, Evanston, Ill. 60204).

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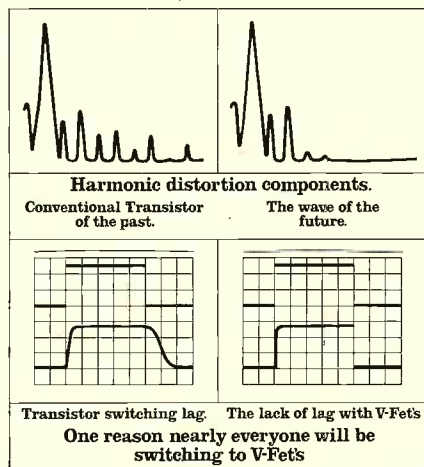
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# POPULAR DISCS AND TAPES

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**JEFF BECK/JAN HAMMER GROUP:** *Live*. Jeff Beck (guitars and special effects); the Jan Hammer Group (vocals and instrumentals). *Freeway Jam*; *Earth (Still Our Only Home)*; *She's a Woman*; *Full Moon Boogie*; and three others. EPIC PE-34433 \$6.98, © PEA-34433 \$6.98, © PET-34433 \$6.98.

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

Jeff Beck was one of the greatest guitarists to emerge from the mid-Sixties English rock renaissance. That he threw his talent away is not unusual; it often happens. But Beck wiped out early. He had a potentially great group with Rod Stewart on vocals and Ron Wood on bass, but he never got from them the magic that they later displayed. The albums he made with them are unmemorable. Later Beck threw in the towel altogether. He became a session man, played a little with Stevie Wonder (not exactly the best thing to do for a guitarist with any individuality), and then—by his own admission—sold out by joining a bucks-driven power trio called Beck, Bogart, and Appice. He has now ventured into jazz-rock, as if that were any more respectable. Today Jeff Beck plays as if he can't decide whether Paul Mauriat's saccharine *Love Is Blue* should be Mahavishnu John McLaughlin's theme song, so he's gone to seek help from those he considers more authentic.

But Jan Hammer's synthesizer-heavy

group goes for effects every time out. Occasionally they come within glancing distance of a genuine feeling, but they back off quickly. I can't decide whether their electronic freneticism just shows how cynical they are or reflects a curious timidity. In any case, the result is a kind of music that may be as decorative as plants in your living room but doesn't grow half so well. If you waste your talent on formulas, those who used to respect you will hate you for it, and I'll bet this record will wilt into the bargain bins by fall. *Lester Bangs*

**BEE GEES:** *Here at Last . . . Live* (see *The Pop Beat*, page 52)

**DICKEY BETTS & GREAT SOUTHERN.** Dickey Betts (vocals, guitar); Dan Toler (guitar); Ken Tibbets (bass); Tom Broome (keyboards); Jerry Thompson, Doni Sharbano (drums). *Out to Get Me*; *Run Gypsy Run*; *Sweet Virginia*; *The Way Love Goes*; and three others. ARISTA AL 4123 \$6.98.

Performance: **So-so**  
Recording: **Very good**

Dickey Betts steps out of the Allman Brothers to a new label, a new band, a new longer-haired image—and back into some of the same old ruts. But only on the guitar, where he tends to build a solo on chord progression instead of melody and on licks for the sake of licks. This venture probably means, first of all, that he has increased confidence in his singing (you may remember he once did a solo album with no vocals on one side). That confidence is warranted. Singing is what he does best here, guitar playing is what he does pretty much the same old way, and writing is what he does worst. One out of every ten or so of his songs is just fine, but the other nine just lie there. His band follows his every turn with gusto—there's some magnificently gimmicky stuff from the drummers—and hangs a lot of nice stuff on some songs that still just lie there. But the first two, *Out to Get You* and *Run Gypsy Run*, have some charm, and Betts' singing is more impressive than I've ever heard it before. He has a really good album in him, but this isn't it. *N.C.*

**BOBBY BLAND:** *Reflections in Blue*. Bobby Bland (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *The Soul of a Man*; *I'll Be Your Fool Once More*; *Sittin' on a Poor Man's Throne*; *I Intend to Take Your Place*; *It Ain't the Real Thing*; *It's All Over*; and three others. ABC AB-1018 \$6.98.

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

Bobby Bland, known in the Fifties as Bobby "Blue" Bland, is a veteran performer and sings with all the calm subtlety that might be expected from a capable vocalist of his experience. There isn't a single tune here that is really distinguishable or memorable, but there also isn't a single tune he does not grace by his delivery.

All of the selections are low-key and middle-register. This is actually a "mood music" album, although that term has not been used positively for some years on account of its being un-hip. But Mr. Bland is a craftsman, and while it takes only two or three lackluster songs' worth of expert handling to prove it (never mind the rest), his skill is constant. Seduction music, active or passive. *J.V.*

**DAVID CASSIDY:** *Gettin' It in the Street*. David Cassidy (vocals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Cruise to Harlem*; *Rosa's Cantina*; *I Never Saw You Coming*; *Living a Lie*; *Junked Heart Blues*; and four more. RCA APL1-1852 \$7.98, © APS1-1852 \$7.98, © APK1-1852 \$7.98.

Performance: **Still tentative**  
Recording: **Good**

This album is merely a stage wait in David Cassidy's attempt to resume his career as a serious composer-performer after his meteor ride as a teen idol a few years ago. Unfortunately, not much jells here except the title song. It's a tender-tough little plaint performed with a lot of feeling and a nice touch of wryness that fits street people perfectly. The rest of the material has only Cassidy's and Gerry Beckley's professionalism and ease within the pop idiom to recommend it. Beckley collaborated with him on the produc-

## 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

Monophonic recordings are indicated by the symbol Ⓜ

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

tion of the album and performs on several of the songs; the engineering is by John Schmitt. Their work seems somehow to stand in the way of Cassidy's communication. I have a feeling that once Cassidy finds out what his real message is, it's going to be a very, very simple one. He's still someone well worth watching and listening to for what *may* happen rather than what's happening now. P.R.

**CHEAP TRICK.** Cheap Trick (vocals and instrumentals). *Hot Love; He's a Whore; Daddy Should Have Stayed in High School; Taxman, Mr. Thief;* and six others. EPIC PE-34400 \$6.98, © PEA-34400 \$6.98.

Performance: **Expensive trash**  
Recording: **Good**

Look at it this way: while it is true that Cheap Trick *sounds* just like all the other characterless, plodding heavy-metal bands on the market, they actually went to the trouble to *look* different. Just check out the photo on the album cover if you don't believe it. There's a pudgy-faced, Bogart-movie, tired-reporter type; a pretty boy who cares enough about you to even wear a tie; a quasi-British fop; and an exact imitation . . . no, let's say a precise *re-creation* of the Huntz Hall character in the Bowery Boys films, the one in the funny hat who used to come out with the dumbest non sequiturs.

There's a point where parody stops being a reflection of the original and takes on a mindless life of its own, which may be the main reason Cheap Trick is going to be an "important" group. If they were just another clot of also-rans, Epic would never have spent so much money packaging them (as in the cover photo). This band is going places. You might not want to go with them, but what do you know? You just care about music, which is beside the point here, apparently. What does it matter that these guys couldn't write a song to save themselves from being buggered by a moose? That their playing is as tired as that same moose in the aftermath? That this whole product (which is all it is or ever will be) is so tired in conception, execution, and everything else you can think of that . . . well, maybe I'm getting bitter. Somebody, somewhere, is bound to write a story claiming that this crew is the best rock group to slop down the pike since Cream waved goodbye. Not me.

Lester Bangs

**RITA COOLIDGE:** *Anytime . . . Anywhere.* Rita Coolidge (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *Higher and Higher; The Way You Do the Things You Do; We're All Alone; I Feel the Burden; I Don't Want to Talk About It; Southern Lady;* and four others. A&M SP-4616 \$6.98, © 8T-4616 \$7.98, © CS-4616 \$7.98.

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

Admirers of singing star Rita Coolidge, a vocalist who somehow contrives to mingle a knowing air with a kind of baby-talk delivery, should skip the first side of this one altogether and proceed immediately to side two, where songs by Neil Sedaka, Kris Kristofferson, Sam Cooke, and Michael Hazelwood give the lady a far better break and an opportunity to exhibit such talent as she has. Not that Sedaka's *The Hungry Years*, Cooke's *Good Times*, Hazelwood's *Southern Lady*, or even Kristofferson's cynical *Who's to Bless and Who's to Blame* is any kind of masterpiece,



Han Solo settles in behind a laser cannon on his Corellian pirate ship

## "Star Wars": the Soundtrack

THE movie *Star Wars* has met with such universal critical acclaim (and of course got the obligatory pan from the iconoclastic-at-any-cost *Village Voice*) that it's almost embarrassing to a film snob like me. After all, I put off seeing *Rocky* for months simply because I was sick and tired of people bugging me about it at parties. But now here I am, following Marvel's comic-book adaptation, clutching the paperback novelization to my bosom, wearing a "May the Force Be with You" button unashamedly, and discussing the film at tedious length with anyone dumb enough to mention it within fifteen feet of me.

But can I help it if it's great? Blame George Lucas, who dreamed it up, for creating a Genuine Epic out of the clichés of forty years of B movies, the shreds and tatters of our collective childhood memories. Just don't be fooled into thinking that *Star Wars* is merely a sci-fi flick (if it is, then *Moby Dick* is merely a fish story) or that it is nothing more than an Entertainment, even in the Graham Greene sense; Lucas' achievement is much greater than that. It takes something verging on genius to meld the look, the feel, the *grammar* of Erroll Flynn swashbucklers, Laurel & Hardy, every western and war movie ever made, *The Wizard of Oz*, Fritz Lang, cheapo Universal serials like *Flash Gordon*, and the propaganda films of Leni Riefenstahl into a cohesive, original whole that manages to be totally outrageous and totally straight-faced at the same time. And the oddest thing of all is that the outer-space milieu of *Star Wars* is just as sharply observed, in its own way, as was the early-Sixties California Lucas evoked for his *American Graffiti*; that he had to *make this one up* only heightens my astonishment at the creative persistence of his vision.

John Williams' score manages the neat trick of keeping up with Lucas almost frame for frame. Williams is no innovator like, say, Bernard Herrmann, but he has a wonderful ear for the endearingly hackneyed tropes of Hollywood film scoring in the grand old Max Steiner/Alfred Newman tradition. Like Lucas, he is capable of manipulating clichés in a

way that never once cheapens them; if anything, he makes them sound as glorious as they were originally meant to (and almost never were). The specific reference point here is Franz Waxman's music for *Flash Gordon*, which you may recall was a mishmash of real classical stuff (mostly Liszt's *Les Préludes*) and leftovers from the score for *The Bride of Frankenstein*. So Williams' heroic-sounding stuff is full of Lisztian bombast (the title theme, some of the battle music, the fanfares that accompany the final throne-room scene), and the lighter things (particularly the music for the Mutt and Jeff robots who practically steal the movie) have the kind of appropriately "modernistic" tinker-toy sound Waxman used to such marvelous parodistic advantage. The music for the scene in which little Artoo-Deetoo (R2-D2), who looks like an intelligent fire hydrant with legs, is accosted by hooded creatures who might as well be malevolent Munchkins is, in fact, almost eerily reminiscent of the fragments Waxman used to portray the Rock People in a similar setting in one of the *Flash Gordon* pictures.

The soundtrack—both records of it—is, in short, enormous fun, improved no doubt by the resequencing and editing Williams did especially for the album, and both the sound and the quality of the orchestral playing (the LSO is not your average Hollywood pick-up outfit) are really quite breathtaking. If, like me, you're waiting impatiently for a chance to catch *Star Wars* again but can't bear to wait in line for hours, you'll definitely want this aural reminder of the delights of the most brilliant American commercial film since *The Godfather Part II*. But let me warn you: *don't* play it at parties, no matter how carried away you get. There are a lot of people out there who have absolutely no sense of humor.

—Steve Simels

**STAR WARS (John Williams).** Original-soundtrack recording. London Symphony Orchestra. John Williams cond. 20TH CENTURY RECORDS 2T-541 two discs \$8.98, © 8-2T-541 \$8.98, © C-2T-541 \$8.98.



Photo: Joseph Sia

PETER TOSH: "I don't want no peace"

## Marley & Tosh: Progress Report on Reggae

My, my, things certainly do change fast in this popsy-topsy music world. Today Don McLean, tomorrow no one remembers. And given the ecumenicism (yeah, sure) of the Seventies and the depletion of Anglo-American musical energies, there's no reason why Third World popsters shouldn't suffer from the same capricious temporality as McLean or Bryan Ferry.

All of which is preamble to saying that reggae is beginning to look, in American record-industry terms at least, like last year's fad. I speak as a confirmed reggae fanatic, so it is with no little sorrow that I conclude that Americans en masse just aren't going to buy the Rastafarians' message of "war in a Babylon" and repatriation to Mother Ethiopia. The record companies are already digging in their heels, providing only minimal promotion for reggae albums, and record buyers may also have good reason for defecting, for after sniffing the green winds of the market many of the artists have begun to dilute their music, with hideous hybrid results. (Bob Marley's "Rastaman Vibration" and the Mighty Diamonds' abysmal Allen Toussaint-produced second album are just two examples.) So, if you aim to keep up your orisons to Jah, the best strategy is to move fast and with informed prudence.

Bob Marley and his Wailers will probably be around long enough that we can afford to wait for his next one, or even the one after

that if he keeps screwing up. Nothing would please me more than to be able to tell you that "Exodus," his latest, is a masterpiece. It isn't, though it doesn't reach the nadir of "Rastaman Vibration" either. What it is is a bit schizoid, perhaps from culture shock or too much ganja. Side two sounds almost entirely as if it were made up of out-takes from that previous album—thin little pop love tunes perfectly suited for covers by Hall and Oates. If your idea of heaven is to have somebody crooning about God as background music while you sip piña colodas, you're welcome to it.

As for me, I'll take side one, which is hardcore Rastafarian doctrine (I'm not a believer and you don't have to be one either; it's the soul and conviction of this music that's moving) and some of Marley's strongest recorded work in a while. Even though anything as didactic as the Rastas' message was bound to become predictable (if not altogether formularized) in short order, there is an elemental poetry (as in *Natural Mystic*) and ineluctable propulsion (as in *Exodus*) to this music that no other genre duplicates. But Marley had better watch it. If he keeps on trying to walk a tightrope between Jah and bubblegum rock, he's liable to turn into the Sergio Mendes of reggae.

JUST how compromised Marley has already become is demonstrated by the new Peter Tosh album. Tosh is a former Wailer and disciple of Marley's whose first album, "Legalize It," was a bit too draggy. His new one, "Equal Rights," is rhythmically stronger than anything by Marley, though it still won't blow you across the room. One of the great beauties of reggae is the contrast between the lilting melodies, the gentle rhythm, and the fierce, apocalyptic declamation of the lyrics. While Marley often seems to be fading into the twilight of vegetative marijuana beatitude, Tosh sings about war. And he doesn't mince words: "Everyone is crying out for peace/None is crying out for justice/I don't want no peace/I want equal rights." (What he will do if he doesn't get them may be inferred from titles such as *Stepping Razor*.) Except for Junior Murvin's fine "Police and Thieves," "Equal Rights" is the only reggae album released in the past twelve months of compromise that fully epitomizes the human pride and melodic soul the form originally stood for. Get it while you can. —Lester Bangs

**BOB MARLEY AND THE WAILERS: *Exodus*.** Bob Marley (vocals, rhythm guitar, acoustic guitar, percussion); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Natural Mystic*; *So Much Things to Say*; *Guiltiness*; *The Heathen*; *Exodus*; *Jamming*; *Waiting in Vain*; *Turn Your Lights Down Low*; *Three Little Birds*; *One Love/People Get Ready*. ISLAND ILPS 9498 \$6.98, © Y81-9498 \$6.95, © ZC1-9498 \$6.95.

**PETER TOSH: *Equal Rights*.** Peter Tosh (vocals, rhythm guitar, percussion, keyboards, tambourine); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Get Up, Stand Up*; *Downpressor Man*; *I Am That I Am*; *Stepping Razor*; *Equal Rights*; *African*; *Jah Guide*; *Apartheid*. COLUMBIA PC-34670 \$6.98, © PCA-34670 \$6.98, © PCT-34670 \$6.98.

but compared to the simpering stuff with the high-school lyrics at the start of this program all of them sound positively sturdy. P.K.

**LAMONT DOZIER: *Peddlin' Music on the Side*.** Lamont Dozier (vocals); Joe Sample (acoustic piano); Wilton Felder (bass); David T. Walker (guitar); other musicians. *Going Back to My Roots*; *Family*; *Break the Ice*; *Tear Down the Walls*; and three others. WARNER BROS. BS 3039 \$6.98, © M83039 \$7.97, © M53039 \$7.97.

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

One of the songwriting stalwarts of the early Motown stable, Lamont Dozier long ago established his own identity as a singer. Yet at times he seems to be suffering from the recording world's equivalent of academe's publish-or-perish syndrome. His albums appear regularly, and, while they contain more than a few moments of musical pleasure, the songs too frequently blur into each other. It becomes increasingly difficult to single out peaks in composition or performance.

It is hard to fault him, though, for his tunes, interchangeable as they are, seem to take root in the mind the more one hears them; then again, dandelions do the same sort of thing. Whether Dozier's songs are fragrant flowers or worrisome weeds is a matter of personal taste. For me, it's all grass—just a pleasant backdrop for some of nature's more ambitious creations. Phyl Garland

**EDDIE AND THE HOTRODS: *Teenage Depression*.** Eddie and the Hotrods (vocals and instrumentals). *Get Across to You*; *Horseplay*; *96 Tears*; *All I Need Is Money*; *The Kids Are Alright*; and eight others. ISLAND ILPS 9457 \$6.98, © Y81-9457 \$7.98, © ZC1-9457 \$7.98.

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

The Punk Rock scene that has emerged in England is a bit different from the one over here, the major difference being that *our* punks have heroes. The British punk bands, on the other hand, are merely pulling the same tired scam that every other act in England has pulled since the beginning of the Seventies: announcing that the "old" stars are irrelevant and tired, that only *they* (the punks) can relate to the kids (whoever they are), and that *their* music owes no debt to anything or anyone. It's a reliable scam for publicity purposes; it worked for Marc Bolan, Slade, and David Bowie, and it may yet work for the Sex Pistols, the most notorious of the New Breed. The problem is that it's never been true. These guys all lie about their ages, steal the same licks as everybody else, and in general have utter contempt for their audiences.

The exception to this rule in England is Eddie and the Hotrods, who come on as nothing more or less than a very energetic little rock band, proud of their roots (the Stones, the Who, old r-&-b), and who seem to view music as something more than a way to grab a fast quid. They're clearly the best the scene has to offer, and parts of this debut album are entertainingly brash, sounding like a slightly more frenetic Dr. Feelgood, especially on the live cuts (Bob Seger's *Get Out of Denver*, in particular). Still, they'll probably never be much more than a good club act. Compare their version of the Who's *The Kids Are Alright* with the original, recorded when the Who were

just as young as these guys. See what I mean? The Hotrods sound pretty feeble in that company, so don't let anybody jive you into thinking that youthful vitality automatically assures one of genius. Give the Hotrods an "A" for Effort and for Keeping the Faith. They have a hell of a lot more class than the Ramones, that's for sure. S.S.

**WALTER EGAN: *Fundamental Roll*.** Walter Egan (guitar and vocals); Lindsey Buckingham (guitar and vocals); Stevie Nicks (vocals); other musicians. *Only the Lucky; Won't You Say You Will; Feel So Good; Yes I Guess I Am Waitin'*; and five others. COLUMBIA PC-34679 \$6.98, © PCA-34679 \$7.98, © PCT-34679 \$7.98.

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

I've been trying for some time now to figure out exactly what it is about Walter Egan's debut album that I don't like, and at long last I think I've got it. It's not that it reeks of California Plastic. It's not that Stevie Nicks and Lindsey Buckingham (of Fleetwood Mac), who produced it, did such a job of overwhelming the nominal star that they might as well have titled it "Rumors, Junior." It's not that the songs come within shooting distance of having melodies yet still miss the mark. It's not that it's a pleasant but forgettable piece of pop fluff designed to be listened to while you're doing the dishes. It's not even that the management team of Leber and Krebs, who gave us Aerosmith and are therefore highly suspect, are behind the whole venture. No, the plain truth is that "Fundamental Roll" is boring. There you are. S.S.

**DONNA FARGO: *Fargo Country*.** Donna Fargo (vocals); orchestra. *Mockingbird Hill; Second Choice; Sing Me; That Was Yesterday*; and six others. WARNER BROS. BS 2996 \$6.98, © M82996 \$7.97, © M52996 \$7.97.

Performance: **Mildred Fierce**  
Recording: **Good**

Donna Fargo seems intent on bringing back hot pants. The back-cover photo of this album is particularly striking, showing her in a barn leaning against the hay, pitchfork at her side, seductively cross-legged in blue denim hot pants (split up the side, fergoshsake!) and flower-print ankle-strap wedgies. On the record, the Joan Crawford ambiance gets even steamier as Donna, fiercely dramatic and courageous (but firm, always firm) in her throbbing, gasping, hyperventilated style, pits herself against such things as *Mockingbird Hill* and Paul Anka's translation of *Do I Love You (Yes in Every Way)* from the fervid French. Most of the album is a jostling reminder that Ms. Fargo ain't just your average c-&-w star no more. No sirree! She's hittin' the Dramatic-Glamour Trail with all headlights (among other things) blazing. If you can't stand the heat, better stay out of the glare. P.R.

**FOREIGNER: Foreigner** (vocals and instrumentals). *Feels Like the First Time; Cold as Ice; Starrider; Headknocker; Woman Oh Woman; I Need You*; and four others. ATLANTIC SD 18215 \$6.98, © TP-18215 \$7.97, © CS-18215 \$7.97.

