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1981 Summer Consumer Electronics Show

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 - Altec 6 Speaker System
 - Audio-Technica AT155LC Phono Cartridge
 - Nikko NR-1000 AM/FM Stereo Receiver
-

DISC SPECIALS

Woman of the Year • Jackle and Roy
Chaka Khan • Kitty and the Haywoods
Willie "The Lion" Smith
Grappelli/Grisman

Gidon and Elena Kremer
Sutherland/Horne/Pavarotti
Ivo Pogorelich • *Four Carminas*
Brendel's Haydn • Marriner's Handel

VIDEO SPECIAL

"Michael Nesmith in Elephant Parts"

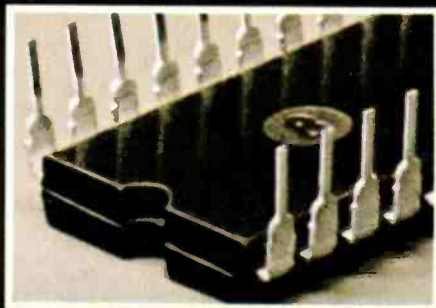


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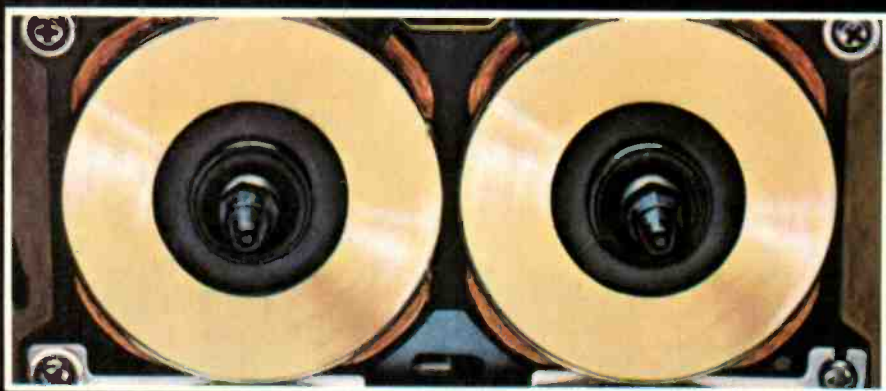
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SEPTEMBER 1981 • VOLUME 46 • NUMBER 9

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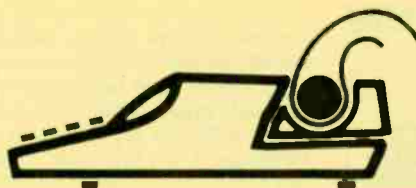
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Stereo Review

BULLETIN

Edited by William Livingstone

- PRINCE CHARLES AND LADY DIANA make disc debut! They are not appearing in a musical called The King and Di, but by the time you read this, the BBC, along with England's National Research Development Corporation, will have recorded the wedding of Prince Charles and Lady Diana Spencer in surround sound. The audio design for the event called for five Calrec Soundfield microphones, one on the approach to St. Paul's Cathedral, four inside. These mikes not only provide conventional four-channel signals, but transduced sonic height information as well. Also specified were a twenty-four-track analog tape recorder with a Telcom C4 noise-reduction system. The recording will be released on a UHJ-quadraphonic disc. Since the House of Windsor owns the copyright, will they also collect the...er...royalties?
- MITSUBISHI AND AEG-TELEFUNKEN have made an agreement to cooperate in the development of professional digital audio tape recorders. This alliance is similar to the one formed for the same purpose by Sony (Japan), Studer (Switzerland), and MCI (United States). Predictably, the formats developed by the two groups are incompatible.
- THE BIG SURPRISE POP SUCCESS OF 1981 is REO Speedwagon's "Hi Infidelity" on Epic. The band's eleventh album, it is their first to hit the number-one spot in Billboard's charts, a position it has held longer than Pink Floyd's "The Wall," John and Yoko's "Double Fantasy," and the Eagles' "The Long Run." Among the claims made for REO's "Hi Infidelity" is that this is the first time since 1945 that a group has held the top spot for so long with its first number-one record. Last holder of that honor was the Glenn Miller Orchestra. For more on REO Speedwagon see "Popular Music Briefs," page 104.
- JOHN LENNON/BAG ONE, a series of fourteen lithographs created by Lennon in 1969, will be shown at galleries in one hundred American cities this fall. The prints show Lennon's wedding to Yoko Ono in Gibraltar, their bed-in for peace in Amsterdam, and scenes of their honeymoon in Paris. When they were shown in London in 1970, eight of the prints were removed from the show by officers from Scotland Yard, but charges of indecency were overturned in court, and a magistrate ruled that the eight erotic lithographs were "unlikely to deprave or corrupt." The U.S. exhibits are managed by Tour Art, a Seattle company, which will have four sets of the prints on the road at one time. Admission: \$3.00, of which 25¢ will go to the Spirit Foundation.
- DOMINGO & DENVER, TOGETHER AT LAST! Placido Domingo is back and John Denver has got him. Or is it the other way around? Anyway, CBS Masterworks has announced for September release a joint album by operatic tenor Domingo and Rocky Mountain countertenor (?) Denver. Placido and John do a duet on Denver's song Perhaps Love, and John provides guitar accompaniment for Placido on one other track. Domingo sings the rest of the album unaided, such tunes as My Treasure, He Couldn't Love You More, and Now While I Still Remember How.
- INTERNATIONALLY ACCLAIMED PIANISTS Richard Goode, Charles Rosen, and Ruth Laredo are currently making debuts on the Nonesuch label with recital discs. An album of works by Schumann released in August is the first solo recording by Goode, winner of the Avery Fisher Prize for 1980. "Beethoven's Great Middle Period Sonatas" performed by Rosen is also an August release. And this summer Miss Laredo recorded the late Samuel Barber's Sonata for Piano, a work with which she has been closely associated, for release early in 1982.
- TEXACO'S LIVE FROM THE MET series on the Public Broadcasting Service begins its 1981-1982 season on September 30 with Verdi's La Traviata. Taped last March at the Metropolitan Opera, this performance is sung by Ileana Cotrubas, Placido Domingo, and Cornell MacNeil. James Levine conducts. Other operas to be telecast later in the season are Puccini's Trittico and La Bohème as well as Verdi's Rigoletto.

Speaking of Music...

By William Anderson



PREJUDICED LISTENING

WHEN a loudspeaker designer puts the product of his drawing board into an anechoic chamber to see how it "really" sounds without the adulterating echoes of room reflections, he knows as well as you and I do that there is very little "reality" to be encountered there, that what is actually involved is a vain desire to inject a bit of objectivity into the most unyieldingly subjective area in all of audio. Sooner or later, however, that speaker will have to come out of the closet; when it does, it will be judged by ears already prejudiced by listening to other speakers in other rooms, already primed by expectations it may not be able to fulfill.

Something very similar often takes place in the more specifically musical sphere as well. It is literally impossible to hear a piece of music in, so to speak, an anexperiential vacuum, and our impressions, even of new

music, are formed as much by what we already know about it and what we expect from it as by the music itself. That may have been what happened to Mozart's little Symphony in F Major, K. 19a, which received its third American performance (the first was at the White House, the second at Kennedy Center) in the mid-July opening concert of this season's Mostly Mozart Festival at New York's Lincoln Center. Written in London in 1765 when Mozart was only nine (he was there to play at the court of George III), the work was long thought to be lost but was discovered in a private collection in Germany last fall (see "Bulletin" page in the May issue). But there, you see, we already know too much about it to be objectively fair: it is by Mozart (who competes only with himself), and a nine-year-old Mozart at that (what could the kid have known about symphonies at that age?).

Conductor Leonard Slatkin and the orchestra, perhaps slightly embarrassed by overestimations of the piece in advance publicity, tended to be influenced by the "nine-year-old" aspect of the thing and swept the music under the rug with a lackluster performance. I, on the other hand, expected more of it—it is, after all, by Mozart—and still think I was right to do so. It is not, to be sure, the "Jupiter," but if you are going to commit yourself to play a convention-filled but well-constructed trifle, *do not trifle*—play it for all, not less, than it's worth. In this case the reduced orchestra sounded perfunctory and leaden when it should have sounded enthusiastic and bright. In addition, Slatkin conducted from the harpsichord keyboard, and that somehow managed to look like condescension (though that was surely not his intention), particularly since the instrument itself was a rather anemic-sounding little mosquito of the breed. Even so, I was quite taken with the slow movement, one of those endearing, opera-drenched Mozart tunes that begs to be sung, and hope to hear it again under better circumstances.

Response to the juvenilia was as languorous as the performance (it was, to be fair, a very hot night), and the general lassitude seemed to pervade both orchestra and audience through the following "Linz" Symphony as well. A buzz of excited anticipation swept both sides of the proscenium after intermission, however: Alicia de Larrocha was to play Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 24, and the air was perceptibly charged when that tidy figure strode purposefully out of the wings to fill the stage, the hall, and, for all I know, the trembling, unbounded welkin far above with the sound of Mozart, glorious Mozart. Not for nothing is De Larrocha known as the Queen of the Festival, and not for nothing, apparently, is Expectation a vital part of musical pleasure. Three cheers, then, for prejudiced listening, for we cannot avoid it in any case. □

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Name That Trumpet

- In Boston, our first trumpeter (his fame is well deserved) is truly a "familiar name," as David Hall observed.

It may not be an easy name, that much I will concede, but it's printed on the jacket—I don't find it hard to read.

But Boston music fans were filled with ire sans alloy when David somehow goofed and called our own *Rolf Smedvig Roy*.

ROBERT D. RUPLINAS
Malden, Mass.

Musical Exhaustion?

- James Goodfriend's July column, "Closing the Copyright Office," decries the creation of "derivative" music, and certainly there is little point in writing works which ape the techniques of Beethoven, Brahms, Mahler, Bartók, or other previous masters. These composers expressed their own messages best. Nonetheless, a completely "original" piece of music has never been written. Whether master, journeyman, or student, every composer has depended on the works of his predecessors to a large degree. Our modern quest for novelty is antipathetic to the art of a composer like Bruckner, who patiently cultivated and refined his style over the span of many years. In doing so, he did borrow techniques from others, but he shaped their ideas to his own use and put his stamp on the whole.

Ugly music is another problem. It is being written, but its creation does not reflect a malicious streak in the composer. Such pieces most often stem from a philosophical approach to composition which is at odds with what audiences wish to hear.

THOM RITTER GEORGE
Quincy, Ill.

- If I understand him correctly, James Goodfriend believes that not all but most good music has already been written and as-

sumes that in order to be good a piece of music must not sound "too much like other pieces that have already been composed." To this I wish to raise two objections.

First, in order to know even that *most* good pieces of music have already been written, it is necessary to know both the numerator and the denominator of the fraction—that is, both how many good pieces of music have been composed and how many are possible altogether. To ascertain the former quantity would be difficult; to ascertain the latter seems impossible—especially if, as Mr. Goodfriend tells us, the number of good pieces that can be composed in the future is "indeterminable." Therefore the ratio of good music previously composed to all good music cannot be known, and in consequence Mr. Goodfriend cannot possibly know what he is talking about when he asserts that *most* good music has already been written.

Second, the assumption that a good piece of music must not sound "too much like other pieces that have already been composed" (that is, it must not be "derivative," "anachronistic," or "superfluous" and must not evoke from the listener the reaction "I've heard it before") is surely mistaken. A piece of music is no worse for its similarity to preceding works, for otherwise every mature example of a style, genre, or composer's work would be in some respect inferior to its forerunners, no revision of a composition could be in any way an improvement on the original, and the very same piece of music would have greater merit if written at one point in the history of music rather than at another.

GEORGE BOWLES
Sioux Falls, S.D.

Music Editor James Goodfriend replies: Mr. George has made some interesting comments which, it seems to me, do not call for an answer. Mr. Bowles, on the other hand, is reasoning abstractly rather than trying to understand the situation as it exists. First, the fact that numbers cannot be provided in no way invalidates the argument; we are not dealing with problems of mathematical certainty and exactness.

(Continued on page 12)

IF 75 WATTS ISN'T ENOUGH, TRY 45.

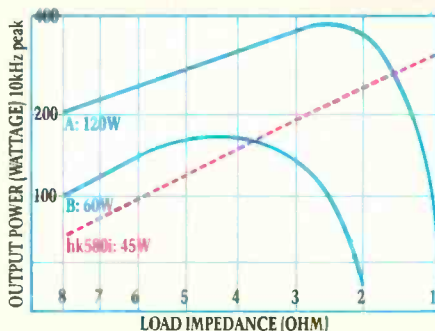


At first glance, you'd think a 75 watt receiver could outperform a 45 watt receiver easily. But FTC power ratings only tell you half the story—how a receiver will react under a continuous speaker impedance of 8 ohms.

Under realistic conditions, though, musical signals can actually cause speaker impedance to drop dramatically, demanding far more current than most 75 watt receivers can deliver. The receiver clips, robbing you of the true dynamics and excitement of your music.

That's why all Harman Kardon receivers have been designed with an enormous power reserve we call High Current Capability, or HCC. The use of special output devices is part of the HCC design. Our output transistors and power supplies, for example, will produce as much power as your speakers demand. Right up to the point at which the receiver shuts down to protect your speakers.

How much power they'll deliver depends on which receiver you choose. The hk580i shown above is rated at 45 watts per channel.* But it will deliver a full 200 watts or more



When you need power most—at low speaker impedances—conventional receivers simply can't deliver. But Harman Kardon receivers with HCC will deliver instantaneous power on demand until the receiver shuts down to protect your speakers.

of instantaneous power on demand, with absolutely no threat of clipping.

Of course power alone doesn't make a receiver great. There's distortion to conquer.

In most receivers, THD is reduced with a heavy application of negative feedback. But negative feedback causes a far more serious distortion called TIM or Transient Intermodulation Distortion. So we use less than 25 dB (compared to a more typical figure of 60-80 dB) to keep TIM inaudible to even the most critical ear.

But even a receiver that sounds great isn't perfect until it's got just the features you want. So we build

six receivers to let you pick and choose. From our modest hk350i, with analog tuner and 20 watts per channel, to our top of the line hk680i with digital tuner, 60 watts per channel and every convenience feature an audiophile might want. Accommodations for two sets of speakers and two tape decks. Tape monitor and two-way dubbing. High and subsonic filters. Tone defeat and loudness contour. And more.

So now that you know how committed we are to sonic accuracy, perhaps you should audition one of our High Current Receivers.

But only compare us to receivers with at least twice the power. After all, you do want to make it a fair comparison.

For the Harman Kardon dealer nearest you, call toll-free 1-800-528-6050, extension 870. Or write Harman Kardon, 240 Crossways Park West, Woodbury, N.Y. 11797. In Canada, Gould Marketing, Montreal H4T 1E5.

*Harman Kardon power ratings: RMS, both channels driven into 8 ohms, 20Hz-20kHz with 0.05% THD.

harman/kardon
ASK ANY AUDIOPHILE.

Once it is accepted that usable musical possibilities are finite (a new notion for this century, though it has its history in earlier ones), then the endless parade of new pieces that sound either naggingly familiar or gratingly ugly leads one inevitably to the question "Why?" Why, when there are so many composers, so much talent, so much support that does not rest on commercial considerations, are there so few pieces that anyone wants to hear twice? If I reject the notion that the composers aren't good enough (which I do), then I am forced to the conclusion that the possibilities have become curtailed; that is, that most of the good pieces have been written already.

Mr. Bowles' second point is again ab-

stract reasoning having little to do with the real world. The time at which a piece of music was written has traditionally (and rightly) been a factor in our estimation of that piece. Great and even merely good composers have most often been ahead of their time (determining which way music would go); those who merely aped (as any number of composers today could, if they wished, ape a Haydn symphony or a Verdi aria) have been long (and rightly again) forgotten. Mr. Bowles does not hear "similarity" the way I do. The fact that Beethoven's Sixth is recognizably by the same man as Beethoven's Fifth in no way beclouds the differences between those pieces. The real problem with someone's attempting to

write Beethoven's "Tenth" today is not that the work would not be similar enough to the nine, but that it would not be different enough from them to be a legitimate "Tenth."

Delius in Florida

● Some readers may be interested in further information about Solano (not Solana) Grove, Florida, mentioned by Richard Freed in his fine review of Delius' *The Magic Fountain* in the July issue. Jacksonville University preserves the small wooden shack from Solano Grove (south of Jacksonville) where the great British composer wrote most of his "American" music while earning part of his livelihood as organist at Congregation Ahavath Chesed. Philip Emanuel, a prominent British Jew and close friend of Delius (and a trustee of his estate), received an honorary degree from Jacksonville University in 1962 in recognition of his role in the removal and restoration of the shack.

HOWARD WAYNE
Altamonte Springs, Fla.

Inflation and Dubbing

● I have noticed a lot of stories lately about record companies pushing to stop off-the-air taping of their albums. I can understand the loss in sales, but I cannot be sympathetic because the companies have brought a lot of it on themselves. First of all, the prices of albums and prerecorded tapes are becoming outrageous, making taping profitable. What irritates me most, though, is the crappy quality of prerecorded cassettes. I was forced to go to this format because I have an old house with very wobbly floors. I soon found out that most prerecorded cassettes sounded as if they had been recorded in someone's basement. Compare a prerecorded cassette with an off-the-air tape of the same album and the difference in quality will shock you.

Somebody has to tell the record companies to use a good brand of tape in their cassettes or they may as well throw their new digital equipment out the window. After all, who wants to spend \$8.98 for a superior digital recording of tape hiss?

DAVID DEREAMUS
Nazareth, Pa.

The Editor replies: Putting entirely aside the ethical question of whether it is okay to "lift" something because it has become too expensive . . . In the December 1961 issue of Hi Fi/Stereo Review, the classical (stereo) records reviewed were either \$6.98 (Deutsche Grammophon, RCA) or \$5.98 (Columbia, Capitol, Decca). That was twenty years ago. Applying a reasonable inflation measure to these figures—say, 175 per cent, which is the approximate increase during this period in the overall Consumer Price Index—means that comparable records today should cost \$19.20 and \$16.46 (actually probably more, considering that phono discs are made of an oil-derived substance). They don't. Why not? Because record-industry members long ago decided to

(Continued on page 14)



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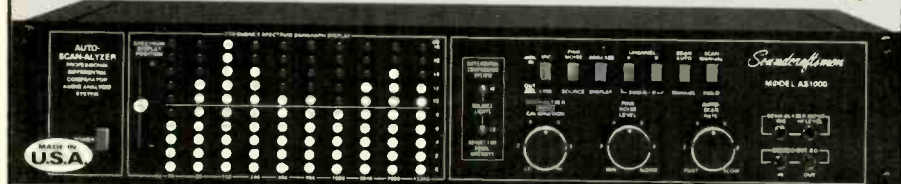


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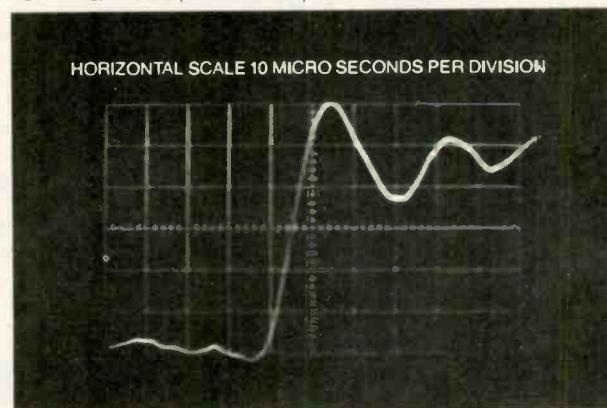
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Actual unretouched oscilloscope photograph showing rise time of 980LZS using CBS STR112 record.



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CIRCLE NO. 13 ON READER SERVICE CARD

compete with each other on the basis of price, not quality. Record prices have therefore been kept artificially low for years while record-company production costs have gone up just like everything else.

How did they manage? By cutting back on quality and selling in enormous quantities. The funny thing about it is that they were absolutely right: they bet that the American public (largely, of course, the pop market) would buy records of poor quality if the price were kept low enough. What they didn't count on was that when they absolutely had to raise prices, the public would scream bloody murder even though they had been relatively philosophical about accepting increases of more than 168 per cent in the price of transportation and 183 per cent in the price of housing in the same period. The \$6.98 Deutsche Grammophon disc of 1961 is \$9.98 today, an increase of only (!) 43 per cent in twenty years. In a sense, then, Mr. DeReamus is right: the record companies did bring it on themselves, but didn't they have a little help from us record buyers?

Video Music

● I don't know that I would go as far as the engineer of a local FM station who suggested that the best way to enjoy a Metropolitan Opera simulcast would be to place the TV set opposite your speakers and sit with your back to it, but I do think that television directors and camera operators have much to learn, and perhaps more to unlearn, if video tapes and discs are to have substantial appeal to the tastes and pocket-books of classical-music audiences. The televised concerts, recitals, and operas I have seen have been consistently marred by restless panning, zooming, split screens, intrusive closeups, and other tricks of the trade that soon lose their novelty and become merely distracting. Intimate views of the mechanics of singing and instrument playing are interesting on occasion but need not be repeated *ad nauseam*. Obsessive visual pinpointing of the particular orchestra section or instrumentalist or singer holding forth at every moment creates a decidedly episodic impression of the music.

The camera techniques that are suitable for soap operas and football games are not, I think, appropriate for concerts and grand opera. Perhaps some so-far-unknown artistic genius will devise better techniques. Meanwhile, I would suggest allotting the cameras three or four of the better seats in different parts of the house and switching between them judiciously at long intervals during natural breaks. These opinions can perhaps be attacked as representing merely resistance to change, but to me they seem a logical extension of the concept of "high fidelity": a reasonably faithful and convincing reproduction of a live performance, rather than the production of a new and artificial experience.

THOMAS ROCKWELL
Columbus, Ohio

But wouldn't it be a disturbingly "artificial" experience to find that your nearest neighbor in the opera house was a TV camera, whether it paid for its seat or not?

STEREO REVIEW

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Cassette Deck
For Studio Use**

□ Designed specifically for studio applications where a good cassette dub is needed for reference or demonstration, the Tascam Model 122 from Teac is a two-speed (1 $\frac{1}{2}$ and 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ ips), two-motor, rack-mountable, three-head unit with source/tape monitoring facilities. The deck incorporates Dolby-B noise-reduction and Dolby-HX headroom-extension circuitry. All transport functions are activated by integrated logic circuits. The front panel has three-position bias and equalization controls for ferric, chrome, and metal tapes in addition to screwdriver controls for bias and record level. Other controls include switching for two line inputs, an output-level control, and a separate volume control for the headphone output. A remote-control unit and dbx noise-reduction circuitry are available as options. Price: \$700.

Circle 120 on reader service card



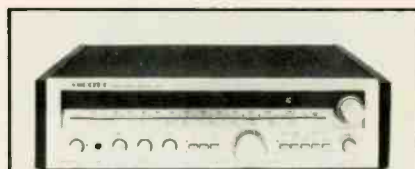
**"Free-space"
Array in Bose
Speaker System**

□ Bose's 601 Series II system incorporates two 8-inch woofers with long-excursion voice coils and four 3-inch high-sensitivity tweeters in an arrangement designed to eliminate the speakers as the apparent

sources of sound. The tweeters and one woofer are mounted above the main enclosure in a multi-directional "free-space" array. Two outward-aimed tweeters reflect sound off the side walls while two inward-directed tweeters aim toward the center of the room. Each of the two woofers is housed in a separate injection-molded compartment that is ported into the main cabinet, which is in turn ported into the listening room. This technique is said to control those frequencies usually exaggerated by room-boundary reflections. The crossover allows the woofers and tweeters to operate together over almost an octave and thus avoid phase-shift effects and audible colorations.

Nominal impedance is 8 ohms, minimum recommended amplifier power 20 watts. Woofer transition frequency is 2.5 kHz; tweeter transition frequency is 1.5 kHz. The cabinet is walnut-grain vinyl on particle board. Dimensions are 29 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 14 x 13 inches. Price: \$445 per speaker, sold only in matched pairs.

Circle 121 on reader service card

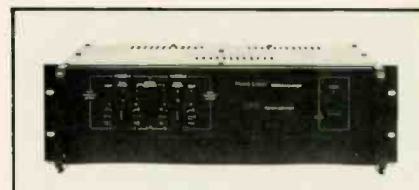


**Scott Receiver
Has Digital Readout**

□ The H. H. Scott Model 375R AM/FM stereo receiver is rated at 65 watts per channel into 8-ohm loads with no more than 0.03 per cent total harmonic distortion. RIAA equalization accuracy is ± 0.5 dB from 20 to 20,000 Hz; phono signal-to-noise ratio is 84 dB (input shorted). The FM-tuner section has an IHF sensitivity of 10.3 dBf (1.8 microvolts). The stereo signal-to-noise ratio with a 65-dBf signal is 70 dB; distortion at the same signal level is 0.2 per cent. The FM frequency response is 20 to 15,000 Hz $\pm 1, -2$ dB. Capture ratio is 1 dB. Stereo separation at 1 kHz is 45 dB.

Features include a digital frequency readout in addition to an analog tuning scale, a servo-lock tuning system, both moving-magnet and moving-coil phono inputs, dual fluorescent power meters, a five-level r.f. signal-strength meter, switching for two pairs of speakers and for two tape decks, and switchable infrasonic and high-frequency filters. (The infrasonic filter has a turnover frequency of 18 Hz and rolls off at 18 dB per octave.) The bass, midrange, and treble controls are detented. Dimensions are 5 x 19 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 13 inches; weight is 27 pounds. Price: \$460.