Performance: **Strained**  
Recording: **Topnotch**

Foreigner is an English supergroup made up principally of former members of King Crim-

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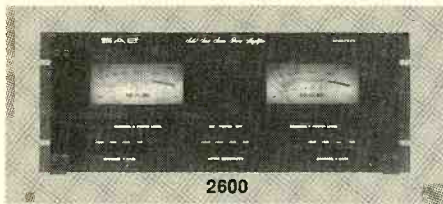


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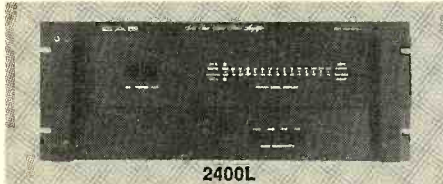
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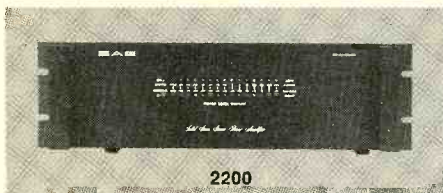
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son and other less "distinguished" defunct bands. and they have one problem they probably won't be able to surmount. In their macho, straight-ahead moments they sound like Bad Company, and in their arty, look-what-we-can-do moments they sound like King Crimson. You may find yourself a bit perplexed by this, as King Crimson specialized in twisted rip-offs of American jazz masters, notably Charlie Mingus, while Bad Company has been playing a metal formula to the hilt. Foreigner has simply mashed two hit formulas into one agonized mulch of sound that they spread out in all marketable directions. As their name implies, they are a group without a country or a personal style, and as such you want to feel sorry for them—except that they are going to sell their particular brand of torture for a lot of money. Then we can expect them in less than half a decade to break up into two or three more "supergroups" and perhaps make even *more* money.

Foreigner is already gaining enough popularity to make them the next big arena-filler, so you might want to buy this record to be in on the next big sell. You have to wonder what exactly is lost in the collective sensibility that lets groups like this become popular, until you realize that they are a bit of something lost from something borrowed from something new that carried on from something old that copped a lick or two from something once rightfully known as the blues. Then it strikes you that we're all in the same boat, waiting for the blessing of truly believed-in music.

Lester Bangs

**GALDSTON & THOM: *American Gypsies*.** Phil Galdston (vocals and keyboards); Peter Thom (vocals and guitars); instrumental accompaniment. *When the Silence Stops; American Gypsies; Why Don't We Live Together; It Won't Work; Savannah Sunny Sunday*; and five others. WARNER BROS. BS 3037 \$6.98.

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

Galdston & Thom write pretty good songs; they won the grand prize at the American Song Festival for *Why Don't We Live Together*, included here. But in performance they have an unhappy tendency to show off in a way that actually detracts from their material. In *Sweepin' It Under*, for instance, they've saddled themselves with a long interlude of swing saxophone to back up their rock vocals while a c-&-w flavor intermittently nudges its way in. This scatter-shot approach pervades the whole album, and the result is you-can't-get-no-satisfaction, at least not for long, because they are so anxious to show you their next trick. As Ninon de L'Enclos said, "Learn to do *one* thing well, and the public is yours for the rest of your life." At least I think it was Ninon who said that. . . . P.R.

## RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**BENNY GOLSON: *Killer Joe*.** Benny Golson (soprano saxophone); Morto nette Jenkins and Drake Frye (vocals); other musicians. *The New Killer Joe; Hesitation; Love Uprising; I'll Do It All with You; Tomorrow, Paradise*; and four others. COLUMBIA PC-34678 \$6.98, © PCA-34678 \$6.98, © PCT-34678 \$6.98.

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

The character Killer Joe, that fast-talking, hard-hitting, street-corner dude, has been



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BENNY GOLSON

*Changing styles along with Killer Joe*

around ever since the tail end of the Fifties, when he was introduced to music lovers by the old Benny Golson/Art Farmer Jazztet. He was revived in recent years by Quincy Jones, who supplied lyrics for his catchy theme, and now he has been reclaimed by his creator. But just as Killer has traded in his suede shoes for a pair of "white, doleskin, four-inch platform shoes," so has Golson altered his former incisive post-bop musical style to fit the currently popular mode of electrified instruments playing simplified rhythms and melodic lines with vocal interplay. This is an enormous compromise for a musician of Golson's stature, but he has just about made it work on this album, his first outing as a leader in quite some time. He succeeds because he has imposed his musical personality on this set, featuring his own accomplished soprano sax work on most of the selections while including pieces that vary in intent and mood. The pace throughout is relaxed, ranging from *I'll Do It All with You* (a highly personal love song to his wife that seems to have been heavily influenced by the more restrained compositions of Ashford and Simpson), through the strolling blues of *Easy All Day Long*, the salsa-flavored *Timbale Rock*, spotlighting Willie Bobo, and the brief but gorgeously lyrical *Tomorrow, Paradise*, which features Golson playing an inspired solo on Fender Rhodes piano. But the main attraction of this album is, of course, *The New Killer Joe*.

For those who admired Golson and Killer in their previous incarnations, this album might be a bit of a disappointment, but, judged as the new popular fare it apparently was intended to be, it is a full cut above most of what is now being huckstered in the marketplace.

Phyl Garland

**GRATEFUL DEAD: *Terrapin Station*** (see *The Pop Beat*, page 52)

**HEART: *Little Queen*.** Heart (vocals and instrumentals). *Barracuda; Love Alive; Sylvan Song; Dream of the Archer; Kick It Out*; and five others. PORTRAIT PR-34799 \$6.98, © PRA-34799 \$7.98, © PRT-34799 \$7.98.

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

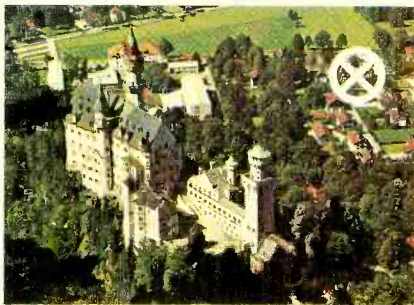
Heart is a Seattle, Washington, group fronted by the singing sisters Ann and Nancy Wilson, (Continued on page 102)

# How did an American Ford Granada compare in tests of smoothness and quietness of ride with a \$20,000 German Mercedes?

Read how German engineers rated both cars after 7 days of testing.

For 1977, a new Ford Granada was brought to Germany for a scientific ride comparison with a Mercedes-Benz 450SE (U.S. sticker price: \$20,689\*). The Granada was a standard production car equipped with optional 250CID engine (\$122.) and automatic transmission (\$186.). Testing was conducted by an independent German engineering firm.

\*Excluding taxes, title, destination charges.



Aerial view of test site in Bavaria, Germany.

## Test 1: Smoothness test.

To test for "riding smoothness" the German engineers drove the Granada and the Mercedes at various speeds over a variety of roads in northern Germany, ranging from cobblestone to smooth highway. Using a sensitive electronic re-

corder, they measured vibration levels.

**Test results:** Analysis of the engineers' data showed that in three out of the four test conditions there were "no major differences" in smoothness between the Granada and the Mercedes.



## Test 2: Quietness test.

In the next series of tests the cars were evaluated for "quietness" of ride. Again, they were compared over a variety of German road surfaces at speeds from 30-55 mph. A sound meter recorded their interior decibel levels on the dBA scale.



**Test results:** Analysis of the data showed that in all tests the Ford Granada consistently rode as quietly as the Mercedes-Benz.

## The Granada idea...

...was to offer American drivers classic styling and great riding comforts—at a sensible price.

You've read what this Granada did



against a \$20,000 Mercedes-Benz in Germany. Take a Granada test drive of your own and see for yourself.



When California needs a better idea, Ford puts it on wheels.



\*1977 Ford Granada. Sticker price: \$4,038, excluding taxes, title, destination charges. WSW tires, \$39. (Photographed in Garmisch, Germany)

# Where they're going to. We're coming from.

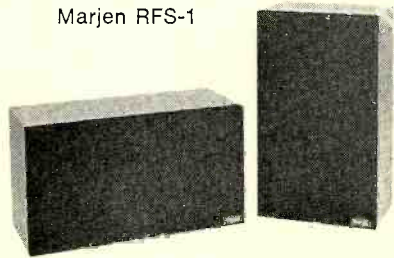
"The extraordinary ability of the human ear to perceive and analyze sound cannot yet be simulated by existing electronic measuring devices. Therefore, we must rely upon the ear's evaluation of our design efforts."

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Marjen RFS-1



## Psycho-Acoustic Research

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Designer's note: The speakers shown above have a suggested list price of under \$100.00 each. Though modestly priced, they well represent the acoustic and economic advantages of the psychoacoustic research done at Marjen.

CIRCLE NO. 30 ON READER SERVICE CARD



Wide World Photos

VINCENT YOUMANS

## Bagley Visits Youmans

VINCENT YOUMANS, the son of a hat manufacturer, was born in New York in 1898 and died of tuberculosis in 1946 in a Denver sanitarium, his disease aggravated by alcoholism. In those forty-eight years he wrote the music for quite a few of the nation's most tuneful songs, including the scores of *No No Nanette*, *Flying Down to Rio*, and many other Broadway and Hollywood hits. But most of the songs in Ben Bagley's "Vincent Youmans Revisited" never became hits. As usual, Bagley has mixed a handful of familiar favorites with a greater number of little-known flops and fizzles by Youmans—which is no mistake, since the man probably couldn't have written an unattractive melody if he'd tried. And the cast assembled to sing these unexpected treasures—in expectedly bright Norman Paris and Dick Hyman arrangements—couldn't be more nearly ideal.

Charles Rydell leads off with *Drums in My Heart*, a rouser that first heartened listeners when the musical *Through the Years* opened in 1931. After that it's one happy find after another. Blossom Dearie mock-simpers her way through *Happy Because I'm in Love from Great Day*; in *Mean Man*, a rediscovered Youmans tune with new lyrics by Bud McCreery, Dorothy Loudon as "a merry masochist" hymns a chap who keeps her happy by alternating bruises and kisses; and Mary McCarty sails into *Come On and Pet Me*, with lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II (later dropped in favor of new ones by Leo Robin that turned the song into the still-popular *Sometimes I'm Happy*). And there are other surprises: small ones such as the charming violin solo that turns up in the middle of *Should We Be Sweet?* and big ones such as Maureen Stapleton (who, it turns out, can really sing) doing two fine numbers—*I'm Glad I Waited* and *Keeping Myself for You*. Gloria de Haven

sings a lovely old tune fitted out with new lyrics by Harold Adamson to become *He Came Along*, and the imperishable Cab Calloway does *Say, Young Man of Manhattan*, a ballad that referred to New York as "fun city" some forty years ago. *Rise and Shine*, a bawdy item, dates back to 1932.

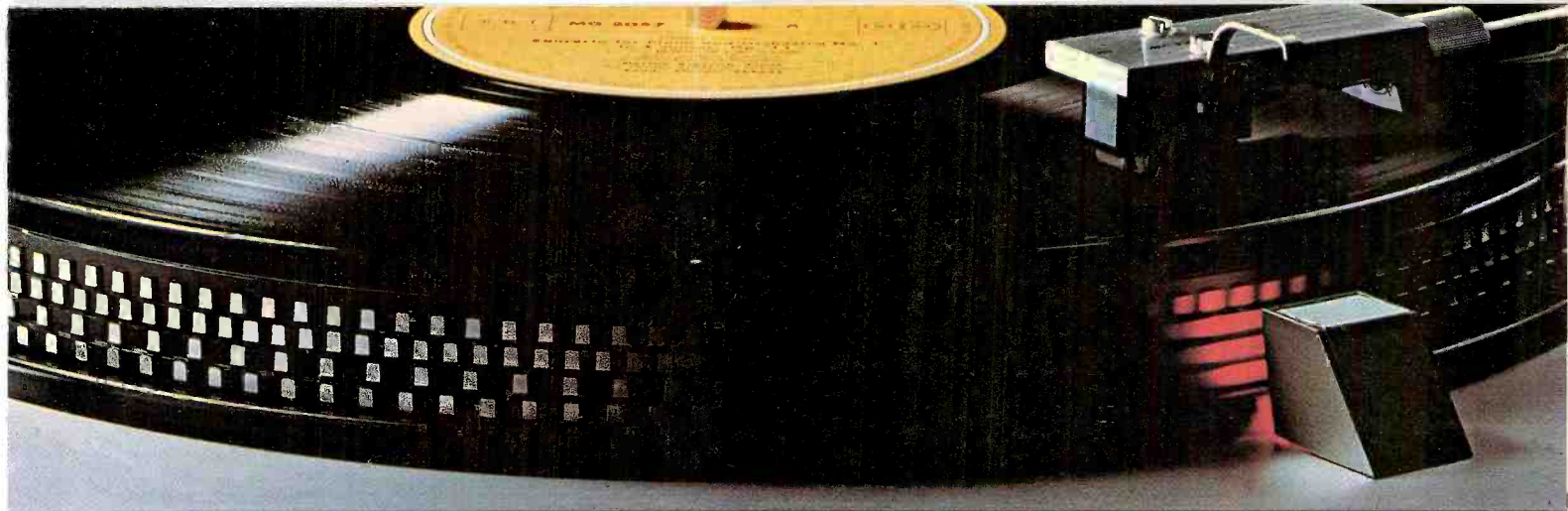
Not least among the album's delights are Bagley's madcap liner notes and his lyrics for three of the songs. And, as a bonus in this

couldn't have written  
an unattractive  
melody if he'd tried

consistently entertaining program, he's thrown in Vernon Duke's *The Love I Long For*, touchingly intoned by Dorothy Loudon. Maybe it doesn't belong in a Youmans album, but it's good to have anyway. —Paul Kresh

**BEN BAGLEY'S VINCENT YOUMANS REVISITED.** Cab Calloway, Blossom Dearie, Gloria de Haven, Dorothy Loudon, Mary McCarty, Charles Rydell, and Maureen Stapleton (vocals); orchestra, Dick Hyman cond. *Drums in My Heart*; *Happy Because I'm in Love*; *Mean Man*; *Come On and Pet Me*; *I Want to Be with You*; *Say, Young Man of Manhattan*; *Keeping Myself for You*; *Oh Me, Oh My*; *Rise and Shine*; *I'm Glad I Waited*; *The Love I Long For*; *The One Girl*; *Should We Be Sweet?*; *He Came Along*; *Great Day Grand Finale*. PAINTED SMILES PS 1352 \$6.98.





Output shaft (Record guide)

Rotor

Magnet (8-pole)

Speed control

Drive coil x 2

Yoke

Ball

Cap

**PS-58  
PHONO MOTOR**  
2 Motor:

*Unitorque DC servo motor  
16-pole gear motor  
automatic mechanism*

*Wow & flutter:*

*0.025% W. R. M. S*

*S/N ratio:*

*74dB*

**CARTRIDGE**

*Type:*

*Vertical magnet type*

*Frequency response: 20Hz-20,000Hz*



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# The Sound Shaper. Because all rooms are not created equal.



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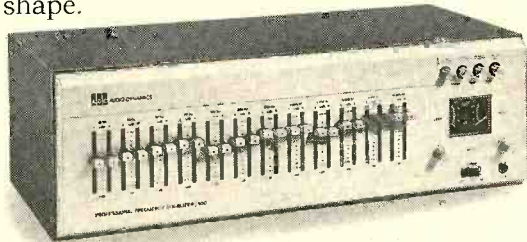
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ADC



## The Sound Shaper

ADC Professional Products Group. A division of BSR (USA) Ltd., Route 303, Blauvelt, N.Y. 10913

both of whom are capable and energetic. What makes this, their second album, unusual is the way the band manages to present both mild, commercial pounders (*Barracuda*, *Kick It Out*) and airy, folkish material (*Ballad of the Archer*, *Love Alive*) in the same program. The band seems more comfortable with the latter, since it gives them more breathing room and has touches of color that the pounders don't.

In either style, the material is sometimes a trifle overwrought, and the presentation is sometimes more calculated than emotional. But the group has a snap and dash that are refreshing, and some of the cuts—especially *Love Alive*—stick with you. J.V.

**HOODOO RHYTHM DEVILS: *Safe in Their Homes*.** Hoodoo Rhythm Devils (vocals and instrumentals). *Gypsy Fly*; *Little Bit of Love*; *Get Somebody New*; *Safe in Their Homes*; *Safecracker*; *Big Time Band*; and four others. FANTASY F-9522 \$6.98, © 8160-9522(H) \$7.95, © 5160-9522(H) \$7.95.

Performance: **Spirited**

Recording: **At times overweighted**

The Hoodoo Rhythm Devils, a West Coast roughhouse rock-and-roll band, are very good at dishing out no-nonsense, stomping, bar-room type music. They also have a touch of cultishness about them, at times venturing into zany regions that remind me of the Holy Modal Rounders, a New York band that played in somewhat similar style.

The Devils' sound, songwriting, and delivery, commendable as they are for sheer pizzazz, smack a little too much of an era gone by (as eras tend to do rather quickly these days). The album has an aura of late-Sixties San Francisco rock-culture *Angst*, and, though the Devils thrash and wriggle to convince us that what they are doing is contemporary, their sound seems to hark back to the days when San Francisco was *the town* (ah, shades of Fillmore West and "underground comix," oh tales of Haight-Ashbury and the 1967 "summer of love"). Yet things have changed, as they always do; San Francisco is no longer *the town*, and the hard-core rock culture has spent itself. The Devils' music is halcyon and brashly sentimental—good times recalled rather than good times now. J.V.

### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**THE ISLEY BROTHERS: *Go for Your Guns*.** The Isley Brothers (vocals and instrumentals); instrumental accompaniment. *The Pride*; *Footsteps in the Dark*; *Tell Me When You Need It Again*; *Climbin' up the Ladder*; *Voyage to Atlantis*; *Livin' in the Life*; *Go for Your Guns*. T-NECK PZ-34432 \$6.98, © PZA-34432 \$6.98, © PZT-34432 \$7.98, □ PZQ-34432 \$7.98, ☒ ZAQ-34432 \$8.98.

Performance: **Excellent**

Recording: **Good**

Sometimes there is justice in this world. The Isley Brothers, after a harum-scarum career that goes back nearly twenty years, are more popular now than ever before. More important, they are just as *good* as they ever were (which is very good), especially Ronnie Isley, who is one of the major black vocal stylists of our era.

The Isleys have settled into a comfortable groove. For most of their career they aimed for a commercial sound, which varied de-

(Continued on page 104)



## In a Class by Themselves

The Nikko Audio professional group of rack-mount design stereo power amplifiers, pre-amps and a remarkable new FM thin-line tuner are truly in a class by themselves.

The Alpha I basic high-power amplifier and Beta I all-FET preamplifier are classics of power and operational ease. Although they have been available for only a few months, they have already garnered critical acclaim.

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selector is shown in matte black. It delivers 100 watts\* per channel, with no more than 0.06% THD. Performance is so pure that the Alpha V is the touchstone by which all other amplifiers will be tested.

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In Canada: Superior Electronics, Montreal, Quebec

pending on the immediacies and expediencies of the moment, but for their last five albums they have been able to relax and take advantage of the immense popularity and prestige of black music itself. Now most of their original material concerns the struggle of the black individual to make a personal mark in a white mass culture. The Isleys have also kept things in the family; except for keyboardist Chris Jasper, everybody in their six-man group is an Isley.

The recent Isley sound has been one of lunge and parry—bumping and grinding shouter songs mixed with the softer but sinewy ballads in which Ronnie excels. The Isleys are putting their vast experience to fruitful use. It has paid off handsomely not only in commercial success but in artistic vindica-

tion. They are something very, very special, as this album demonstrates. J.V.

**JEFFERSON STARSHIP: *Flight Log*** (see *The Pop Beat*, page 52)

**TOM JONES: *Say You'll Stay Until Tomorrow***. Tom Jones (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *Say You'll Stay Until Tomorrow*; *One Man Woman*; *Anniversary Song*; *When It's Just You and Me*; *Papa*; *We Had It All*; and four others. EPIC PE-34468 \$6.98, © PEA-34468 \$6.98, © PET-34468 \$6.98.

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

If only Mr. Jones were as interesting to hear as he is to read about in those marvelous suc-

cess-story press releases Epic puts out on him! After following his adventures from airport to airport and speedster to skis, it is truly something of a letdown to hear Tom Jones simply sing, which he does on this record with an oversize ardor that sets Miami matrons swooning. "Oh, my Papa," he wails, as Mama tucks the old man into bed to die. "Oh, how we danced," he sighs, giving the customers the *Anniversary Song* they crave with such desperate nostalgia. "Come to me," he sobs, lending lustful words to the theme from *The Pink Panther Strikes Again*. "I can't face the night alone," he groans, "say you'll stay until tomorrow." Who'd have the heart to turn him down? P.K.

**JOHN LODGE: *Natural Avenue***. John Lodge (vocals, guitars, electric bass); Chris Spedding (electric guitar); Mick Weaver (acoustic and electric pianos, celeste); Kenney Jones (drums, percussion); other musicians. *Rainbow*; *Say You Love Me*; *Carry Me*; *Summer Breeze*; *Natural Avenue*; and five others. LONDON PS 683 \$6.98, © 8-683 \$7.95, © 5-683 \$7.95.

Performance: **Heathcliff lives!**  
Recording: **Good**

Ex-Moody Blues member John Lodge's appropriately moody, brooding performances and impassioned guitar work are enough to make him any teenybopper's Heathcliff. That there is something gothic to his songs, such as *Broken Dreams*, *Hard Road*, and the title track, may or may not be deliberate, but the effect is so steamily morose, the approach so full of glaring intensity, that right now there are probably maidens fainting all over the place listening to him growl through *Say You Love Me*. P.R.