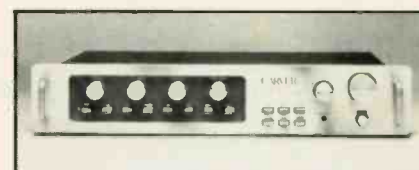
Circle 122 on reader service card



**Phase Linear's
Rugged Power Amp**

□ Designed for professional applications requiring audiophile-quality performance from a compact, road-worthy unit, Phase Linear's A60 power amplifier is rated at 225 watts per channel into 8 ohms with total harmonic distortion less than 0.05 per cent from 20 to 20,000 Hz. The exterior chassis is constructed of heavy-gauge steel. The power transformer and its associated power-supply components are housed in a separate internal chassis with the transformer near the front panel, a design that minimizes stress on the front-panel rack mounts. Protection features include LED fault, signal, and thermal-overload indicators. Power output into 4-ohm loads is 350 watts per channel; dynamic headroom into 8 ohms is 1.25 dB. Dimensions are 5 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 19 x 12 inches; weight is 42 pounds. Price: \$1,099.

Circle 123 on reader service card



**Lower-price Carver
Preamp with
Sonic Holography**

□ The Carver C-1 preamplifier has a second-generation "Sonic Hologram" stereo-image enhancement circuit that is said to have a larger "listening window" and to provide tighter imaging and smoother frequency response than Carver's original design. (The horizontal-plane image resolution is claimed to be better than 5 degrees.) Front-panel controls include switchable tone controls for each channel, loudness compensation, an external-processor loop, switching for two tape decks, and the Sonic Hologram controls. Specifications include ± 0.25 -dB RIAA-equalization accuracy, frequency response from 5 to 200,000 Hz, and distortion of 0.05 per cent or less. Dimensions are 19 x 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 10 inches. Weight is 6 pounds. Price: \$550.

Circle 124 on reader service card



23 deck makers bias with TDK metal. That doesn't leave many for the competition.

When it comes to the critical bias adjustment, the vast majority of manufacturers won't use anything but TDK Metal Alloy cassettes. TDK metal excels in two different cases. The MA-R has the Reference Standard Mechanism, with a unique metal unibody frame. MA uses the Laboratory Standard Mechanism, designed to deliver the smoothest possible flow of music.

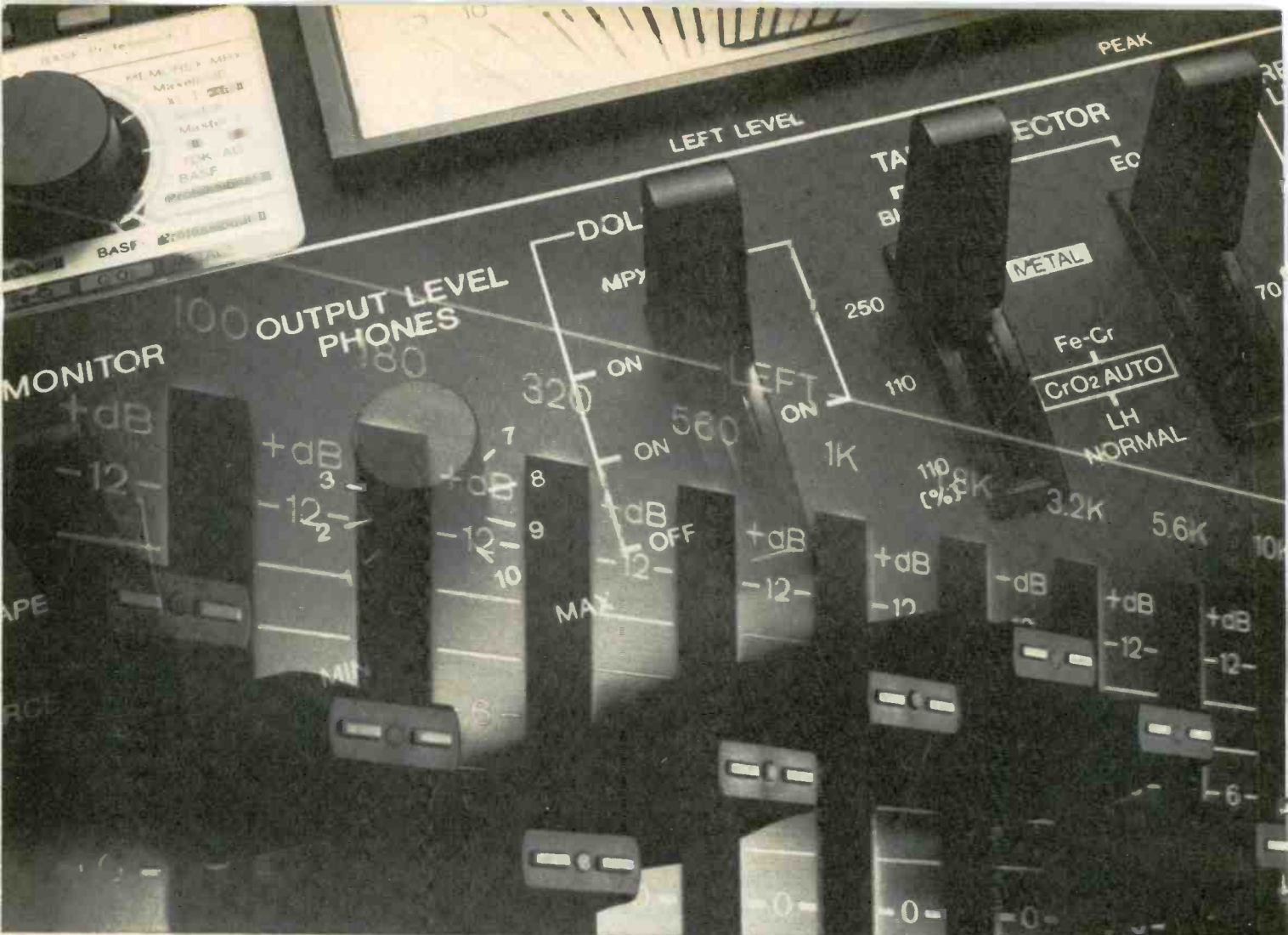
Both MA-R and MA incorporate TDK's remarkable tape formulation, FINAVINX, a metal particle with extremely high coercivity and remanence for high frequency response and low distortion. TDK metal has the widest frequency range and highest MOL of all cassettes rated in an independent test.

It's not easy to get 23 quality deck makers to reach the same conclusion. If you use TDK metal, you'll be in good company.

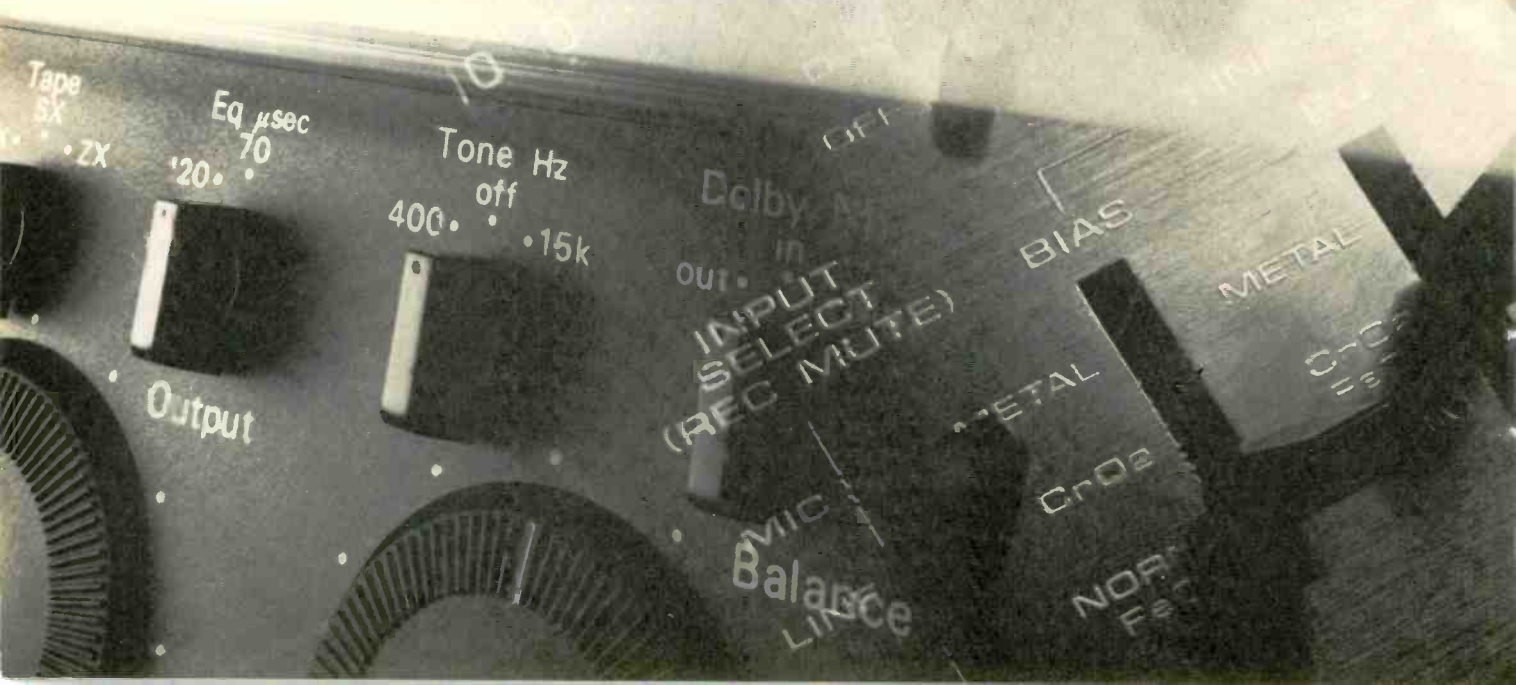
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The machine for your machine

CIRCLE NO 52 ON READER SERVICE CARD





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Overwhelmingly simple

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The AD-M800's specifications tell you it's the last word in cassette deck technology. But its D.A.T.A. microcomputer system lets you know a new era of recording accuracy and simplicity is just beginning.

Instead of imprecise tape selector switches or confusing variable bias and eq switches, the AD-M800's D.A.T.A. microcomputer system is as simple as it is accurate.

For "master" quality recordings with ruler-flat tape frequency response all you do is press "start". D.A.T.A. does the rest.

It's so smart, it automatically senses what type

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And thanks to its memory, next time you use the same tape it won't take any time at all. D.A.T.A. can recall past analyses instantly.

But D.A.T.A. is just one of the AD-M800's outstanding features. There are a lot more. Like Aiwa's V-cut Sendust CVC 3-head system. Infrared remote control. Both VU and Peak LED metering. Double Dolby* NR. And Dual Motor Drive.

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To accurately reproduce this state-of-the-art material you need efficient loudspeakers that literally allow your amplifier to idle during normal listening levels and respond with its rated capabilities only to reproduce the sharp transients and increased dynamic range typical of today's source material.

The Interface:A was designed to answer the high-efficiency challenge. Highly efficient, truly accurate, yet capable of handling a lot of power when necessary, without the sonic coloration found in so many loudspeakers.

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Interface: A Series III

Audio Q. and A.

By Larry Klein



Measurement Capabilities

Q. Why is it that test reports sometimes say that a product's published specs are "beyond the measurement capability of presently available test equipment?" How then do the manufacturers themselves make the measurements?

RANDAL C. AKACICH
Tigard, Ore.

A. By availing themselves of the luxury of hand-tailored test equipment. It's not difficult, just terribly time-consuming, to design and hand-build equipment able to make measurements that exceed the capabilities of the best commercial instruments. Usually one trades the option of making a wide range of tests for the ability to make a single ultrasensitive measurement on a specific component. Obviously, no test lab that handles a wide variety of brands and models has the time or inclination to design test equipment for specific jobs.

But there's another aspect of the question worth discussing. The laboratory equipment used by Mr. Hirsch can measure distortions of 0.0003 per cent and noise levels of -80 dB, both below the thresholds of human hearing. Is it really necessary to do any better than that? I fully understand the competitive economic and psychological forces that drive engineers to seek ever-better specifications. However, in my view such technological *tours de force* are largely pointless, akin to adding additional layers of gold plating to some already very well-gilded lilies.

Off-shore Video

Q. I want to send a videodisc player to some friends in Europe, but I am told that it won't play there because their TV-broadcast signal and therefore their TV sets are different from ours. Is this true?

J. D. GOMEZ
Southampton, N.Y.

A. Yes. There are now three major—and incompatible—systems in use for transmitting color-television signals. These are the NTSC (National Television Sys-

tems Committee), used in the U.S., most of North and South America, and Japan; SECAM (Sequential with Memory), used in France; and PAL (Phase Alternate by Line), used in Great Britain and the rest of Western Europe. The differences are in the frame rate (thirty frames per second for NTSC, twenty-five frames per second for PAL and SECAM), in the lines per frame (525 lines per frame for NTSC, 625 for PAL and SECAM), and in the way color information is encoded.

Videodisc equipment sold in the U.S. has been designed for use here and uses the standard U.S. TV system, and you cannot play a disc with NTSC encoding over, say, a SECAM-type TV. A U.S.-standard TV set would work, but the cost and inconvenience make the whole enterprise questionable. Videocassette players, by the way, will have the same compatibility problems. Note, however, that there are several TVs available from various companies that are said to work anywhere in the world, be the voltage 100, 120, or 220, the line frequency 50 or 60 Hz, or the broadcast format NTSC, SECAM, or PAL. Such a unit should be able to play videocassettes and videodiscs made for any format.

Specialized Speakers

Q. I have heard it said that one should use one type of speaker for classical records and another type for rock, yet neither you nor Julian Hirsch has ever mentioned a need for specialized speakers. How come?

HARRY WEST
Toledo, Ohio

A. There is at least a small grain of truth in the "certain speakers for certain program material" approach. A while back I visited a friend who had carefully set up for comparison three pairs of very expensive and generally highly regarded speaker systems. I spent most of an afternoon in A-B-C listening to digitally mastered and direct-cut discs and came to four conclusions: (1) any one of the three sets of systems could sound marginally better than the other two, depending on the specific records played;

(Continued on page 22)

WHY ONLY SONY TAPE HEARS FULL COLOR SOUND.

There are some good and sound reasons Sony audio tape is second to none. Why Sony tape has such a sensitive, full frequency response all along the sound spectrum that it is actually capable of recording sounds that go beyond the range of human hearing. That incredible range, sensitivity and balance is what Full Color Sound is all about.

A history of milestones

When you get a Sony tape you get a lot more than tape. You get the entire history of tape recording

Sony has been a pioneer in tape manufacturing since it began over 30 years ago. In fact, we made the first audio tape ever in Japan. Sony technology was in the forefront then... and it still is! (Who else could bring you the amazing Walkman?)

Besides a history of spirited determination to be the very first in technology, there's the knowledge that comes from also being pioneers in high fidelity audio equipment. (After all, you'd better know all there is to know about tape decks before you make a tape. Sony does.)

Another reason for Sony's unmatched excellence is our unmatched — almost fanatic — insistence on the highest quality material and manufacturing methods. Sometimes our standards are so high we can't find machinery that meets them, so we have to invent the machinery ourselves!

Then there's Sony's unique balance system. The fine-tuning of all the elements that go into making a tape, so that each complements the other, and together deliver the finest recording that is humanly and technically possible.

The new tape standard: State-of-the-Sony

Fact: Everyone uses magnetic particles for tape. But not everyone insists on buying super-fine grade particles, and then carefully examining and mixing each and every lot to be absolutely positive that the quality is consistently pure and homogenous. Sony does.

Fact: Sony has a unique formula for binding the particles to the tape. Binding determines the life

of the tape and the heads. Because of the high standards we demand, Sony had to invent its own binder.

Fact: Another example of Sony high technology is in the coating process. The coating of magnetic particles must be *absolutely, uniformly even* all along the tape. Any variation at all, and the consistency and quality of the tape are compromised. Not only did Sony perfect the process for its regular tapes, but Sony outdid itself with its dual-coated tapes, where it was necessary to produce a top coating that was *super-thin*. We actually managed to create a perfect coating that's only 1 micronmeter thick! (Especially impressive when you realize some other tape makers have trouble producing an even coating 4-5 micronmeters thick, much less 1 micronmeter thick!)

Hearing is believing

Sony tape comes by its extraordinary quality honestly. It has a heritage of breakthrough innovation. And a history of being famous throughout the world for leading technology, quality and dependability.

And that is why only Sony tape has Full Color Sound. But you don't have to take our word for it. Listen to Sony tape as fanatically as you wish. As they say, hearing is believing **SONY**.

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How to get 50% more sound without turning up the volume.

There's a whole range of sound in a live performance that you never hear from your stereo system. And it's not a question of turning up the volume.

The problem is in the records you play.

When recording engineers master a record, they electronically eliminate up to half the music. They literally compress the sound to make it "fit" on the vinyl record.

Fortunately, there's one solution to the problem: dbx Dynamic Range Expanders.

A dbx Dynamic Range Expander in your system restores most of the lost music. And it reduces annoying record surface noise by as much as 20 dB. So instead of a compressed 50 or 60 dB of dynamic range, you get a full 75 to 90 dB. The loud passages begin to thunder. The softs are truly subtle. All your music comes to life.

And you can use a dbx Dynamic Range Expander not only with your records, but also with tapes and FM broadcasts.

Visit your authorized dbx retailer for a demonstration of the 1BX, 2BX and 3BX Dynamic Range Expanders. Then select the model that's best for your system.

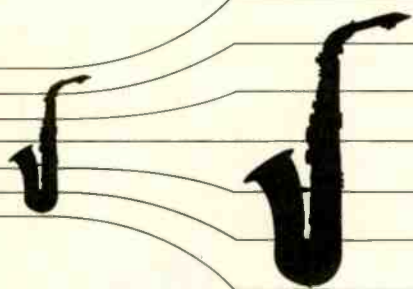
Because there's a lot more to music than has been reaching your ears.

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dbx

Making good sound better

CIRCLE NO. 16 ON READER SERVICE CARD



(2) if the room or the speaker locations within it were different, my preferences might well have shifted; (3) there aren't a helluva lot of *significant* differences to be heard among the top speakers, in any case; and (4) I run out of patience pretty quickly for this sort of listening, if only because, in Bob Dylan's words, "Nothing was revealed." (I guess that if I had found that any pair of the systems had been clearly inferior or superior to the others, I would have derived at least some satisfaction from the evaluation process.)

Note that when I said that some speakers sounded superior with certain records, I wasn't referring to the rock, jazz, or classical program on the records, but rather to unpredictable sonic nuances of balance in the recordings deriving from the way each had been made and equalized. It seems to me that except under special circumstances, what one wants, therefore, is neither "rock" nor "classical" speakers (whatever they may be) but rather a system that can deliver an accurate acoustic analog of the electrical audio signal fed to it by the amplifier. Those who espouse the use of different speakers for different music are saying, in effect, that certain music requires more or less speaker distortion, or peaks in the bass, midrange, or treble frequencies, or something other than a flat, *accurate* response. Since the musical instruments have been recorded with a specific loudness in relation to each other, it seems to me that a speaker ought to reproduce those individual relative levels accurately no matter what kind of music is involved. If the recording has been engineered so that the brass has an extra "sock" and the strings extra "bite," the speakers should deliver those qualities—neither more nor less. And the only way a speaker can do that is if it doesn't have any *built-in* "sock" or "bite"—meaning peaks at certain frequencies.

It is true that a speaker that does a fine job of reproducing chamber music may not be suitable for rock, but only because it lacks the efficiency and acoustic-output capability (in the bass or overall) to achieve the sound-pressure levels desired. If the attempt to achieve a desired loudness level for rock (or some contemporary electronic music) drives your system into distortion because your amplifier has inadequate power or because your speakers have low efficiency or inadequate power-handling ability, then other speakers with greater efficiency and power-handling ability would, of course, do a better job. However, all other performance criteria—frequency range and smoothness, distortion, dispersion, and so forth—continue to be valid. A speaker able to deliver loud rock music with true high fidelity should do just as good a job when reproducing a string quartet.

Incidentally, it seems to me that a legitimate aesthetic case can be made for *boosting* the bass on much current rock and disco material. But the problem with having a *built-in* response peak is that you get it whether or not it's appropriate to the music being played. For that reason, a better source of boost where and when you need it is a five- or ten-band equalizer. Once the program is adjusted to taste, it should then be fed to the flattest, widest-response speaker you can afford. □

You might find a bigger loudspeaker at the same price. You won't buy a better one.

Sadly, some people still think one loudspeaker is much the same as another.

To those of you suffering the consequences of this misapprehension, we have a message—there is a difference!

A difference once appreciated, never forgotten.

A difference appreciated by Stereo Review, whose noted testing authority, Julian Hirsch, said "... its sound is unusually smooth, balanced, and utterly easy and unstrained. You can pick almost any favorable adjective and it would apply equally to the sound of this loudspeaker."

(Stereo Review July, 1981)

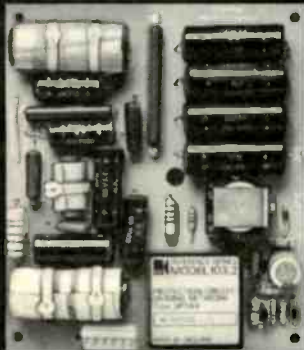
The KEF Model 103.2 is a new addition to the renowned

Reference Series. It may not look strikingly different, but inside the compact 19 litre cabinet it is a different story: drive units, filter networks and the unique KEF electronic overload protection circuit (S-STOP) represent the latest advances in loudspeaker technology.

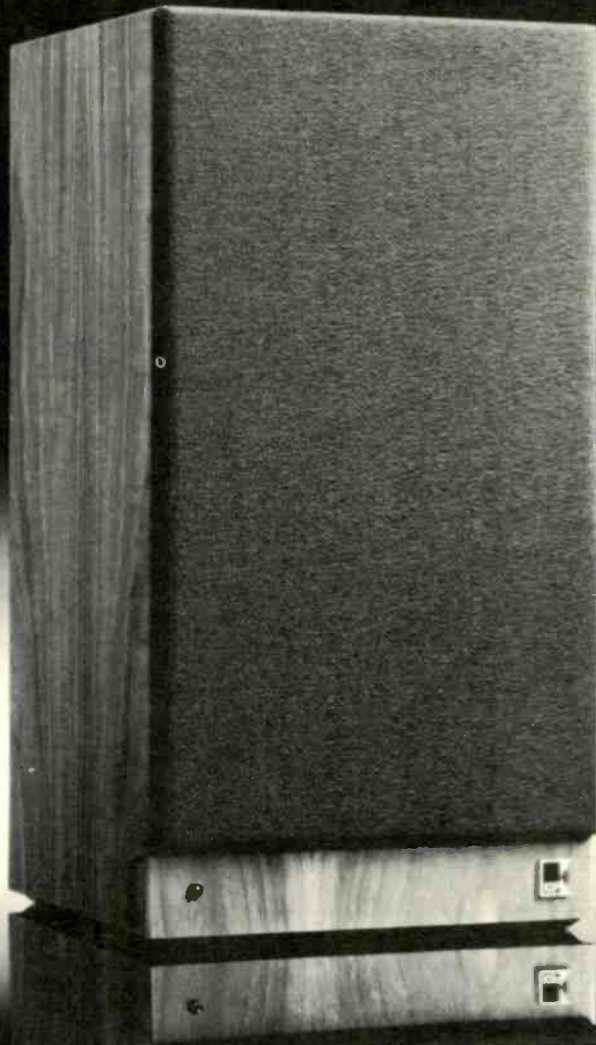
The result is a system which achieves broad frequency response with optimum efficiency, unsurpassed realism and clarity of reproduction.

Stereo Review summed it up... "If one were to consider only its size and appearance, it might be hard to justify the price of the KEF 103.2. However, judged (as it ought to be) by its sound, it appears to be a very good buy."

Contact your KEF dealer for a thorough demonstration. For his name and address, write: KEF Electronics, Ltd. c/o Intratec P.O. Box 17414 Dulles Int'l Airport Washington, D.C. 20041. In Canada: Smyth Sound Equipment Ltd., Quebec.



S-STOP circuit



KEF

The Speaker Engineers

Car Stereo

By Ivan Berger



NEW EQUIPMENT AT CES

It took two days of riffling through the mound of car-stereo literature I brought back from the summer Consumer Electronics Show in Chicago to come to the conclusion that there was nothing earth-shatteringly new to report. Still, there is some interesting new equipment coming out this fall, and a few mini-trends are becoming clearer.

I noticed, for example, that a bit more attention is being paid to human engineering. Just before CES, for example, Alpine unveiled its new 7136, the second Alpine model with digital everything, auto-seek tuning—the works. The five station-selector buttons are clustered rather than stretched in a row, which makes them look more accessible. (On the other hand, the Program Memory button is no larger than any of the others and is clustered with the rest, which I suspect might lead to accidental memory erasures.)

Blaupunkt is going heavily into "night design"—illuminated controls that you can find in the dark—on their CR-2010 analog-tuned and CR-3001 digital units (\$370 and \$630, respectively). The 3001 also has a remote station-scan switch which can be used to put that control nearer the driver or to give back-seat listeners a say.