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**BARRY MANILOW: *Barry Manilow Live***. Barry Manilow (vocals and piano); orchestra. *Riders to the Stars*; *Why Don't We Live Together*; *Looks Like We Made It*; *New York City Rhythm*; *A Very Strange Medley*; *Jump Shout Boogie Medley*; *This One's for You*; *Beautiful Music*; *Daybreak*; and eight others. ARISTA AL 8500 two discs \$11.98, © 8301-8500 \$11.95, © 5301-8500 \$11.95.

Performance: **Glittering and friendly**  
Recording: **Good**

The Uris Theater was packed for this one-man show by Barry Manilow, a composer-performer who worked with Bette Midler as her accompanist, musical director, sparring partner, and what-have-you earlier in his career and has more recently become a star in his own right. Not only has he written such songs as *Mandy* and *Weekend in New England*, he has a high-key, genuinely friendly performing manner that's half unregenerate New York City street kid and half Bloomingdale's glitter.

Up to *A Very Strange Medley*, Manilow's show is just a highly professional, lavishly produced revue, enlivened by a dynamite back-up group called the City Rhythm Band and three gorgeous, funny girls collectively named Lady Flash. The audience has clearly and audibly loved every moment of it. Then, shushing everyone, Manilow confides that his "ahtsy-fahtsy" friends are always shocked by the number he's about to do, but his "trashy" friends think it's just great.

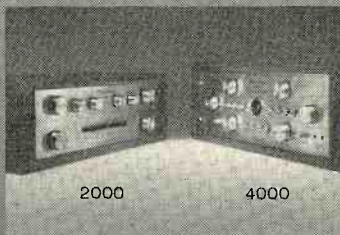
(Continued on page 106)

## Phase Linear 2000: The very quiet preamp with a big difference.

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Well, I must be trash, because I loved the next six minutes: a full-scale run-through of his (are you ready?) *TV commercials!* Barry Manilow's brilliant odes to and come-ons for brands of fried chicken, auto insurance, cosmetics, bandages, toilet-bowl cleaners, soft drinks, and hamburgers are already such a firm part of the national consciousness that I almost felt, as his audience must have, that I should join in. In the show they are all done straightforwardly (with just a little camping on the toilet-bowl number) as the new "folk" music they are. Aside from being authentically entertaining, these songs are as much works of popular commercial art as the fashion drawings of Erté or such famous advertising one-liners as "Does she or doesn't she?" from the Clairol campaign.

Of course, Manilow is a lot more than just another Madison Avenue comet, as he proves here particularly in his final version of *Beautiful Music*, a song he weaves throughout the show, in which he displays the kind of showmanship and performing grace that will probably keep him at the top for as long as he wants to stay there. "Barry Manilow Live" has got to be the final, flip Seventies answer to the messiahs and prophets of the Sixties who have been boring the hell out of all of us for much too long with their messages of doom and gloom. Manilow's courage in confessing that he likes to pick up a few bucks once in a while requires more honesty than most of them were ever capable of in the first place.

P.R.

**DAVE MASON: *Let It Flow*.** Dave Mason (vocals, guitar); Mike Finnigan (keyboards); Ger-



Arista Records

**BARRY MANILOW**  
*Half street kid, half Bloomingdale's glitter*

ald Johnson (bass); orchestra. *So High (Rock Me Baby and Roll Me Away); We Just Disagree; Mystic Traveler; Seasons;* and six others. COLUMBIA PC-34680 \$6.98, ® PCA-34680 \$6.98, © PCT-34680 \$6.98.

Performance: **Like molasses**  
Recording: **Good**

Sweet and thick is how Dave Mason lets it flow here, sounding like he's joined the crowd in drifting back toward the straightest, mid-

dle-of-the-road, plush-studio kind of sound, which reminds me of pre-rock music and names like Jack Pleis and Hugo Winterhalter. Mason's move toward the most conservatively planned commercial pap this side of Peter Frampton is, sad to say, reflective of the times. The first two songs jibe, one-two, with two of the major themes I see in the late Seventies: the desire to get loaded and forget about the world situation ("Rock me baby and roll me away"), and the pensive, no-heroes-no-villains "relating" we do so much of in our personal lives these days ("There ain't no good guy and there ain't no bad guy . . . there's just you and me . . . and we disagree"). But of course it's not an artist's job to reflect every damned thing the times reek of; it's an artist's job to be selective about what he or she reflects and then to filter *that* through a personal vision, not according to a consensus.

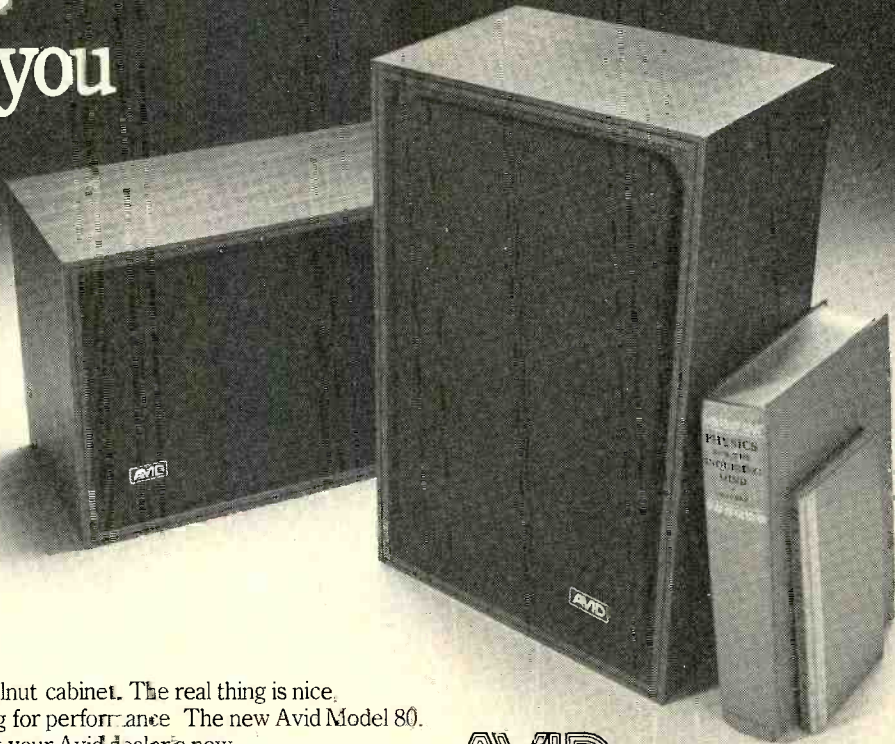
One thing Mason deserves credit for here: the album is quite melodic. *Seasons* is so catchy it should keep most buyers from playing most of the rest of the album most of the time. That's something, for a lot of the boys adopting short hair (inside their heads, at least) for the Big Changeover cannot, it turns out, even write melodies, which leaves a lot of that plush studio sound on their albums hanging precariously out at odd angles. Good music to half-listen to seems to be the goal of this movement, and Mason's is a better-than-average example of it.

N.C.

**THE MOODY BLUES: *Caught Live + 5*.** The Moody Blues (vocals and instrumentals).  
*(Continued on page 110)*

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So if you're looking for a best buy in a top-loading deck for less than \$200, \*\* your choice is simple; TEAC A-170S.

**SPECIFICATIONS**  
Wow & Flutter (NAB Weighted):  
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50 dB (WTD 3% THD)  
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Frequency response:  
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30-14,000 Hz  
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30-11,000 Hz

\*Dolby is a trademark of Dolby Laboratories, Inc.  
\*\*Nationally advertised value. Actual resale prices will be determined individually and at the sole discretion of authorized TEAC dealers.

The A-100 is shown with an optional simulated wood cabinet.

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Neil Young:  
naked emotionalism  
... and first-take  
sloppiness

## Regress Report on CSN ...and Y

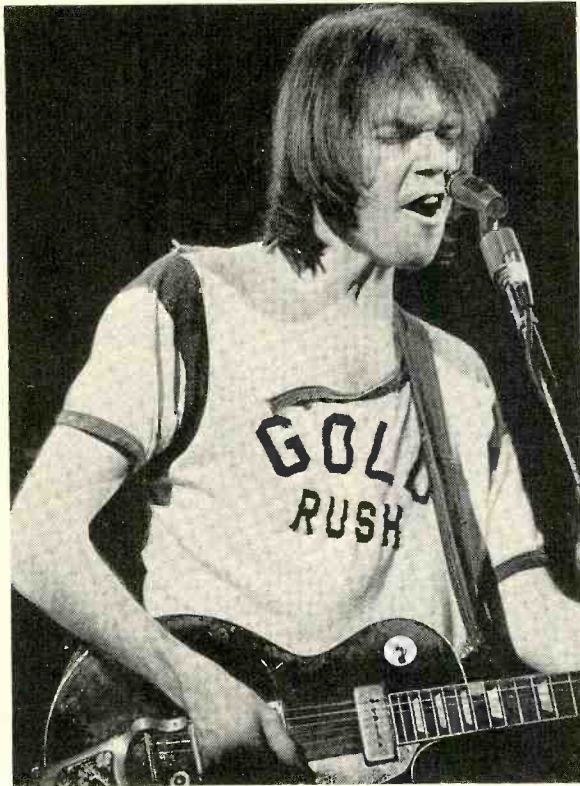


Photo: Stuart G. Liben

there's at least one winner in the package (not surprisingly, it's *Like a Hurricane*, one of the epic guitar workouts that are his trademark). Most of it, though, despite support from such stalwarts as Emmylou Harris and Linda Ronstadt, has the sound of his recent work but nothing of the ambitious content. There are no themes here, only a collection of songs that sit perilously on the edge of formula. This was perhaps inevitable given the basically intuitive nature of Young's working method, and one can only hope that it is not a preview of even worse things to come.

"CSN," on the other hand, has no redeeming virtue whatsoever. It is perhaps the worst single record from a group with a major reputation since Creedence's "Pendulum." Of course, to call these three guys a "group" at this point is to abuse the language. Sure, they still sing together, but they don't write together, and they do hardly any playing at all—the arrangements and overall sound of the thing are dominated by the session hacks they've dragged along from their solo outings. It wasn't always that way. If you go back to "Crosby, Stills, and Nash" and "Déjà Vu," you'll notice that, with the exception of an occasional guest solo, they took justifiable pride in doing everything themselves, even if it meant that Stills had to overdub layers of guitar, his own bass, and multiple keyboards. Today, apparently stricken with terminal L.A. torpor, they probably haven't a clue that they have forfeited the last vestiges of individuality by using hired hands.

As for the songs, they're hardly worth discussing. Both Stills and Crosby seem incapable of rewriting even themselves with any panache (*See the Changes*, for example, is *Helplessly Hoping* taken sort of sideways), and Nash, once a purveyor of irresistible light pop fluff, is now dealing in imitation Jethro Tull. *Cathedral* (that's *Winchester Cathedral*, if you can believe it), is a clumsy swipe at the hypocrisy of organized religion, but there's no heart in it.

With a fan's eternal optimism I had allowed myself to hope these two records might be better. But the incontrovertible proof is here: when the thrill is gone, it's gone for good. Which means, I guess, that in a perverse sort of way we've been taught a valuable lesson, so thanks a lot, guys. —Steve Simels

**NEIL YOUNG: *American Stars and Bars*.** Neil Young (guitar and vocals); Frank Sampedro (guitar and vocals); Billy Talbot (bass and vocals); Ralph Molina (drums and vocals); other musicians. *The Old Country Waltz*; *Saddle Up the Palomino*; *Hey Babe*; *Hold Back the Tears*; *Bite the Bullet*; *Star of Bethlehem*; *Will to Love*; *Like a Hurricane*; *Homegrown*. RE-PRICE MSK 2261 \$7.98, © M8 2261 \$7.98, © M5 2261 \$7.98.

**CROSBY, STILLS & NASH: *CSN*.** Stephen Stills (guitar and vocals); David Crosby (guitar and vocals); Graham Nash (piano and vocals); other musicians. *Shadow Captain*; *See the Changes*; *Carried Away*; *Fair Game*; *Anything at All*; *Cathedral*; *Dark Star*; *Just a Song Before I Go*; *Run from Tears*; *Cold Rain*; *In My Dreams*; *I Give You Give Blind*. ATLANTIC SD 19104 \$7.98, © TP 19104 \$7.98, © CS 19104 \$7.98.

LOS ANGELES is . . . the heart of the state that gave us Jack-in-the-Box burgers, Richard Nixon, and Charles Manson . . . the city that Bette Midler has dubbed "the Home of Absolutely Nothing" . . . the place Nathanael West and Raymond Chandler turned into a metaphor for everything seedy about America . . . and the entity one sci-fi writer theorized was a living organism growing inexorably eastward and engulfing everything in its path. That it is today the capitol of the Music Business as well is somehow only fitting.

Easy cynicism? Maybe, but justifiable, I think, under the circumstances. I have before me two new albums that would be absolutely unthinkable except in terms of the soft-core L.A. mentality. The principal perpetrators of these two Monuments of Nullness are David Crosby, Stephen Stills, Graham Nash, and—to a lesser degree—Neil Young, and that makes it all the more painful. Despite my flip tone, my distress is real, for at various times all four of them have mattered to me. They have probably mattered to you too, given the long shadow they've managed to cast across the Seventies with a recorded output that is probably the smallest of any comparably successful rock band in the history of the music.

It was the Eagles' Glenn Frey, I think, who remarked that when he heard the first CS&N album back in 1969 he "freaked out just like everybody else." That's a pretty accurate description of the almost overwhelmingly positive across-the-board audience response evoked by that collaboration. The response to their second try (after Neil Young climbed aboard) was exactly the same. It may have been that they came along just in time to fill the Beatles' gap with those gorgeous harmonies and catchy tunes, but in retrospect there

was clearly something substantial there. I was astonished, after listening to those two records recently, to find that they were far less slick and far more moving than I had remembered, that the music, for all its studio polish, was very definitely the work of actual human beings with actual, identifiable feelings.

In the years since the four last recorded together, only Young has made any music for which similar claims might be made. Stills ground out the conventional *Endless Boogie*, and Crosby and Nash were reduced to singing fervent odes to whales. Young, on the other hand, deliberately turned his back on an audience still hungry for pabulum. After enormous solo success with the lush, overproduced, and generally vacuous "Harvest," he insisted on making records that, although sometimes embarrassingly gauche in their naked emotionalism and first-take sloppiness, had a certain dazed integrity that was somehow affecting. "Tonight's the Night" and "Zuma," in particular, were memorable in

Young . . . had a certain dazed integrity that was somehow affecting

this sense, and even his recent collaboration with a predictably shallow Stills resulted in some chilling moments.

Young's newest effort, "American Stars and Bars," is hardly in that league, though



# Stereo Review's

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CONTEMPORARY movie directors seem to be possessed by an irrepressible urge to re-create old-fashioned Hollywood musicals. There was Ken Russell's free-wheeling, fantastic version of *The Boy Friend*, for example, and Peter Bogdanovich's outrageous *At Long Last Love*. Now Martin Scorsese, of all people, has abandoned the stark worlds of *Mean Streets* and *Taxi Driver* to come up with *New York, New York*, a laughter-through-tears, movie-lot-Manhattan musical that just might have been made in the Forties.

Jimmy Doyle (Robert De Niro), a gum-chewing saxophone player fresh out of the

*Man I Love*, or when, in a tribute to Maurice Chevalier, she slams into *You Brought a New Kind of Love to Me*, her supercharged personality bursts through with the overwhelming fervor that is all her own. She even makes the four far less memorable pseudo-period ballads concocted for the score by Kander and Ebb (*There Goes the Ball Game*, *But the World Goes Round*, *Happy Endings*, and *Theme from New York, New York*) sound sturdier than they are (though even her energy cannot give life to the dismal title tune—why can't American composers write good hymns to New York the way the French do to Paris?). The closest thing to a real vehicle for Liza among the contributions by Kander and Ebb (who did so well by her in the movie version of *Cabaret*) is *But the World Goes Round*; she makes the most of it, becoming an even higher-strung version of her mother Judy before our astounded ears.

De Niro can be heard singing here only in an artless, intentionally inept, yet somehow affecting run-through of *Blue Moon* with Mary Kay Place as another big-band vocalist. His character takes on more believable form through the saxophone of Georgie Auld, who dubbed in all the music Jimmy Doyle is seen tootling away at on the screen. Hearing Auld in his own period-true piece *Flip the Dip*, in Sy Oliver's imperishable *Opus Number One*, and in such juicy items as *V. J. Stomp*, *Once Again Right Away*, and *Hazoy* is an arresting experience. It is uncanny how Auld's playing expresses all the combined belligerence, buoyancy, and brashness of Doyle himself. An additional delight in this double-disc set is Diahnne Abbott (De Niro's wife), who makes the sexy most of *Honeysuckle Rose*.

THE movie version of *New York, New York* is long, but it was even longer before they dropped the elaborate *Happy Endings* production number, a hard-breathing takeoff on one of those mammoth movie-musical climaxes wherein the stage of a Broadway theater suddenly expands to the size of a football stadium. This item has been totally restored in the recording, and it features some marvelous moments between Minnelli as "Mary Smith," the former usherette who makes good when her big chance comes, and Larry Kert as the singing producer who "meets her cute," as they say. It is a welcome eleven-and-a-half minute dividend, and it makes one wish—almost—that the scene had not been edited out of the movie. But the real joy of this album is the exhilarating, unpatronizing way it pays homage to the big-band swing sound of the time. The kudos therefore goes to conductor Ralph Burns, who has so stunningly recreated an almost forgotten music.

—Paul Kresh

**NEW YORK, NEW YORK** (original songs by John Kander and Fred Ebb). Original motion-picture score. Liza Minnelli, Robert De Niro, Mary Kay Place, Larry Kert, Diahnne Abbott (vocals); Georgie Auld (saxophone); orchestra, Ralph Burns cond. *Main Title*; *Once in a While*; *Game Over*; *It's a Wonderful World*; *Just You, Just Me*; *Don't Be That Way*; *Bobby's Dream*; and fourteen others. UNITED ARTISTS UA-LA 750-L2 two discs \$13.98, © UA-EA 750-L \$11.98, © UA-CA 750-L \$11.98.

*Dr. Livingstone, I Presume*; *Never Comes the Day*; *Peak Hour*; *Tuesday Afternoon*; *Nights in White Satin*; and fourteen others. LONDON 2PS 690/1 two discs \$11.96, © 2PS8-690/1 \$13.95, © 2PS5-690/1 \$13.95.

Performance: **Variable**

Recording: **Dated**

Ah, the Moody Blues. The band Joel Vance once called "Mantovani with Teeth" (and nobody was sure if that was a compliment or not). The band that another reviewer described as "potentially first-rate rockers who deliberately smother their work in conceptual goo." The band that went from covering James Brown songs to dispensing Himalayan homilies and made millions in the process. The band that split up and whose members then went on to make solo albums even more cosmic than anything they had done together. The band that has had the most consistently tacky art direction in rock. Ah, the Moody Blues—truly a phenomenon.

And what of "Caught Live + 5"? Well, it's a fair recording of a Moodies concert from 1969, with the band dispensing most of their hits and clearly demonstrating that they were studio animals generally incapable of reproducing their recorded sound live. But it also shows that Justin Heyward could be a really great front man for some other band—his guitar and vocals are consistently outstanding, despite the drivel he's playing. We also get, from the period just after Denny Laine quit the group and they had not yet completed the transition from r-&-b grit to Flower Power bushwah, some considerably older studio outtakes, none of which are particularly interesting in any but the historical sense.

Some years ago, a rumor circulated that the group was working on a new masterpiece, tentatively titled "The Moody Blues Cure Cancer." Somehow I've always felt cheated that it was never delivered, and this new package doesn't help much. S.S.

**THE O'JAYS: *Travelin' at the Speed of Thought***. The O'Jays (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *We're All in This Together*; *So Glad I Got You, Girl*; *Work on Me*; and five others. PHILADELPHIA INTERNATIONAL PZ-34684 \$6.98, © PZA-34684 \$6.98, © PZT-34684 \$6.98.

Performance: **Hectic**

Recording: **Good**

According to the pretentiously evangelical liner notes supplied by Kenneth Gamble, who produced this record with his partner Leon Huff, there's supposed to be a message in this music. If so, it eludes me. Here are several predictable up-tempo songs about romantic adventures, a gospelish treatment of Morris Albert's overexposed *Feelings* that works rather well, and a frantic number called *Stand Up*, lifted from a live performance, that led me to believe my stylus was stuck in the groove.

When in peak form, this vocal trio performs with admirable cohesion, projecting an infectious joy through their music. There have even been times when they managed skillfully to incorporate morsels of social commentary into their work, as on *Backstabbers*, which launched them on an upward trajectory. But their previous album, "Message in the Music," is still their best offering. This one finds them mired in the humdrum. Phyl Garland

## Liza Again: "New York, New York"



United Artists

army on VJ Day, decides that he must have Francine Evans (Liza Minnelli), a World War II WAC who aspires to be a big-band singer. The movie that ensues is a mad, moving indulgence that explores the larger-than-life love-hate romance of its principals for two-and-a-half entertaining hours. There's a lot of good acting in *New York, New York*—and a lot of good music too, the lion's share of it drawn from that now-legendary Barnum-and-Bailey world of the big bands, and it is this that makes the two-record set of the score worth hearing.

Although she certainly looks the part in the movie, it is hard to believe just from listening to her that our zestful Liza is really one of those poker-faced Helen Forrest types who sat in her chair while the band played on, stood up and ran cold-bloodedly through her vocal, and then sat down again. When Minnelli sings *You Are My Lucky Star* and *The*

(Continued on page 112)



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**POUSETTE-DART BAND: Amnesia.** Pousette-Dart Band (vocals and instrumentals); other musicians. *County Line; Fall on Me; Amnesia; I Think I Know; May You Dance; I Don't Know Why; Winterness*; and four others. CAPITOL SW-11608 \$6.98, © 8XW-11608 \$7.98, © 4XW-11608 \$7.98.

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

Seldom do bands so relatively new to the relatively big time make albums this slick—or this dull. Part of the trouble is that Jon Pousette-Dart writes a song that lies stylistically somewhere about halfway between the Carpenters and Kenny Rankin, and part of the trouble is that the band took such a conservative approach to production for this one that they hired some studio musicians to play vital roles—such as Kenny Buttrey to play drums. I'd rather have found out what the band itself really sounds like, except that I wouldn't want to hear many of these songs again anyway. Pousette-Dart shows signs of being able to write a song about something—I *Don't Know Why*, for example—but most of the time he writes slop like *Country Line*. The overall impression I have of this is that it is awfully efficient and clean and modern. And, of course, sterile. N.C.

**LUCY SIMON: Stolen Time.** Lucy Simon (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *If You Ever Believed; Father to Son; Please Say Yes; Safe in My Arms*; and six others. RCA APL1-1745 \$7.98, © APS1-1745 \$7.95.

Performance: **Ms. Monotone**  
Recording: **Good**

Lucy Simon seems to be following in the Guccied footsteps of such as Jennifer Warnes—Intelligent, Sensitive, Radcliffish, Into Music, and so on. She too gets wracked, simply wracked, from time to time about things in general. In *Please Say Yes*, a song she's written with Carole Bayer Sager, she's a liberated Ms. telling the guy that "... there's no joy in being coy/At this time in our career," and she'd like to know will-he-or-won't-he? We never find out, but it sounds like an offer it would be hard to refuse. Carly Simon and James Taylor turn up on the background vocals of *Father to Son*, a turgid tale of departing husbands and their sons who will repeat the same mistakes a generation later. Unfortunately, it would probably take at least Diana Ross, Mick Jagger, and the Luftwaffe Marching Band in the background to liven up Ms. Simon's performance. She possesses the most all-enveloping vocal monotone since the days when Lauren Bacall first entered films and made an art of blankness. Nevertheless, this is an album by an Interesting Person which is probably already being murmured about by other Interesting People. P.R.

**RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT**

**O.C. SMITH: Together.** O.C. Smith (vocals); orchestra. *Just Couldn't Help Myself; Simple Life; Come with Me; I Found the Secret; Pre-tending; Love Song*; and five others. CARIBOU PZ-34471 \$6.98, © PZA-34471 \$6.98, © PZT-34471 \$6.98.

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

As a singer, O.C. Smith possesses all the virtues of a well-worn house slipper—comforta-  
(Continued on page 115)

bly familiar and not prone to pinch you into thinking about it too much. The songs he sings extoll old-fashioned values: mother, little-green-apple pies, and the joys of love. Corny, perhaps, but clichés, even those cast in the musical medium, have attained their commonality simply because they so frequently fit well.

Smith is in particularly fine voice on this album, and his keen sense of phrasing is most apparent on ballads that fall just short of the saccharine: *Empty Hearts, Together*, and *Simple Life*. *Wham Bam (Blue Collar Man)* brings swinging defiance to the theme of everyday problems, and there's a bit of gospel punch in *Sweet Lov'liness*. O.C. Smith reminds you that while raw corn is sometimes tough to chew, it can be very sweet.

Phyl Garland

**GARY STEWART: *Your Place or Mine*.** Gary Stewart (vocals, keyboards); Mike Leech (bass); Jerry Shook, Reggie Young (guitars); other musicians. *Your Place or Mine; Rachel; Leah; Drinking Again; The Blue Ribbon Blues; I Had to Get Drunk Last Night; Dancing Eyes*; and four others. RCA APL1-2199 \$7.98, © APS1-2199 \$7.98, © APK1-2199 \$7.98.

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

It's all very well for Gary Stewart to sing about almost nothing but getting drunk and carousing around in honky tonks—he can make a *living* keeping such hours in such places. Other people can't, and if I were Gary I'd start putting more than one or two token outdoor-daytime songs in my albums—out of fear of a backlash. Some of Stewart's songs are pretty good honky-tonk numbers, the hit title song of this album being one. And his backing is quite tasty if a little stylized, considering who the pickers are. Not as stylized as Gary is getting to be, though. I used to think he was interesting, but he's become so specialized at expressing the same two or three sentiments (in the same two or three settings) over and over that I'm afraid self-parody is just around the bend. But consider this: you could listen to this album for forty minutes and meet all your honky-tonk music needs for a month. Why you would want to is your business. N.C.

**10cc: *Deceptive Bends*** (see Best of the Month, page 88)

**HANK WILLIAMS JR.: *One Night Stands*.** Hank Williams Jr. (vocals, guitar); Clayton Ivey (keyboards); Larry Byrom (guitar); Bob Wray (bass); other musicians. *One Night Stands; Mobile Boogie; Building Memories; Call Me; She's the Star; Daddy; Cherokee*; and three others. WARNER BROS. BS 2988 \$6.98, © M82988 \$7.97, © M52988 \$7.97.

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

"Hank Williams Jr. and Friends" really aged well at my house, but here Williams has taken some strides toward that great temptation, the broader audience—which is to say he's showing signs of trying to provide something for everyone. The thing has two novelty songs on the same side, a bit much in itself. It also has some of those neither-fish-nor-fowl arrangements a country boy should always be leery of and such crooner's pop songs as *All by My-*  
(Continued on page 118)

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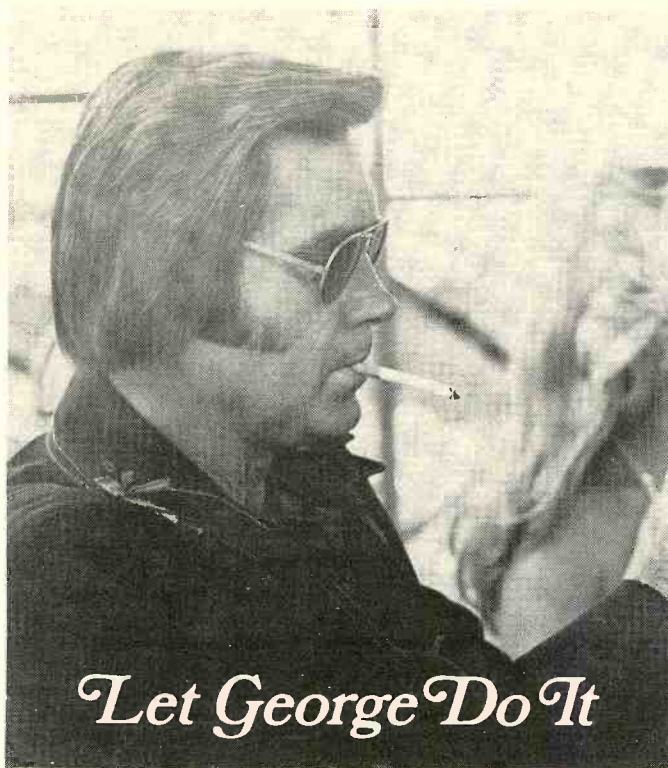
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## Let George Do It

WHAT is singing *about*, anyway? Well, you have your answer and I have mine, which I cribbed on a trip down home recently from a simple farmer, insurance man, schoolteacher, football coach, antique dealer, and summertime state-park ranger. He (this was all one person, you understand; nobody is simple enough to try getting along just *farming* down there these days) said, "Singing is about thirty per cent technique and about seventy per cent feeling." "Amen, Brother," I said, "that's where it's at, as we used to say in the places you see about on the TV."

What inspired him to say that was a George Jones record we were playing on this so-called stereo he got down at the K-Mart six months ago, which he admits doesn't sound so hot now that it's grown old. Even so, you could plainly hear the extraordinary talent and soul this man George Jones has, and I've been looking for some excuse to write to you about his being among the ten or twelve best singers alive right now, and his new Epic album, "All-Time Greatest Hits, Volume I," will do nicely.

It's one of those comparatively rare ones in which the artist (and Jones, unlike most of the country singers who are *called* "artists," which includes all of them, really *is* one) goes back and rerecords his old hits with the producer of his choice today. That would be the famous Billy Sherrill—the architect, one might say, of the career of George's ex-wife, Tammy Wynette. This one is even rarer than most such, since Jones first recorded these hits on a scattering of labels going back many years. He has, in fact, recorded more albums than he can remember.

One can find a great deal of fault with a number of those, none of it having much to do with singing, and a measure of that is true of

this one. It is an improvement over the way most of the songs were recorded the first time—*Why Baby Why*, with a swinging violin-fiddle back-up, is notoriously improved, and *White Lightnin'* is hoisted up by sheer vocal prowess—but that still doesn't leave the arrangements anywhere near wonderful. Sherrill takes a basically conservative, Nashville-sound approach, same as he does with Tammy, and it grows awfully sleek before it's over. Backed with rawer, more basic instrumentation instead of spiraling, string-fed curlicues, a George Jones album could make ripples travel back and forth across your hair and make your heart feel like it was swelling up. But that kind of Jones album, to be fair

far and away the best  
honky-tonk singer  
there is or ever was

about it, would kick out not only most of these arrangements but some of these songs as well, hits or not. As it is, this one demonstrates at least as much in a positive way about singing as it does in a negative way about production. And it seems to indicate that Jones just keeps getting better.

His voice is more whiskied (in more ways than one; look up Tammy's comments about why they split) than it used to be, more weathered, more knowing, touched by some great and sad instinct about the human condition. An extraordinary progression for a rich man,

you might say if you're political, and George and Tammy between them did pile up a heap of cash. But Jones gives a sad phrase an extra little something that only a person who has really known sadness to the point of despair could give it, assuming that person had the voice to do it with.

Jones came from deep in redneck country (east Texas) and started out more or less imitating other singers (the late Lefty Frizzell, whom Merle Haggard also started out imitating, was among them). But he soon learned to stop getting in the way of his own natural voice and to follow his feelings about using it, and "success" hasn't been to him an unbridled happy experience—you can tell that simply from the honest way he expresses feelings when he sings. His feelings and instincts also shape his style, which has a fairly distinctive sound to start with and a retinue of ornamental accessories that he uses so easily and expertly—much more so than anyone could who was *thinking* about it—that they don't sound like ornaments or accessories but like organic, natural parts of the basics.

Jones can convey two or more seemingly opposing feelings about the same song at the same time. Some of the songs identified with him are of one or another "cute" school (endemic to hard-core country, it seems) and tend, like *The Race Is On*, to be parodies of songs at the same time they *are* songs about some (likely as not unfortunate) late adventure of the heart. *Race*, still getting off to a flying but difficult unaccompanied vocal start, almost makes fun of *all* songs with its nutty little horse-racing metaphor, vaguely reminiscent of Spike Jones' Beetlebomb stuff, as if to say listen to the silly way grown people sing about love.

BUT there is another side to the lyrics of even this kind of thing, and Jones gets that lyrical content to overshadow the cute style: a honky-tonk refined sadness couched in stylized—distancing—terms. Jones is far and away the best honky-tonk singer there is or ever was, and yet many of the songs he does aren't as blatantly honky-tonk as, say, Gary Stewart's are—they don't, that is, talk *specifically* about incidents in beer joints. Jones puts you in that kind of place without having to say outright, "I am putting you in that kind of place."

My friend the insurance man and coach and so forth, who understands this sort of thing without having to think about it, is going to like the singing on this record the way he likes the aged, tangy flavor of winesap apples, but he's going to grumble, neighbors, about the pop stuff in the background, just as he's grumbled about one thing or another in the background of more George Jones albums than he can remember. But get him to talking about *singing* and he'll trot this one right out. I might just do the same thing myself.

—Noel Coppage

**GEORGE JONES: All-Time Greatest Hits, Volume I.** George Jones (vocals, guitar); instrumental accompaniment. *The Race Is On; My Favorite Lies; Tender Years; The Window Up Above; She Thinks I Still Care; White Lightnin'; Walk Through This World with Me; She's Mine; I'll Share My World with You; Why Baby Why.* EPIC KE-34692 \$5.98.

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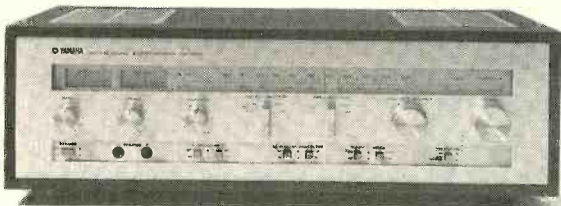
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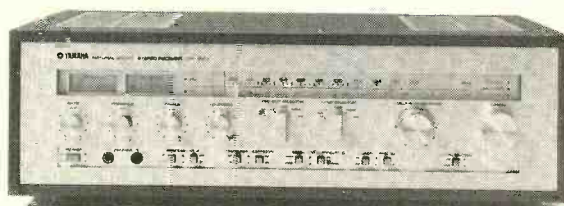
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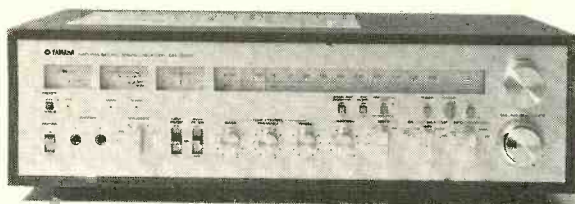
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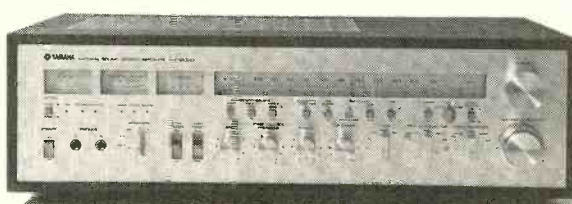
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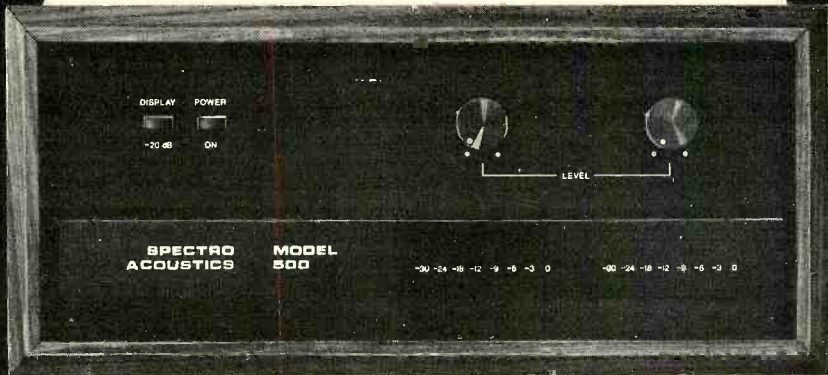


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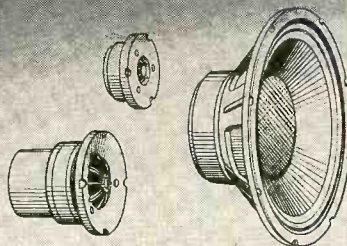
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self that don't go with Williams' voice (or anyone else's except Engelbert Humperdinck's). There's some good stuff, too, of course; the title song and *Cherokee* work especially well. Williams has *something*—he does transcend strict "country" and "pop" labeling—but what he has works better in a simpler, less ambitious format. This album doesn't have the drive he's capable of or the emotional intensity his last one did. It does spot those qualities here and there, but it also spots him trying to be more versatile than he is. *N.C.*

### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**JESSE WINCHESTER: *Nothing But a Breeze*.** Jesse Winchester (vocals, guitar, piano, organ, marimba, vibes); instrumental accompaniment. *Nothing But a Breeze; My Songbird; Seems Like Only Yesterday; You Remember Me; Twigs and Seeds; Gilding the Lily; Bowling Green*; and three others. BEARSVILLE BR 6968 \$6.98, © M86968 \$7.97, © M56968 \$7.97.

Performance: **Very good**

Recording: **Good**

Jesse Winchester goes legit here with full-fledged (and then some) production by Brian Ahern where there used to be a sparse little combo finding licks as it went along. I have to admit Ahern does a slick job of "mainstreaming" old Jesse commerce-wise, if you get my drift, and I have to admit he does a craftsman-like job artistically, except for a couple of places where he goes overboard (*Bowling Green*, a bad song in the first place—I say it though I used to *live* there—becomes a tastelessly overdressed bad song here), but I wish I liked this album more and admired it professionally less. Winchester, still living in Canada, has been touring the States since President Carter's pardon for war resisters, and this fuller sound, replete as it sometimes is with standard studio licks and topped off sometimes with strings, no less—well, the timing of this kind of Jesse Winchester album and a Jesse Winchester tour (a first in itself) seems to suggest a push is on. Fortunately, Winchester has written a couple of sparkling songs that do come out neatly arranged, and those bail the thing out. The title song is one of those simultaneously simple and convoluted songs Winchester specializes in; *You Remember Me* is even more so, and strange to boot. *Twigs and Seeds* is good once, but *My Songbird* is an intriguing little thing. Much of side two is disappointing—just as much of side one is worth hearing several times. *N.C.*

### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**JESSE COLIN YOUNG: *Love on the Wing*.** Jesse Colin Young (vocals, guitar); David Hayes (bass); Jeff Myer (drums); Jim Rothermel (horns); other musicians. *Higher and Higher; Love on the Wing; Workin'; Hey, Good Lookin'; Fool; Drift Away*; and four others. WARNER BROS. BS 3033 \$6.98, © M83033 \$7.97, © M53033 \$7.97.

Performance: **Very good**

Recording: **Excellent**

Jesse Colin Young does a pretty good job here of bringing off a semi-theme album about life on the tour for a pop star, a subject that tends to be done badly and to death by today's pop stars. Young's an even better singer than he used to be, and now he's getting crafty enough to do some pretty fancy vocal stuff



without a sign of self-consciousness. He tries several styles and rhythms, and he has hired several sets of pretty good musicians to help him with each. His distinctive voice is what gives it cohesion. It's a fine album as it is, and it could have been a great one if something were done about the sag it hits in *Workin'* and stays in through three more tunes. Both sides start with a little something extra, though, which is a smart production touch. *Higher and Higher* is a very tasty job of working another man's rhythm, and *Drift Away*, despite the grafted-on refrain, has winning ways. Most of the material is more than adequate, and the performance pulls this one well apart from the herd. I do wonder why Young chose the album-cover photographs he did, which show him all machismoed up with a motorcycle, a clinging woman, and a leather vest. His face and his voice just don't go with that image. And anyway, politics being what it is these days, it probably gets between some people and the music. Try to give it a listen and skip the look. N.C.



**TINA CHARLES: *Rendezvous*.** Tina Charles (vocals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. It's Time for a Change of Heart; Dr. Love; All Comes Back to You; Rendezvous; Dance Little Lady Dance; and four others. COLUMBIA PC-34807 \$6.98, © PCA-34807 \$6.98, © PCT-34807 \$6.98.

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

As Tina Charles sings in one of this album's better cuts, "When you got love, you got a good thing going." She clearly has love, and she's also got a composer/producer/arranger

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*She's got love and she's got Biddu*



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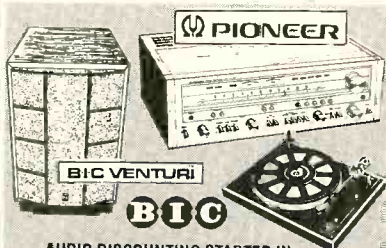
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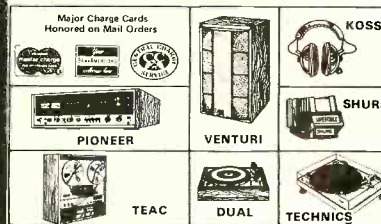
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named Biddu. The combination is simply terrific.

The love, of course, is for singing. Whether she turns her attention to a throwback ballad called *All Comes Back to You*, complete with spoken doobie-doo ending, or to a straight reading of *Amazing Grace*, she sings with feeling, an impressive range, and style. But this is Tina Charles, so the accent, of course, is on her own now-classic standard disco sound. She sings slow, romantic disco (*It's Time for a Change of Heart* and *When You Got Love*), struttin' disco (*Dr. Love*), syn-copated disco (the title song, with some classy marimba work), and top-notch flying disco (the two best tracks, *Dance Little Lady Dance* and *Halfway to Paradise*). Through them all that Biddu beat never lags and that Tina Charles knack for finding a phrase or two to play with imaginatively (listen to what she does with "everything's gonna change some time" while she rides out her *Time for a Change of Heart* or to her "callin', callin'" *Dr. Love*) never fails to engage us.

—Ed Buxbaum

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**JOE TEX: *Bumps & Bruises*.** Joe Tex (vocals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Ain't Gonna Bump No More; Leaving You Dinner; Be Cool (Willie Is Dancing with a Sissy); I Mess Up Everything I Get My Hands On; We Held On*; and four others. EPIC PE-34666 \$6.98, © PEA-34666 \$6.98, © PET-34666 \$6.98.

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

What distinguished Joe Tex's many pop hits through the Sixties and early Seventies was a combination of catchy titles (*One Monkey Don't Stop No Show*, for example) and a sense of humor. Along with his guttural, gasping vocals, he often included spoken asides or recitatives that told a story, described a character, or commented on the human comedy.

Tex's career has been more or less dormant since 1972, but he is back in the chips with *Ain't Gonna Bump No More*, the opening cut on this album. It describes the injuries a dancer receives from an enormous woman who grabs him as her partner at a disco. Although the album is disco-oriented, the music is not the monotonous glop and thud of "pure" disco; it shakes and grinds, all right, but the beat is not allowed to make Tex merely a supporting player—his humor and showmanship dominate. *Leaving You Dinner* is a song Tex wrote about a woman walking out on her man. Another original, *Be Cool (Willie Is Dancing with a Sissy)*, takes the disco culture to its ludicrous limits: the plot concerns a fellow trying to tell his pal that the pal has been hotting it up with a transvestite; the pal doesn't want to believe it and gets angry about the attempt to enlighten him. *Jump Bad*, though not written by Tex, is a song just made for his style, describing a fierce old lady beating hell out of a mugger. It is all very funny and very solid. The album is a treat, and it's good to have Tex back. J.V.