Kenwood's new KRC-1022 receiver gives the impression of being easy to work with. Maybe it's the way the various controls are differentiated by size and shape: a row of small buttons for local/DX, ANRC (auto hi-blend, among other things), high filter, loudness compensation, and an "Auto Broadcast Sensor System" (it seeks new stations as old ones fade out); a row of six

larger buttons for the station presets; then smaller buttons for Dolby and tape-EQ selection, larger buttons just above for tape direction, cassette standby (which cues up and switches to a cassette if the station fades out), and eject. There's a big knob for volume and balance, small ones for bass and treble. The tuning controls appear to be rather small (which I don't like), but they are right on the tuning dial (which I do).

Marantz has a new feature which may or may not fall under the heading of human engineering: a "Continuous Music System" that turns on the tuner while you're fast-forwarding or rewinding the tape in case you can't bear to be without music for that long. Some units in Panasonic's new Supreme series have the opposite feature: you can push a button to check what's on the air while a tape's playing instead of having to eject the tape first.

Sony's tape-protector system may or may not be human engineering too, but I like it: if the system senses drag tension or tape slack during play, it reverses the tape's direction. That's on the new FT590 Plus Series deck, which is loaded with features (Dolby, auto tuning, bi-amp mode switching, automatic music-sensing system...) and has a liquid-crystal display (LCD) instead of the usual LED type. It's also on the under-\$180 FT240, an auto-reversing model with Dolby and AMSS. Sony's conventionally tuned XR-35 has a center-tune light, the most sensible analog tuning aid I've yet seen for car use.

Fujitsu Ten's \$780 Mini-Wizard looks fairly good from the human-engineering standpoint too. At the very least, it seems

less complex to operate than its profusion of features would suggest. The five station-select pushbuttons are grouped at the top (a good idea in many cars though not, alas, in mine), and while these fall within a long row of other buttons they do differ in size or feel from the others. The controls fall into several distinct groupings, and there's even a five-band equalizer built in—all in a package notably smaller than Fujitsu's original Wizard.

The best part, though, may be the optional (\$50) full-feature remote control. Its buttons serve dual purposes, with tape functions printed in blue, radio functions in black: auto tuning up and down, rewind or fast forward, auto tape search for the gaps between selections, even eject. The controls on the Mini-Wizard's built-in equalizer are a bit larger than most such but smaller than those found on most separate equalizers.

Sony attacked the cramped-control problem a bit differently last year, with equalizers whose slider controls run at an angle (see XM-E7 below) for longer travel without a higher panel. This year at least two other companies (Sound Barrier and Rockford Fosgate) have taken a similar slant on some models. Rockford Fosgate also has two equalizer/amp systems (with separate boxes for the amps) with dbx noise reduction: the RX5 and RX1, 100 watts and 50 watts per channel, respectively. There was also a decoder from dbx itself, the dbx 22, at \$149. It looks like any other piece of dbx gear, suitably shrunken to fit into a car.

MEANWHILE, another noise-reduction system made car-stereo news at CES. National Semiconductor's DNR, it was announced, would soon be seen in stereo units from GM's Delco and from Autotek. DNR is a signal-sensing filter which cuts the high-frequency response when there's little high-frequency energy in the signal, on the principle that whatever highs are left are probably just noise. In a brief, non-automotive demonstration, it sounded just fine.

There was also a lot of emphasis on installation problems, which get worse as dashboards shrink and buyers demand more features in their stereos. Audiovox talked about its Flex and Superflex mounting systems, Sanyo about "EZ Install," and so on. Since GM's last new car-body family, the "X-body," caused car-stereo manufacturers some unusual installation problems, there was much industry worry about the newer, smaller "J" cars. No problem, it appears. The J-cars' radio slots may be a bit on the shallow side, but the panel space is unusually generous. Audiovox, Clarion, Jensen, and others were able to show models for J-body cars at this show, and there will

(Continued on page 26)



Clarion PE959A cassette/receiver



Jensen R425 cassette/receiver



Sony XM-E7



Fujitsu Ten CE-4130 cassette/receiver/equalizer



Kenwood KRC-1022 cassette/receiver



Sparkomatic SR 305 cassette/receiver/equalizer

illegitimate child

Rip-off or spin-off, you've never heard sound like you'll hear from the headphones you can get for only \$5 pictured below. But there's a catch.



It was spawned by Sony. And, it's an entirely new technology. No more cheap paper speakers and heavy magnets. Sound is reproduced with such clarity and power that it will send shivers up and down your spine.

Sony's MDR-3 headphones sell for about \$50, and they've been worth it. Now you can have DAK's for only \$5. We challenge you to take them to your favorite Hi Fi store and compare them to Sony's. But there are 2 things you ought to know.

Thing One. If you can hear a difference, any difference at all, not only can you return them and get your money back, but we'll also give you a free gift for your trouble.

YOU'VE BEEN THERE BEFORE

You may already be familiar with the sound produced by these headphones. If you've ever sat in the very front row during a symphony concert, or right in the middle of a live jazz band, you know the spine tingling thrill of the full rich sound that envelops you.

If you sit even 10 rows back, you lose the feeling. You still listen to the music, but you can't touch or taste the sound.

It's only when you sit right up front that the sound is alive with electricity. It's the same sound you get with Sony's MDR-3s and DAK's \$5 stereophones.

ILLEGITIMATE CHILD

Not recognized by law as a lawful offspring.

The technology is new. Up until the Sony featherweight headphones were introduced, most headphones were simply uncomfortable miniature speaker systems that you wore on your ears.

The Sony breakthrough was made possible by changing the cheap paper speaker cones to mylar diaphragms, and by using the powerful rare earth magnet Samarium to move the diaphragms.

The mylar diaphragms are much more accurate than paper and have a drastically improved dynamic range. The result is a headphone that weighs less than 2 ounces and yet produces 20-20,000hz

sounds better than a theater sized loud speaker system.

Sony fathered the technology for these headphones and obviously has no connection to DAK, but the technological heritage will become vividly apparent when you compare the sound of these marvelous headphones side by side. DAK's come with a full one year limited warranty.

THE CATCH

Thing two. Frankly we are losing our shirts on the headphones, but we're taking a gamble because we want you to try our audio cassettes.

In order to get the \$50 value pair of featherweight headphones for only \$5, we want you to try 10 DAK High Energy, Normal Bias 90 minute cassettes for only \$2.19 each.

DAK's price is less than half the price of the competition, and each cassette comes with a deluxe index insert card, a box and a one year guarantee.

You're very valuable to us in the form of future business. DAK has excited over 80,000 of you valuable customers with special bonuses like the headphones. We find most of you keep buying once you try our cassettes and our prices; and that's a gamble worth taking.

NOT A BAD CATCH

DAK manufactures a cassette that you can really forget about. Great sound, and no problems.

We make mostly industrial cassettes for high speed duplication. We've developed a special jam proof cassette. It uses a spring tension liner within the cassette that guides the tape as it winds.

We coat these liners with a new chemical called Molysulfide which drastically reduces friction within the cassette.

Hi Frequency Protection! As tape moves within the cassette friction causes the build up of static electricity. Static electricity is drastically reduced by the low friction of the Molysulfide and so is its tendency to erase very high frequencies. A very important consider-

ation for often played tapes.

MAXELL 'TAPE' IS BETTER

Yes, honestly, if you own a \$1000 cassette deck like a Nakamichi, the frequency responses of Maxell UDXL or TDK SA are slightly superior and you just might be able to hear a difference.

DAK ML has a frequency response that is flat from 40-14,500hz ± 3 db. Virtually all cassette recorders priced under \$600 are flat ± 3 db from 40hz to about 12,500hz, so we have over 2000hz to spare, and you'll probably never notice the difference.

No apology. We feel that we have equaled or exceeded the mechanical reliability of virtually all cassettes and offer one of the best frequency responses in the industry.

TRY DAK ML90 CASSETTES RISK FREE

Try these high energy cassettes and the featherweight headphones in your own home for 30 days. If you aren't 100% satisfied for any reason, return only 9 of the 10 cassettes and the headphones for a courteous refund. The 10th cassette is a gift from DAK for your time.


To order your 10 DAK ML 90 minute high energy cassettes at \$2.19 each and get the headphones for only \$5 with your credit card, call the DAK toll free number below, or send your check for only \$21.90 for the tapes, plus \$5 for the headphones, and \$3 for postage and handling for each group. Order No 9186 (CA residents please add 6% sales tax).

Why not order an extra group of 10 DAK ML90 cassettes. We will add one free ML90 cassette to each additional group you buy and of course you can get a headphone for \$5 with each group.

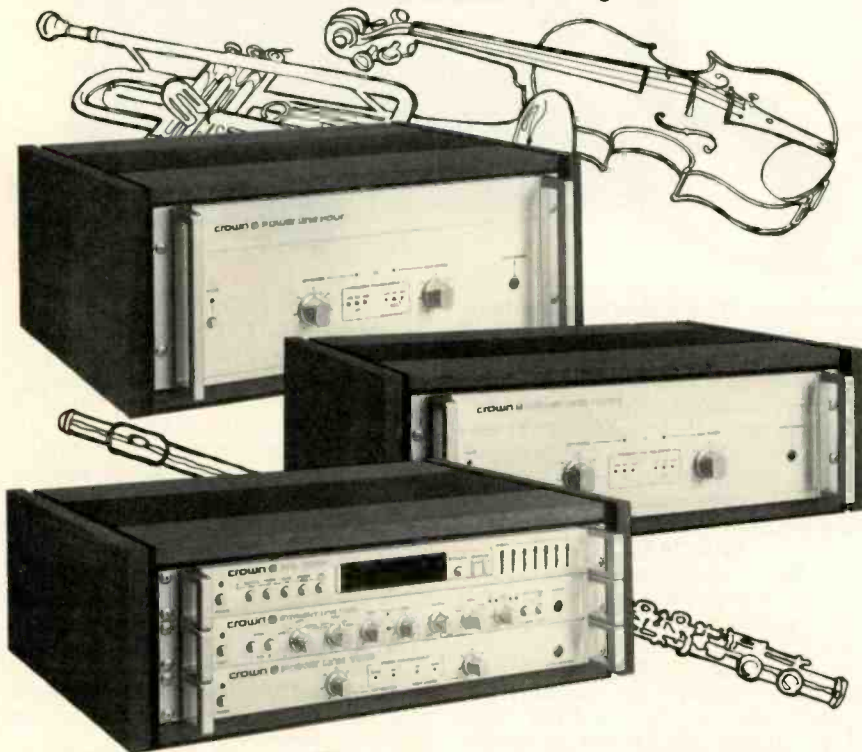
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doubtless be many more by the next CES.

Another installation problem—mixing tuners, amps, and equalizers of different brands—is getting easier too, but it's still not very easy. Not all companies use the same connectors, and even those that do may wire them differently. You can wire up adaptors for those, but what do you do when different brands use different signal-voltage levels? One answer is to make equipment that's adaptable to them all. Autotek's Hi-Tek in-dash units now have variable preamp-output voltages, from 100 millivolts to 1 volt, to match any amplifier. At the amplifier end, new models from Sony, Vissonik, and others had selectable input-voltage levels.

As far as appearance goes, Midland and others offer trim panels that can be reversed or interchanged to give some choice of color. Marantz, too, now offers a choice of black or their traditional gold trim plates.

Some new models bucked the trend toward integrated radio/cassette units. Kenwood's new KZC-657, for example, is an under-dash cassette/amplifier combination that develops 15 watts of power per channel at 1 per cent distortion. It has an input for an external tuner which is automatically disconnected when a tape is playing.

Pioneer, on the other hand, introduced a new tuner, the GEX-60, with preset selection for fifteen stations (five AM, ten FM) and controls for bass, treble, volume, and balance, plus an automatic deck/tuner switching relay (apparently Pioneer intends this, not the tape deck, to be the master unit). Pioneer also introduced two new tape decks, the KP-202G, which releases the pinch-roller when the car's ignition is turned off, and the KP-404G, which has the same features plus Dolby. Both models also have Music Search and the Automatic Tape Slack Canceller (also featured in Pioneer home decks).

Kraco introduced a new micro-mini Stackmaster component system. With tuner, cassette deck, and equalizer/amplifier, the whole system is only 5 1/4 inches high, 4 inches in its other two dimensions, and costs \$300. Magtone (MGT) had a similar system, the MGT 3207, only 100 mm (just under four inches) tall.

SONY introduced the "Earthquake" amplifier—not, at 60 watts per channel, the most powerful amplifier around, but hardly the least powerful, and technically quite interesting. The power supply is a two-stage design: one stage operates at amplifier output levels below 15 watts per channel, and the other kicks in after that. There's also a Bass Drive filter for use with subwoofers.

MGT Magtone showed a five-band "parametric" equalizer that I hadn't noticed before. Like Jensen's "fifteen-band" model, it has conventional boost/cut controls plus switches selecting one of three center frequencies for each filter band. But there's no "Q" control to widen or narrow the filter bands as there would be on a true parametric.

A few more companies from the mainline audio industry have entered the car-stereo field. Nikko introduced its first two in-dash car-stereo units, and ESS, Infinity, SAEC, JVC, Ohm, and Philips showed speakers. I'll be covering the new car speakers in next month's column. □

Pocket Concert Hall PRICE SLASHED

Was \$199, then \$179---We cut it to only \$118

NOW JUST \$69

Cybernet has a problem. They built over 100,000 of these fabulous Pocket Concert Halls. They built them to be better than the Sony Walkman, but by the time they got them here, the price had already come down on the Walkman (it's now as low as \$139 in some areas) and lots of cheap Hong Kong made recorders have hit the market.

The Cybernet was built to sell for \$200 and wholesale for \$119. It has a very sophisticated dual flywheel tape drive system and superb electronics. To test a portable, shake it while you play music. If the music wows badly, or even stops, you have a cheap unit.

Both Sony's and Cybernet's can pass this test. Not many others can. So, if you want the best sound and the most stable unit, Cybernet has 35,000 left. And, at only \$69 (\$2.50 P&H) Order No. 9192, it's an incredible bargain. Remember this is a \$200 retail unit, and the January 1981 wholesale price sheet shows dealer cost at \$119.97. We'll be glad to send you a copy if you'd like to see it. You get DAK's 30 day risk free trial & Cybernet's 1 year warranty described below.

EXTRA HOME BONUS—We've made a special matching cable system so you can plug the Pocket Concert Hall into any line (aux) inputs in your home stereo. Now you can make copies of cassettes by playing them on the Pocket Concert Hall and recording on your main cassette deck, or just listen to your favorite cassettes through your home stereo. The sound is fabulous. Just \$4 (1 P&H) Order No. 9200.

First there was silence. Then from nowhere, there explodes an awesome kaleidoscope of sound. Violins from the left, trumpets from the right, while the sounds of a vocalist seem to come from somewhere above.

You've just experienced a breathtaking experience in sound. It's better than sitting in the middle of a full symphony orchestra.

As you take off the almost weightless 1½ ounce headphones and tentatively look around for the orchestra, the realization of the experience sinks in.

Now you can enjoy more beautiful sound from your cassettes while you are jogging or washing the car than when you are sitting in front of your stereo.

SOMERSAULTS AND CARTWHEELS
If you were on a diet yesterday, you probably lost more weight than the trifling 16 oz. of the Pocket Concert Hall.

The Concert Hall goes where you go with a protective leatherette case that easily hangs on your belt or rides comfortably in your pocket. It also comes with an adjustable shoulder strap.

Whether you're into gymnastics, long walks, or just mowing the lawn, you'll enjoy the unbelievably rich stereo sound of the Pocket Concert Hall. And, to prove our point, we offer you a 30 day risk free trial.

ENGINEERED FOR STRESS

Most fine stereo equipment is designed to be lovingly placed on a shelf and never moved. Obviously, this isn't a practical way to listen when you're walking your dog or riding a bike.

The Pocket Concert Hall incorporates a special dual flywheel tape movement system with a unique anti-rolling mechanism resembling a fine clock. It keeps the music smooth and stable, even when you're doing cartwheels.

The Pocket Concert Hall is specifically designed for rough treatment. Other machines are really redesigned dictation recorders. The Pocket Concert Hall is designed to provide superb stereo music while you're on the move.

You can expect years of enjoyment from this finely crafted revolutionary new sound machine.



MUSIC AT YOUR COMMAND

You won't be 'roughing it' when you leave home. You can play all your cassettes since there is an equalization switch for Metal/Chrome or standard.

The sound is crisp and clean with a frequency response of 30-14,000hz. The entire system is operated by 4 AA batteries (included).

There are convenient lock-in fast forward and rewind buttons, plus cue and review. If you want to listen to a song again, just press the review button without ever leaving play.



You can listen to the outside world by pushing the talk switch without taking off the feather-light stereophones. Dual volume controls, auto-stop and a battery condition/operation indicator light round out a full compliment of convenience features to enhance your musical enjoyment.

MULTINATIONAL GUARANTEE

Cybernet is an extremely large Japanese Company with a large presence here in the U.S. They manufacture component systems valued in the thousands of dollars and sophisticated wireless transmission systems.

Cybernet backs the Pocket Concert Hall not with the usual limited 90 day parts and labor guarantee, but with a limited full one year guarantee.

DAK is America's largest direct selling manufacturer of magnetic products. We add our own 30 day 100% satisfaction guarantee to protect your purchase.

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Take your Pocket Concert Hall on walks, to the mountains or as you commute to work. Enjoy your favorite music wherever you are and experience incredible concert hall realism.

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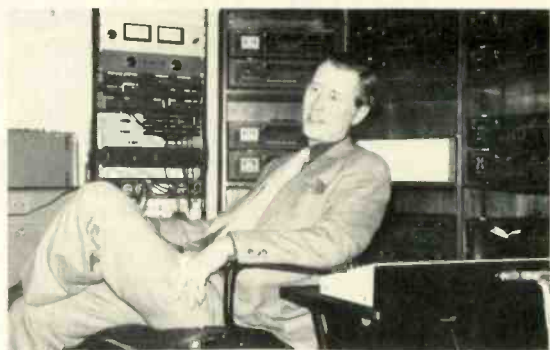
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Approved for Veterans Training

Tape Talk

By Craig
Stark



Different Dolbys

Q What is the difference between Dolby
B and C?

CURTIS WHITE
Glenwood, Iowa

A Dolby-B (and JVC's essentially equivalent ANRS) has been the standard home noise-reduction system for more than a decade. In its "encode" mode (during recording) it operates by boosting low-level ("soft") treble frequencies before they are fed to the tape deck's record amplifier. During playback the tape is "decoded," restoring the proper audio-frequency balance, by correspondingly cutting back all the low-level high frequencies. Noise reduction is achieved because the tape hiss inherent in the record playback process isn't boosted before recording but, like the other "soft" high frequencies, is subjected to the playback-side cut.

The total noise reduction achieved by Dolby-B varies with both the level and the frequency distribution of the treble content of the original signal. If there are strong high-frequency components in the music, the system bypasses itself, for further treble boosting would overload the tape. When the treble is soft (so that tape hiss would be audible), noise reduction starts to occur at about 1,000 Hz and reaches its maximum—10 dB—at frequencies of approximately 5,000 Hz and above.

Dolby-C is a little—only a little—like putting two Dolby-B systems in series. That is to say, it achieves 20 dB of noise reduction and (presently) uses two Dolby-B integrated circuits, one acting conventionally (thus preserving compatibility with the B system) and the other being used (in the C mode) to process separately another 10 dB of dynamic range. The maximum frequency at which Dolby-C operates is limited to approximately 17 kHz, for it has been found that at the extreme upper frequencies even Dolby-B can over-boost signals on a few very wide-range decks. Dolby-C extends the processed frequency range *downward* by about two octaves, however, bringing noise reduction to the mid-frequencies where it was not previously available with Dolby-B.

A comparison between Dolby-B and

Dolby-C, using wide-range material, shows how much noise we had learned to live with almost unnoticed (through even Dolby-C doesn't get it *all*). Dolby-C does impose a more stringent noise-level requirement on the other circuits in the cassette deck itself, however, so it will undoubtedly be restricted to "upper bracket" machines until lower-noise circuitry filters down to the more economical models.

Tape Wear

Q I'm considering buying a deck with an "automatic tape sensor" as well as "cue" and "review" facilities, but I am worried that these features might cause tape snarling, excessive oxide shedding, and excessive head wear. Will they?

ANTHONY SIMS
Chicago, Ill.

A Happily, your worries are all groundless. The "tape sensor" never touches the tape (only the shell), and the additional stress imposed by cue/review mechanisms is negligible in ordinary use.

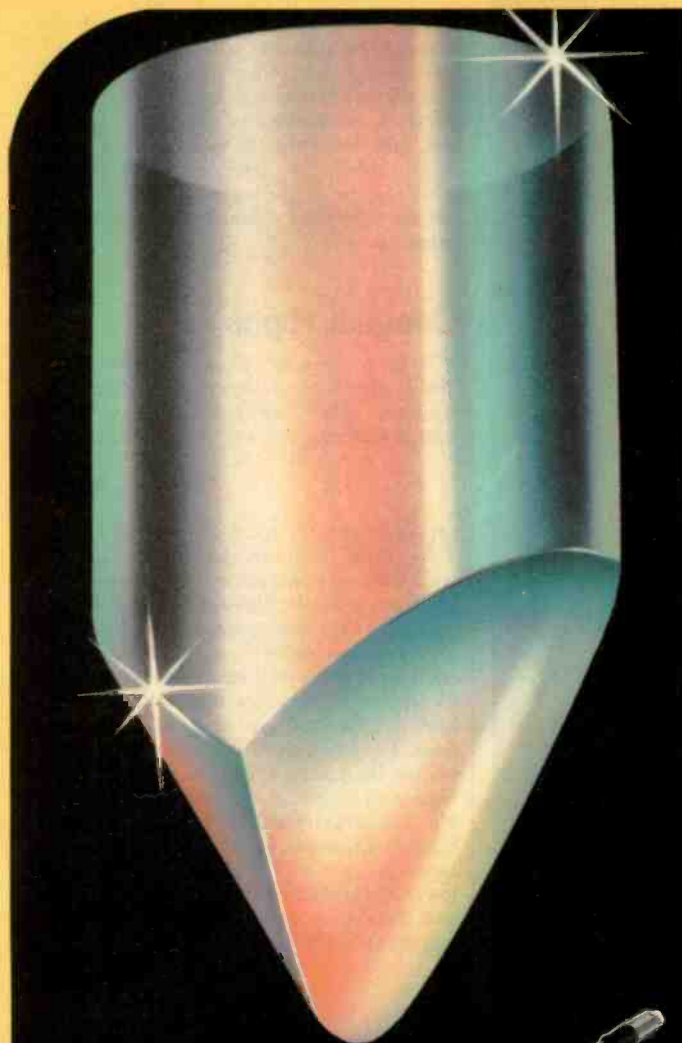
Capstan Cleaners

Q Is isopropyl alcohol safe for cleaning rubber capstan rollers? Some people have told me it removes vital constituents of the rubber compound and will rob the roller of its suppleness, so to be on the safe side I've avoided it. I use acetone for the tape heads, but not for the rubber, since it is a powerful solvent.

J. L. BAKER
Perth-Andover, New Brunswick

A I think you've gotten out of a cold frying pan and into a hot fire! I've used isopropyl alcohol (in the 91 per cent pure form, not the "rubbing-alcohol compound" form, which may contain some lubricants) on both tape heads and rubber pinch-rollers for some twenty years and have yet to harm either. Alcohol is, indeed, the chief ingredient of most tape-head and pinch-roller cleaners on the market.

The use of acetone on tape heads *can* be
(Continued on page 30)



When you're ready to "face" the music we have a tip for reduced distortion



**The HE Family:
Hyperelliptical-Equipped**



V15 Type IV
¾-1¼ grams

MV30HE
¾-1¼ grams

V15 LT
1¼ grams

V15 Type III-HE
¾-1¼ grams

M97HE
¾-1½ grams

M97HE-AH
(with attached headshell)
¾-1½ grams

M97 LT
1¼ grams

M95HE
¾-1½ grams

M75HE Type 2
¾-1½ grams

M75HE-J Type 2
1¼-2½ grams

Whether you are seeking to reproduce the full dynamic range in the grooves of today's new superdiscs, or simply to obtain maximum listening pleasure from treasured "oldies" in your record collection, you need a phono cartridge that will deliver optimum trackability with minimum distortion.

Because the phono cartridge is the only point of direct contact between the record and your entire stereo system, its role is critical to faithful sound re-creation. That's why upgrading your phono cartridge is the single most significant (and generally least costly) improvement you can make to your stereo system.

To that end Shure now offers the Hyperelliptical Stylus Tip configuration—first introduced on the critically acclaimed V15 Type IV—in a full line of cartridges with a broad range of prices.

The Hyperelliptical Stylus Tip has been called the most significant advance in decades in tip geometry. It has a narrower and more uniform elongated contact area that results in significantly reduced intermodulation and harmonic distortion.

Look over the list at left to see which Shure HE cartridge best matches your tracking force requirements.

Shure has been the top-selling cartridge manufacturer for the past 23 years. For full details on this remarkable line of cartridges write for AL667.

Go with the leader—Shure.

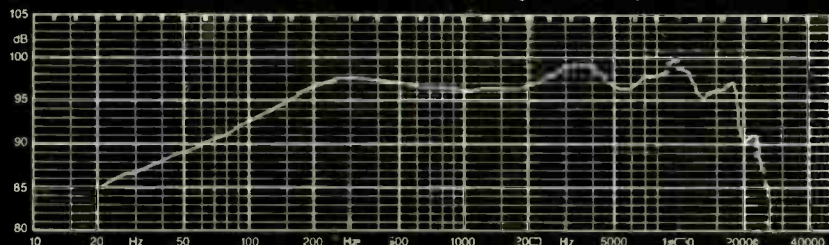


Shure Brothers Inc., 222 Hartrey Ave. Evanston, IL 60204
In Canada: A. C. Simmonds & Sons Limited
Manufacturers of high fidelity components, microphones, sound systems and related circuitry.