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(List compiled by David Mancuso, owner of *The Loft*, one of New York City's top discos.)



#### RECORDINGS OF SPECIAL MERIT

**PAUL BLEY/GARY PEACOCK/BARRY ALTSCHUL: *Japan Suite*.** Paul Bley (piano); Gary Peacock (bass); Barry Altschul (drums, percussion). *Japan Suite I; Japan Suite II.* IMPROVISING ARTISTS 373849 \$7.98.

Performance: **Very together**  
Recording: **Excellent remote**

**BARRY ALTSCHUL/PAUL BLEY/GARY PEACOCK: *Virtuosi*.** Paul Bley (piano); Gary Peacock (bass); Barry Altschul (drums). *Butterflies; Gary.* IMPROVISING ARTISTS 373844 \$7.98 (both from Improvising Artists, Inc., 26 Jane Street, New York, N.Y. 10014).

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

This is an interesting set of releases that might well have been combined into one double album documenting the superb trio of pianist Paul Bley, bassist Gary Peacock, and drum-

mer Barry Altschul. But the discs were recorded on separate occasions some nine thousand miles and nine years apart.

In 1967, when "Virtuosi" was recorded, jazz instruments were still largely acoustical, and free-form players—not yet equipped with wah-wahs and synthesizers—were still largely ignored. Gary Peacock, fresh from the Miles Davis group, had gone into semi-retirement, Barry Altschul was a relative newcomer, and Paul Bley was two years away from acquiring his first synthesizer and starting (with Annette Peacock) the "Bley-Peacock Synthesizer Show," a venture I'm glad to say he abandoned in 1973. The music sounds wonderfully current ten years later, and it will probably find a wider audience today than it would have back then. The album contains tight improvisations by three marvelously cogent, technically facile artists.

The two-part *Japan Suite*, recorded at the Yamaha Music Festival during a 1976 tour of Japan, shows the trio reflecting some of the changes that occurred in music during the intervening years. Bley is heard on electric as well as acoustic piano, and Altschul—having in the meantime become closely associated with the very avant-garde Anthony Braxton—employs many more percussive effects. The rapport is intact, the music is intense, and the years have not dimmed the inspiration of Messrs. Bley, Peacock, and Altschul. C.A.

**GEORGE DUKE: *From Me to You*.** George Duke (vocals, keyboards); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *From Me to You; Carry On; What Do They Really Fear?; 'Scuse Me Miss; You and Me; Broken Dreams*; and four others. EPIC PE-34469 \$6.98, © PEA-34469 \$6.98, © PET-34469 \$6.98.

Performance: **Fraudulent**  
Recording: **Excessive**

There's jive, and then there's jive. The particular jive George Duke peddles is of the clinical, semi-jazz, trendy variety in which the rhythm section and the back-up singers knock themselves out while Duke plays every



PAUL BLEY, GARY PEACOCK, AND BARRY ALTSCHUL: nine years of undimmed inspiration

Improvising Artists, Inc.

known hackneyed run and solo up front. Clinical jive is as offensive in its own way as its counterpart, greasy jive, in which the players attempt to be funky and low-down. Once in a while Duke throws in a little grease to cover all the bets, but not once in these dreary proceedings does he come close to a tune or a performance. The lyrics are the usual hey-baby-let's-get-our-fertilizer-together-because-I'm-from-outer-space hooley. If this kind of incompetent nonsense had a section and number in the law books, Mr. Duke would get five years with no hope of parole. J.V.

**DEXTER GORDON: *More Than You Know.*** Dexter Gordon (soprano and tenor saxophones); orchestra, Palle Mikkelborg arr. and cond. *Naima; Ernie's Tune; Tivoli;* and three others. INNER CITY IC 2030 \$6.98 (from Inner City Records, 43 West 61st Street, New York, N.Y. 10023).

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

"More Than You Know" is an album made in Denmark early in 1975 with a sizable studio orchestra that included three of Gordon's fellow expatriates, Idrees Sulieman, Richard Boone, and Ed Thigpen. The arrangements, by Palle Mikkelborg, are a bit too embroidered in spots, and for the most part they're about twenty years behind in style, but the overall sound is pleasing to the ear and there are excellent moments. Gordon's playing is superb throughout; his work on Vincent Youmans' 1929 ballad *More Than You Know* is simply exquisite. Though his performance here is as good as anything he does on the recent Columbia "Homecoming" album, I still prefer to hear him without Mikkelborg's commercial dress. C.A.

**URBIE GREEN: *The Fox.*** Urbie Green (trombone); Joe Farrell (soprano saxophone); Jeremy Steig (flute); Toots Thielemans (harmonica); Eric Gale (guitar); Mike Manieri (vibraphone); Anthony Jackson (bass); others. *Manteca; Goodbye; Mertensia; You Don't Know What Love Is;* and three others. CTI CTI-7070 \$7.98, ® CT8-7070 \$7.98, © CTC-7070 \$7.98.

Performance: **From fine to formula**  
Recording: **Very good**

When trombonist Urbie Green isn't in the studio enhancing somebody's record date with the rich, buttery tones of his horn—which he very often is—chances are you'll find him on the cattle farm he owns outside Philadelphia. I'm not suggesting that he should have stayed on the farm when the three sessions for this album took place, but he is such a fine player that it seems a shame to confine him in the regimented, often stilted arrangements David Matthews has provided for "The Fox." There are good moments, but Green seems inhibited by his surroundings and he never really gets off the ground. For comparison, check out his performance on the Marky Markowitz Sextet album ("Marky's Vibes"—Famous Door HL-111, reviewed last month in these pages) and you'll hear what I mean. With such sidemen as Jeremy Steig, Toots Thielmans, and Eric Gale on hand, this *could* have been a hell of an album. Urbie Green does not need Barry Miles' synthesized Wagner (in the background of *Foxglove Suite*) or David Matthews' footsteps (*You Don't Know What Love Is*) or, for that matter, Joe Farrell's by now hackneyed soprano sax solo (*Mertensia*).

What he does need is a good group and the freedom to swing. C.A.

**WOODY HERMAN: *The 40th Anniversary Carnegie Hall Concert*** (see Best of the Month, page 87)

**PERCY HUMPHREY AND HIS CRESCENT CITY JOYMAKERS: *Climax Rag.*** Percy Humphrey (trumpet); Jim Robinson (trombone); Albert Burbank (clarinet); George Guesnon (banjo); Alcide "Slow Drag" Pava-gneau (bass); Josiah "Cie" Frazier (drums). *Climax Rag; Yes Sir! That's My Baby; San; Savoy Blues; When I Grow Too Old to Dream;* and four others. PEARL PS-3 \$6.98.

Performance: **Wobbly**  
Recording: **Wobbly**

This album was recorded in 1965 when the Joymakers (two of whose members are now deceased) were touring as one of the Preservation Hall groups from New Orleans, the Hall being a rendezvous where local musicians of advanced years pound away with great good will trying to re-create the glories of old-time New Orleans jazz.

The Humphrey group plays with wonderful spirit, but unfortunately the musicians don't always have the chops to express what they want to. Clarinetist Albert Burbank has a fascinating tone, somewhere between a squeal and a coo, but he—like other members of the band—sometimes gets temporarily lost in the course of a performance, now going flat, now sharp. Trombonist Jim Robinson has a muscular, tailgate sound, and trumpeter Humphrey plays with drive, but age tells. Drummer Josiah "Cie" Frazier, however, is exciting and spicy throughout. This recording, while enjoyable in spots, is for archivists even more than for purists. J.V.

**BARNEY KESSEL: *Soaring.*** Barney Kessel (guitar); Monty Budwig (bass); Jake Hanna (drums). *Star Eyes; Beautiful Love; Get Out of Town; Seagull;* and four others. CONCORD Jazz CJ-33 \$6.98 (from Concord Jazz, Inc., P.O. Box 845, Concord, Calif. 94522).

Performance: **Gentle**  
Recording: **Very Good**

Guitarist Barney Kessel was twenty in 1943 when he joined the Chico Marx orchestra, a job that led to other big bands (including those of Charlie Barnet and Artie Shaw), tours with Jazz at the Philharmonic, and international fame. Over the past twenty years, he has led and performed on numerous record sessions, toured extensively, written guitar instruction books, and added his nimble, imaginative guitar sound to countless film and television soundtracks.

This album, Kessel's second for Concord Jazz, is typically excellent. The repertoire favors the familiar but includes two Kessel originals, and the sound is the smooth, almost extinct one of an amplified guitar that is nudged along by the very sympathetic work of Monty Budwig and Jake Hanna. Stylistically, "Soaring" could have been made in the Fifties, but taste is never an anachronism. C.A.

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

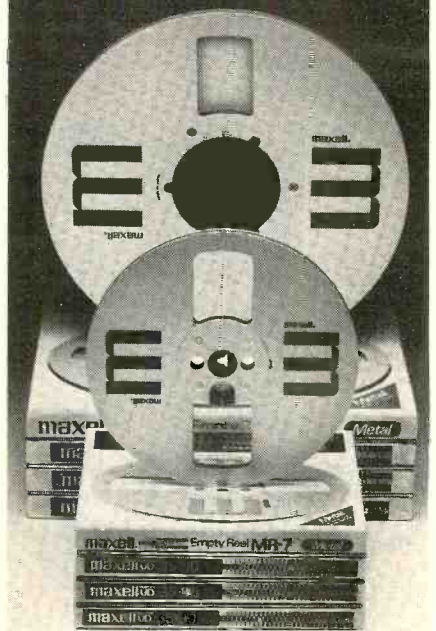
**CAROL LEIGH/ORIGINAL SALTY DOGS JAZZ BAND: *Wild Women Don't Have the Blues.*** Carol Leigh (vocals); Lew Green (cornet); Tom Bartlett (trombone); Kim Cusack (clarinet); Mike Walbridge (tuba); John Coop-

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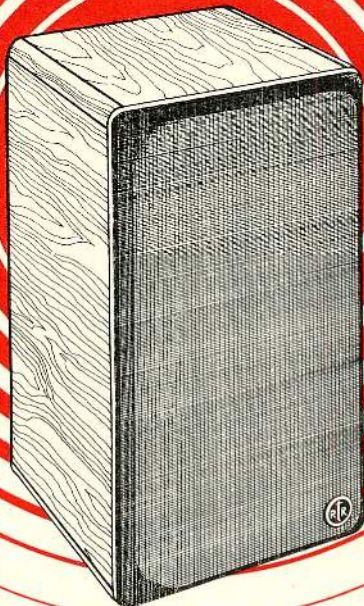
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SHAKTI AND MCLAUGHLIN: *creative intelligence, power, and beauty*

er (piano); Jack Kuncel (banjo); Wayne Jones (drums). *Wild Women Don't Have the Blues; Ticket Agent, Ease Your Window Down; My Heart; Put It Right Here; Gimme a Pigfoot; Too Busy; Messin' Around;* and five others. JAZZOLGY GHB-88 \$6.98.

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

Carol Leigh has been singing hot jazz for some years, mostly around the San Francisco area, but this is her first recording. She has a good attack, obviously enjoys herself, likes the music she sings, and knows how to phrase.

Nearly half the songs on this album are from the Bessie Smith repertoire, and, while Miss Leigh does not imitate Smith, she owes some tonal inflections to the incomparable Bessie. The task in essaying songs that a titanic artist like Bessie Smith has made her own is to overcome the bias of a listener familiar with treating them as ordinary songs, but you can't avoid feeling uncomfortable when another singer, with whatever innocent goodwill, takes on Bessie's songs in *Bessie's mode*. It seems that somehow a patent is being infringed upon—especially in such a song as *At the Christmas Ball*, which is so shatteringly Smith's.

But once Miss Leigh moves into non-sacrosanct territory, her own delightful sass and sense of adventure come through. The title track was written by Ida Cox, a blues singer of the Twenties, and Miss Leigh does just fine with it. *My Kitchen Man* is one of the many hilarious semi-pornographic ditties from the Twenties and Thirties written by both white and black composers (Harold Arlen and Fats Waller, among others) for Harlem night-club floor shows and recording dates. It is a prize sample of erotic comedy and receives a cheerfully bawdy treatment on the album.

But the two most outstanding tracks feature the superb support Miss Leigh has from the Original Salty Dogs Jazz Band, in particular cornetist Lew Green and trombonist Tom Bartlett. *Too Busy* shows Green playing a subtle but prodding muted obbligato fill behind Miss Leigh's vocal, after which he takes a semi-open horn solo that must be as good as anyone—repeat, *anyone*—ever recorded. On *Cake Walkin' Babies*, Green and trombonist Bartlett, who plays with a delightful ferocity, take a "chase" chorus (alternating solos every eight bars) that will make you whoop.

All in all, the album proves that hot jazz dished up with bold poetics and proud spunk still works, and always has. A good time is timeless. J.V.

SHAKTI/JOHN MCLAUGHLIN: *A Handful of Beauty*. Shakti (instrumentals); John McLaughlin (guitar). *Two Sisters; La Danse du Bonheur; Lady L; Kriti;* and two others. COLUMBIA PC-34372 \$6.98, ® PCA-34372 \$6.98, © PCT-34372 \$6.98.

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

In 1975, English-born guitarist John McLaughlin dropped both his adopted name, Mahavishnu, and Sri Chinmoy, the guru who gave it to him. All that was a silly fad, anyway. What McLaughlin didn't shed was his fondness for Indian music, and there's nothing silly about that. Shakti is a sort of raga-rock group (more raga than rock), and McLaughlin appears to be its leader, but—though his presence is never in doubt—he is careful not to dominate it. The music is very pleasing to the ears and often downright exciting, with much emphasis on rhythm, but perhaps the definition of "shakti," given on the back of this and the group's previous album, best sums up what's inside: "creative intelligence, power and beauty." McLaughlin has come a long way from his late-Fifties days with Big Pete Deuchar and His Professors of Ragtime. C.A.

### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

PHIL WOODS: *The Phil Woods Six "Live" from the Showboat*. Phil Woods (soprano and alto saxophones); instrumental accompaniment. *Rain Danse; Cheek to Cheek; Little Niles; Superwoman (Where Were You When I Needed You);* and nine others. RCA BGL2-2202 two discs \$13.98, ® BGS2-2202 \$14.98, © BGK2-2202 \$14.98.

Performance: **Sensational**  
Recording: **Very good remote**

Except for his plugged-in quartet album on the Testament label, a 1973 effort that had him playing an alto saxophone robbed of its salient characteristics, I have always admired Phil Woods' recordings. But this album—a live date from a club in Silver Springs, Maryland—is so fine that I find myself hard put to describe it adequately. I won't even try, but rest assured that it contains more than an hour and fifty minutes of solid jazz performed by six spirited, inventive souls whose leader was awarded two Grammys last year and now deserves a matching pair. The program ranges from Harold Arlen and Irving Berlin to Randy Weston and Stevie Wonder, with a good measure of original material that is bound to find its way into the repertoires of other artists. It is all splendidly executed. C.A.

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# CLASSICAL DISCS AND TAPES

Reviewed by RICHARD FREED • DAVID HALL • GEORGE JELLINEK • PAUL KRESH  
STODDARD LINCOLN • ERIC SALZMAN

**ARRIAGA: *Los Esclavos Felices, Overture*** (see Best of the Month, page 90)

## RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**J. S. BACH: *Partita No. 1, in B-flat Major (BWV 825); Partita No. 2, in C Minor (BWV 826)***. Igor Kipnis (harpsichord). ANGEL S-36097 \$7.98.

Performance: **Superb**  
Recording: **Rich**

Igor Kipnis is certainly one of the finest harpsichordists on the scene. Today, at the height of his powers, his playing is mature and poised. His rhythm is flexible, his technique brilliant but never used to show off, and his concepts of pacing and phrasing spacious. It is a pleasure to hear him tackle these familiar partitas.

Although Kipnis uses a modern instrument by Rutkowski and Robinette that is complete with pedals and a sixteen-foot stop, his registration is, for the most part, simple and tasteful. This is especially true in his broadly conceived reading of the B-flat Partita, in which he eschews the sixteen-foot stop and registers according to the musical structure. While his interpretation of the C Minor Partita is equally strong, I wish he had not resorted to the sixteen-foot stop in the Sarabande and Capriccio. The result is muddy, and it is hard to hear the inner complexities of the music.

The application of added ornaments and di-

visions to repeated passages is undoubtedly part of the Baroque performance tradition, but I question this usage in the music of Bach, where the written-out ornamentation is already so profuse. Kipnis, however, is a firm believer in adding his own fancies, and he does so here with a bold hand. These embellishments may come as something of a surprise in such familiar music, but they are done with taste and ingenuity and certainly give one pause for thought. S.L.

**J. S. BACH: *Partita No. 1, in B-flat Major (BWV 825); Partita No. 2, in C Minor (BWV 826); Partita No. 3, in A Minor (BWV 827)***. Alexis Weissenberg (piano). CONNOISSEUR SOCIETY CS 2117 \$7.98.

**J. S. BACH: *Partita No. 4, in D Major (BWV 828); Partita No. 7, in B Minor ("Overture in the French Manner," BWV 831)***. Alexis Weissenberg (piano). CONNOISSEUR SOCIETY CS 2118 \$7.98.

Performance: **Energetic**  
Recording: **Hard**

The revival of the harpsichord has put the pianist who plays Bach in an awkward position. If he plays the music at all, the purists condemn him for using the wrong instrument. If he tries to ape the harpsichord on his piano, the results are usually disastrous and non-purists doubt his pianism. Alexis Weissenberg is undaunted by any of this. He approaches the piano for what it is and interprets Bach as though the music were written for the piano. His tone is clear and crisp, his rhythmic approach vital, and the result, for the most part, is excellent.

But perhaps because he is armed with a flawless technique, Weissenberg frequently succumbs to the temptation to play some of the fast movements quicker than the ear can absorb them. In the A Minor Partita, for example, he takes the fantasia so briskly that it is impossible to hear the counterpoint, and the scherzo loses all its humor and bounce in a whirl of notes. In order to keep the music going (as if Bach needed help on this point) he rushes through cadence points, completely disrupting the harmonic rhythm.

The lyrical playing, though, is well controlled, and Weissenberg avoids "terraced" dynamics, replacing them with pianistically idiomatic long crescendos and diminuendos. Some of the crescendos, however, build up to rather more than the music will bear, as in the allemande of the Fourth Partita. And in the one place where terraced dynamics are essential, the *Echo* of the Overture in the French Manner, they are avoided. The music thus loses its point.

Weissenberg has learned his ornaments well even if a few do anticipate the beat. He should, however, also learn the Baroque conventions of double-dotting and *when* to dot. This would add more strength to the openings of the Second and Fourth Partitas and, especially, to the Overture in the French Manner. S.L.

**BRUCH: *Violin Concerto No. 2, in D Minor, Op. 44; Scottish Fantasy, Op. 46***. Itzhak Perlman (violin); New Philharmonia Orchestra, Jesús López-Cobos cond. ANGEL □ S-37210 \$7.98.

Performance: **Fine**  
Recording: **A little mushy**

Itzhak Perlman gives a great deal of pleasure in everything he does, but he is limited here by the material: Bruch's Second Concerto, even in the best of hands, is a bit of a loser. Naturally, Bruch wanted to repeat the success of his beautiful G Minor Concerto; he made all the same gestures in No. 2, and the opening sounds promising, but beyond that his inspiration failed him. There is not a single memorable tune in the piece, and not much in the way of contrast of mood, either, since there is no honest-to-goodness fast movement. Perlman makes a somewhat stronger case for the work than Menuhin does (Angel S-36920), but even Heifetz's version (RCA □ LM-1931) isn't fully convincing, and one feels he and Perlman both do as much as can be done for the piece. Perlman's customary elegance and warmth of heart are brought to bear effectively on behalf of the more appealing Scottish Fantasy, but in this work I do find his performance a mite underanimated; Grumiaux remains my choice (Philips 6500.780,

### Explanation of symbols:

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

with the G Minor Concerto). Jesús López-Cobos conducts tidy and tasteful accompaniments, but the orchestra does not fare as well as Perlman's velvet-toned violin in the rather mushy sonics. R.F.

**CHABRIER:** *Gwendoline, Overture; España; Fête Polonaise; Joyeuse Marche; Danse Slave; Habanera; Suite Pastorale.* Orchestra of Radio Luxembourg, Louis de Froment cond. **TURNABOUT** □ QTV-S 34671 \$3.98.

Performance: **Bright but hard-driving**  
Recording: **On the brassy side**

Alexis Emmanuel Chabrier wrote all those tuneful works we constantly hear on the radio in the last twelve years of his life. In 1879 he took a leave of absence from his post in the French Ministry of the Interior to attend a performance of *Tristan und Isolde* in Munich, and shortly afterward he resigned altogether. Then, up to the time of his early death in 1894, he devoted himself to admiring Wagner and writing music of his own, which at its best is not at all Teutonic but as light as a good French mousse. His most popular piece, *España*, perhaps encouraged other French composers to turn to Spanish themes. His ambitious operas are pretty well forgotten today, but the overture to *Gwendoline* and the *Fête Polonaise* and *Danse Slave* from *Le Roi Malgré Lui* remain ingratiating listening experiences. *The Joyeuse Marche* can still lift leaden spirits, his *Habanera* may have prompted Ravel's, and the pretty *Suite Pastorale* is believed to have inspired Debussy to compose his own charming *Petite Suite*.

Individually, every one of these works has its allure, but hearing *all* of Chabrier's orchestral pieces played one after another, as they are here, is a bit numbing after a while. Moreover, the playing by the Orchestra of Radio Luxembourg under Louis de Froment is bright but rather hard-driving and relentless, and the recorded quadraphonic sound is somewhat on the harsh side. It's all here, all right, but it's better for the spirits if played in small doses. P.K.

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**CHOPIN:** *Andante Spianato and Grande Polonaise Brillante in E-flat Major, Op. 22; Mazurka in G Minor, Op. 24, No. 1; Mazurka in C Major, Op. 24, No. 2; Mazurka in B-flat Minor, Op. 24, No. 4; Etude in F Major, Op. 10, No. 8; Prelude in A-flat Major, Op. 28, No. 17; Prelude in F Minor, Op. 28, No. 18; Waltz in A-flat Major, Op. 34, No. 1; Scherzo in E Major, Op. 54.* Krystian Zimerman (piano). **DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON** 2530 826 \$7.98.

Performance: **Stimulating**  
Recording: **Close and bright**

This is the first recording to reach us from the much-discussed young Polish pianist who won the Chopin Competition in Warsaw in October 1975 at the age of eighteen (the same age Pollini was when he won the same competition fifteen years earlier). The performances were in fact recorded during that event, before an extremely well-behaved audience. It is easy to understand why Zimerman has caused so much excitement: he is not only a marvelous pianist but a genuine artist—sensitive, serious, and evidently as well equipped in matters of taste as in dexterity. He uses the pedal hardly at all; his crisp articulation and general straightforwardness bring a stimulating freshness to the music, the for-

mer quality in particular making at least this listener think of Glenn Gould's Bach.

It was just a year ago that RCA released the extraordinary Chopin recital by Emanuel Ax that includes the two big pieces that open and close Zimerman's program (ARL1-1569, with the Nocturne, Op. 62, No. 1, and *Polonaise-Fantaisie*, Op. 61, making up the balance). The Ax disc struck me then as "simply one of the most beautiful records of anything ever offered to the public," and it still does. Ax brings no less freshness to the music than Zimerman, but in place of the latter's more or less analytical approach he gives us the delicate shadings and poetic phrasing that are the essence of the Chopin magic. And RCA's somewhat softer sonic focus also seems more apt to this music than Deutsche Grammophon's very bright and close sonics.

If Ax's is one of the piano records I would be most reluctant to part with, the Zimerman is one I would very much want to keep, too. In its own right it is enormously enjoyable, and perhaps more exciting still as the first entry in the discography of an obviously major

performing artist who is even now not yet twenty-one. R.F.

**COWELL:** *Piano Music. The Voice of Lir; Advertisement; Anger Dance; Amiable Conversation; The Tide of Manaunau; Aeolian Harp; The Hero Sun; Tiger; Six Ings; Dynamic Motion; The Harp of Life; What's This?; Sinister Resonance; Fabric; Antinomy; The Trumpet of Angus Og; The Banshee; Maestoso; The Lilt of the Reel.* Doris Hays (piano). **FINNADAR** SR 9016 \$6.98, ® TP-9016 \$7.97, © CS-9016 \$7.97.

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

Those who have never heard Henry Cowell's piano music but have heard *about* it—about tone clusters and passages played with the fist, palm, or forearm—may well expect it to consist of onslaughts of percussive attacks and jumbled harmonic clashes. But there is a great deal more to these pieces in terms of both expressiveness and variety. There are

(Continued on page 128)

## Verdi's Wonderful Calling Cards



mood setters in the great old magic-of-the-theater tradition. It is a little unnerving, then, to listen to these pieces one after another: an introduction to a prelude to an introduction to a prelude. The *preludio* to *Un Ballo in Maschera* seems to require being followed by *Un Ballo in Maschera*, not the overture to *La Forza del Destino*. (DG's claim that these are *all* the Verdi preludes and overtures is questionable. Verdi wrote twenty-seven operas, of which only the last two, I believe, entirely dispense with introductions; but only nineteen works are represented on this album. Of course, after complaining that there are too many of these works to absorb in succession, it hardly seems sporting of me to cavil at a few omissions.)

Although many of these orchestral introductions seem incomplete without the operas meant to follow them, they are full of the most genial music, and it is surprising that so few of them have gained any kind of place in the concert hall. (*Un Giorno di Regno*, for example, may be a failure as an opera, but its overture is a pops concert natural.) Their very "crudeness"—great tunes in organ-grinder orchestrations alternating with thud-and-blunder outbursts—is appealing today; it seems somehow real, honest, and "natural." Listening to these pieces you'll laugh, you'll cry, you'll stand up and cheer—and if anybody challenges you just tell them that Karajan, the Berlin Philharmonic, and Deutsche Grammophon say it's okay. If the countrymen of Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms give their seal of approval to these goings on, who are we to argue? *Viva Verdi!* Or perhaps I should say *Hoch lebe Verdi!*  
—Eric Salzman

**VERDI: Overtures and Preludes.** Berlin Philharmonic, Herbert von Karajan cond. **DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON** 2707 090 two discs \$15.96, © 3370 010 \$15.96.



RCA Records

Emanuel Ax and the Cleveland Quartet (left to right, Donald Weilerstein, Peter Salaff, Martha Strongin Katz, Paul Katz)

## The A Major Quintet of Dvořák: Two Recordings

Rudolf Firkusny and the Juilliard Quartet (left to right, Joel Krosnick, Earl Carlyss, Sam Rhodes, Bob Mann)



Columbia Records

**R**UDOLF FIRKUSNY, the outstanding champion of Czech piano music on the international circuit, recently made his third recording of Dvořák's relatively unfamiliar Piano Concerto and his second of Smetana's *Czech Dances*, but he has only now gotten around to making his first of Dvořák's well-loved Piano Quintet, with the Juilliard Quartet on Columbia. At the same time, young Emanuel Ax, who seems destined to enjoy the same pre-eminence among pianists of his generation as Josef Hofmann did in his, has chosen the Dvořák quintet for his first ensemble recording, with the Cleveland Quartet on RCA. The quintet is not only lovable, it is possibly the finest of all Dvořák's chamber works, and in terms of fusing pianistic elements with those peculiar to the string quartet it is probably the most successful of all the big nineteenth-century works for this combination of instruments. While it would be preposterous to regard any performance of such a work as "definitive," both these new recordings seem clearly to supersede all those that have come before them.

Both performances pulse with affection and authority that call attention to nothing but the

music itself. Firkusny and his associates focus more on the work's straightforwardness and drive, whereas Ax and his colleagues stress its intensity and expressiveness. The need for the latter team's taking the exposition repeat in the first movement might be disputed; Dvořák is said to have written in first-movement repeats for the sake of form, never intending that they actually be taken. But this one, like that in the *New World Symphony*, might be considered to give the movement a better balance. Without the repeat, Columbia is able to provide space on the Firkusny/Juilliard disc for Dvořák's *Bagatelles*—endearing pieces from the same period as the first book of *Slavonic Dances*, whose appeal rests on their ingratiating tunes (one of them from a folk song) and Dvořákian warmth of heart at its warmest. The sound of the harmonium Firkusny plays is not quite as pleasing as that of Miroslav Kampelshheimer's instrument in his recording with members of the Vlach Quartet (on Supraphon SUAST-50463), but I can't imagine anyone's failing to respond to this performance nonetheless.

**T**HE sound of Columbia's recording is in general less attractive than RCA's warm, natural sonics, which put a lovely bloom on the strings for what may well be the finest thing the Cleveland Quartet has yet given us—simply gorgeous playing that is totally integrated, within the foursome and with the pianist, at every point. Columbia's somewhat dry and fierce sound tends to make the Juilliard players sound harsh and wiry in spots, and the prominence given to the piano further suggests that they were allowing themselves to be pulled along by Firkusny's commanding authority. In contrast, the Clevelanders seem to have really absorbed the work with Ax and to "breathe" it with him. How much the sound quality of the two discs has to do with these impressions is difficult to determine. The richness of RCA's recording may enhance the expansiveness of the Ax/Cleveland performance; it certainly helps make the most of the lovely viola and cello musings under the piano in the middle of the final movement and the lambent poetry of the *Dumka*.

**O**NE man's lilt, of course, is another's over-inflection. But I don't think anyone will find the radiant Ax/Cleveland version excessive or the noble Firkusny/Juilliard reading too austere. The RCA release has the advantages of superior sound and a more thoroughly integrated collaboration by the performers, while Columbia's is distinguished by Firkusny's compelling interpretation and offers an additional work (as well as exceptionally informative notes by Phillip Ramey). The differences between the two versions may even persuade listeners who love the quintet that they have to have both; either is the sort of recording to turn a listener into a lover. —Richard Freed

**DVOŘÁK: Quintet in A Major for Piano and Strings, Op. 81.** Emanuel Ax (piano); Cleveland Quartet. RCA ARL1-2240 \$7.98.

**DVOŘÁK: Quintet in A Major for Piano and Strings, Op. 81; Five Bagatelles for Two Violins, Cello, and Harmonium, Op. 47.** Rudolf Firkusny (piano, harmonium); Juilliard Quartet. COLUMBIA M-34515 \$6.98.



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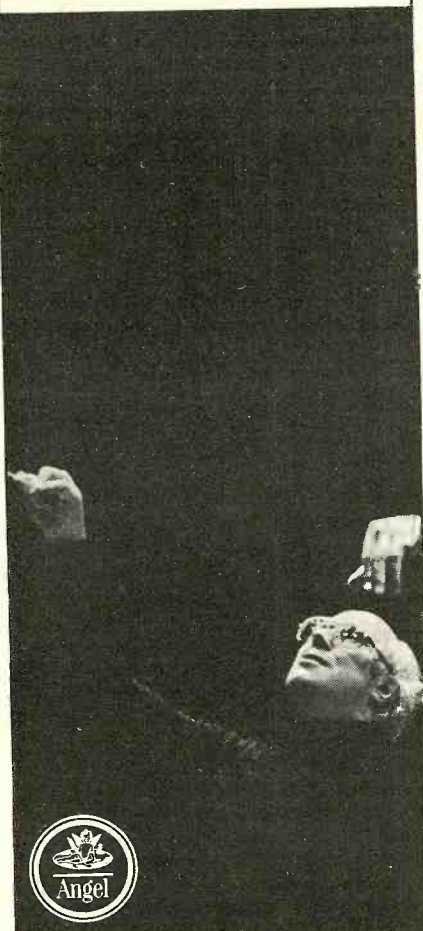
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wit, fantasy, and always a sense of unusual devices being used for a musical or expressive purpose rather than simply for shock effect (not that these sounds are likely to be at all shocking by now). The strumming of the piano wires in *Aeolian Harp* is not hokey but agreeably evocative; the set of *Six Ings* ("Floating," "Frisking," "Fleeting," "Scooting," "Waiting," "Seething") is downright enchanting without being cute. Cowell himself recorded his piano music (CRI © 109, Folkways © 3349), and these recordings of course have a unique authority, yet it is gratifying to have an up-to-date stereo collection, not only for the better sound but also for the assurance thus given that the material will continue in the active repertoire of pianists other than the late composer. Doris Hays has in fact made a specialty of performing Cowell's music, and her own comfortable



DORIS HAYS  
A comfortable authority in Cowell's music

authority is evident on both sides of this well-filled disc and in her written comments on the respective pieces. The piano sound is quite realistic, and it must have been a challenge to the engineers in such items as *The Banshee*, whose effects would fool almost anyone into assuming the piece to be an electronic tape confection. R.F.

**DEBUSSY: Images, Books I and II; Estampes; L'Isle Joyeuse; Masques.** Jean-Philippe Collard (piano). CONNOISSEUR SOCIETY □ CSQ 2136 \$7.98.

Performance: **Good to superb**  
Recording: **Very good**

The nine pieces that make up the two books of *Images* and the one of *Estampes*, plus *L'Isle Joyeuse* and *Masques*—all composed between 1903 and 1907—are among Debussy's most imaginative, innovative, and virtuosic keyboard masterpieces. Jean-Philippe Collard strikes a nice balance between the coloristic and the precisionist approach to Debussy and has also had the benefit of some of Pathé-Marconi's finest piano recording. For me the most successful readings here are of *Reflets dans l'Eau* and the *Hommage à Rameau*, to which the young pianist brings a most affecting stately grandeur. Remarkable, too, is the brilliance and volatility he brings to

*Mouvement* and the flashing *Poissons d'Or*. Slightly less successful to my ear is his *Masques*, which seems lacking in something of its mercurial essence, while the later pages of *L'Isle Joyeuse*—the most virtuosic of all Debussy's piano music—seem somewhat labored, at least when heard alongside the incredibly dazzling Horowitz performance on Columbia M2S-757. This may possibly stem from the very wide range of dynamics Collard employs at the upper end, which makes precise and even articulation of Debussy's repeated-note figures a near impossibility—unless one is a Horowitz. D.H.

**DEBUSSY: Prélude à l'Après-midi d'un Faune; La Mer** (see RAVEL)

**RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT**

**DOWLAND: Lachrimae Pavans; M. John Langton's Pavan; M. Nicholas Gryffith, His Galiard; Sir John Souch, His Galiard; Semper Dowland, Semper Dolens; M. Giles Hobies Galiard; The King of Denmark's Galiard; Sir Henry Umpton's Funerall; M. Henry Noel, His Galiard; The Earl of Essex Galiard; M. Buc tons Galiard; M. George Whitehead, His Almand; Captaine Digorie Piper, His Galiard; M. Thomas Collier, His Galiard; Mrs. Nichols Almand.** Consort of Musicke, Anthony Rooley cond. L'OISEAU-LYRE DSLO 517 \$7.98.

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

Perhaps one of the most exquisite expanses of musical dolor ever created is Dowland's set of seven *Lachrimae Pavans*. The performance here of this miraculous work by the Consort of Musicke, five viols and a lute, does full justice to the music. The sound is unearthly, the pacing beautifully poised, and the pitch impeccable. I doubt that we will ever get a more fully satisfying rendering than this.

Although the other dances are well done and offer slightly more spritely fare, I cannot help but wish that the Consort would lay aside, for a time, the composer's motto, "*Semper Dowland, Semper Dolens*," and play these pieces for their dance quality. But, then again, perhaps Dowland never danced. S.L.

**DVOŘÁK: Symphony No. 7, in D Minor, Op. 70.** London Philharmonic Orchestra, Carlo Maria Giulini cond. ANGEL □ S-37270 \$7.98.

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

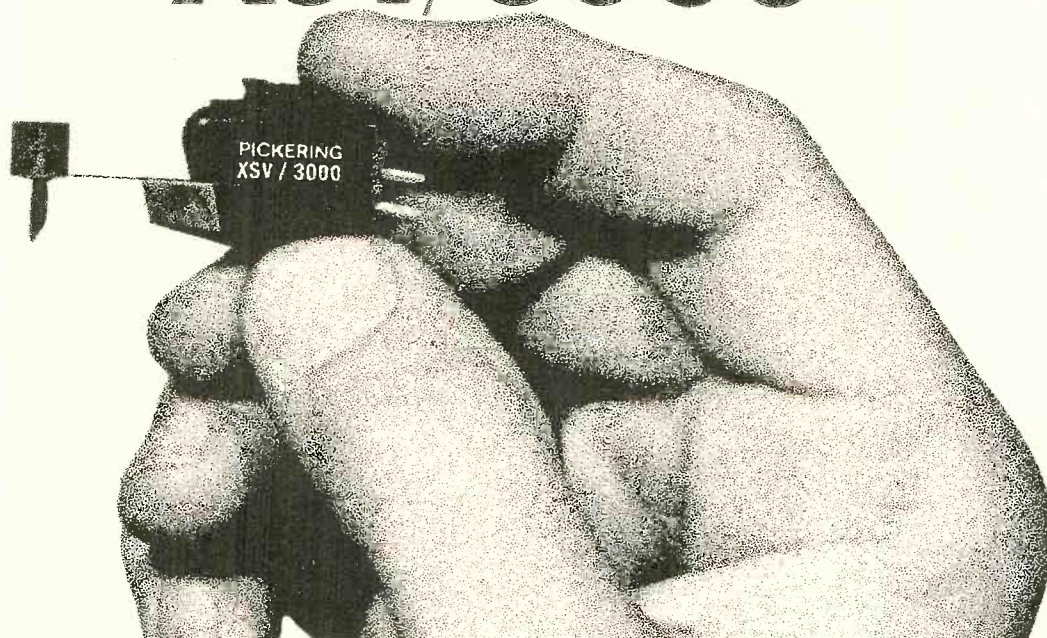
**RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT**

**DVOŘÁK: Symphony No. 7, in D Minor, Op. 70.** Concertgebouw Orchestra, Amsterdam, Colin Davis cond. PHILIPS 9500.132 \$7.98, © 7300.535 \$7.95.

Performance: **Ablaze**  
Recording: **Vivid**

Giulini's recording of the *New World* (Sera phim S-60045, with the *Carnaval Overture*) is one of the better ones, though not on the very top level, and his new account of the Seventh calls for the same description. It is well molded, most handsomely played, and even aglow with warmth, but it strikes me as being too relaxed for so dramatic a work. The lyrical element, always abundant in Dvořák, is rather gratuitously emphasized at the expense of tension and bite. There are moments when this work should crackle and even snarl, but  
(Continued on page 132)

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Donnie Ray Albert (Porgy) and Clamma Dale (Bess)

## The Inexhaustible "Porgy and Bess"

**W**HAT a piece of work is *Porgy and Bess*! The plot is simple—man loves woman, man gets woman, man murders rival, man loses woman. The music is sometimes crude and elemental, but at the same time impassioned and inspired. It has leitmotives, arias, cantillations and cacophonies, street cries and spirituals, set pieces and storms and sunshine—in short, moods and weather of all kinds, both atmospheric and emotional. And from the moment that brief, headlong overture speeds us southward, like a fast train, to Catfish Row, how *prodigal* it all is! Any other composer might have been content to stop with Porgy's murder of Crown and the assertion of his manhood in the second scene of Act Two. Only George Gershwin would have gone on to give us *There's a Boat Dat's Leavin' Soon for New York* and that marvelous, moving finale, all of it germinating from a key passage in the first act: "When God made cripple/He mean him to be lonely."

When Sherwin M. Goldman and the Houston Grand Opera brought their production of *Porgy and Bess*, just about complete for the first time, to the Uris Theater on Broadway, it proved to be a revelation even for those who thought they knew Gershwin's masterpiece well. The "folk opera" turned out to be a great deal more substantial than most of us had ever realized. London Records had released its new recording of *Porgy and Bess* some months before the Houston company's Broadway run, and it too was a revelation (see Eric Salzman's review in April 1976 *STEREO REVIEW*). Even those well satisfied with the much older recording of the work by Lehman Engel for Columbia were persuaded that this new one, with the Cleveland Orchestra and Chorus and a skilled group of black soloists under Lorin Maazel's incandescent direction, was some kind of last word on the subject.

Not quite, for RCA has now presented us with another, and it is surely the best record-

ing *Porgy and Bess* has ever received. It is, of course, based on that fabulous Houston Grand Opera production but, since it is a recording, has been able to circumvent even its limitations. Complete? Producer Thomas Z. Shepard has brought in a children's chorus (eliminated on stage) for the *Good Morning, Sisters* number in the final scene and restored an edited portion in one of Crown's big numbers. And with a theater orchestra of only fifty, augmented by eight additional players and Dick Hyman at a deliberately mistuned piano for the Jasbo Brown solo, music director John DeMain, with the help of an ingenious engineering staff, has managed to get out of his enthusiastic forces a sound that belies their small numbers. I thought I would never hear the big hurricane scene more effectively performed than it was on the Columbia recording. Along came Maazel, and I was floored. But the storm scene on the new RCA set, a marvel unmatched, is even *more* frightening, *more* overwhelming.

As for the singing, Donnie Ray Albert makes a marvelous, mellifluous Porgy, and enough has perhaps already been written at-

*the best recording  
"Porgy and Bess"  
has ever received. . .*

tempting to chart the many excellences of Clamma Dale's memorable Bess. Suffice it to say that she lives up to all her notices, at once magnificently operatic and satisfactorily gutsy. If the orchestra sounds at times a bit more macho than Andrew Smith (Crown) does in the Kittiwah Island seduction scene,

the soloist nonetheless builds in power and ultimately takes command, especially in his big moment with the jazzy *Red-Headed Woman*. Larry Marshall is no match for Avon Long in the Columbia set, but his Sportin' Life does seem to grow on you. Wilma Shakesnider makes a magnificent Serena, almost bloodcurdlingly stricken in the mournful *My Man's Gone Now*. Carol Brice's Maria, the keeper of the cook-shop, is hilarious, especially with the character's best vaudeville moments left intact, and Alexander B. Smalls, as the fisherman Jake, contributes a sweet, true baritone.

As for the recording quality, the exaggerated dynamics, with drops in level to simulate distance, are disconcerting at times. By and large, however, the sound is splendid, stereo and discreet sound effects being used resourcefully to create the aural illusion of movement on stage.

**L**ONG before Andrew Young, it used to be fashionable to patronize *Porgy and Bess* as at worst a meanly racist, at best a naively Uncle Tom effort. Now, with the score so thoroughly and forcefully presented, the characters so humanly and persuasively drawn, such a dismissal seems merely petty. *Porgy* is not about politics but about people, and it makes you care as all great art does. It will be a long time before another stage or recorded production brings us as close to the essence of this moving work as this one does. —Paul Kresh

**GERSHWIN: *Porgy and Bess*.** Donnie Ray Albert (baritone), Porgy; Clamma Dale (soprano), Bess; Andrew Smith (baritone), Crown; Wilma Shakesnider (soprano), Serena; Betty Lane (soprano), Clara; Carol Brice (mezzo-soprano), Maria; Alexander B. Smalls (baritone), Jake; Larry Marshall (tenor), Sportin' Life; others. Dick Hyman (pianist); children's chorus; orchestra and ensemble, Houston Grand Opera, John DeMain cond. RCA ARL3-2109 three discs \$23.98.

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the opening of the scherzo as heard here affords a prime example of corners rounded off; the introduction to the slow movement loses some of its nobility in Giulini's drawn-out handling, and the big tune in the finale is similarly sentimentalized in the name of expressiveness. Those who think of the Seventh as genial and cloudless will enjoy this; those who regard it as a tragic or heroic work will find a good deal missing. The sound is quite good.