THE MURA RED SET III. TRUE SPECS.

At Mura, we believe the unadorned truth is our strongest ally. That's because we produce superior and innovative products of uncompromising quality. Products that can't require puffery and half-truths to sell them.

Take our top of the line mini headphones, the Red Set III™. The graph below represents the Red Set III's frequency response. Note the



use of 1dB increments so that maximum performance details are revealed (rather than using larger increments as others do to make their curve look flatter). Also note that our measurements are taken at realistic sound pressure levels and that there is no peak or valley of more than 2dB from 1000 Hz reference level over the range of 150 Hz to 19,000 Hz.

Of course one graph is not a complete presentation of the specs on the Red Set III. For instance, THD is less than 0.3% at 100 dB output from 100 to 20,000 Hz.

But the most impressive spec of all is that sound of this quality can be produced by a headset that weighs only 1.6 oz.

Try it for yourself. We think you'll be truly amazed.

TRUE SOUND.



MURA

You'll be Hearing From Us

dangerous, however, for in some cases it can dissolve the glue that bonds the head laminations together. Also, of course, a drop of acetone spattering can mar nearby plastic parts. A more effective cleaner than alcohol, and one which is safe for both heads and rubber, is trichlorotrifluoroethane, which is the active ingredient in the Nortronics tape-head cleaner (and probably in others as well).

Unequal Highs

Q. Is it possible to use a multiband equalizer to improve the frequency response of an inexpensive tape so as to match that of premium-price tapes?

DONALD W. COOK
Coral Gables, Fla.

A. You can try it, of course, but I don't think your chances of success—at least with very inexpensive tapes—are very good. By using the high-frequency sliders of your equalizer during playback (not recording) you can probably achieve essentially equivalent frequency response from "next-to-premium" cassettes when the recorded high frequencies are at a relatively low level. The hiss (which is already likely to be higher than with premium tapes) will be higher, of course, but it may still be tolerable. The larger problem, however, concerns high frequencies at high levels. Inferior tapes go into high-frequency overload at lower levels than the premium products do, and there your equalizer won't be able to correct the problem.

Dokorder Repairs

Q. I own a Dokorder tape deck that is in need of repair. However, the parts seem to be unavailable since Dokorder went out of business in the U.S. Can you help me?

TOM MELITO
Rochester, N.Y.

A. Write to Dokorder Service, P.O. Box 8, Lawndale, Calif. 90260. They have a stock of parts for the various Dokorder machines. They also perform repairs, but only on Dokorders.

Bad Channel

Q. When I record from my receiver, one of my deck's meters reads much lower than the other. Can you suggest why and what I can do about it?

STUART FISCHMAN
New York, N.Y.

A. The first thing to check is whether the fault is in the signal source, the recorder, or the cables between them. First, interchange the left- and right-channel cables between the tape-out jacks of your receiver and your deck's input jacks at one end only. If the problem switches channels, either the signal source or one of the cables is defective. Substituting a different cable on the problem channel may cure the difficulty. If the problem does not switch channels, then the deck is at fault. □

WHY SPEND \$200 MORE ON A BETTER TAPE DECK WHEN ALL YOU NEED IS \$2 MORE FOR A BETTER TAPE.



No matter how much you spend on a tape deck, the sound that comes out of it can only be as good as the tape you put in it. So before you invest a few hundred dollars upgrading your tape deck, invest a few extra dollars in a new Maxell XLI-S or XLII-S cassette.

They're the newest and most advanced generation of oxide formulation tapes. By engineering smaller and more uniformly shaped oxide particles, we were able to pack more of these particles onto a given area of tape.

Now this might not sound exactly earth-shattering, but it can help your tape deck live up to its specifications by improving output, signal-to-noise ratio and frequency response.

Our new XL-S cassettes also have an improved binder system, which helps keep the oxide particles exactly where they're supposed to be. On the tape's surface, not on your recording heads. As a result, you'll hear a lot more music and a lot less distortion.

There's more to our XL-S tape than just great tape. We've also redesigned our cassette shells. Our new Quin-Lok™ Clamp/Hub Assembly holds the leader firmly in place and eliminates tape deformation. Which means you'll not only hear great music, but you'll also be able to enjoy it a lot longer.

So if you'd like to get better sound out of your tape system, you don't have to put more money into it. Just put in our new tape.

maxell
IT'S WORTH IT.

Maxell Corporation of America, 60 Oxford Drive, Auckerman, N.J. 07074
CIRCLE NO. 35 ON READER SERVICE CARD

PIONEER LASERDISC. FIRST THE BEST PICTURE.



An actual freeze frame on tape. An actual freeze frame on disc.

The first time you see Pioneer LaserDisc™ in action, you'll know it's different.

It actually puts a picture on your TV with 40% more video resolution than home video tape. (Viewed side by side with tape, the difference is staggering.)

The first time you hear Pioneer Laser-Disc, you'll have a tough time believing your ears as well. Instead of hearing mono with that picture, you'll hear honest-to-

goodness stereo.

This combination of sight and sound creates a sensation you've simply never experienced at home before.

A reality of performance, a sense of "being there" that makes watching a movie or concert at home finally worth staying home for.

Having created all this picture and sound fidelity, it seemed only logical to offer pictures and sounds worth seeing and hearing.

Software that would live up to the hardware. And that's precisely what we've done.

Academy Award winning movies like *Ordinary People*, *The Godfather*, *Tess*, *Coal Miner's Daughter*.

Comedies like *Airplane*, *Animal House*, *Cheech and Chong*.

When you have the ability to play back in stereo, it makes sense that you offer music. So there are movie musicals like *Grease*, *Saturday Night Fever*, *All That Jazz*. There are Broadway shows like "Pippin." And there are concerts with Paul Simon, Liza Minnelli, Neil Sedaka, even the Opera.

The sight and sound experience of Pioneer LaserDisc is so remarkable, it seemed to demand a larger scale. Which led us to introduce the Pioneer 50" Projection TV.

The experience is more like being at the movies than like being at home. In fact, for the first time seeing a concert at home offers a



Attached to your stereo, it's more than a great picture, it's great sound.



Ordinary People¹



The Muppet Movie²



King Kong¹



Urban Cowboy¹



The Elephant Man¹



The Rose²



Popeye¹



The French Connection²



The China Syndrome³



Alien²



Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid²



Tess³

THEN THE BEST PICTURES.

picture that's every bit as large as the sound. As for the picture quality, well, just look at the picture of Liza below. Hard to believe, it's an actual picture taken right off the screen.

But with Pioneer LaserDisc you don't just sit back and watch. For example, with the "How to Watch Pro Football" disc, you can go backwards, forwards, in fast motion, slow motion, stop motion, study it one frame at a time.

There are discs that teach you golf, tennis, cooking, step-by-step. Then there's The First National Kidisc. For the first time, children learn at their own rate. Unlike television, the disc responds to them. Your kids will love it so much they won't even know they're learning.

The only way to believe all this new tech-

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nology is to see it. And we've arranged it. Just call us at 800-621-5199,* for the store nearest you. *(In Illinois, 800-972-5855.)

 **PIONEER®**
We bring it back alive.

Liza in Concert⁴



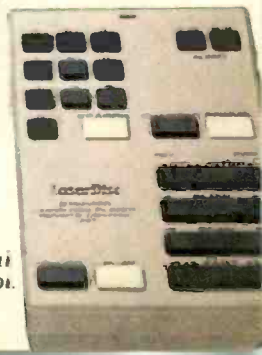
The Pioneer 50" Projection TV.

The Pioneer
LaserDisc Player.



*This LaserVision mark certifies compatibility with other laser-optical products bearing the mark.

Optional
Remote Control.



HEAR THE BEAUTY THAT IS MCS

Let the beauty of MCS® take you beyond sound. See it. Touch it. Feel it. The MCS Model 6720 Direct Drive Turntable. Its quartz crystal speed control maintains platter speed accuracy and helps reduce wow and flutter. Hear it. Only 239⁹⁵



Prices higher in Alaska, Hawaii and Puerto Rico.
MCS® Series Audio Components sold exclusively at JCPenney.
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STEREO
FOR THE SENSES
Sold only at JCPenney

CIRCLE NO. 60 ON READER SERVICE CARD

Technical Talk

By Julian D. Hirsch



• How Much FM-Tuner Sensitivity Do You Need? •

A RECENT letter from a reader in Knoxville, Tennessee, reminded me rather forcefully that we fortunate FM listeners who reside in well-served metropolitan areas have a pretty easy time of it, at least insofar as signal strength is concerned. That is probably why I have felt that all the FM tuners and receivers tested by H-H Labs in recent years have more than enough sensitivity for any reasonable person and that sensitivity is really a minor specification in terms of its actual importance to the majority of FM listeners.

I still feel that way, but the letter makes it plain that there are some listeners for whom this is not necessarily true. My correspondent explains that he prefers to listen to classical music, that such programming generally comes from far-off stations, and that most hi-fi component tuners and receivers are not up to the task. He feels that the designers of these products (and, by implication, reviewers such as myself who are satisfied with their performance) are not meeting *his* needs or the needs of a number of others of his acquaintance.

To hear his favorite stations, he must operate his tuner in its mono mode with the muting defeated. Of course, he also uses a roof-mounted, rotatable high-gain antenna. Oddly enough, he is able to obtain usable reception from a highly sensitive—but definitely *not* “hi-fi”—all-wave receiver that also has FM coverage. It has considerable distortion and very little audio power, but it at least receives stations that are ignored completely by some elaborate hi-fi components. Therefore, and with considerable jus-

tification, he wonders why there is all the current emphasis on pushbutton tuning, station memory, multipath indicators, and other whistles, bells, and “convenience” features when all he wants (and is willing to pay for) is high sensitivity.

My first reaction to this letter was that the writer was already doing all that was theoretically and practically possible to receive those weak signals, since he mentioned using “stacked log-periodic” antennas that are much more elaborate than the antenna systems typically used with stereo FM receivers. However, to improve my perspective I tabulated some of the sensitivity data for the twenty-two tuners and receivers we reported on during 1979 and 1980. I listed the mono IHF usable sensitivity and the 50-dB quieting sensitivity for both mono and stereo, all figures being in dBf.

If one is interested only in hearing a program, disregarding the noise accompanying it, the IHF mono usable-sensitivity figure is perhaps a reasonable minimum basis for selecting a tuner. The range of measured figures for these receivers was from 10 to 17 dBf, with the average being 11.2 dBf (about 2.1 microvolts). They spanned a wide price range, and there was little or no correlation between price and sensitivity.

If a tolerably quiet (but by no means “hi-fi”) background-noise level is required, the 50-dB mono quieting sensitivity can be used for comparison. Here the range of measurements was from 10 to 18 dBf, almost identical to the usable-sensitivity range (the two do not measure the same thing, however, since “usable” refers to a 3 per cent total-

harmonic-distortion figure of a modulated signal, while “quieting” refers to the noise level relative to 100 per cent modulation). The average was 13.4 dBf (about 2.55 μ V). If, by chance, one wants to hear programs in stereo, the problem is much more difficult, since in theory (and in practice as well) about 20 dB more signal is needed to achieve the same noise level in stereo as in mono. The stereo 50-dB quieting-sensitivity range was from 31.5 to 40.5 dBf, with the average figure being 35.7 dBf (32 μ V).

One fact emerges from the data, and it is that a number of presently available receivers and tuners, at all price levels, have sensitivities that approach theoretical limits; moreover, in many cases less expensive units outperform the more expensive ones (in respect to sensitivity, at least). Even if one selects a tuner or receiver at random, the sensitivity, no matter how specified, is likely to be within 2 or 3 dB of the best attainable figure. Until recently I would have said that it does not seem possible to make a significant improvement in any of these sensitivity ratings without a major design compromise such as degraded stereo separation or unacceptable distortion. However, I know of at least two respected designers who claim to have broken through the theoretical limit using a new technical approach (see last month’s “Bulletin” page).

To return to my correspondent’s problem: he is apparently already using a rather elaborate antenna system. Whatever it may be, simply “stacking” another similar unit

Tested This Month

Sound Concepts SX-80 CX Adaptor • Altec 6 Speaker System
Adcom GFP-1 Preamplifier • Nikko NR-1000 AM/FM Stereo Receiver
Audio-Technica AT155LC Phono Cartridge

above it and thus doubling the number of elements will add a useful 3 dB to the signal power at his receiver's antenna terminals. Further, if one is fortunate enough to have the necessary space, there is no need to limit oneself to conventional rotatable Yagis or similar antennas. A large fixed antenna such as a rhombic (or stacked rhombics if one is *really* serious) aimed at the preferred station will accomplish wonders. Gains of 15 or 20 dB over results obtained with a dipole antenna are possible with reasonable antenna sizes at FM broadcast frequencies. For example, a rhombic antenna ten wavelengths long on each leg (about 100 feet

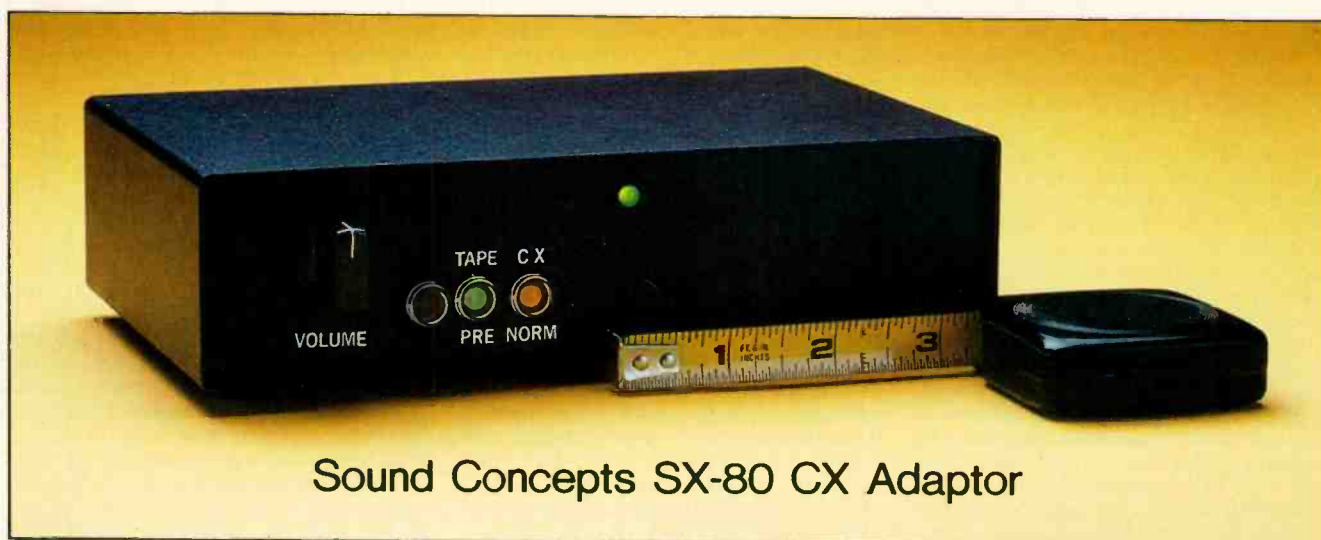
will occupy a space about 150 feet long in the desired direction (and about the same amount in its width) and need not be very high to be effective. It would provide reception far surpassing anything that could be achieved by purely electronic means. If space is available, such an antenna could be constructed out of wire for a few dollars—compared with the thousands that might be required for a "super-sensitive" tuner. With such an antenna, there is even some chance that those far-off stations could be received in stereo with passable quality. (For more information about rhombics, see *The ARLL Antenna Book* published by the American

Radio Relay League and available at large technical bookstores.)

Obviously, few people face such a difficult situation as does my correspondent. Nevertheless, the same principles apply in every case. FM tuner sensitivity as such is not a be-all, end-all specification, for a good antenna will enable even a so-so tuner to run rings around the most highly advanced, super-sensitive tuner *if* the latter is being operated with an inferior antenna. And remember—antenna gain is almost always far cheaper, if not more convenient, to obtain than an equivalent gain in tuner sensitivity. □

Equipment Test Reports

By Hirsch-Houck Laboratories



Sound Concepts SX-80 CX Adaptor

THE recently announced CBS "CX" companding system for recording was developed specifically to reduce noise in phonograph records. Like the dbx disc-noise-reduction system, CX requires the use of specially encoded discs, played through a complementary decoder, for optimum results. Those results include a 20-dB improvement in signal-to-noise ratio (S/N), effectively extending the dynamic range of analog discs to better than 80 dB and rivaling the performance claimed for the still-to-come digital audio disc systems. (This is based on the assumption that a recording made on a twenty-four-track digital tape recorder with a 95-dB S/N per channel, when mixed down to two channels for stereo, will have an 81-dB S/N.) The dbx noise-reduction system provides better than 20 dB improvement, but it must be decoded to sound acceptable even to a noncritical listener.

CBS set out to develop a disc encode/decode system which would be capable of significant noise reduction and whose encoded discs would not suffer by comparison with ordinary stereo discs when played *without*

decoding. The name of the system—CX—stands for "compatible expansion." Although only a few CX-encoded discs have so far been released, it is expected that within a year virtually all new releases from Columbia, Epic, and a number of other labels (Warner Bros. and RCA have announced their intention to participate) will be CX-encoded, particularly since the system is being made available on a royalty-free basis to the rest of the industry.

At present, several manufacturers are building CX decoders under license, using both integrated and discrete circuit elements. Eventually, most of the decoding circuits will be available in a single IC chip, which should expedite the appearance of CX-decoding circuits in receivers, amplifiers, and preamplifiers.

In the CX-encoding process the signal dynamics are compressed by 2:1 from above a 0-dB recording reference level down to -40 dB. This range encompasses much of the audible program content of music records. At levels below -40 dB there is no compression, and the input/output transfer

characteristic of the recording system returns to its normal 1:1 linear relationship.

Although record noise is *measurably* emphasized at both low and high frequencies, the Fletcher-Munson effect causes the *perceived* surface noise to be nearly uniform with frequency. For this reason, the CX system is designed to "compand" (compress and expand) uniformly across the entire audio range. This differs from both the Dolby-C system, which affects only high and middle frequencies, and dbx, which covers all frequencies but is weighted to suit the characteristics of tape noise. The operating parameters of the CX system are designed specifically for the noise and level characteristics of phonograph records. For example, the absence of compression below -40 dB prevents the CX system from boosting the master tape's noise above a record's background noise even when the record is played without decoding.

In the decoder, the input signals from the left and right channels are combined, rectified, and filtered by a circuit with a 1-msec

(Continued on page 40)



At last there's a cassette transport that fully exploits the precision of quartz.

You expect precision from quartz-locked direct-drive. But with a wow and flutter specification of 0.019% WRMS, the JVC DD-9 goes beyond your wildest expectations.

Audibly, this means complete freedom from pitch wavering. Plus uncanny clarity in the high frequencies thanks to almost total absence of flutter.

What else can you expect from a deck that's this accurate? Dolby[®] C for one thing. It reduces noise by 20 dB (versus 10 dB with the previous Dolby system). And it operates much farther down into the midrange, giving 15 dB noise reduction even at 500 Hz.

Against this newfound background of silence you'll hear a greater resolution of musical details, especially with wide-range source material.

There's other JVC magic in the DD-9, too. Like our computer B.E.S.T. system that automatically measures every tape you use. Then sets bias, EQ and noise-reduction values to achieve ruler-flat response with lowest possible distortion. While JVC's heralded Sen-Alloy (SA)[®] Heads give you supremely low distortion plus rugged durability, all in a three-head configuration.

* Dolby is a trademark of Dolby Laboratories.

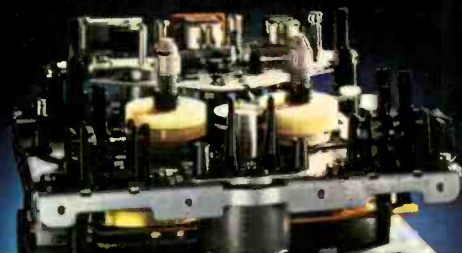
There's also an electronic-cigital tape/time counter. Peak/VU fluorescent level meters. Memory and Auto Rewind. And full-logic transport controls.

Is there a place in your system for a deck as accurate as the DD-9? Or the DD-7 or CD-5, both with wow and flutter at 0.021% WRMS? Why not visit a JVC dealer and find out.



DD-7 with quartz-locked direct-drive.

Quartz-locked direct-drive transport.



JVC

US JVC CORP.

41 Slaters Drive, Emwood Park, NJ 07407
JVC CANADA, INC., Scarborough, Ont.

Any loudspeaker system this flat deserves a fair hearing.

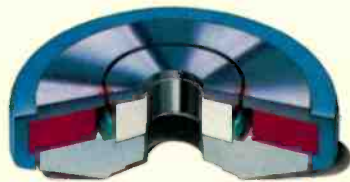
If you like the flatness of our L112 frequency response curve (below), you'll be even more impressed by the smooth, natural, uncolored sound that goes with it.

The L112 is a perfect example of JBL's advanced engineering design philosophy at work. Lasers, holography, computers and the human ear interfacing toward one end: The flattest, most accurate sound reproduction in JBL bookshelf history. The kind of pure, uncompromised sound quality that's made JBL the longstanding choice of audio professionals worldwide.

The overall performance quality of the L112 bookshelf system is the result of many

precision-engineered components working together to achieve sound so natural there's no sense of a speaker at all—only the music.

Cleaner, more powerful bass. The L112's Symmetrical Field Geometry (SFG) 12" woofer, with its larger 3" edge-wound voice coil and specially coated cone, delivers the bass notes of music with extremely low distortion. Lower than any other bookshelf system we've ever tested. You'll hear crisp, clean, powerful



bass all the way down to the lowest notes.

Our SFG innovations—the symmetrical magnetic field at the voice coil gap, and the aluminum Flux Stabilizing Ring—dramatically reduce the second harmonic distortion found in conventional drivers.

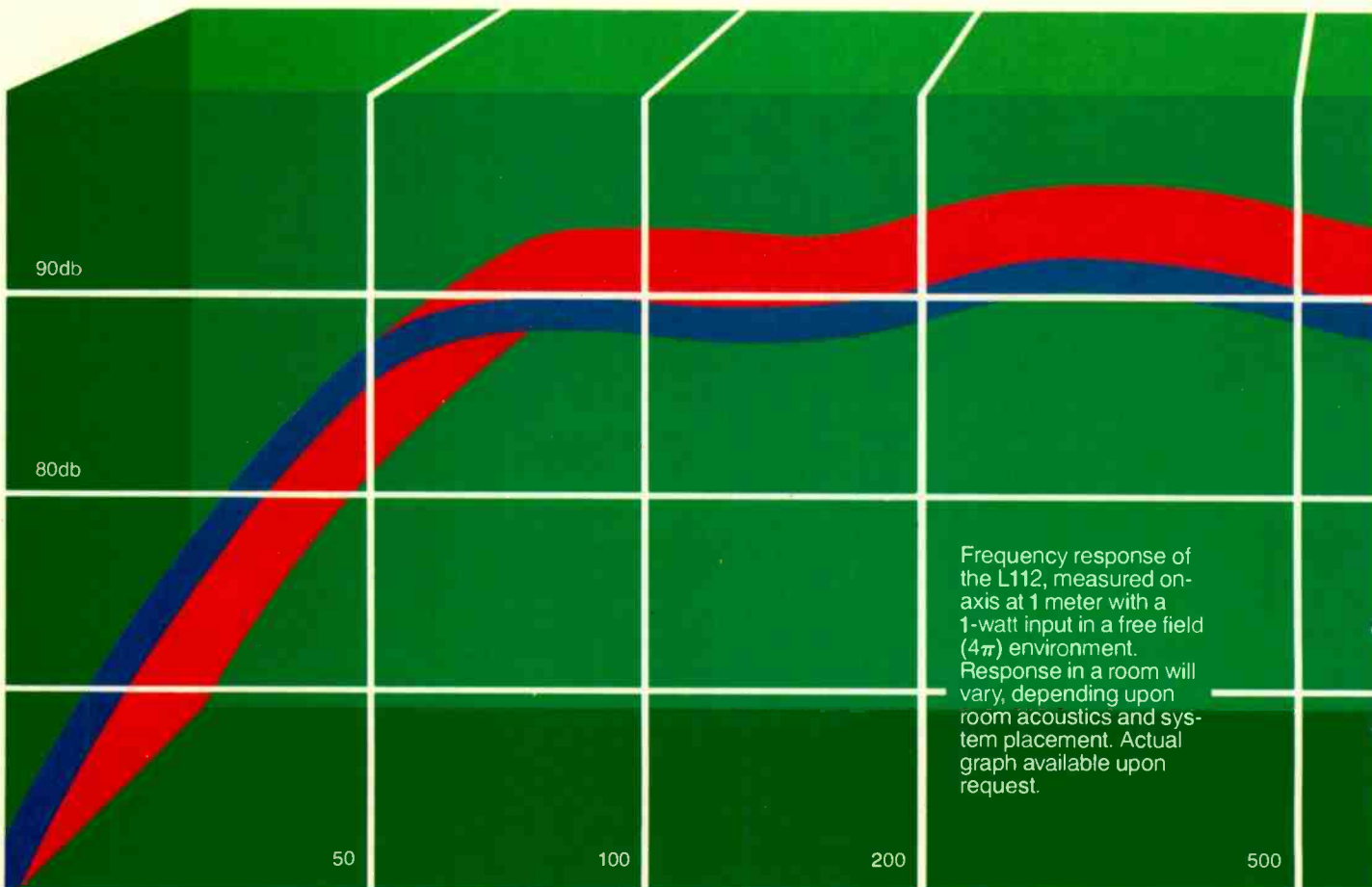
More high frequency detail. Specifically designed for the L112 system, our new 1" 044 high frequency dome radiator is formed of a lightweight phenolic material, coated with aluminum by means of a vapor deposition process. The 044 tweeter was developed using the capabilities of our fully equipped laser-optics laboratory.