The only previous Dvořák recording by Colin Davis known to me is the very attractive pairing of the String Serenade and the Symphonic Variations, unfortunately dropped when Philips converted from domestic pressings to imports some years back. His Seventh is sterner stuff than Giulini's, blazing

with conviction from beginning to end; it augurs well indeed for the Dvořák cycle he is undertaking in Amsterdam. Freshness, spontaneity, and passion characterize Davis' approach, which is neither tradition-bound nor self-consciously "different." In the finale (which follows the scherzo here without a real pause) one is accustomed to more mellowness in the statement of the big tune, but Davis' relatively austere treatment is not a miscalculation: it is fully in keeping with his fresh, unfussy approach, which focuses on the work's considerable musical strengths and makes no attempt either to emphasize or to suppress the Bohemian coloring where Dvořák wrote it in. There are fierceness and tautness here (the qualities most missing in Giulini's version) that suit the work superbly,

and there is dignity without posturing. The slow movement's straightforward, uncontrived unfolding of its splendors brings to mind Igor Markevitch's aristocratic way with the Tchaikovsky symphonies—and how the cross-rhythms in the scherzo tell! The orchestra is at no point less than glorious, the sound always powerful and finely detailed. R.F.

**ELGAR: *The Dream of Gerontius, Op. 38.*** Robert Tear (tenor), Gerontius; Alfreda Hodgson (contralto), Angel; Benjamin Luxon (baritone), Priest, Angel of the Agony; Scottish National Orchestra and Chorus, Alexander Gibson cond. CRD 1026/7 two discs \$15.96 (from HNH Distributors, P.O. Box 222, Evanston, Ill. 60204).

Performance: **Compassionate**  
Recording: **Generally good**

Of Elgar's three massive oratorios, it is *The Kingdom* that commands my special admiration for both its musical eloquence and its human characterizations. The doctrinal aspects of *The Dream of Gerontius* I have always found a little hard to take, but in a performance as compassionately human as this one, with Robert Tear's strongly individual delineation of Gerontius, all previous reservations tend to go by the board. Further enhancing the whole is the superior vocalism—marked by a fascinatingly distinctive timbre—displayed by Alfreda Hodgson in the role of the Angel. The dialogue episode in Part Two, preceding the Chorus of Demons, is wonderfully effective. Benjamin Luxon seems a bit fierce in his handling of the Priest's role at the close of Part One, but he is deeply stirring in his "Jesu!" by that shuddering dread."

The choral and orchestral forces do splendidly by their all-important assignments, especially in the lyrical and atmospheric episodes. Least convincing is the Chorus of Demons—in part because of inherent musical weaknesses, but mainly because the recording at this point lacks an illusion of depth and an impact comparable to that achieved by EMI in the Adrian Boult readings of the other two oratorios (issued over here by Connoisseur Society). Sir Adrian's 1976 EMI recording of *Gerontius* still awaits U.S. release, so if superlative recorded sound is a major factor for you, I suggest holding off until comparisons can be made. D.H.

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**ELGAR: *Violin Concerto in B Minor, Op. 61.*** Pinchas Zukerman (violin); London Philharmonic Orchestra, Daniel Barenboim cond. COLUMBIA M-34517 \$6.98.

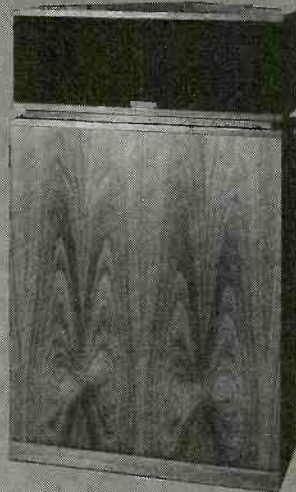
Performance: **Superb**  
Recording: **Very good**

The Elgar concerto occupies a position in the violin concerto literature that is comparable to that the Brahms B-flat Piano Concerto occupies in its repertoire: it is about the longest and toughest great work of its kind. Like Delius' violin concerto, Elgar's was fortunate in its early disc interpreters (but what a shame that Kreisler, to whom the work was dedicated, never essayed a recording!). Albert Sammons, one of the music's great exponents, did the first complete recording, in 1929, with Sir Henry Wood. Then there was the unforgettable 1932 set of discs with the teenage Yehudi Menuhin accompanied by the London Symphony Orchestra under Elgar himself. (Continued on page 134)

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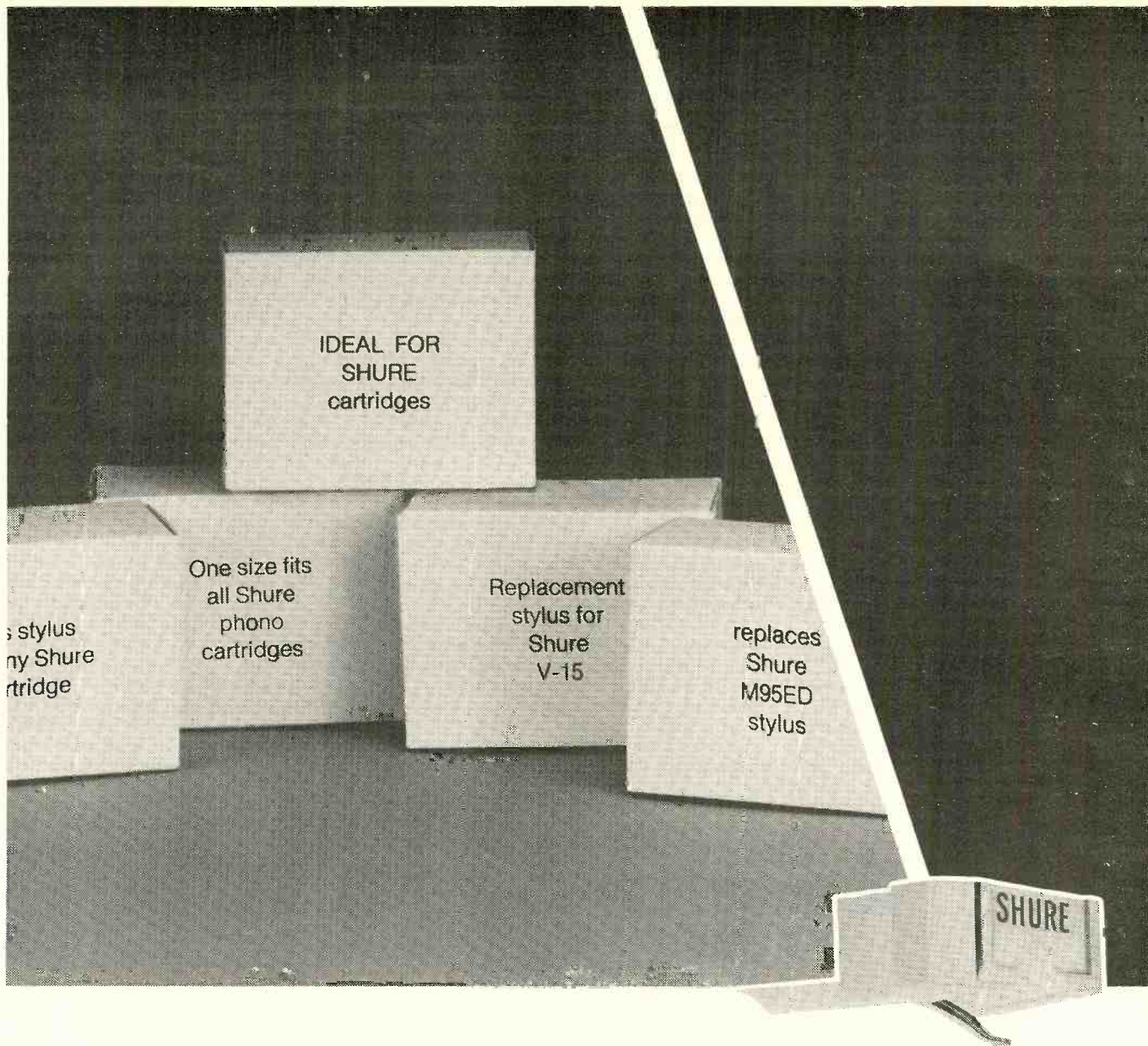
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Both these recordings have been transferred to LP format and reissued in England; the Menuhin is still available, and it makes his 1965 rerecording with Boult seem interpretively pale by comparison. The other post-1932 recorded performances of the concerto have not been very memorable either—until this latest by Pinchas Zukerman with Daniel Barenboim and the London Philharmonic.

This performance is equal in passionate commitment and authority to the Menuhin/Elgar collaboration, and it has the benefit of contemporary state-of-the-art recording. Zukerman has all of the intensity of the young Menuhin, together with beautifully thought-out refinements of phrasing and coloration not to be heard in the earlier readings and stunning virtuosity as well. For me, as always, the high point of the concerto is the exquisitely lovely slow movement, though it is hard not to be dazzled by the exuberance and fantastic elaboration of the finale. I have been critical of Barenboim's past recorded performances of Elgar because of a tendency to oversaturate the already rich textures and melodic content, but here he allows Elgar's symphony-dimensioned orchestral partnership to assert itself eloquently on its own terms. All in all, this is a great performance of the greatest of the late-Romantic violin concertos. *D.H.*

#### RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

**HANDEL: *Belshazzar*.** Robert Tear (tenor), Belshazzar; Felicity Palmer (soprano), Nitocris; Maureen Lehane (contralto), Cyrus; Paul Esswood (countertenor), Daniel; Peter van der Bilt (bass), Gobrias; Thomas Sun-

negaardh (tenor), Arioch; Staffan Sandlund (bass), Messenger. Stockholm Chamber Chorus; Concentus Musicus of Vienna, Nikolaus Harnoncourt cond. TELEFUNKEN 46.35326 four discs \$31.92.

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

Virtually unknown, *Belshazzar* is one of Handel's most dramatic oratorios. It was written during the composer's creative peak and contains some of his most stunning music. There is not a weak moment in it. Charles Jennens' libretto provides a wide variety of characters, each of whom is carefully drawn and fully developed by the composer in a series of passionate arias and powerful accompanied recitatives. *Belshazzar* is a drunken libertine attended by a chorus of swaggering Babylonians. His long-suffering mother, Nitocris, and the contemplative prophet Daniel are unable to divert him from his folly. This, however, is accomplished by the benevolent Cyrus and his militant followers. Caught in the middle are the Israelites, who are transformed from suffering slaves to thankful freemen. Although Handel presents these forces in his usual larger-than-life scale, he still sees his colorful cast as individuals and imbues them with deep human feelings.

The cast here is as strong as the music; again there is no weak link to worry about. In fact, the most striking aspect of the performance is the cast's individual portrayals and sense of dramatic projection. Honors, though, must be awarded to Felicity Palmer, whose voice is in the finest "pure" English tradition. Her legato is superb, and each of

her long, soaring phrases is beautifully molded. Her extended coloratura is clear and instrumental—thrilling to hear. Paul Esswood's voice is clearer and richer than ever, and the music almost seems to have been written specifically for him. Peter van der Bilt is particularly virile in his vengeful part and also turns in some splendid coloratura. Robert Tear and Maureen Lehane, in their attempts to be heroic, are inclined to force a bit and get into some vocal difficulties as a result, but their portrayals are so vivid that one can excuse this. Any contralto portraying a general or tenor characterizing a drunken despot might be tempted to overdo the part a bit.

The chorus is bright and clear and manages to make distinctions among the three different forces it represents. Of course Handel helps in this matter a great deal, but less sensitive singers would miss these distinctions.

The controversial element of this reading is the orchestra, especially the strings. Playing on old instruments, they emphasize the Harnoncourt mannerisms: each note, when time allows, is subjected to a quick *diminuendo* and shortened in value. First beats are heavily accented, and *détaché* is the password. Historically this may be accurate, but it is overdone. The constant fading notes make one queasy after a while, and the constant hitting of the main beats is crude and tiresome, especially when it results in an *unaccented* dissonance resolving to an *accented* consonance. The effect is disturbingly unmusical. Shortening note values this way, particularly in final chords which are not prepared for by a ritard, sounds like tape breaks. In rapid pieces, such

*(Continued on page 136)*

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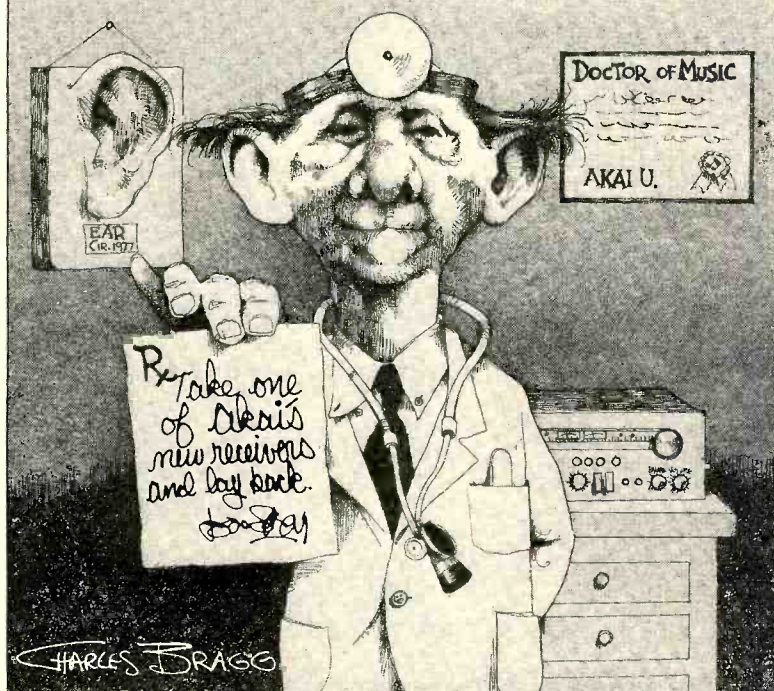
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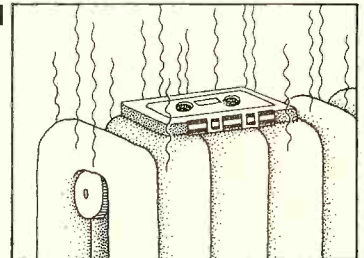
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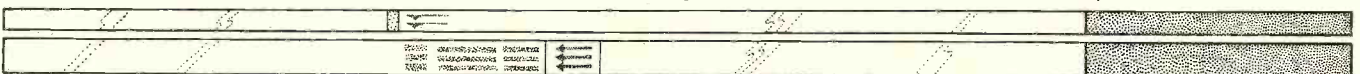
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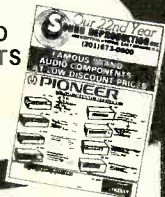
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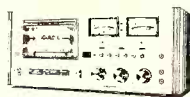
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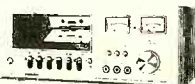
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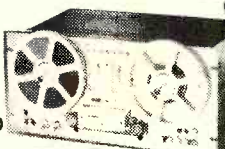
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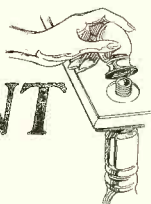
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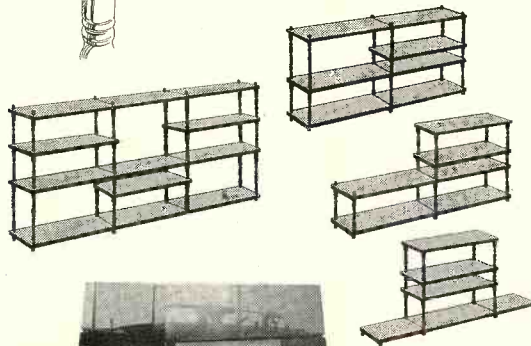


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as the *Postillion*, the effect of all this is brilliant, but in sustained passages the lack of line is frustrating.

On the other hand, the sound is fine and the blend with the voices striking. Harnoncourt can whip up his forces into blazing battle music or cut them down to the most exquisite calm. One wonders, though, why such an exultant final chorus is taken as a light scherzo. Certainly Handel's "forever"s and "hallelujah"s deserve a mightier fabric than they are given here. The vocal decorations are tasteful and the continuo realizations simple with none of the typical cleverness that so frequently mars today's performances. Harnoncourt fully understands how galling this can be when committed to a medium that can only repeat itself with deadly accuracy.

Despite the disturbing orchestral details, the work is of such stature and the performance of the vocal forces so admirably executed that the album is really a brilliant addition to the catalog. Because of *Belshazzar's* dramatic quality (Handel supplied the score with stage directions), it should delight the opera buff as well as the oratorio lover. S.L.

LISZT: *Transcriptions and Paraphrases* (see Collections—Gyorgy Cziffra)

MENDELSSOHN: *Symphony No. 1, in C Minor, Op. 11; Symphony No. 5, in D Minor, Op. 105 ("Reformation")*. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Christoph von Dohnányi cond. LONDON CS 7038 \$7.98.

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

Of the numbered symphonies that followed the dozen for strings that the young Mendelssohn composed for family gatherings, the *Reformation*, though numbered "5," is actually second in order of composition. The First Symphony, written when Mendelssohn was eighteen, is cut from much the same cloth as works by Weber and the young Schubert, but the mature composer's characteristic touch is far more in evidence throughout the middle movements of the so-called Fifth.

Christoph von Dohnányi and the Viennese players are at their best in these middle movements, as they are throughout the modestly scaled First Symphony. However, the more obviously dramatic and ceremonial end movements of the *Reformation* need a larger utterance than what emerges here—a need that is admirably fulfilled, to my way of thinking, by both the Bernstein and Karajan recordings.

D.H.

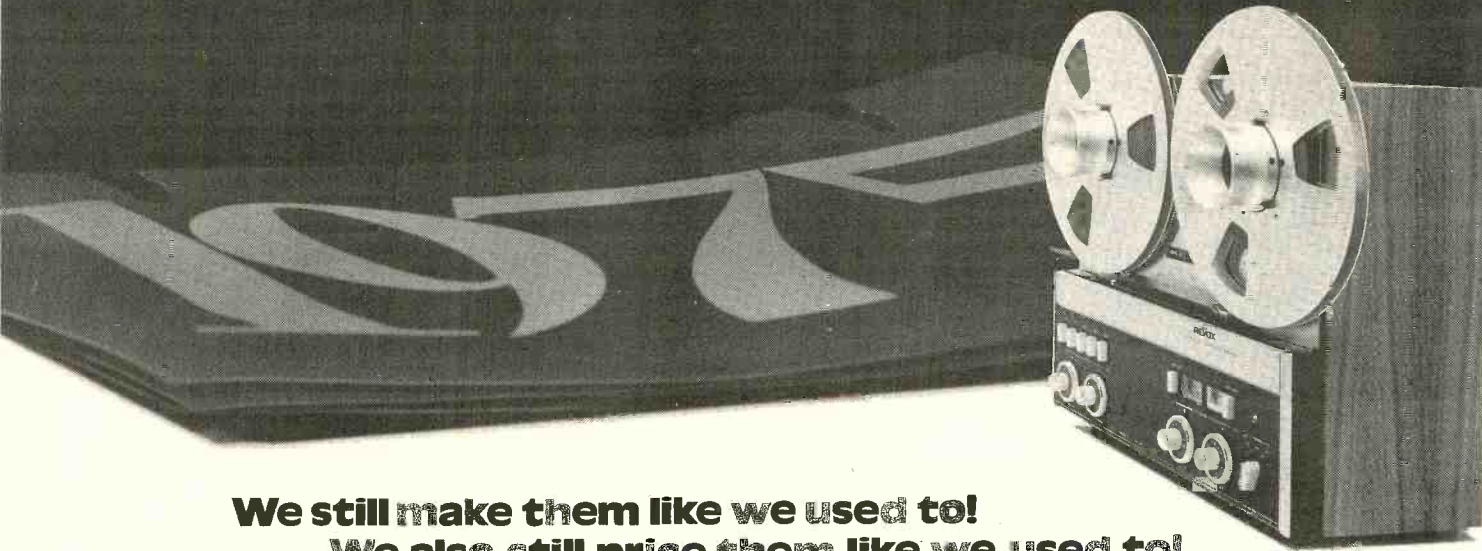
MONTSALVATGE: *Concerto Breve*. SURI-NACH: *Piano Concerto*. Alicia de Larrocha (piano); Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos cond. LONDON CS-6990 \$7.98.

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

It is understandable that prominent Spanish composers would write concertos for an outstanding Spanish pianist and that, said pianist being Alicia de Larrocha, her performances of them would be given the permanence of recording. The performances are not only authoritative but, of course, extremely brilliant, from soloist and orchestra alike, and the recorded sound is up to London/Decca's current standard. That much acknowledged, it must be said that the musical substance of

(Continued on page 138)

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these works is not great, and its lack is not compensated for by any particular charm. For all one's admiration of Xavier Montsalvatge's songs (and, for that matter, his solo pieces for piano) and of Carlos Surinach's skill in dealing with the flamenco idiom as well as the color possibilities of both piano and orchestra, it is hard to find anything in either of these concertos that invites rehearsing for its own sake or goes beyond the realm of the virtuoso vehicle pure and simple. In that context, it is the Surinach I find the more effective of the two—a sort of flamenco counterpart to the Armenian-flavored showpiece of Khachaturian. This is only for the most devoted Larrocha fans—but there are enough of them, surely, to make the enterprise worthwhile. R.F.

**RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT**

**OCKEGHEM: Ave Maria; Alma Redemptoris; Ma Maistresse; Missa Ma Maistresse; Au Travail Suis; Missa Au Travail Suis.** Pomerium Musices, Alexander Blachly cond. NONE-SUCH H-71336 \$3.96.

Performance: **Suave**  
 Recording: **Exquisite**

The Pomerium Musices is a fine vocal ensemble devoted to the performance of Renaissance music, especially that of Franco-Flemish composers. In order to capture the proper timbre and spirit, they have modeled themselves in size and make-up on the chapel choirs of the era. Their performances are usually *a cappella*, but when it is deemed necessary they draw on accompanying instruments such as the *vielle* and *lute*. Judging from this record, leader Alexander Blachly is not only a thorough musicologist who researches the performing editions and supplies the listener with complete documentation, comprehensive notes, and translations, he is also a fine musician. His skill is beautifully demonstrated in this finely chosen album of works by Johannes Ockeghem, a composer whose music is so intricate in its detail and so sinuous in its phraseology that it rarely comes off in performance. The Pomerium Musices brings it off. The timbres are well defined, the rhythms are precise, and the articulation is clear. Especially felicitous is Blachly's careful choice of tempos. The long wandering lines are never rushed, nor do they meander flabbily—as so often happens in performances of this music. Each line moves with certainty toward its goal, enabling one to ap-

preciate Ockeghem's exquisite sense of contour. The Pomerium Musices is a group to be watched; let us hope for more recordings of this difficult music from them. S.L.

**RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT**

**PAGANINI: Violin Concerto No. 1, in D Major.** Boris Belkin (violin); Israel Philharmonic, Zubin Mehta cond. LONDON CS 7019 \$7.98.

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

"The recording debut of the brilliant Israeli-Russian violinist," says the announcement on the jacket, and with that the information on the artist is exhausted. Belkin surely deserves more, for he makes this fiendishly difficult concerto seem almost easy. Aside from his impressive technique, he has the requisite boldness, a sweet tone, and a warmly expressive approach. Mehta's broadly paced yet incisive collaboration provides harmonious and effective support. In sum, for all the dazzle, this is a soundly *musical* performance.

The overgenerous dimensions of the first movement cause this concerto to be cut in most recorded versions. This one is an exception (as is the Tretyakov version on Melodiya 40015 and the Accardo account in the Deutsche Grammophon set of Paganini concertos). Belkin's performance can stand up to all competition. It should be said, however, that the superb abbreviated versions by Perlman, Rabin, Szeryng, and Grumiaux all come coupled with another major work, whereas the second side of the present disc offers only the concluding fifteen minutes of the Paganini First—not an impressive bargain at today's prices. G.J.

**RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT**

**PIERNE: Cydalise et le Chèvre-pied, Suites 1 and 2. Ramuntcho: Overture on Basque Themes.** Paris Opera Orchestra, Jean-Baptiste Mari cond. ANGEL □ S-37281 \$7.98.

Performance: **Splendid**  
 Recording: **Sumptuous**

Five years ago the Musical Heritage Society issued the first LP made up entirely of orchestral works of Gabriel Pierné. That disc (MHS 1489) included the late Jean Martinon's delightful Erato recording of the Suite No. 1 from *Cydalise*, the *Divertissements sur un thème Pastorale*, and (with Lily Laskine) the *Konzertstück* for harp and orchestra. Because of the duplication of an entire side, Jean-Baptiste Mari's disc must be regarded as not merely complementing Martinon's but clearly superseding it, and it makes one look forward most eagerly to the further recordings Angel is planning with this Algerian-born conductor. (Perhaps, at last, a D'Indy Second?) Mari's feeling for this material is deliciously apparent, he has the Paris Opera Orchestra sounding better than either of the other two big Parisian orchestras in their recent recordings, and the sound is the handsomest Angel has given us in some time. I would not want to forgo the *Divertissements* on Martinon's disc (the *Konzertstück* is available elsewhere), but the *Basque Overture* (from the incidental music Pierné wrote for Pierre Loti's *Ramuntcho* in 1908) is equally ingratiating, and the additional suite from *Cydalise* is especially welcome. The sound on the less costly MHS disc, while quite good, is by no means as sumptuous as

(Continued on page 140)

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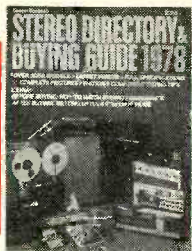
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R.F.

**RAVEL: Boléro. DEBUSSY: Prélude à l'Après-midi d'un Faune; La Mer.** Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Sir Georg Solti cond. LONDON CS 7033 \$7.98, © 5-7033 \$7.98.

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

Solti and his Chicago players here give as powerful and controlled a performance of Ravel's "fifteen minutes of orchestration without music" as we are ever likely to hear on records, and, thanks to the London engineers, it comes through with crystalline clarity. With the Debussy works the story is quite different, however. The *Faune* is exquisitely rendered, but without much magical poetic ambiance or sensuousness. Solti's *La Mer* is endowed with the same essentially symphonic attributes associated with Toscanini's reading, but it lacks the elemental power that made the Italian maestro's performances so memorable.  
D.H.

**RESPIGHI: The Birds; Three Botticelli Pictures.** Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, Neville Marriner cond. ANGEL □ S-37252 \$7.98.

Performance: **Beautifully balanced**  
Recording: **Superb**

One thinks of Ottorino Respighi as the designer of monumental works of Italian impressionism that somehow seem the musical equivalent of Mussolini architecture—the bombast of *Roman Festivals* and *The Pines of Rome*, even the heavy if muted harmonies of *The Fountains of Rome*. The fact is, though, that Respighi, who turned his back on the musical experimentation of his own time (1879-1936), was fascinated by the ancient forms devised by his forebears, and in scores such as *Ancient Airs and Dances* and *The Birds* was quite successful in celebrating the nobility of the old music while supplying it with striking orchestral colors from his own elaborate palette.

In *The Birds*, melodies from compositions of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by Rameau, Pasquini, and Jacques de Gallot, as well as from English sources, are marvelously orchestrated in a manner that borders on mimicry but never quite descends to it, despite hen-like cluckings on clarinets, feather-flutterings on high strings, and cuckoo-calls on the flute and oboe. The work is noble in its ancestry, exciting in its colorful orchestral robes. *Three Botticelli Pictures* is a musical celebration of Renaissance art in which the sense of form is strong, but the whole affair is too heavy for the subject matter it is supposed to suggest: the goddess in "The Birth of Venus" comes out of the sea heaving more like a Brunnhilde than her fragile self, "Spring" erupts like a musical Vesuvius, and "The Adoration of the Magi" is colored in like one of those old-fashioned chromolithographs hanging on the walls of bedrooms in Italian country inns. But the playing, with Neville Marriner trying to weave all the elements of the complex instrumentation into a tasteful tapestry, beautifully balances luxury of sound against lucidity and manages to keep the colors from running.  
P.K.

**RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT**

**SCHUBERT: Sonata in G Major, Op. 78 (D. 894).** Christian Zacharias (piano). SERAPHIM S-60285 \$4.98.

Performance: **Splendid**  
Recording: **Rich**

This is Christian Zacharias' debut recording, and it is the best performance of the Schubert

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If there has been any question about Vivaldi's ability to write passionate, brilliant vocal music, this album should dispel it at once. Written for a pupil, "La Giro," who favored "passionate, agitated music, rather than the languid," these Latin cantatas are in reality vivid operatic scenes written in the Venetian master's most brilliant concerto style. Filled with sequences, passage work, trills, and leaps that would challenge a virtuoso fiddler, this is terse, rugged music that hits at the gut with its dramatic utterance. Teresa Berganza, never distorting her velvety tone or losing control of her musical powers, tears through the contorted lines like a laser beam through steel. The English Chamber Orchestra offers powerful ritornellos and accompanies her with a strength and virility usually reserved for an instrumental soloist and rarely afforded a singer. The result is stunning.

—Stoddard Lincoln

**VIVALDI: Psalm 126, Nisi Dominus; Invicti Bellate; Longe Mala Umbrae Terrores.** Teresa Berganza (contralto); English Chamber Orchestra, Antoni Ros-Marbá cond. HNH Records HNH 4012 \$7.98 (from HNH Distributors, Ltd., P.O. Box 222, Evanston, Ill. 60204).

G Major Sonata I have ever heard. On the eminently reasonable grounds that those who like the sonata will like a lot of it, Zacharias makes no attempt to speed things up, but chooses deliberate tempos and maintains them, and he takes all available repeats. One is struck right at the outset by the young pian-

(Continued on page 142)

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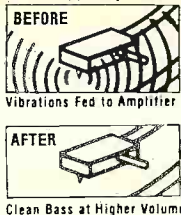
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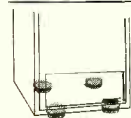
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WIENER TRIO: appropriate wit, charm, and feeling in Schubert

ist's courage in choosing such a broad tempo, and admiration grows as he resists time and again the temptations to score short-run points that would require breaking the basic pulse. He is by no means rhythmically inflexible, but that opening sets the pace at which things are going to happen, and that is the pace at which they do. Zacharias is obviously a man of considerable self-control.

There are those who will find this performance devoid of charm. I don't. The lyricism is all there, but the melodies emerge as part of the whole musical fabric; they are not underlined for your attention. By the same token, Schubert's harmonic divagations make their points without the pianist's insisting on them. All this produces a performance on the large scale, the kind that one returns to not for particularly wonderful moments, but for the whole, really rather awe-inspiring experience.

Zacharias has a lovely modulated tone and a dynamic range that seems well matched to the inner demands of the music. Some pianists could or would strike greater fortissimos at certain points, but those that Zacharias supplies are always sufficient to the occasion. Above all, though, one admires the pianist's faithfulness to the music, his uncanny control, and his steadfastness of purpose. I don't know anyone else today who plays Schubert this way. It is not the only possible way, but it certainly works, and it makes quite an imposing debut.

James Goodfriend

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Performance: **Charming**

Recording: **Clean**

Schubert wrote only two full-scale works for piano, violin, and cello—both, apparently, in 1827. Originally intended as *Hausmusik* for amateur performance by Schubert's friends, the E-flat Trio was one of his few works to receive a major public performance in his lifetime, and the B-flat is now probably the most popular piano trio in the concert literature. For the same combination of instruments Schubert also wrote (and they are included here) a so-called "Sonata" in B-flat, an attractive single movement from his student days, and the Nocturne in E-flat, a mysterious and lovely piece of unknown date.

This wonderful, seductive music is beautifully played by the Wiener Trio. The affinity of Viennese musicians for the works of their compatriot (among all the composers of the classical Viennese School only Schubert was a native) is well known, and these young players exhibit wit, charm, and warm feeling. Recommended.

E.S.

SCHUMANN: *Frauenliebe und Leben, Op. 42*; *Liederkreis, Op. 39*. Jessye Norman (soprano); Irwin Gage (piano). PHILIPS 9500.110 \$7.98.

Performance: **A bit heavy**

Recording: **Good**

Jessye Norman is blessed with a plush voice of great natural beauty. She uses it knowingly to achieve a wide range of dynamic and coloristic effects, and some of her recorded operatic appearances (*Euryanthe*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*) have attracted favorable comment.

I am less happy with the present recital. There is a rather operatic approach to her singing, which works in a song like *Waldeggespräch* (Op. 39) but decidedly does not in most of the songs of these two intimate cycles. In general, I find her manner cautious and not spontaneous enough. The tempos are invariably slow, and there are some minor but nonetheless damaging intonational lapses.

G.J.

SURINACH: *Piano Concerto* (see MONTSALVATGE)

SZYMANOWSKI: *Mazurkas, Opp. 50 and 62*. Carol Rosenberger (piano). DELOS DEL-25417 \$7.98.

Performance: **Stylish**

Recording: **Good**

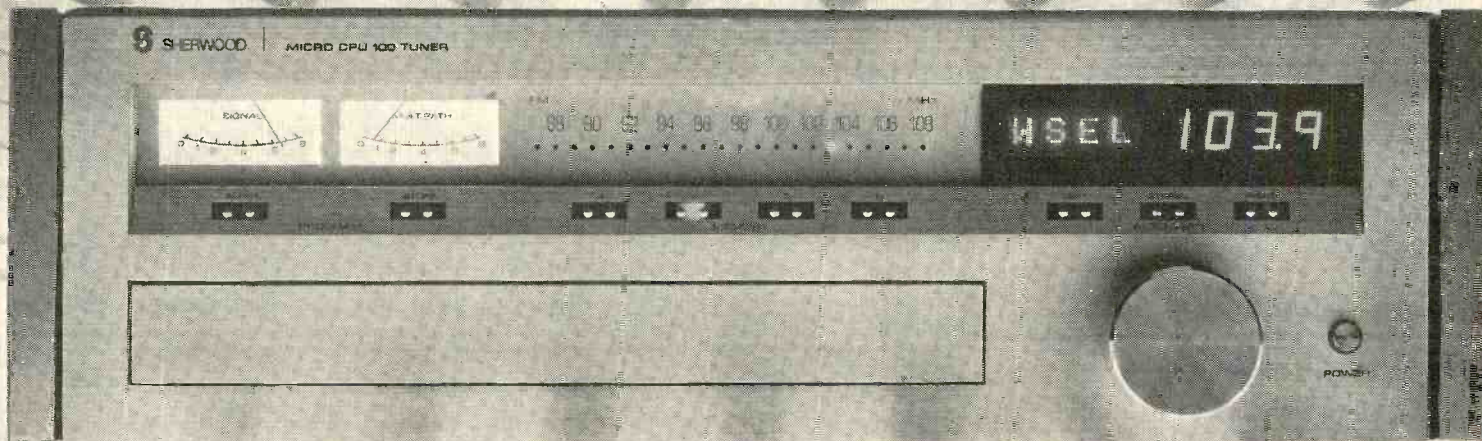
In many respects, Karol Szymanowski (1882-1937) accomplished for the music of his native Poland what his near-contemporaries Béla Bartók and Manuel de Falla did for that of Hungary and Spain. With Szymanowski, this happened late in his career, after he discovered the musical folklore of the Tatra country. The result, as exemplified by the Op. 50 and Op. 62 mazurkas, is far removed from Szymanowski's great compatriot Chopin, and decidedly closer to what might have been had Falla or Bartók been Polish. Like their folk-based creations, this music is fresh and bracing to the ear. Also evident in the mazurkas is Szymanowski's flair for harmonic coloration growing out of his earlier experience with Ori-

(Continued on page 146)



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## MISCELLANEOUS

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ental music and with the work of Debussy and Ravel.

We have Carol Rosenberger and the California-based Delos label to thank for this first integral recording of all the Szymanowski mazurkas. Compared with other performances of the mazurkas—Barbara Hesse-Bukowa's (Op. 50, on the Polish Muza label), Artur Rubinstejn's (Op. 50, Nos. 1-3, 6, on RCA), and the composer's own (Op. 50, No. 13, and Op. 62, No. 1, included in a commemorative album on Muza)—Rosenberger's approach is closer to that of Rubinstein. She leans toward the poetic-evocative, and carries everything off with great style. She also has the benefit of decidedly better engineering than she received for her Delos album of Szymanowski's *Masques* and etudes issued some years ago.

D.H.

**WAGNER: *The Flying Dutchman*** (see Best of the Month, page 89)

### COLLECTIONS

**GYORGY CZIFFRA: *The Young Cziffra—Paraphrases, Transcriptions, and Improvisations***. Rimsky-Korsakov: *Flight of the Bumblebee*. J. Strauss: *Tritsch-Tratsch Polka*; *Reminiscences of "Die Fledermaus"*; *On the Beautiful Blue Danube*. Brahms: *Hungarian Dance No. 5*. Rossini: *La Danza*; *William Tell Overture*. Cziffra: *Fantaisie Roumaine (After the Gypsy Style)*. Gyorgy Cziffra (piano). CONNOISSEUR SOCIETY CS 2131 \$7.98.

**GYORGY CZIFFRA: *Liszt Transcriptions and Paraphrases***. Wagner: *Tannhäuser Overture*. Verdi: *Rigoletto Paraphrase*. Tchaikovsky: *Eugene Onegin: Polonaise*. Auber: *La Muette de Portici: Grand Tarantelle Bravoure*. Mendelssohn: *A Midsummer Night's Dream: Wedding March*. Gyorgy Cziffra (piano). CONNOISSEUR SOCIETY CS 2130 \$7.98.

Performances: **Uninhibited**  
Recordings: **Variable**

This potpourri of pianistic fireworks from Gyorgy Cziffra derives from a variety of sessions done when he was a fire-eating young virtuoso recently escaped from the Soviet takeover of Budapest in 1956. In fact, a couple of the selections included in "The Young Cziffra" appear to have been recorded at the Hungarian Radio studios just prior to the 1956 uprising. Others were first recorded by EMI (and released over here on Angel 35610 and 35528); the Liszt transcriptions of Mendelssohn, Wagner, Verdi, and Auber appeared originally on the French Pathé-Marconi FALP 520. That some of the recordings betray their monophonic origins is a minor point in terms of the total context, which is totally uninhibited virtuosity, and purists be damned!

For myself, if I wanted a party-stopper in the piano fireworks department, I'd certainly pick Cziffra's *Flight of the Bumblebee*, which must be heard to be believed, with *La Danza* and the Auber/Liszt *Tarantelle* close runners-up. If one must exercise a measure of musical judgment, there is the *Eugene Onegin* Polonaise, which has real panache. Otherwise, both of these records are essentially party stuff, and highly enjoyable on that level. The sound varies from clangy (*Tannhäuser*) to excellent.

D.H.

**BENIAMINO GIGLI: *The Art of Beniamino Gigli, Album 2***. Donaudy: *O del Mio Amato Ben*. Mozart: *La Violetta* (K. 476). Meyer-

beer: *L'Africana: O Paradiso*. Thomas: *Mignon: Ah! non credevi tu*. Flotow: *Martha: M'appari*. Verdi: *Aida: Celeste Aida. I Lombardi: Qual voluttà trascorrere*. Attila: *Te sol quest'anima. Il Trovatore: Di quella pira*. Puccini: *La Bohème: Che gelida manina*. Tosca: *Recondita armonia; O dolci mani*. Leoncavallo: *Pagliacci: Prologue*. Beniamino Gigli (tenor); Elisabeth Rethberg (soprano) and Ezio Pinza (bass), in *I Lombardi* and *Attila*; various orchestras and conductors. SERAPHIM Ⓜ 60280 \$3.98.

Performance: **Exceptional**  
Recording: **Fairly good mono**

Gigli reissues are always welcome, and this sequence of recordings from 1922 to 1947 (arranged in a rather haphazard fashion) should be snapped up by vocal connoisseurs without delay, especially at Seraphim's low price. The



GYORGY CZIFFRA  
All out for virtuosity

trios from *I Lombardi* and *Attila*, appearing for the first time on a domestic LP, are alone worth the price many times over. Nowhere else can this music be heard with such vocal luxuriance.

For the rest, we have another display of the Gigli characteristics, both positive and negative. A lifetime of admiration for the former (warm and caressing timbre, expressiveness, and a superlative technique) has made it easy for me to accept the latter (overstressed emotions and occasionally excessive portamentos). When all is said and done, his is probably the most beautiful tenor sound ever captured by the phonograph, and that is hard to ignore.

A complaint, however, must be registered. This Seraphim reissue is a replica of HMV 1170, released in England a few years ago, but minus three selections. The loss would be justified if superior sound had resulted from the expanded groove spacing. Unfortunately, the reverse is true: the English disc has cleaner and more striking sonics.

G.J.

**NELLIE MELBA: *The London Recordings 1904-1926*** (see *The Opera File*, page 54)

**ADELINA PATTI: *Songs and Arias*** (see *The Opera File*, page 54)

**MAGGIE TEYTE: *L'Exquise*** (see *The Opera File*, page 54)

## STEREO REVIEW ADVERTISERS' INDEX SEPTEMBER 1977

READER SERVICE NO.	ADVERTISER	PAGE NUMBER
6	Acoustic Fiber Sound Systems	105
4	ADC Acoutrac	71
5	ADC Equalizer	102
	Advent Corporation	32, 33
	Akai America Ltd.	134
7	Angel Records	128
61	Audio Discount Warehouse Sales	138
8	Audio Technica U.S., Inc.	97
9	Avic Corporation	106
10	Ball Corporation	131
	BASF Systems Inc.	53
	Bose Corporation	11
2	British Industries Co.	37
	Brown & Williamson Kool	86
11	Cerwin-Vega	111
12	Crown International	10
13	Discount Music Club	12
14	Discount Sound	119
15	Discwasher	51
16	Discwasher	85
	Dixie Hi Fi	119
50	Dual	6, 7
21,99	Empire Scientific Corp.	2, 29
	ESS	23
17	Fisher Corp.	67
18	Ford Motor Company	99
19	Fuji Photo Film, USA	49
20	Hitachi	101
23	Illinois Audio	118
24	International Hi-Fi Distributors	112
25	J&R Music World	138
	Jensen Sound Laboratories	5
26	JVC America	31
	Kenwood Electronics	21
28	Kirsch	136
27	KLH	91
29	Klipsch & Associates	132
31	Koss Electronics	Cover 4
30	Marantz	42, 43, 44, 45
32,22	Marjen Company	100
	Maxell Corp. of America	121, 135
33	McIntosh Laboratory, Inc.	112
34	Memorex Corporation	27
35,36	National Dist. Tequila Sauza	109
	Netronics Research & Development	142
	Nikko Electronics of America	103
37	Olympus Corp. of America	115
38	Onkyo	123
39	Phase Linear	104
41	Pickering & Company	129
40	Radio Shack	139
	R.J. Reynolds Winston	41
42	RTR Speakers	122
43	S.A.E.	98
44	Sankyo Seiki (America)	55
45,46	Sansui Electronics Corp.	13, 15
100	H.H. Scott, Inc.	9
47	Sharp Electronics	141
62	Sherwood Electronic Labs, Inc.	143
48	Shure Brothers	133
49	Sony Corporation of America	92, 93
52	Soundcraftsmen	14
51	Sound Reproduction, Inc.	136
53	Speakerkit	118
54	Spectro Acoustics, Inc.	118
55	Stereo Corp. of America	119
65	Studer/Revox	137
	Sturpscope	Cover 3
59	TDK Electronics	127
56,57	Teac Corporation	24, 25, 107
58	Technics by Panasonic	47
	Time-Life Records	17, 19
60	Top Discount Audio	112
3	Toyota	95
1	U.S. Pioneer	Cover 2, 1
	Yamaha	117

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