Laser holography helps our



engineers examine tweeter cone movement like an X-ray allows physicians to examine the human body. Diaphragm excursions have been refined for exceptionally smooth response, maximum stereo imaging and high power handling. You'll hear harmonics you've never heard before.

JBL First with the pros.





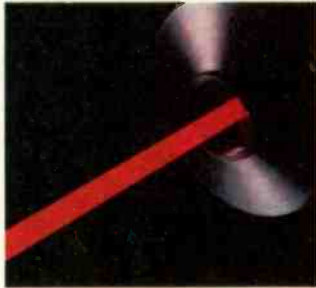
Superior transient response. Our new High Resolution Dividing Network enables the L112 to deliver transients with startling immediacy. The network controls each of the L112's drivers throughout its full operating range. You'll hear sound so coherent it will seem that only one extremely wide-range transducer is responsible.

Traditional JBL craftsmanship. The L112 represents more than engineering excellence. It is also an example of JBL's longtime commitment to fine craftsmanship and unrelenting quality control. Each speaker is crafted in the U.S.A. at our Northridge, California facility, and undergoes more than 50 inspections and tests during manufacture.

Each L112 is veneered in American black walnut, oiled and hand-rubbed to a lustrous fine furniture finish.

In the end, we know that you — and you alone — are the final judge of the products we work so long and so hard to produce.

So, listen to the L112 bookshelf system for yourself.



Audition it with the kind of music you like best, with the help of the audio specialists at your nearest authorized JBL dealer.

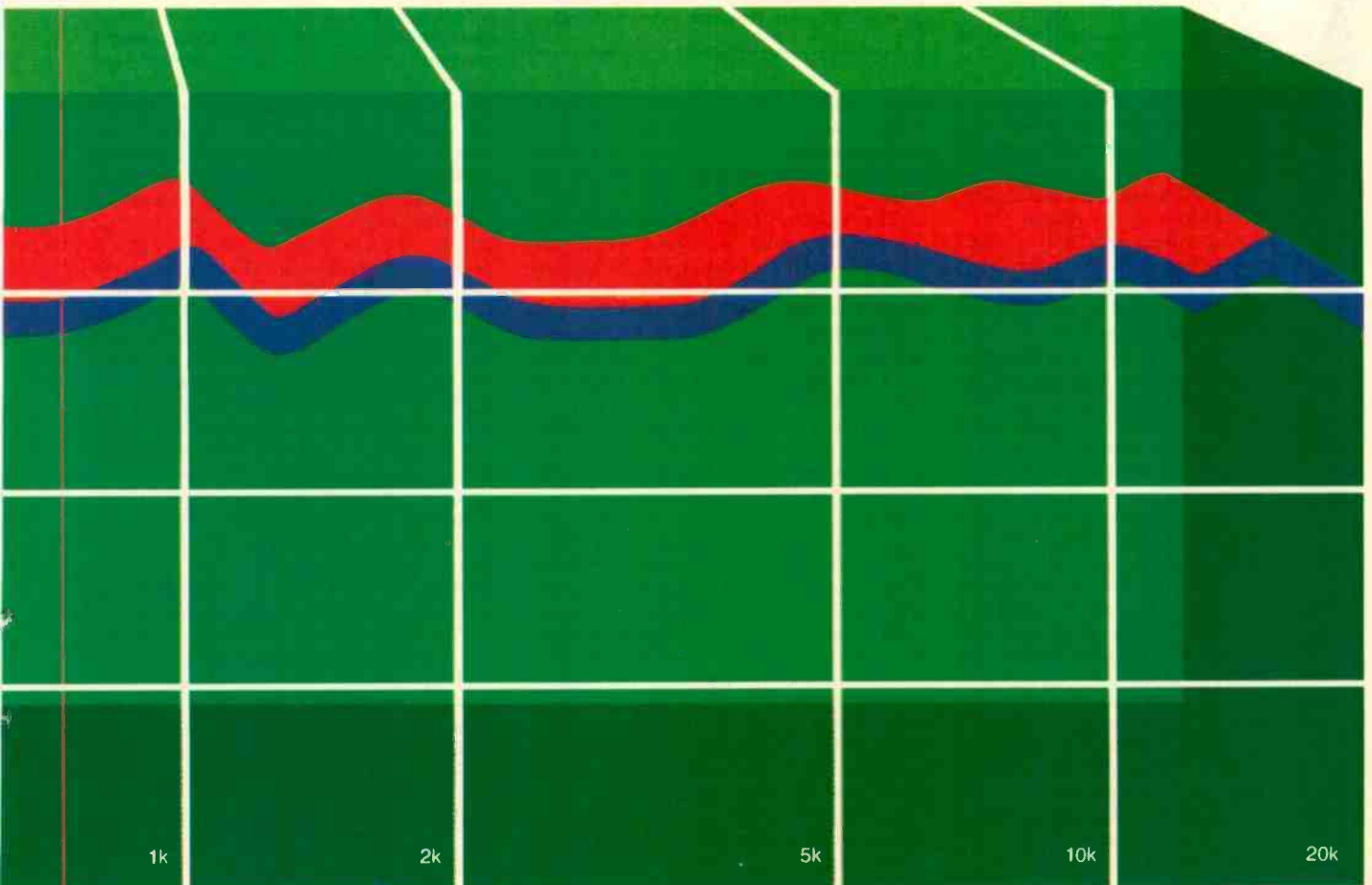
For the name and address of the JBL dealer nearest you, write: James B. Lansing Sound, Inc., 8500 Balboa Blvd., P.O. Box 2200, Northridge, CA 91329.

Comparison Analysis now available. Recently, we conducted a very enlightening series of performance tests comparing the L112 against several competitive speakers. For a copy of the documented results, as well as reprints of recently published L112 reviews, please write to us at the above address, attention: L112 Comparison Analysis.



JBL Harman International
©1981 James B. Lansing Sound, Inc.

CIRCLE NO. 29 ON READER SERVICE CARD



(millisecond) attack time and a 10-msec release time. Although this allows the expansion-control signal to follow rapid changes of program level, it would normally cause unacceptable "pumping" of background noise. Therefore, the rectified control signal is further processed by four separate filters with different time constants whose summed output voltage controls variable-gain amplifiers in the main left- and right-channel signal paths.

One filter permits only the first 30 msec of the "attack" (a sudden change in signal level) to reach the control stage. A second filter passes only signals longer than 30 msec, continuing the control action for signals of long duration with a minimum of ripple in the control waveform. A long-time-constant filter (about 2 seconds) tracks only the low-level steady-signal components to minimize signal modulation and audible noise. The fourth filter responds to a sudden decrease of signal level, adjusting the gain-control voltage at a rate which will not cause audible noise pumping until the third (long-time-constant) filter output takes over.

Although the operation of the CX circuit may seem complex when described, it is really no problem to achieve at relatively low cost with today's solid-state electronics. (It would have been prohibitively expensive with tube circuits.) As a matter of fact, the major cost in a CX adaptor is in the chassis, power-supply parts, and other assorted necessary hardware rather than the CX circuitry itself. This means that when the CX circuits are built into components (perhaps in early 1982), their inclusion should not add appreciably to the overall cost.

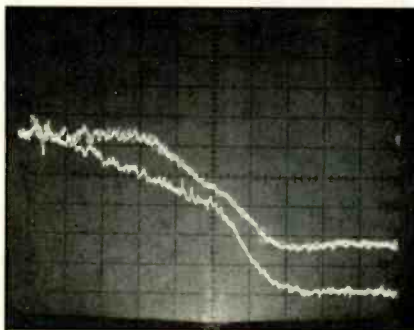
AMONG the first companies licensed to build a CX decoder is Sound Concepts, whose Model SX-80 was evaluated for this report. The unit we tested was a prototype; though it differs in mechanical details from production models, its electrical performance met the CBS criteria. It was supplied to us with several CX-encoded records produced for demonstrating the system.

The Sound Concepts SX-80 is a small black box 5½ inches wide, 3½ inches deep, and 2¼ inches high; it weighs 2 pounds. It was designed to be connected into the tape-monitor loop of an amplifier or receiver. On its front panel are three pushbutton switches; one connects or bypasses the decoding circuits, and another restores the function of the amplifier's tape-monitor switch. The third pushbutton, PEAK/CX, turns on an expander circuit. This feature, not a part of the CX process, is provided in the SX-80 to give an upward expansion of the dynamic range during playback of ordinary (non-CX-encoded) discs. An output-level knob enables the user to match the subjective volume levels of CX-decoded and normal discs. A LED glows green when the CX mode is selected if the signal level is less than the decoder's "0-dB" reference. Above that level (which should correspond to the output of a typical cartridge delivering 1 millivolt per cm/sec into a preamplifier having a 33-dB gain) the light passes through yellow and into red. There are internal adjustments to match the decoder's operation to the particular cartridge and

amplifier in use, but the system is relatively noncritical, and in practice most cartridges and amplifiers should give satisfactory results with the factory settings.

The specifications of the Sound Concepts SX-80 include a frequency response flat to ±0.25 dB from 20 to 20,000 Hz, distortion of less than 0.1 per cent at standard operating level, and a noise output of 85 dB below standard operating level. The maximum output voltage is 8 volts rms into a 10,000-ohm load. The SX-80 consumes less than 3 watts. Price: \$99.95.

● **Laboratory Measurements.** As with most noise reducers and other dynamic signal processors, our laboratory measurements of the Sound Concepts SX-80 consisted principally of verifying its input/out-



Spectrum analysis of phono-preamp noise reduction, 20 Hz to 43 kHz, at the output of an SX-80 CX decoder. Upper trace, decoder bypassed; lower trace, noise-reduced decoded signal. Vertical scale divisions indicate 10 dB.

put transfer characteristic, distortion versus signal level, and noise level. The bulk of the evaluation was done by listening to the CX-encoded records supplied to us for the tests.

The transfer characteristic was quite close to the stated one. The 2:1 expansion occurred between input levels of approximately +10 and -30 dB relative to the unit's reference level, at which the LED changed from green to red. (That level corresponded to an input of 0.17 volt at 1,000 Hz.) The front-panel level control was set for an output of 0.17 volt (unity gain) with a 0-dB input, although it could be increased to an output of 0.69 volt if desired. These are all arbitrary levels, of course, set by the manufacturer but user-adjustable to suit a particular phono cartridge and preamplifier, and the expansion range can be moved up and down to accommodate a different range of signal levels. In our case, an input variation of 35 to 40 dB resulted in an output change of at least 70 dB, and the slopes at inputs greater than +10 dB or less than -30 dB gradually reverted to the unmodified 1:1 values.

The PEAK/CX expander button, when pressed, disabled the CX decoding circuits. The SX-80 then operated as a linear amplifier (its overall gain was still adjustable by the front-panel knob) at input levels below 0 dB. From approximately 0 to +10 dB the

original 2:1 expansion slope was restored, and the slope reverted to a 1:1 ratio above +10 dB (as in the CX mode). The effect was to pass most program material without modification, but a high-level peak input of +10 dB appeared as a +18-dB output. The 8-dB expansion gave a worthwhile extra "impact" to many normal records, and in our tests it never degraded the sound in any way.

The 1,000-Hz output distortion at 0 dB was about 0.06 per cent, increasing slowly to 0.2 per cent at +6 dB to 0.5 per cent at +10 dB. The unweighted output noise was less than 100 microvolts (our minimum measurement limit, and 80 dB below 1 volt) with the decoder adjusted for unity gain at 0-dB level. We also made a spectrum analysis of the output noise with the SX-80 driven from an RIAA-equalized preamplifier whose input was terminated in 1,000 ohms. The noise was measured across the audio range with the CX-decoding circuits both active and bypassed. This showed about 18 dB of noise reduction at low frequencies (20 to 200 Hz), falling to 8 to 10 dB in the mid-range and rising to about 13 dB between 2,000 and 5,000 Hz (see accompanying scope photo) before falling to zero at 20,000 Hz. These figures cannot be related to the usual single-value noise specification, but they do show the actual effect of the SX-80 on RIAA-weighted noise from a conventional preamplifier (which, although it differs from the actual record-noise spectrum, will be combined with the latter in a real listening situation).

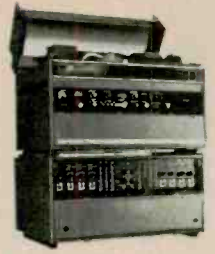
● **Comment.** We heard the CX system demonstrated by CBS earlier at a press showing, and it was quite impressive under those conditions (with insignificant audible changes between the digital master tape and a CX-encoded disc cut from it). Under more familiar listening conditions in the lab the results were much the same. Unfortunately, some of the demo records supplied were apparently made from analog master tapes and tape hiss could be heard clearly at the beginning of those discs. Others were quieter, and the program emerged from a dead-silent background. There was never any "pumping" of background noise or other audible clues that a compander system was at work. At any volume-control settings that would reasonably be used in home listening, there was *no* audible speaker output while playing silent grooves even with our ears pressed to the speaker grille.

This subjective effect will be familiar to anyone who has used dbx, Hi-Com II, Dolby C, or any other "20-dB-or-better" noise-reduction system. Although we did not make any A-B comparisons, the CX system was at least *subjectively* equal to any of them in respect to noise reduction and freedom from audible "processing" flaws.

The "acid test" for compatibility of the CX system was to listen to encoded records *without* decoding. This is actually CX's only real reason for being, for although the other systems are capable of achieving the desired S/N performance, they are "incompatible"—one simply cannot get satisfactory playback without correct decoding. With the CX records, when the system was

(Continued on page 42)

1939...FIRST DIRECT-DRIVE TURNTABLE SYSTEM.
1951...FIRST MOVING-COIL CARTRIDGE.
1972...FIRST DIGITAL (PCM) RECORDING.



Denon was founded 71 years ago, making it among the oldest extant companies in the audio industry. Thirty years ago, Denon first entered the professional recording field, and today it is the prime supplier to organizations like the NHK, Japan's equivalent to the British BBC.

Denon's professional products range from blank tape to 24-track recording consoles to fully automated radio stations; their accomplishments include the development of PCM (digital recording), one of the most significant advancements in the history of recorded sound.

In the U.S. Denon is known primarily by those in the know. In Japan, the land where electronics is king, Denon is king of the land.



1981...THE DENON DR-330 AND DR-320 SERVO-TENSIONER THREE-HEAD CASSETTE DECKS.

Many manufacturers would lead you to believe that three heads alone can transform a cassette deck. Denon's experience with professional studio tape-recorders proved that lack of uniform tape-to-head contact and proper transport stability, can create serious phase problems—especially in the high frequencies—whether the recorder has three heads or two.

To solve this problem, Denon developed a unique Tape Tension Servo Sensor, a system that maintains uniform tape-to-head contact during record and playback. In addition, Denon originated the Non-Slip Reel Drive mechanism (without clutches) which provides the extremely stable tape movement and prolongs the deck's life.

Before the development of the DR-330 (Speed Control and fine Bias Adjustment), Denon built two-head decks, which many audiophiles prefer even to the most expensive conventional three-head units.

With the development of the Tape Tension Servo Sensor and Non-Slip Reel Drive, Denon has realized the full potential of the three-head configuration.

The Denon DR-320 and DR-330. Two important contributions to better sound reproduction, from the company where innovation is a tradition.

CIRCLE NO. 18 ON READER SERVICE CARD (Remote control RC-55 optionally available.)

DENON
*Imagine
 what we'll
 do next.*

Denon America, Inc.
 27 Law Drive, Fairfield, N.J. 07006

test reports

adjusted for the same volume on loud passages with CX switched in and out, the low-level passages, as expected, got louder with CX off and became softer with it on. However, *in no case* would we have been able to tell just from listening without a decoder that the records were CX-encoded; they sounded pretty much like ordinary stereo discs. With CX on, however, the sound became much more natural (analogous to the difference in sound quality between an FM station using lots of compression and one that uses very little). Also, with a decoded CX-encoded disc, the maximum volume could be increased substantially without noise being audible during quiet portions.

To us, the most impressive aspect of the CX process was its reduction of low-frequency noise. Hiss is already fairly low on many good records, but very few records or

record players are free of low-frequency noise, and many systems have audible, though faint, power-line hum when their phono inputs are used. With CX, those noises are gone—totally! It makes an ordinary, modestly priced turntable as quiet as the most refined and expensive turntable (actually quieter, since the difference in rumble is much less than 20 dB). Although the Sound Concepts SX-80 that reaches the market (about the time you read this) may look slightly different from our test sample, it will operate in the same manner, and there will of course be other brands available as well. It is to be expected that their CX performance will be generally alike, since they are all built to meet CBS specifications, but some (like the SX-80) might have a special feature, such as the peak expander, in addition to CX decoding.

To us, it seems that with CX the consumer comes very close to getting something for (almost) nothing. CX-encoded records will sell for the same price as non-encoded records. Eventually, if CBS' plans come to fruition, all or most new records will be CX encoded and most receivers and amplifiers will have low-cost built-in CX decoders. This will not, however, make the development of digital audio discs unnecessary, for they will have other qualities (zero flutter and durability, for example) that are unlikely to be approached by any analog system. Still, CX brings the S/N of the ordinary, run-of-the-mill phonograph record and its reproducing hardware close to the levels touted for digital-disc record systems of the future—and CX is here *now*.

Circle 140 on reader service card



Altec 6 Speaker System

THE Altec 6 is one of a new series of medium-size speakers featuring technology that has until now been available only in Altec's larger home and professional systems. A three-way system using a 10-inch woofer in a vented enclosure, it is a relatively large (though not unduly heavy) system for shelf mounting, which is one of the recommended modes of installation since it offers the advantage of placing the tweeter near ear level. Alternatively, the speaker can be installed (vertically) on the floor,

preferably on a stand that raises its tweeter to ear level.

The woofer operates up to 700 Hz, where it is crossed over to the 5-inch midrange cone driver. The second crossover, at 5,000 Hz, is to a compression driver coupled to a "Mantaray" horn. The Mantaray constant-directivity horn and "Tangerine" phase plug are also used, in larger sizes, in the more expensive Altec systems. In the Altec 6, the scaled-down horn is driven by a lead-zirconate titanate (LZT) driver. The wide

dispersion of the horn is demonstrated in the specified coverage: 100 degrees horizontally and from +40 to -20 degrees vertically. If the speaker is to be mounted horizontally, the horn can be rotated 90 degrees to maintain the same polar coverage.

The Altec 6, nominally an 8-ohm system, has fairly high sensitivity. It is rated to deliver a 90-dB sound-pressure level measured at 1 meter when driven by 1 watt of wide-band pink noise. The speaker is rated for

(Continued on page 44)

BASF Chrome. The world's quietest tape is like no tape at all.

Today, only one high bias tape is able to combine outstanding sensitivity in the critical high frequency range with the lowest background noise of any oxide tape in the world.

That tape is BASF's Professional II.

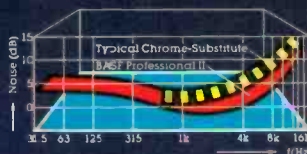
Professional II is like no other tape because it's made like no other tape. While ordinary high bias tapes are made from modi-

fied particles of ferric oxide, Professional II is made of pure chromium dioxide. These perfectly shaped and uniformly sized particles provide a magnetic medium that not only delivers an absolute minimum of background noise, but outstanding high frequencies as well.

Like all BASF tapes, Professional II comes encased in the new ultra-precision cassette shell for perfect alignment, smooth, even

movement and consistent high fidelity reproduction.

With Professional II, you'll hear all of the music and none of the tape. And isn't that what you want in a tape?



The difference in noise level between PRO II and ordinary high bias tape is greatest where the human ear is most sensitive (2-6 kHz)

GUARANTEE OFA LIFETIME

All BASF tape cassettes come with a lifetime guarantee. Should any BASF cassette ever fail — except for abuse or mishandling — simply return it to BASF for a free replacement.

Mobile Fidelity Sound Lab.

BASF Professional II is so superior it was chosen by Mobile Fidelity Sound Lab for the "Original Master" Recording™ High Fidelity Cassettes. These state-of-the-art prerecorded cassettes are duplicated in real time (1:1) from the original recording studio master tapes of some of the most prominent recording artists of our time.



CHROMA



BASF

For the best recordings you'll ever make.

use with amplifiers delivering between 20 and 200 watts per channel. It is protected by Altec's "Automatic Power Control," a passive (signal-powered) circuit that responds to an excessive power input by attenuating the signal for the duration of the overload. A red light, visible through the black grille, glows when this happens.

The cabinet of the Altec 6 is veneered in endriana (a wood from the South Pacific whose color and grain are somewhat similar to walnut). The front baffle is covered with a black acoustic-damping material to reduce diffraction effects, and the drivers are mounted flush with the baffle for the same reason. The cabinet is 25½ inches high, 15½ inches wide, and 13½ inches deep. The speaker weighs 37 pounds. Its spring-loaded input connectors are recessed into the rear of the cabinet. On the front baffle, flanking the three vertically aligned drivers, are the woofer-vent opening and a control panel containing continuously variable midrange- and tweeter-level adjustment knobs and the indicator light for the Automatic Power Control. Each control has a broadly designated "optimum" range where the flattest overall frequency response will be obtained. The rated frequency response is 60 to 20,000 Hz \pm 2.5 dB. Price: \$350.

● **Laboratory Measurements.** With both level controls set to maximum, the reverberant-field response of the Altec 6 was quite smooth through the midrange and rose above 5,000 Hz to a maximum of about +10 dB at 20,000 Hz. The dispersion of the Mantaray-horn tweeter was outstanding, with almost no measurable difference between the left- and right-channel response curves up to 20,000 Hz. The high-frequency level control affected frequencies above 7,000 Hz, reducing their level by 7 to 10 dB

when the control was moved from its maximum setting to the lowest point on its "optimum" scale (at about a 2 o'clock knob setting). At a middle setting the tweeter was already turned off. The middle-frequency output was adjustable between the limits of 1,000 and 8,000 Hz with about 3.5 dB of change between the maximum and middle settings of the control (the "optimum" range fell between those limits).

The woofer output, close-miked and combined with the port output, was greatest at about 80 Hz, where it was about 5 dB above the average midrange level. With the level adjustments optimized, the overall variation of our response curve was less than \pm 4 dB from 50 to 20,000 Hz. The "anechoic" frequency response of the speaker, as measured by our new INDAC FFT-analyzer computer, was within \pm 6 dB from 200 to 18,000 Hz (the high-frequency limit being set by the analyzer). There was a fairly narrow dip in output at about 5,000 Hz, apparently caused by a crossover cancellation at the microphone position used for this measurement. The woofer response was essentially the same as measured with our regular procedure.

The woofer distortion was very low down to 60 Hz (about 0.5 per cent or less at a 1-watt input and under 1 per cent at a 10-watt input). Even at 40 Hz, the 1-watt distortion was only 1.7 per cent and at 10 watts it was about 6 per cent. The system impedance was 5 ohms in the 20- to 30-Hz region, peaking at 30 ohms at the 60-Hz resonance and dropping to 7 ohms at 100 Hz (which would be the normal impedance-rating frequency for the speaker). It varied smoothly between 7 and 16 ohms over the rest of the audio range. The sensitivity was slightly lower than rated, but we use only an octave band of noise at 1,000 Hz instead of the

wideband noise on which Altec bases their rating. Our sensitivity reading of 87 dB with 1 watt input would rank the Altec 6 between the most efficient acoustic-suspension speakers and some moderately efficient vented systems.

● **Comment.** Initially, we set up the Altec 6 speakers with their level controls at maximum (the distinction between the "optimum" and maximum settings of the controls is not too visible at a glance). The sound was noticeably bright and crisp. When we experimented with the controls and placed the systems on a shelf against a wall instead of on the floor, there was a striking transformation in their sonic character. Altec's recommended settings were then just about right, and the speakers sounded excellent. They still showed a trace of brightness, but the sound was at all times pleasant and easy to live with.

The presence of the Automatic Power Control virtually challenged us to test its efficacy (but only after our measurements had been completed). With a 200-watt amplifier driving the systems, we slowly turned up the volume, alert for any sounds of distress or for the red alert light on the speaker baffle to come on, whichever occurred first. The protection circuit won the race. Before any of the other possible limitations on maximum level came into effect, the red lights came on brightly and unmistakably. We heard no evidence of the level limitation, but at that sound level (close to 110 dB) no one's hearing is at its best. Our conclusion: the Altec 6 is a fine-sounding, good-looking, well-protected speaker selling at a very fair price. A really nice job in every way.

Circle 141 on reader service card



Adcom GFP-1 Preamplifier

THE Adcom GFP-1 is a compact, no-frills preamplifier/control center whose design stresses low noise and maximum compatibility with other system components. The GFP-1 weighs about 11½ pounds and is suitable for rack mounting: front-panel dimensions are 19 inches by 3 inches and depth is 12½ inches.

The GFP-1 is an ideal companion for the

Adcom GFA-1 power amplifier, matching its flat-black exterior finish. A large, square pushbutton power switch at the left of the front panel controls two switched a.c. outlets in the rear (there is also one unswitched outlet). The 800-watt rating of the switched outlets makes them suitable for powering the 200-watt-per-channel GFA-1 or any other high-power amplifier.

The most prominent feature of the front panel of the GFP-1 is the large volume knob, which operates a lightly detented forty-position control. Smaller knobs are used for the bass and treble tone controls, balance control, and input selector. The last operates a switch at the rear of the preamplifier close to the input jacks through a

(Continued on page 46)

Blaupunkt Innovations in Automotive Sound

Only the new Blaupunkt 3001 has Remote Control Station Scanning and Illuminated Controls

Here is a sophisticated AM/FM Stereo Cassette that incorporates two of the latest Blaupunkt advances in car stereo.

Blaupunkt engineers have found a way to minimize the aggravation of searching out a station while you drive. The 3001 has a built-in microprocessor that, among other things, relieves you of twiddling with knobs and fine tuning dials to isolate the station you want to enjoy.

Scan manually or by remote control

When you want to scan the AM or FM spectrum, you simply press a knob and the microprocessor orders an automatic signal scanner to do the rest. It will lock in each station, crystal clear and with no interference, for five seconds. Then it automatically advances to the next frequency, station by station, until you hear what you like. Just press the knob once more to lock in the station of your choice.

To carry convenience a step further, Blaupunkt furnishes you with a remote

control device which you can mount on your dash or your steering column. This device lets you perform the above scanning operation without even touching the radio.

Illumination for night driving

Convenience is not the only concern of Blaupunkt engineers. To improve the margin of safety during night driving, the essential controls on the face of the 3001 are fully illuminated. You can expect other



The essential controls are fully illuminated. car stereos to incorporate this feature sooner or later. At Blaupunkt we're used to that.

The 3001 sells for \$630* and is part of a complete line of AM/FM stereo cassettes priced from \$250.

Because of its compact chassis plus adjustable shafts it will fit easily into the dash of just about any car.

Blaupunkt 3001 Features

- 4 x 15W (4 separate channels)
- 12 Electronic Station Presets
- Electronic Station Scan
- Remote Control Scanner
- Illuminated Station Controls
- Digital Frequency/Clock Display
- Local/Distance Switch
- Stereo/Mono Switch
- ASU (Automatic FM Noise Suppression)
- **Dolby Noise Reduction Circuit
- Autoreverse Cassette
- Pushbutton Locking Fast Forward and Rewind
- Semidust Head
- Separate Bass and Treble
- Separate Fader and Balance
- Tape Bias Compensation Switch
- Power OFF Eject

**Dolby is a registered trademark of Dolby Laboratories.

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Mississauga, Ontario L5N 1R1

*Suggested retail price exclusive of installation and speakers.

BLAUPUNKT

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flexible shaft and provides inputs from two magnetic phono cartridges and two high-level sources (TUNER and AUX).

The other front-panel controls are push-buttons. Two engage the LO and HI filters (whose infrasonic and ultrasonic cutoff frequencies exclude extraneous noise rather than modify the program content). A MUTE button drops the gain about 20 dB, and the TONE button switches the tone-control circuitry in and out. The LOUDNESS button activates the loudness compensation, which follows the criteria of psychoacoustic researchers Robinson and Dadsen, providing less extreme low- and high-frequency boost at low volume levels than the earlier Fletcher-Munson curves.

The MONO button interconnects the two signal channels, and the remaining three buttons control the tape functions for either one or two decks: MONITOR connects the playback output of either TAPE 1 or TAPE 2 (as selected by the adjacent button) to the amplifier circuits, and DUB cross-connects the two tape decks (the playback output of each to the recording input of the other) for dubbing tapes in either direction. The GFP-1 also has a front-panel headphone jack.

The rear panel of the GFP-1, in addition to its signal inputs and outputs, has two pairs of MAIN OUT jacks and a +48-volt jack for powering other accessories to be made available in the future. The price of the Adcom GFP-1 is \$350.

● **Laboratory Measurements.** The maximum rated output voltage of the GFP-1 is a sizable 10 volts, and in our tests it handily exceeded that rating, clipping at 12.3 volts output into a standard IHF load of 10,000

ohms in parallel with 1,000 picofarads (pF). The output noise with the high-level inputs was unmeasurable under our test conditions, being less than the 100-microvolt minimum reading of our meters even when unweighted. The phono-input noise was 0.48 millivolt (mV) unweighted, but it was less than 100 microvolts with A-weighting (-74 dB referred to the standard output level of 0.5 volt). The preamplifier's noise ratings are -90 dB (high-level) and -87 dB (phono) with A-weighting; both exceed our measurement capability.

The harmonic distortion was also very low (it is rated at 0.015 per cent). At 1,000 Hz it was only 0.0003 per cent (the instrument residual) at 1 volt, increasing to 0.0016 per cent at 10 volts. At the frequency extremes the distortion was slightly higher, typically 0.0015 to 0.003 per cent for outputs of a few volts at 20 and 15,000 Hz and increasing to 0.003 and 0.008 per cent, respectively, at 10 volts. The GFP-1 can obviously be considered, for all practical purposes, distortionless.

At maximum gain, the high-level sensitivity was 31 mV and the phono sensitivity was 0.5 mV for a 0.5-volt standard output. The phono preamplifier (a low-noise FET stage) overloaded at 300 mV at 1,000 Hz, and the equivalent overload values at 20 and 20,000 Hz were 342 and 262 mV. The phono-input impedance was 47,000 ohms in parallel with 75 pF. The RIAA equalization was accurate within ± 0.25 dB from 20 to 20,000 Hz and was completely unaffected by cartridge inductance.

The tone-control curves had a sliding bass-turnover frequency from less than 100 to about 500 Hz, and a family of treble-

response curves hinged at 3,000 Hz. The maximum tone-control range was unusually large, with about ± 20 dB of bass adjustment available at 30 Hz and ± 15 dB of treble range at 20,000 Hz. Adcom's literature points out that the tone-control rollover frequencies match those of the RIAA phono equalization curve for better control of phono-playback response. However, the bass turnover of 500 Hz (which is also the RIAA turnover frequency) is realizable only at the maximum control setting, which we doubt would be used in any reasonably good system.

The loudness contours showed a bass boost beginning at about 100 Hz and reaching a maximum of about +12 dB at volume settings below about -30 dB. The treble boost was very moderate, beginning at 10,000 Hz and reaching only +4 dB at 20,000 Hz. The LO filter, which is supposed to have a 12-dB-per-octave slope and a -3-dB response at 20 Hz, was down 8 dB at 20 Hz on our sample, and its -3-dB frequency was 40 Hz. The HI filter had a barely detectable effect in the audio range (-2 dB at 20,000 Hz), but when its button was pressed the overall gain of the preamplifier dropped by 2.5 dB. The listening volume through headphones was excellent even with medium- to high-impedance phones.

● **Comment.** Adcom's term "Silent Partner" seems wholly appropriate as applied to the GFP-1. Electrically, this is as quiet as any preamplifier we have seen (hum and noise are not only inaudible, but are too low for convenient measurement). There are no switching transients, partly because of a turn-on time delay that mutes the preamplifier outputs with a relay for about 5 seconds after power is applied, allowing the other parts of the system to reach stable operating conditions.

The phono preamplifier section of the GFP-1 is about as close to ideal as any we know of from the standpoints of equalization accuracy, freedom from interaction with cartridge inductance, and overload capability, to say nothing of its very low noise levels. The tone controls, whose characteristics are very good, have a large range of adjustment and should be used with discretion (20 dB of bass boost could overtax almost any amplifier or speaker system). Although we have rarely been satisfied with the effects of loudness compensation unless separate control of level and frequency response are provided, we must say that the Adcom system is remarkably unobtrusive. There is little or no evidence that it is in use unless the program contains appreciable low-frequency energy, in which case switching the loudness compensation in and out makes a modest but clearly audible change in the overall program balance.

The Adcom GFP-1, like its companion power amplifier the GFA-1, is compact and unobtrusive. It is a "Silent Partner" in a visual sense as well as sonically, doing its job without unnecessary frills or gimmicks. At its modest price, this is one of the better preamplifier values on today's market.



"... I've had a tough day, Elaine. Just put the ambiance setting on 'suburban living room.'"

Circle 142 on reader service card

(Continued on page 48)

A close-up photograph of a man with a mustache wearing a light-colored cowboy hat and a light-colored shirt. He is looking slightly to the right and holding a lit cigarette in his right hand. The background is a soft-focus outdoor scene.

**Come to where the flavor is.
Come to Marlboro Country.**

16 mg^{av.} tar, 1.1 mg nicotine av. per cigarette. FTC Report Mar. 81

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





Nikko NR-1000 AM/FM Stereo Receiver

THE Nikko NR-1000 stereo receiver features digitally synthesized FM and AM tuning with six preset "memory" channels for each of those bands. Its audio amplifier is rated to deliver 65 watts per channel to 8-ohm loads from 20 to 20,000 Hz with no more than 0.03 per cent total harmonic or intermodulation distortion.

Like most digital-synthesis receivers, the NR-1000 uses pushbuttons for its tuning functions, displaying the received frequency with $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch-high orange numerals. The band in use is identified by the orange letters AM or FM, with the appropriate "kHz" or "MHz" appearing to the left and right of the numbers. The stations are tuned by a pair of flat elongated buttons below the frequency readout, which cause the receiver to scan either up or down in frequency when they are pressed.

A small TUNING MODE button selects either auto or manual tuning. In auto the receiver scans rapidly after a momentary touch of a TUNING button, stopping only on a signal of sufficient strength. In manual the tuning advances in steps of 200 kHz (a channel width) on FM and 10 kHz on AM. In either mode, holding a TUNING button in will cause the receiver to scan rapidly and continuously.

To the left of the frequency readout are several LED displays indicating relative signal strength (with five segments), stereo reception, power on, and two groups of audio-power indicators calibrated from 0.03 to 65 watts for each channel. Below the displays are the six preset tuning buttons and a MEMORY button. To store the frequency of any station, MEMORY and one of the preset buttons are touched in succession. A small green LED above each preset button glows when it is in use. Each button can be used to store one FM and one AM frequency. The large power button completes the horizontal row below the display area.

The receiver's other controls are conventional in appearance and operation. They include two SPEAKER buttons, a phone jack, bass and treble tone controls (each having eleven detented positions), a center-detented balance control, and a large volume

control to the right of the display window. Small rectangular buttons provide TONE-DEFEAT, SUBSONIC FILTER, STEREO/MONO mode, LOUDNESS compensation, TUNING MODE, FM MUTE, FM/AM band selection, and choice of either an MM (moving-magnet) or MC (moving-coil) phono input.

The program source is selected by pressing one of five large rectangular clear-plastic buttons aligned vertically at the right of the panel. They are marked PHONO, TUNER, AUX, TAPE 1, and TAPE 2 and light up in green when engaged. A small knob next to the balance control cross-connects two tape decks for dubbing in either direction.

The rear of the NR-1000 contains the usual input and output connectors, including small insulated binding posts for the two sets of speaker outputs and the antenna input connections. The AM antenna is a small loop (not a ferrite rod) whose outputs connect to the AM-antenna terminals externally. The loop can be removed from the rear of the receiver and mounted nearby for best reception. One of the two a.c. outlets is switched. There are also two pairs of phono jacks marked ADAPTOR (OUT, IN), and they are joined by removable jumpers. These are almost equivalent to the pre-out/main-in jacks found on some amplifiers and receivers. However, they are ahead of the volume, loudness, mono/stereo, and infrasonic-filter circuits of the NR-1000, although they come after the tone controls and tape-recording circuits. The ADAPTOR jacks are suitable for connecting signal-processing accessories such as equalizers, noise reducers, and expanders. The Nikko NR-1000 receiver, finished in silver grey, is 17 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches wide, 13 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep, and 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches high; it weighs about 22 $\frac{1}{2}$ pounds. Price: \$620.

● **Laboratory Measurements.** The cooling fins for the output transistors are located within the cabinet of the receiver, with heat being removed by air convection through a grille on its top cover. The grille became very hot during our preconditioning and high-power tests, but the exterior was comfortably cool during normal operation.

The output at 1,000 Hz clipped at 81 watts per channel into 8 ohms for an IHF clipping-headroom rating of 0.96 dB. Into 4- and 2-ohm loads (for which the receiver is not rated) the respective clipping power outputs were 82 and 40.5 watts. Using the tone-burst signal of the IHF dynamic-headroom test, the output clipped at 111 watts into 8 ohms, 96 watts into 4 ohms, and 51 watts into 2 ohms. The IHF dynamic-headroom rating (8 ohms) was 2.32 dB.

At the rated 65-watts output (8 ohms) the distortion was less than 0.002 per cent below 5,000 Hz and was 0.0075 per cent at 20,000 Hz. At half power and one-tenth power the characteristics were similar, with slightly lower readings. At 1,000 Hz, the distortion into 8 ohms was undetectable, being below the "noise floor" at most power outputs. It was well under 0.001 per cent up to 70 watts, reaching 0.005 per cent at 80 watts output just before clipping occurred. The 4-ohm performance was similar, with the distortion being less than 0.0014 per cent up to 40 watts and rising to 0.04 per cent at 75 watts. The 2-ohm distortion became measurable at 20 watts, where it was 0.0027 per cent, and it rose rapidly from 0.016 per cent at 30 watts to 0.26 per cent at 40 watts.

The amplifier was stable with reactive loads, although as clipping occurred with 2-ohm loads there was a burst of high-frequency oscillation visible on the output waveform. The IHF slew factor exceeded 25. The IHF IM distortion, measured with equal-amplitude signals at 19,000 and 20,000 Hz, was unmeasurable, with no component greater than -90 dB referred to rated power output.

The amplifier sensitivity for 1 watt output was 19 millivolts (mV) through the AUX input and 0.28 mV through the PHONO (MM) input. No measurements were made through the MC input, which has a rated sensitivity ten times higher than the MM input and a 100-ohm input impedance.

The noise levels were nearly alike for the high- and low-level inputs, measuring -79 to -81 dB (A-weighted) referred to 1 watt.

(Continued on page 50)

The Onkyo TA-W80.

It will dazzle you, delight you,
drive and deliver you.



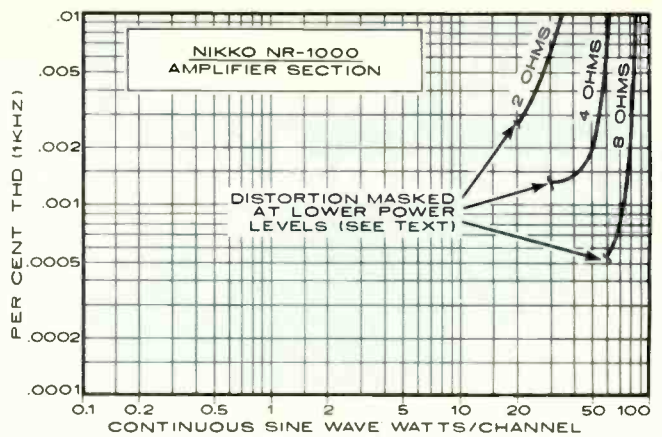
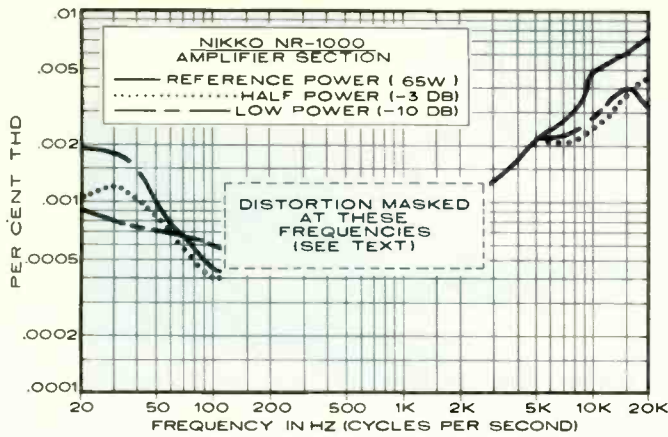
The Onkyo TA-W80 Studio Deck is the most exciting stereo cassette deck available today. It integrates two cassette tape decks into a single component, with all the controls to operate them individually, simultaneously, or in sequence.

The Onkyo TA-W80 not only provides incredibly pure and exciting record/playback quality . . . it gives you a capability that even two stand-alone tape decks cannot provide.

You can now edit with improved precision . . .

make quality high speed dubs in half the normal time without setting levels . . . playback two tapes simultaneously . . . or set them for uninterrupted automatic sequential play. You can even mix your own recordings . . . mixing a mic input with an external source . . . or a mic signal with the program from cassette #1.

Little wonder that The Onkyo TA-W80 was selected as "one of the year's most innovative products" in the Consumer Electronics Design Exhibition.



The phono-preamplifier stage overloaded at 170 mV at 1,000 Hz, and at the frequency extremes of 20 and 20,000 Hz the overload levels (converted to equivalent 1,000-Hz values) were 185 and 141 mV, respectively. The MM phono-input impedance was 46,000 ohms in parallel with a capacitance of 135 picofarads.

The amplifier tone controls had the typical Baxandall frequency response, with the low-frequency turnover shifting between 100 and 300 Hz as the bass control was varied and the treble curves being hinged at 3,000 Hz. The loudness compensation boosted both low and high frequencies at low volume settings. The infrasonic-filter response was down 3 dB at 30 Hz and 5 dB at 20 Hz. The RIAA equalization was accurate within ± 0.5 dB from 20 to 20,000 Hz. The extreme high-frequency phono response was very slightly affected by cartridge inductance, rising about 0.5 dB at 20,000 Hz.

The FM-tuner section had a mono usable IHF sensitivity of 14.4 dBf (2.9 microvolts, or μ V) and a stereo sensitivity of 17.2 dBf (4 μ V). Its mono 50-dB quieting sensitivity was 15.3 dBf (3.2 μ V) in mono and 35.5 dBf (33 μ V) in stereo. At a 65-dBf (1,000- μ V) input the distortion was 0.28 and 0.19 per cent, respectively, for mono and stereo modes, with corresponding noise levels of -69 and -67 dB. The two-tone IHF IM distortion measurement, using frequencies

of 14,000 and 15,000 Hz, showed a 1,000-Hz difference-tone component of -56 dB in mono and -62 dB in stereo, referred to 1,000 Hz at 100 per cent modulation. The third-order components at 13,000 and 16,000 Hz were 48 and 52 dB below the modulating-tone levels for mono and stereo. In stereo, there were also a number of spurious frequencies in the output (this is typical of most FM tuners), but none exceeded a -60-dB level.

The stereo-FM frequency response was flat within ± 0.6 dB from 30 to 15,000 Hz. The low-pass filters that removed multiplex pilot-carrier signals from the audio output were very effective in spite of having no effect on the frequency response at 15,000 Hz, since the 19-kHz leakage was a low -70 dB. The tuner hum was -67 dB. The channel separation was about 38 to 42 dB at the frequency extremes of 30 and 15,000 Hz and about 45 dB throughout the mid-range frequencies.

The muting threshold was factory-set at 16.2 dBf (3.5 μ V) but is easily adjustable with a screwdriver by a rear-mounted control. The adjustment limits were 10.8 dBf (1.9 μ V) to 62 dBf (700 μ V). The stereo-switching threshold varied with the muting setting, but it was slightly lower. It was adjustable from 8.7 dBf (1.5 μ V) to 61 dBf (600 μ V) and the setting was 14.4 dBf (2.9 μ V) as received. The capture ratio was 1.83 dB at 65 dBf input, and the AM rejection

was 58 dB at the same level. Alternate-channel and adjacent-channel selectivity readings were 63 and 6 dB. The image rejection was a good 83 dB. The AM frequency response was down 6 dB at 90 and 3,700 Hz.

● **Comment.** Many of the control features of the Nikko NR-1000 are typical of those found on modern digital-synthesis receivers in its price range. Unlike some receivers, whose tuner-memory circuits can be kept "alive" only while the receiver is plugged into a powered a.c. socket or with batteries installed in the receiver, the NR-1000's memories function for at least three days without power. We also appreciated the adaptor connectors, which make it unnecessary to usurp one of the tape-monitoring circuits for another accessory device.

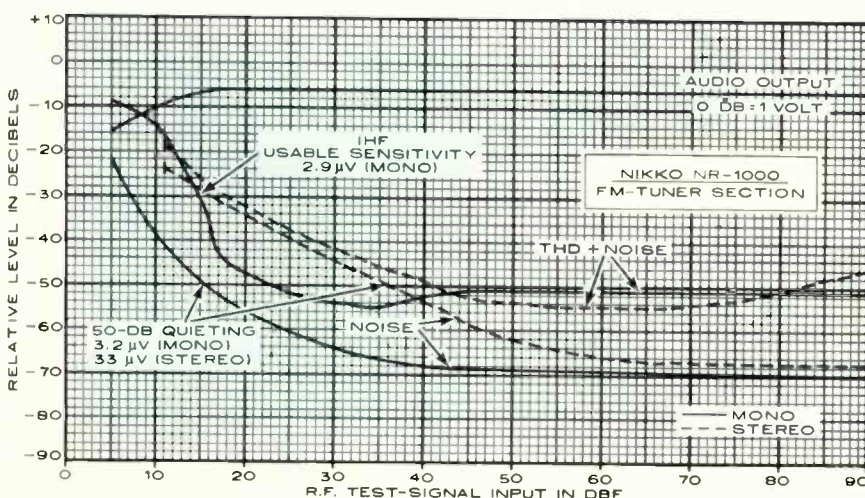
Although the lights above the preset buttons show when one is engaged, they can be seen only over a restricted vertical angle, so that the receiver should be installed close to eye level if these lights are to serve any purpose. The brightly lit and highly legible selector buttons more than compensate for this minor inconvenience, since they can be read from across the room. The digital frequency readout is highly visible from almost any location.

The FM tuner of the NR-1000 can be characterized as a good performer. Perhaps because of its true loop antenna, the AM tuner was less plagued by local electrical interference than most tuners, and its upper frequency-response limit of nearly 4,000 Hz almost qualifies it for "hi-fi" status, at least compared to the vast majority of AM-tuner sections on the market. At any rate, it was very listenable.

The audio amplifier, in addition to its flexibility (two tape-recorder circuits with dubbing facilities, built-in MC gain and termination, among other things), has extraordinarily low distortion at any normal listening level within the audio band. All in all, the Nikko NR-1000 impressed us as a very competently executed medium-power, full-feature receiver. If it does not boast of any "new breakthroughs," it is also happily free of design flaws that might mar the pleasure of using it.

Circle 143 on reader service card

(Continued on page 52)



SIGMA DRIVE



Without it, an amplifier simply isn't good enough for the Purist.

While everyone else was bogged down in the same old concept, Kenwood's engineers were busy developing a totally new way to look at amplifier performance.



Traditionally, audio engineers have tended to approach amplifier design from the same misconception: that an amplifier and speaker should function as separate entities; when in reality they function together.

After years of extensive research, our engineers have solved the problem with a radical departure in amplifier design. It's incorporated for the first time in our new KA-1000 Purist Amplifier.

Kenwood's exclusive patented SIGMA DRIVE ignores traditional amplifier-speaker relationships by extending the KA-1000's negative feedback loop past the output ter-

minals, all the way to the speaker terminals.

SIGMA DRIVE ties a speaker's behavior directly to the amplifier's performance, which produces an unprecedented damping factor in excess of 600 at the speaker terminals and literally forces a speaker to behave in perfect sync with the amplifier.

Just as impressive are the other Kenwood advanced audio technologies which helped

pave the way for SIGMA DRIVE.

For instance, an exclusive non-magnetic chassis. Dual power supplies, totally separate from the main chassis to further minimize magnetic interference.

And DC amplification for crystal clear tonal response down to 0Hz. Plus a built-in preamp for moving coil cartridges.

We've also included our famous HI-

SPEED™ circuitry, which allows the KA-1000 to react much faster to dynamic music changes. And an ingenious touch-sensor

volume control that increases to any preset volume level or fades to silence.

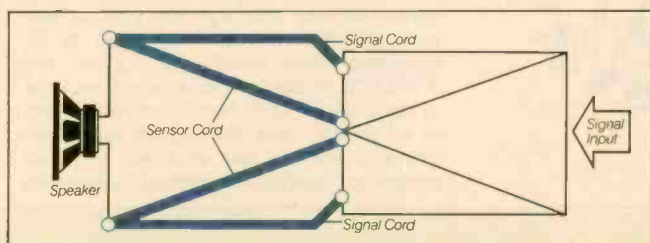
Of course, there's even more



to the KA-1000 than we can possibly mention in this limited space. For the complete story, visit your nearest Kenwood Audio Purist Dealer. And find out for yourself why anything less simply isn't for the Purist.



Significant specifications measured at speaker terminals: 100 watts per channel, minimum RMS into 8 ohms from 20Hz to 20kHz with less than 0.005% total harmonic distortion. Transient Response: Rise Time 0.9 microsecond; Slew Rate ±120 volts per microsecond. Phono S/N: MM 93dB; MC 67dB. Special 10 meter speaker cables included.



Audio
purist

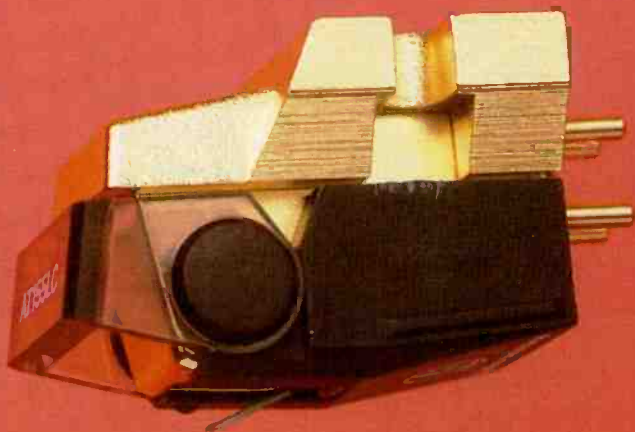


KENWOOD

Not all Kenwood dealers carry these products. For the Audio Purist dealer nearest you, write Kenwood, P.O. Box 6213, Carson, CA 90749.

CIRCLE NO. 32 ON READER SERVICE CARD

Audio-Technica AT155LC Phono Cartridge



THE Model AT155LC heads the new Audio-Technica line of "Vector Aligned" stereo cartridges. It has a high-efficiency magnetic structure based on the toroidal-coil design introduced a couple of years ago in the company's AT24 and AT25 cartridges. This "para-toroidal" design eliminates soldered wires between the coils and the terminal pins (the coil wires themselves extend to reach the pins), and the coil cores are extended and shaped to serve as pole pieces. An integral mu-metal shield installed between each channel's coils gives improved audio separation between the two channels in addition to its hum-shielding properties.

The well-known Audio-Technica dual-magnet design uses two small rod magnets mounted just forward of the cantilever pivot at right angles to the cantilever and to each other. The reduction of electrical and magnetic circuit losses in the generating system of the AT155LC helps to give it an unusually high output voltage for a high-quality cartridge. It is rated at 5 millivolts at a 5-cm/sec velocity. The rigid beryllium cantilever is fitted with a nude-mounted, "linear-contact" square-shank diamond stylus.

Recommended tracking force is 0.8 to 1.6 grams. The easily replaceable stylus assembly includes a hinged stylus guard.

There are four less expensive models in the Vector Aligned series; they use the same coil and magnet structure as the AT155LC but have different body materials and stylus and cantilever designs. The AT155LC, which comes with an individually run frequency-response curve, is priced at \$225. The ATN155LC replacement stylus is \$100.

● **Laboratory Measurements.** The Model AT155LC was tested in the tone arm of an Onkyo CP-1130F record player. The low-mass arm (11 grams) and 8.1-gram cartridge mass interacted with the cartridge's highly compliant stylus to resonate at 8.5 Hz. This is near the low end of the optimum range of arm-resonance frequencies. (The AT155LC's weight of 8.1 grams, compared with the 6.5 grams of its sister cartridges in the series, is apparently the result of using a die-cast metal body instead of—presumably—a lighter plastic body. However, no difficulties were experienced from this source.)

The recommended load for the AT155LC is 47,000 ohms and 100 to 200 picofarads (pF). Our tests were made with a 180-pF load shunting 47,000 ohms. We also checked the frequency response of the cartridge with several values of capacitance, confirming the manufacturer's ratings but also showing that no reasonable load capacitance will have a serious effect on the cartridge's performance. Up to 14,000 Hz, the response changed by no more than ± 1 dB with capacitance changes from 180 to 450 pF. It is more important to use the correct resistance load, since a higher terminating resistance results in a sizable response peak at about 15,000 Hz.

With the CBS STR 100 test record, the frequency response of the AT155LC was within ± 1 dB from 40 to 20,000 Hz. Channel separation was maintained strongly over the full range, although we noted the differences in left- and right-channel separations that are typical of the test record. Since a close match between the geometry of the cutter and the playback cartridge is important for maximum separation, we also checked the cartridge with the AT-6605 test record. The separation was 16 to 24 dB at 20,000 and 30,000 Hz and some 27 to 30 dB in the midrange.

Its flat response in the audio range encouraged us to measure the AT155LC with the JVC 1005 test record at higher frequencies. This yielded even more spectacular results, the response being almost identical for the two channels and within ± 1 dB from 1,000 to 40,000 Hz. Midrange channel separation was about 25 dB, and it was 15 dB or better up to the record's limit of 50,000 Hz.

Although our preliminary tracking tests showed that the AT155LC could handle almost any commercially released music record at a force of 1 to 1.2 grams, we preferred to use a 1.5-gram force (it is axiomatic that any cartridge will give its best performance when operated close to its maximum rated force). At 1 gram, the AT155LC tracked the 60-micrometer level of the German HiFi No. 2 test record, but at 1.5 grams it was able to play the 90-micrometer level, a feat of which few cartridges are capable. (Continued on page 54)



"... No, that's not tape hiss,
that's Emma—she hates Bartók."

RONRICO RUM PRESENTS THE MARSHALL TUCKER BAND SWEEPSTAKES.



WIN A STEREO SYSTEM ON WHEELS.*

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FIRST PRIZES: 5 **CRAIG** Road-Rated Car Stereos.

SECOND PRIZES: 10 **CRAIG** Soundalong Portable Stereo Cassette Players.

THIRD PRIZES: 1000 Cassettes of The Marshall Tucker Band's latest release, "Dedicated."



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1. On an official entry form, or on a 3" x 5" piece of paper, print your name, address and zip code. Then answer the 2 Ronrico Rum questions with information found on the front and back labels of any bottle of Ronrico White or Gold Rum. If you don't own a bottle, visit your favorite restaurant or tavern or go to any participating liquor store and look for the Ronrico display. A facsimile of Ronrico Labels may be obtained by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to P.O. Box 82010, St. Paul, Minnesota 55182. No purchase required.
2. Enter as often as you wish, but each entry must be properly completed, addressed and mailed in a separate envelope and received by December 31, 1981 to be eligible. Prize winners will be determined in a witnessed random drawing of entries by Siebel/Mohr, an independent judging organization whose decisions are final.
3. The Grand Prize winner will receive a 1982 Pontiac Firebird Trans Am with T-roof, air-conditioning and a top of the line Craig Road-Rated Component Stereo System, with graphic equalizer, amplifier and Road-Rated speakers. (Car shown is a 1981 Pontiac Trans Am.) The five first prize winners will each receive a Craig Road-Rated Car Stereo. The ten second prize winners will each receive a Craig Soundalong Portable Stereo Cassette Player. The 1000 third prize winners will

each receive a cassette of The Marshall Tucker Band's latest release, "Dedicated." Prizes are non-transferable and non-redeemable.

4. Only one prize per family or household. The odds of winning will be determined by the number of entries received. All prizes will be awarded.
5. Trans Am winner agrees to assume responsibility for any additional optional equipment as defined by General Motors, as well as local, state and federal taxes, city and state licensing and registration fees. Trans Am will be made available for pickup as near as possible to grand prize winner's home address. Sweepstakes open to residents of the continental U.S.A., Alaska and Hawaii. Employees and their families of General Wine & Spirits Co., its affiliated and subsidiary companies, liquor wholesalers and retailers, their advertising agencies and judging organizations are not eligible. Sweepstakes void where prohibited or restricted by law. All federal, state and local laws apply.
6. Entrants must be of legal drinking age under the laws of their home state.
7. A list of major prize winners may be acquired at the conclusion of the sweepstakes by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to: "Ronrico Rum Marshall Tucker Band" Winners List, P.O. Box 82029, St. Paul, MN 55182.

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"Marshall Tucker Band" Sweepstakes
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1. Ronrico Rum is produced and bottled in _____ Puerto Rico
_____ Florida _____ Jamaica

2. How many hearts appear in the upper right hand corner of the coat of arms on the Ronrico Rum Label?

I certify that I am of legal drinking age under the laws of my home state.

NAME _____

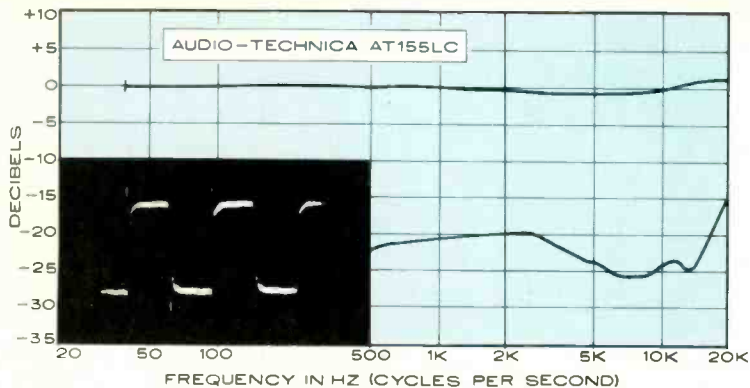
ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

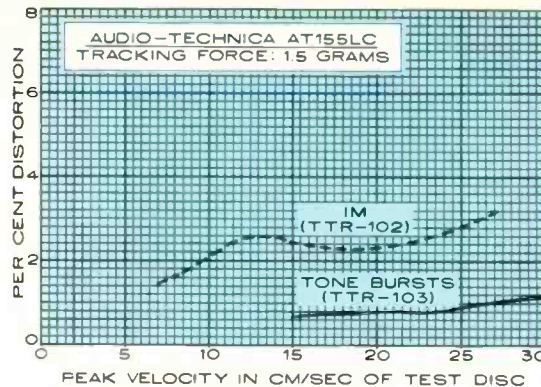
No purchase necessary. Void where prohibited or restricted by law.



test reports



In the graph at left, the upper curve represents the frequency response of the cartridge. The distance (measured in decibels) between it and the lower curve represents the separation between the two channels (anything above 15 dB is adequate). The inset oscilloscope photo shows the cartridge's response to a recorded 1,000-Hz square wave, which indicates resonances and overall frequency response (see text). At right is the cartridge's response to the intermodulation-distortion (IM) and 10.8-kHz tone-burst test bands of the TTR-102 and TTR-103 test records. These high veloc-



ities provide a severe test of a phono cartridge's performance. The intermodulation-distortion (IM) readings for any given cartridge can vary widely, depending on the particular IM test record used. The actual distortion figure measured is not as important as the maximum recorded-signal groove velocity that the phono cartridge is able to track before a sudden and radical increase in distortion takes place. There are very few commercial phonograph discs that embody musical audio signals whose average recorded groove velocities are much higher than about 15 centimeters per second.

The tracking distortion, measured with Shure TTR-102 and TTR-103 test records, was low. The IM distortion hardly changed over the full range of the test bands on the TTR-102, from 1.5 per cent at 7 cm/sec to 3.2 per cent at 27 cm/sec. The former reading is close to the residual distortion on the record, and the latter shows that the cartridge is not close to mistracking, or even distorting significantly, at a level far above that likely to be found on music records.

The cartridge output was 4.85 millivolts at a 3.54-cm/sec velocity and the channel levels were matched within 0.36 dB. The measured vertical-tracking angle was 20 degrees. The response to the 1,000-Hz square wave on the CBS STR 112 record

showed a single sharp overshoot, but otherwise there was no significant ringing or other shape alteration.

● **Comment.** Subjective tracking tests of the AT155LC, using Shure's "Audio Obstacle Course" records, were consistent with our measurements. The cartridge was able to play every level of every band on both records without audible mistracking, although there was a trace of "hardness" on the highest level of the bells section in the Shure ERA IV test record (a sign of incipient mistracking).

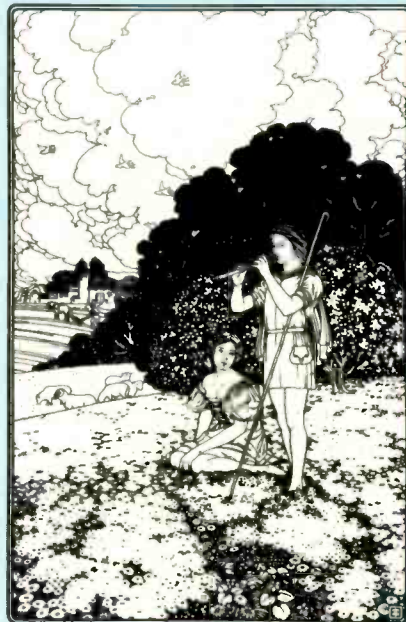
Clearly, the Audio-Technica AT155LC excels in just about every area of cartridge performance, and it came as no surprise to

find that it was as silky smooth and "forgettable" when playing music as its measurements would suggest. We would have difficulty describing the "sound" of the cartridge, since it contributes so little of itself to the final sonic quality. Good records often sound superb when played with the AT155LC, and records with sonic deficiencies are immediately recognizable for what they are. Previous Audio-Technica cartridges we have used have been uniformly excellent, and the AT155LC continues in that tradition. In a growing competitive field of very fine cartridges, it manages to more than hold its own.

Circle 144 on reader service card

The New 1981 Basic Repertoire

STEREO REVIEW again presents the annual revision of the Basic Repertoire. In pamphlet form, the 1981 updating includes disc and tape recommendations for over 180 standard musical works. For your copy, send \$1 in cash, plus a stamped (20¢), self-addressed No. 10 envelope (9½ x 4½ in.), to Esther Maldonado, STEREO REVIEW, 1 Park Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10016.





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* The RS-7 Remote Control is available for most Super Compo systems.

CIRCLE NO. 43 ON READER SERVICE CARD

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

A vintage seaplane with a white and red striped fuselage is docked on a calm lake. The background features a forested shoreline and misty mountains under a grey sky. The word "CAMEL" is written in large, bold, orange letters across the water, with the tagline "Where a man belongs." in white below it.

CAMEL

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Low tar. Camel taste.

"It is hardly conceivable that a small, inexpensive, lightweight cube such as this could deliver as much clean power as any but a few of the largest conventional amplifiers on the market—but it does!"

Julian Hirsch,
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The Carver M-400 Magnetic Field Amplifier

The cube that impressed Julian Hirsch is indeed small: less than 7 inches. And it is very light: less than 10 pounds. And very inexpensive: suggested retail price, \$399.

As for its clean power: 201 watts per channel in stereo and 500 watts mono! That, of course, is RMS into 8 ohms, from 20 to 20kHz with no more than 0.05% total harmonic distortion.

As for its sound, Leonard Feldman reported in *Audio*: "Music reproduction was superb and completely free of any false bass coloration or muddiness... none of that brittle quality that one often detects from amplifiers that are beginning to strain."

In short, the M-400 is musical and accurate.

And now here's good news for everyone with a receiver. The M-400 can be added to it easily—with our new Z-1 coupler. So if you now have a 20-watt receiver, it can be a 201-watt (per channel) receiver!

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CIRCLE NO. 10 ON READER SERVICE CARD

Going on Record

By James
Goodfriend



THE JAZZ TINGE

JAZZ is an American musical phenomenon of the twentieth century. It is a difficult music to define because it involves not only a repertoire of specific pieces and harmonic, melodic, and rhythmic usages, but also a way of playing: a style, a feel, and, at the center, the idea of improvisation. Jazz has had a definite influence upon classical music in this century, but that influence has been felt mostly through its repertoire of musical devices and not its improvisatory nature. So far, every work that has attempted to combine the improvisatory aspects of jazz with music deriving from the European classical tradition has failed as completely as attempts to mix oil and water. The work either *becomes* jazz (as in Duke Ellington's more ambitious compositions) or it separates into its two immiscible components and falls apart stylistically.

On the other hand, observant and inventive composers have delved into such substantive matters as the blues scale and form, jazz syncopation and instrumental techniques, the expressive flattening of notes, and other elements of the jazz repertoire. Since composers have been dealing with elements and techniques rather than simply with tunes, the music produced has been considerably more sophisticated than most products of folk-song adaptation (Bartók, Kodály, and Janáček excepted).

It should be pointed out that all experimentations with jazz by classical composers were preceded by similar experimentations with ragtime elements by Debussy, Ives, Stravinsky, and others. Moreover, the first important and successful classical work based on jazz was not the work of an American at all, but of a Frenchman, Darius Milhaud, whose ballet *La Création du Monde* had its première in Paris in 1923, the year before the "Experiment in Modern Music" concert by Paul Whiteman in New York which introduced George Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*.

Comparison of the two works is fascinating. Gershwin's makes its points through the abrupt contrast of its jazz elements with the Romantic concerto style—keyboard virtuosity and sweeping Romantic melody. Milhaud's piece integrates its jazz elements not into the European orchestral tradition

(nor even the European ballet tradition—the setting is African) but into the anti-traditionalist, polytonal "modern music" of which Milhaud was a champion.

But there are other works one should look into. Stravinsky, like Milhaud, encountered jazz quite early and made some use of it. It was not until 1945, however, that he wrote his "jazz piece," the *Ebony Concerto*, and, as might be expected, his approach was individual: a classical piece written for jazz orchestra (specifically for clarinetist Woody Herman and his orchestra). The style of the music is essentially Stravinskian neo-Classical, the jazz inflections added by the natural playing style of the musicians for whom it was written. As the work proceeds, certain jazz-derived ideas become noticeable, but they are wholly assimilated into the style.

Gershwin's Three Preludes for piano are perhaps his most direct translation of jazz ideas into a classical score, and the second one in particular has come to be seen as the archetype of the whole idea. But Aaron Copland wrote a set of four *Piano Blues* which almost rival the Gershwin Preludes in appeal. No one could ever mistake them for jazz, but no one could fail to miss the jazz in them.

MEYER KUPFERMAN'S *Sonata on Jazz Elements* is piano music on a considerably larger scale. It is a muscular piece of real power, brilliantly played by Morton Estrin on a record still, luckily, in the catalog (Serenus 12001). Kupferman is an eclectic composer, but jazz has played a large part in many of his works and he handles its techniques and their transformation into a classical language with rare assurance.

Milton Babbitt's *All Set* is a startling but eminently successful and communicative piece written with jazz-based musical materials for jazz ensemble. It sounds quite jazz-like and seems to bears no relation to most of Babbitt's other work, but it is quite in line with his most uncompromisingly "controlled" serial music; every element of the piece follows its predetermined "set"—hence the pun of the title. It is an object lesson in something, but just what that may be posterity will have to tell us. □



Only one tape deck combines the incredible realism of dbx[®] with the precise sound of direct drive. Technics RS-M270X.

Dynamic range has long been the quest of audio purists because it represents a major difference between live and reproduced sound. And perhaps nothing says dynamic range better than dbx.

Rotational stability is something else audio purists have longed for in a tape transport system, and virtually nothing says that better than Technics direct drive. After all, the majority of the top radio stations that use turntables rely on Technics direct drive.

Listen to the RS-M270X. You'll hear the expansive distinction between loud and soft tones. In fact, a

recording made on the RS-M270X will sound 50 percent more dynamic than the same recording made on a conventional deck.

Of course, dbx also doubles as a noise reduction system. Yet, unlike conventional systems, dbx reduces noise at all frequencies, not just the high ones. And with the RS-M270X, you can even decode dbx Encoded Discs.

The RS-M270X also features solenoid controls, SX sendust heads and fluorescent VU meters.

Listen to Technics RS-M270X. You'll agree you've never heard so much dynamic range, so precisely. [®]dbx is a registered trademark of dbx Incorporated.

Technics
The science of sound

CIRCLE NO. 55 ON READER SERVICE CARD



NEW AUDIO PRODUCTS

... a preview
for buyers

THE Consumer Electronics Show in Chicago this June was seen by many attendees as a harbinger of better times to come. Manufacturers who came to sell their audio products were encouraged by the increasing numbers of dealers who came to buy, and although the wheeling and dealing at the show perhaps didn't reach the level of three or four years ago, there was nonetheless considerable cause for optimism.

Aside from the business aspects of the show—the CES is, after all, a trade show—there appeared some innovative designs based on conventional solid-state technology, and there was also hard evidence that manufacturers are finally beginning to grasp the novel technical opportunities provided by microprocessors. You'll read about

them all in the individual component reports that follow.

Given the sheer number of new products and the difficulty of keeping track of who introduced what, and when, some worthy products have doubtless escaped the notice of our reporters. These will be picked up in "New Products" columns in the months to come. And since our reporters were instructed to concentrate on the really new, those products that have been around for six months or so are probably not covered here.

We can't provide further information about the products mentioned, but we will be pleased to supply the addresses of their manufacturers: send a stamped, self-addressed long envelope to STEREO REVIEW, Dept. CES, One Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016.

THE general atmosphere of optimism that pervaded the summer CES this year was shared by exhibitors in the tape field. There were large numbers of new products (far too many even to catalog) and an apparent willingness to risk the introduction of untried new formats.

A striking illustration of this more venturesome spirit is the four-company (Maxell, TDK, Akai, Teac) cooperative venture that introduced new "EE" (Extra Efficiency) open-reel tapes and decks. The new tape formulations are open-reel versions of TDK SA and Maxell XL-II and require some 30 per cent higher bias than normal, somewhat less treble boost during recording, and a changed playback equalization (from 90 to 50 microseconds at 3¾ ips, and from 50 to 35 microseconds for 7½ ips). The advantages claimed are considerable, however: an increase in high-frequency headroom of 3 dB and a lowering of bias noise by a similar amount. In all, the intent is to make performance at 3¾ ips equal to the best now achievable at 7½. The hope is that the long uninterrupted playing times (up to three hours each way with a 10½-inch reel at 3¾ ips), the ease of editing, and the quality reputation of open-reel will revive open-reel popularity in the U.S. (it has remained higher in Japan and Europe than it has in this country). BASF also announced at the show that it, too, will produce an EE open-reel tape, using CrO₂.

With few exceptions, existing audiophile decks are *not* equipped to produce the high bias currents or to switch to the new equalizations for EE tapes, but both Akai and Teac introduced models that will, and other manufacturers are expected to follow suit. Akai's offerings in this area are the GX-747 (\$1,250), which takes reels up to 10½ inches, and the smaller GX-77 (\$775), both featuring auto reverse and electronic digital counters with real-time readout.

From Teac the EE-equipped decks are the top-of-the-line 10½-inch X-20R (\$1,400), which also features a built-in dbx noise-reduction system, and the more modestly priced X-3R. Again, both Teac decks are auto-reversing, reinforcing the emphasis on long playing time that EE tape facilitates. If the new system catches on, other open-reel manufacturers will quickly follow. Indeed, Tandberg's 20A has already been designed with ample bias reserve and was demonstrated with a somewhat similar switch-selectable equalization. Revox, too, reports that there would be no problem in including EE settings in its B-77 should there be sufficient interest.

AT the opposite end of the size range there seem to be some initial moves toward making the microcassette into a serious hi-fi medium. Of course, the "personal headphone portables" designed for beach, bicycle, and jogging path are quite listenable, but most of these employ regular 17½-ips cassettes. A few now even feature metal-tape playback capability, but the advantage of metal really comes through at 1½ ips. Both TDK and Maxell introduced metal-tape microcassettes. In addition to a number of portables, Fisher now has a metal-ready microcassette deck, the CRM500 (\$479.95), which includes the Dolby HX

headroom-extension system and boasts response to 12,000 Hz with metal tape, along with a 0.07 per cent wow/flutter figure.

Still on the tape scene, two long-established industry giants—Philips and DuPont—announced the formation of PD Magnetics, a cooperative venture that will produce metal (from Philips), CrO₂ (from DuPont), and high-grade ferric-oxide cassettes for sale here. Initial marketing plans disclosed by company spokesmen are keyed

lations; other types will likely be added by the time this report appears.

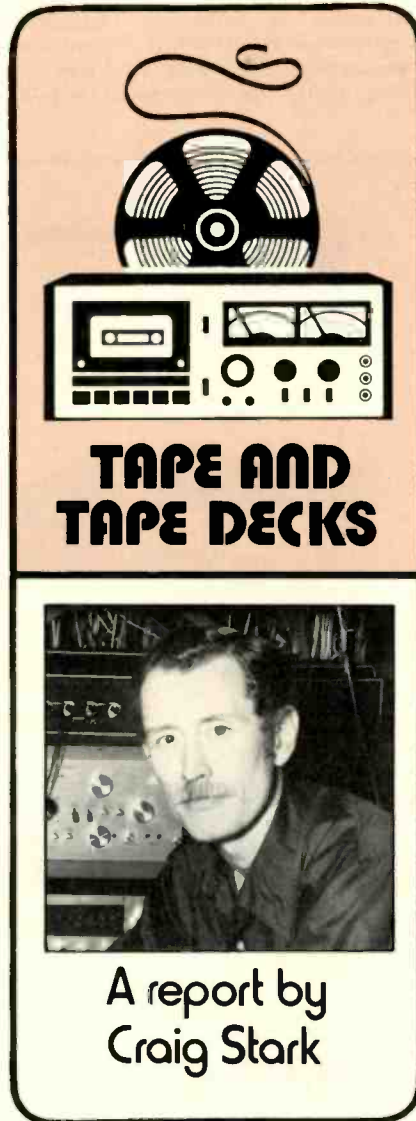
JVC has developed two new high-output metal-particle cassettes—ME and ME-P—which were formally introduced at CES (though previously shown to the press). And, perhaps reflecting the trend toward "one-brand consciousness," Hitachi, Panasonic, Marantz, Pioneer, and Kenwood will all be marketing full lines of cassettes under their own brand names.

Among the more unusual new cassette decks was the dual-well Onkyo TA-W80 (\$370), which, in addition to playing one cassette after the other, will dub tapes at double speed. From Bang & Olufsen came the distinctively styled Beocord 8002 (\$1,100) with real-time digital readout and tape access; it also features an advanced version (HX Professional) of the Dolby headroom-extension system that has also been licensed for commercial recording.

CLEARLY, the battle of the advanced noise-reduction systems (principally dbx and Dolby-C) has been joined in earnest. Dolby claimed some thirty-four new "C"-machine introductions at the show. The dbx score was less impressive, but dbx predicts that their new integrated-circuit chip will help even things up by the time of the winter show. Both dbx and Dolby-C provide a far lower background-noise level than the almost universal Dolby-B, which cuts down tape hiss by 8 to 10 dB. Dolby-C essentially doubles this figure, while the dbx approach goes even further by employing a 2:1 compression/expansion system that can theoretically turn a 45-dB signal-to-noise ratio into 90 dB. A more detailed explanation of each system is planned for a future issue, but for now it should be noted that Dolby-B—or its ANRS equivalent in many JVC decks—is normally included in both the Dolby-C and dbx decks as a switchable option, allowing for playback of previously recorded cassettes.

Two of the five new offerings from Technics, the RS-M270X (\$500) and RS-240X (\$350), incorporate dbx, as do four new Teac decks, ranging from the \$690 C-3RX to the \$410 V-5RX. A new head material—cobalt amorphous—said to have better overall magnetic and wear properties than the more commonly used permalloy, ferrite, or Sendust, is incorporated in the dbx-equipped Teac V-3RX (\$470). Nikko offers dbx in the attractively priced ND-700 (\$320), one of four new models that range from the ND-1000 (\$650, with computerized tape bias setting) to the economical ND-500 (\$250). And for those who want to compare the relative merits of dbx and Dolby-C noise reduction, Onkyo introduced its new TA-2090, priced at \$750, which includes them both.

Dolby-C is to be found in all six of the new Pioneer decks, which range from the deluxe three-head, three-motor CT-9R with its real-time digital countdown and automatic bias/sensitivity/equalization adjustments (about \$700) to the more modest CT-4 (about \$200). No less than seven new or updated Nakamichi decks, from the \$595 two-head 480Z to the \$1,800 682ZX, incorporate the new system. And a separate NR-100 Dolby-C type processor (\$230) is



A report by
Craig Stark

to videotape distributors, subject to the new firm's developing more experience in the American consumer audio market.

Smaller in size, but enthusiastically dedicated to the premium-quality audio market, is the new Loran cassette line employing specially developed Lexan (instead of the usual polystyrene) shells that retain their dimensional integrity even when "cooked" in the broiling temperatures encountered in a closed automobile left in the summer sun. The first two Loran cassettes announced are dual-coated ferric and high-bias formu-

available for the newly introduced Nakamichi 700ZXE and 700ZXL (\$2,400 and \$3,000) models, as well as for the \$3,800 1000ZXL.

The top deck (DD-9, \$900) in the new six-model JVC line features Dolby-C, along with the company's computerized B.E.S.T. tape-matching facilities, three heads, and an elapsed-time digital counter. In addition to two speeds, three heads, and six (!) tape-equalization positions, the new top-of-the-line Dual 844 also goes with Dolby-C. Sony's two best, the TC-FX6C (with real-time digital counter) and the TC-FX5C, incorporate the Dolby-C system. Marantz put Dolby-C in the middle of its new, gold-finished five-deck series (the SD 3030, \$395), and the top two of the five new H. H. Scott

additions (Models 688DM and 588DM) also feature it, as do the NAD 6150C (\$469), the Denon DR-330C (\$540), and three new Aiwa models (AD-3500U, AD-3200U, and the slim-line AD-3300).

Both the Kenwood KX-1000 (\$595) and the Aiwa AD-3600U incorporate the Dolby HX system to increase treble capacity, and new offerings from Sansui, Hitachi, Toshiba, and others also had legitimate points of interest.

While it's impossible even to list everything that's exciting at a *good CES*—such as this one was—I was struck by three introductions in particular. Matsushita's high-technology exhibition showed their vacuum-deposited-coating metal-tape technology (only video, but it is also the future

of 1/8-inch hi-fi microcassettes), which will double signal-holding capability (over metal tape) once again.

Among cassette decks, the Vector Research VCX-800 (\$1000) contained no less than four Dolby systems (B, C, HX, and FM), computer-adjusted tape parameters using swept instead of fixed tones, a real-time digital playing-time readout that would even distinguish between various tape lengths automatically, and every other "bell and whistle" imaginable.

And finally, on the digital scene, a \$2,000 prototype Alpine deck using 1/4-inch-tape cassettes and usable *either* for digital audio or for color videotaping caught both my ear and my eye as a portent of things to come in both these fields.



Aiwa AD-3500
cassette deck



Kenwood KRX-5
cassette/receiver



Sony TC-FX6C
cassette deck



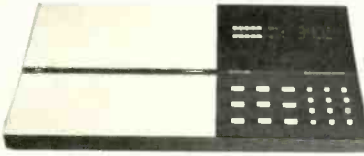
Akai GX-77
open-reel deck



Optonica RT-6605
dual cassette deck



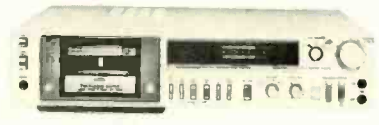
TDK Super Avilyn
open-reel tape



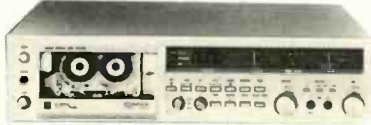
Bang & Olufsen Beocord 8002
cassette deck



Sansui D-150M
cassette deck



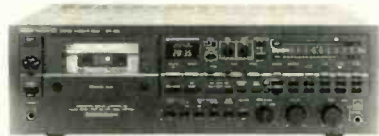
Technics RS-M270X
cassette deck



Dual C 844
cassette deck



Sanyo Plus D56
cassette deck



Vector Research VCX-800
cassette deck



JVC KD-D4
cassette deck



H. H. Scott 658DM
cassette deck



Yamaha K-960
cassette deck



**RECEIVERS
AMPLIFIERS
TUNERS**



**A report by
Peter Mitchell**

Receivers

Despite the influx of "mini" and "single-brand" rack systems into the hi-fi marketplace, the stereo receiver remains the best value in audio today. A receiver usually offers a performance level practically identical to that of equivalent separate tuners and integrated amplifiers at a substantial reduction in cost thanks to the elimination of a second metal chassis, a second power supply, a second shipping carton, and so forth. Some manufacturers are now taking this consolidation a step further with the inclusion of a cassette deck in the same chassis. Kenwood's KRX-5 cassette-receiver, for example, includes a 30-W/ch (watts per channel) amplifier (with slider volume and tone controls) and an analog AM/FM tuner, both with respectable hi-fi specifications, plus a Dolby-B cassette deck with microprocessor control for automated selection of favorite selections in playback, all for a suggested retail price of \$500. Of course the central virtue of the "casceiver" (also spelled "casceiver" and "casceiver") is that it provides an easy entry into fairly high-quality audio for the newcomer. Most cassette-receivers, in fact, are to be marketed as part of a complete one-brand system, like minis and racks. The subject of the

"casceiver" is covered on page 76, so in this section we will focus on conventional tuner-amplifier receivers, which are making a major comeback this year with the introduction of complete new lines by five manufacturers (Pioneer, Yamaha, Marantz, Sherwood, and Sony) plus assorted new models from a dozen other suppliers.

Pioneer's four new receivers embody a striking departure in styling and functional control layout, with input selection accomplished via digital circuitry instead of mechanical switches and with digital frequency-synthesis tuning in all models. The SX-4 (20 W/ch, \$250) and SX-5 (30 W/ch) have six tuning presets each for FM and AM. The SX-6 (45 W/ch, \$425) and SX-7 (60 W/ch, \$550) have eight presets, provision for inserting plastic labels to identify station frequencies or call letters, a thirty-two-step all-electronic volume control (instead of a rotary potentiometer) whose setting is displayed numerically, "nonswitching" dynamic-bias output circuits for ultralow distortion, and an "ion-implantation double-diffusion MOSFET" tuner front end for improved immunity to strong-station overload.

Yamaha is replacing its receiver line with six new models. While most manufacturers are limiting their receivers to a maximum power rating of 70 watts or so, Yamaha's new line includes two high-powered units rated at 150 W/ch (R-2000, \$900) and 100 W/ch (R-1000, \$700), both employing the very efficient "X" circuitry in which the power-supply output tracks the signal level. These receivers, together with the R-900 (70 W/ch, \$550) and R-700 (50 W/ch, \$450, reviewed in the July 1981 issue), feature digital frequency-synthesis tuning and a Spatial Expander circuit that manipulates the "difference" component of the stereo signal to broaden the stereo image. At the economy end of the range, the R-500 (40 W/ch, \$330) and R-300 (30 W/ch, \$260) include Yamaha's effective loudness-compensation control.

In its four new receivers Marantz recap-

tures its heritage with a return to all-gold styling, and that extends even to the use of gold-plated input and output jacks which are immune to the long-term oxidation that can occur with tin plating. The SR-8100DC (rated at 90 W/ch into 4 ohms, about 20 per cent less into 8 ohms, and featuring a built-in five-band graphic equalizer—price \$750) and the SR-7100DC (63 W/ch into 4 ohms and about 50 W/ch into 8 ohms, \$600) include digital-synthesis tuning with eight station presets each for FM and AM plus a digital clock/timer for programmed operation.

Sherwood's widely respected Series 7000 stereo receivers are being replaced by a new 9000 series of five models. The top four, from the S-9600CP (60 W/ch, \$480) down to the S-9200CP (20 W/ch, \$250), include analog tuning with servo-lock fine tuning and digital frequency display; all five, including the S-9180CP (18 W/ch, \$220), feature discrete-transistor phono-preamp circuits, infrasonic and ultrasonic filtering, and an FM signal-to-noise ratio specified as 75 dB in stereo and 80 dB in mono. The top three models feature a bass-equalizer circuit that boosts the bottom octave, which droops in most loudspeaker systems.

Sony has filled out its new line of six VX low-profile receivers with power ratings in 1-dB increments from 22 to 70 W/ch and prices ranging from \$225 for the VX-1 to \$700 for the VX-6. The top three models feature digital-synthesis tuning with eight presets, a "non-volatile" memory that retains the station frequencies with the power cord unplugged, and provision for labeling each preset with the station's frequency. The VX-5 and VX-6 include ultrasonic-switching power supplies, resulting in a net weight barely greater than that of a preamp, and Sony's "direct comparator" circuit (first seen in the ST-J75 FM tuner last winter) for a measured S/N of about 80 dB in stereo and 85 dB in mono. The top four receivers in the new Sony line carry the "Legato Linear" trademark, referring to the elimination of ultrasonic crossover dis-



"... Frankly, Dr. Gertzner, the board feels that this obsession of yours to achieve 0.0008 per cent distortion—I beg your pardon—0.00000008 per cent distortion in our receiver line ..."

tortion (accomplished by using "ring-emitter" output transistors that consist, in effect, of numerous small wide-bandwidth transistors connected in parallel to avoid the speed limitations of conventional large power transistors).

The newest receiver from Vector Research, the VRX-9500 (90 W/ch, \$1,000), features built-in dbx II circuitry with switching not only for playing dbx-encoded discs but also for recording and playing dbx-encoded tapes with any tape deck. Other features include bass, midrange, and treble controls whose operating frequencies are adjustable over a broad range, a digital-synthesis tuner, and a programmable digital timer. Optonica's new introductions include two digital-synthesis receivers with black-face styling, gold trim, and five station presets each for FM and AM: the SA-5407 (60 W/ch, \$500) and the SA-5207 (40 W/ch, \$400).

Akai also has two new digital-synthesis receivers with six presets for each band: the AA-R51 (62 W/ch, \$550) and the AA-R41 (50 W/ch, \$500). JVC's low-profile receivers include two new models, the R-2X with digital-synthesis tuning (40 W/ch, \$330) and the R-1X with servo-locked analog tuning (25 W/ch, \$240); both specify an FM signal-to-noise ratio of 75 dB in stereo and

82 dB or better in mono. And Toshiba, the first manufacturer to market a digital-synthesis receiver several years ago, introduced its third-generation model, the SA-S55 (\$400), with six presets each for AM and FM and dual sets of varicap tuning diodes for improved performance in the areas of selectivity and image rejection.

H. H. Scott's line of analog-tuned receivers includes two new models, the 385R (85 W/ch, \$600) and the 375R (65 W/ch, \$460), both with digital display of the tuned frequency, servo-lock fine tuning, and inputs for moving-coil as well as moving-magnet cartridges. Technics has added two low-profile models, just 3½ inches high, with slide-rule tuning: the SA-203 (30 W/ch, \$260) and SA-103 (20 W/ch, \$200). Technics' full-size, top-of-the-line 100-W/ch SA-828 receiver (\$875) includes a "Dimension Control" circuit for enhancing the spatial ambience and stereo-image breadth. Mitsubishi introduced four new receivers ranging from 30 to 80 W/ch, with prices from \$325 to \$690; the top three models have digital-synthesis tuning, while the top two have moving-coil phono inputs. And Hitachi's array of new products includes two receivers, the HTA 4000 (35 W/ch, \$360) and the HTA 5000 (45 W/ch, \$420) with digital tuning.

Integrated Amplifiers

Of the many new integrated amplifiers coming to market this year, nearly half are to be sold only as part of single-brand packaged systems, so we won't discuss them individually here. Of the amplifiers that will be marketed separately and are destined to succeed or fail on their own merits, many have obvious "family" relationships (in terms of styling and technical features) with the receivers described above.

For instance, Pioneer's five new integrated amplifiers share the same basic styling as their new receivers and cassette decks, with the primary operating controls (consisting of large knobs and pushbuttons) located in the right-hand third of the front panel and the secondary controls (smaller knobs and buttons) generally concealed under a panel at the left. The central one-third is devoted to illuminated meters and LEDs illustrating signal paths and selected functions. They use dynamic-bias output circuits and ring-emitter power transistors. Moving-coil (MC) pre-preamps are found in all but the least expensive model, and the top two models have selectable cartridge loading. The Pioneer integrated amps vary in rated power output from 35 W/ch (Model A-5, \$200) up to 110 W/ch (Model A-9, \$800). The A-8 (90 W/ch, \$550) was reviewed in the July issue.

Onkyo's parade of new products this year includes three integrated amplifiers, the A-35, A-45, and A-65, with power ratings from 55 to 100 W/ch and prices from \$330 to \$650. Each has an MC phono input and separate input and recording selectors. Nikko has two new integrated amps, the NA-500 (40 W/ch, \$250) and the NA-700 (60 W/ch, \$300), with an MC input in the latter model. Akai's line now includes three integrated amps: the AM-U03 (37 W/ch, \$280), the AM-U04 (48 W/ch, \$330), and the AM-U06 (68 W/ch, \$400), with an MC phono input in the top model and a "heat-pipe" cooling system in the top two models. The heat pipe allows the output transistors to be located on the main circuit board while liquid coolant transfers their heat out to external fins.

Optonica and H. H. Scott are marketing integrated amplifiers that may be purchased separately or as part of one-brand packaged systems. The Optonica SM-3300 amp is rated at 20 W/ch and priced at \$200. Scott has four "Slimline" amplifiers ranging from 30 to 65 W/ch and from \$160 to \$350, with an MC input in the top model. Hitachi has two new low-profile amps which stand just three inches high: the HA-3800 (35 W/ch, \$220) and HA-2700 (25 W/ch, \$180). And Denon's new integrated amplifier is anything but small, featuring an 80-W/ch "pure class-A" circuit with MC phono inputs, separate input and recording selectors, and a headphone amplifier with adjustable impedance. Unlike most of today's amplifiers, the \$995 Denon PMA-950 also carries a formal 4-ohm power rating—100 W/ch.

Technics has a line of four new integrated amplifiers, all with separate input and recording selectors and all featuring "new class-A" dynamic-bias output circuits for minimum crossover distortion. The new



Akai AA-R51



Technics SA-103



JVC R-1X



Toshiba SA-S55



Optonica SA-5407



Vector Research VRX-9500

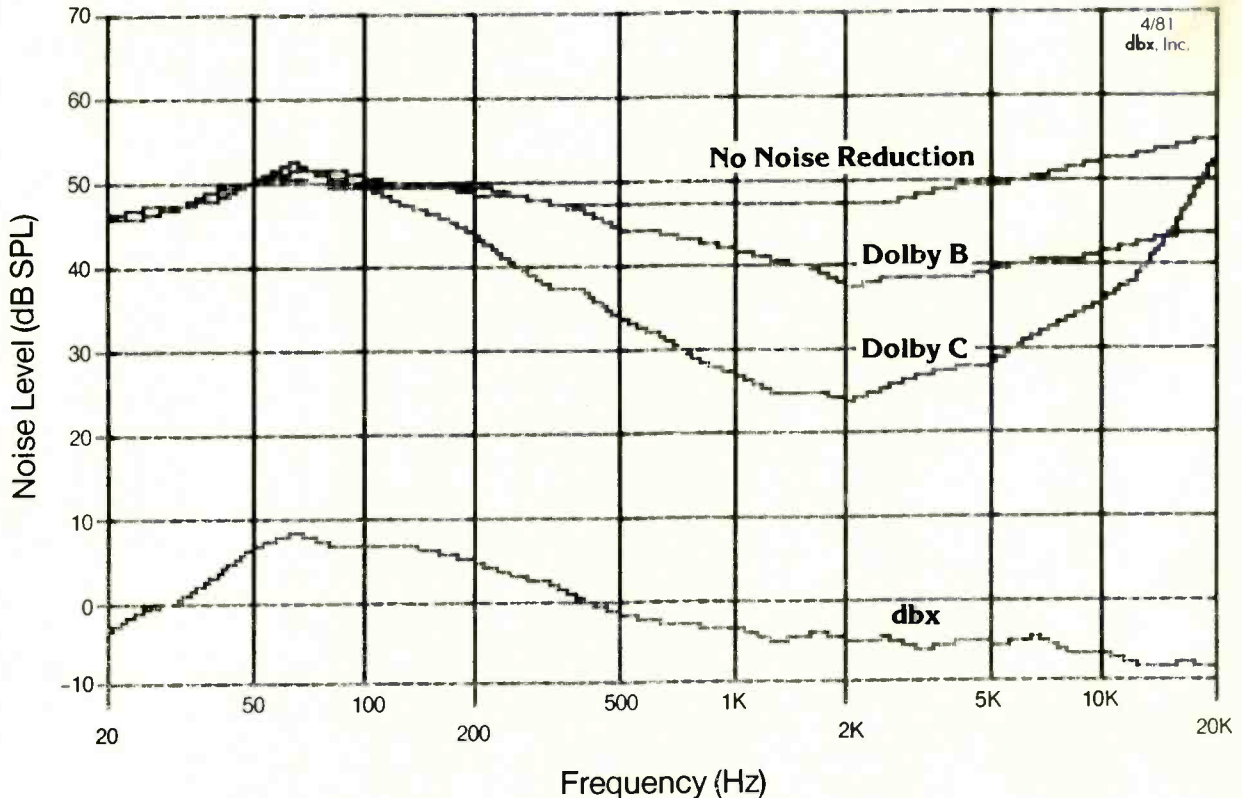


Pioneer SX-7



Yamaha R-2000

dbx has been silent too long.



Noise from biased Chromium Dioxide cassette tape, comparing Dolby and dbx noise reduction systems. One third octave analysis. Tape noise level referenced to 200 nWb/m = 110dB SPL.

For years Dolby* has been trying to reduce tape noise.

First came Dolby B. Then Dolby HX. Now there's Dolby C.

At dbx, we think it's time to set the record straight. You see, we've never tried to reduce tape noise. We've never had to.

Because from the beginning, dbx has done what Dolby keeps trying to do: *eliminate* tape noise.

Just compare Dolby's latest attempt with dbx.

Where Dolby C reaches a maximum noise reduction of 20 dB, dbx reaches 50 dB. In a CCIR-weighted noise measurement analysis, Dolby C manages only 18 dB, while dbx achieves 55 dB.

What do these numbers actually mean?

Simply this. When you push the Dolby C button, tape noise decreases. When you push the dbx button, tape noise disappears. (You can perform this test yourself using any blank cassette tape.)

The dbx system reduces tape noise so effectively, that it's beneath the noise floor of even the quietest living rooms. Unlike Dolby C, dbx is effective in more than just the mid-range. It operates across the entire frequency spectrum. There's no low-frequency noise. No high-frequency noise. No noise, period.

No wonder Technics, Onkyo, Yamaha, TEAC and others have designed their newest generation of tape decks with dbx.

There's more to this story, too. With the dbx tape noise reduction system, you're also equipped to play the widely acclaimed dbx Discs, the world's only Full Dynamic Range Records — and the first discs that eliminate record surface noise.

In addition, when digital playback technology finally arrives, dbx is the only system that will faithfully reproduce that sound on tape. You'll even be able to hear the sound of digital in your car, because we've developed a dbx decoding system for car stereo.

So before you rush out to buy a tape deck with Dolby C, we have a suggestion.

Listen to the new tape decks with dbx. Or hear what a dbx Model 222 or 224 can do for your existing system.

At dbx, we've been silent too long.

The fact is, Dolby just reduces noise.

dbx eliminates it.

dbx[®]

dbx[®] is a registered trademark of dbx, Inc.
*Dolby[®] is a registered trademark of Dolby Laboratories, Inc.

Imagination has just become reality.

Finally. The elusive goal, attained.

Audiocassettes of such remarkable accuracy and clarity that differences between original and recording virtually vanish.

This is the sound of the future. Tapes with the widest possible dynamic range. The flattest frequency response obtainable. And freedom from noise and distortion.

New Fuji tapes: Born of microscopic particles made smaller, more uniformly than ever before. Permanently mated to polymer film so precise, its surface is mirror smooth. The product of intensive research that unites physics, chemistry, computer technology and psychoacoustics.

The sound of the future. Hear it at your audio dealer today. In four superb tapes that share a single name.

FUJI
CASSETTES

Imagination has just become reality.



Power Amps, Preamps



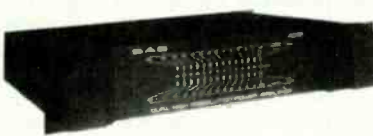
Aiwa AA-8500 integrated amplifier



Technics SU-V9 integrated amplifier



Denon PMA-950 preamplifier



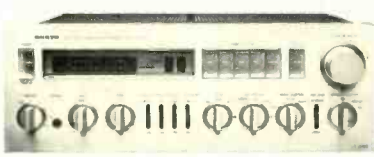
SAE A201 power amplifier



Nikko NA-700 integrated amplifier



H. H. Scott 458A integrated amplifier



Onkyo A-65 integrated amplifier



Yamaha A-1060 integrated amplifier

The vacuum-tube preamps and power amplifiers from Audio Research have a wide following among audiophiles despite their high cost, and the latest version of the company's preamp is the SP-6C, with "long-life industrial reference" tubes and elaborately regulated power-supply circuits, for \$2,195. The SP-8 is now available with similar circuitry and features—but with standard tubes and a simplified automatic-muting circuit—for \$1,495. For just one tenth of that price (\$148) NAD has a discrete solid-state preamplifier, the Model 1020, whose features include a very quiet phono preamp with selectable input capacitance, effective infrasonic filtering, and a high-output headphone amplifier. Basically, the 1020 is the preamp/control section of the NAD 3020 integrated amplifier.

SAE's new P101 preamp uses logic circuitry for all control functions, so the audio signal doesn't pass through mechanical switches and potentiometers. The volume level in each channel is adjusted in 1.5-dB steps and is displayed digitally on the front panel. The moving-magnet phono input has selectable load resistance and capacitance, a separate moving-coil pre-preamplifier is included, and the output stage of the phono preamp is actually a miniature high-current power amp (to drive the complex impedance of the RIAA-equalization network without distortion). The price of the SAE P101 is \$650.

From England come two preamps with modular construction, permitting them to be tailored to individual needs. Available overseas for several years and now being introduced here, the \$495 Boothroyd-Stuart "Meridian" 101 is a tiny unit (2 inches high by 5 1/2 inches wide) with a control layout consisting only of a volume control and input-selector switches. Its phono preamps are plug-in modules whose gain and response are tailored to complement the output of the phono cartridge you decide to use; modules are supplied for a broad range of moving-magnet and moving-coil cartridge groups. The new Arcam (A&R/Cambridge) C200 preamp can also be equipped with any combination of moving-magnet, moving-coil, and line-level inputs by selecting appropriate circuit boards; it also has room for an electronic crossover to biamplified loudspeakers. Its features include selectable load resistance and capacitance for both moving-coil and moving-magnet phono inputs, an infrasonic filter, and tone controls in a slim chassis 17 inches wide by less than 2 inches high; price, \$750.

The Luxman C-300 preamp has moving-coil inputs, low-feedback circuitry, and the elegant appearance and feel customarily associated with the Luxman name, but its most striking novelty is its tone controls, which have continuously adjustable turn-over frequencies: the bass control is labeled from 20 Hz for slight rotations up to 400 Hz at maximum boost or cut, and the treble control varies from 10 kHz down to 1 kHz as boost or cut is increased.

Returning to the luxury market, the Spectral Audio MS-One preamp from California is now in national distribution for

models are the SU-V3, -V5, -V7, and -V9, with power ratings from 40 to 120 W/ch into 8 ohms and prices from \$280 to \$650. All but the SU-V3 have MC phono inputs, and the SU-V9 includes a "super-bass" adjustable low-frequency equalizer. These Technics amps also feature Linear Feedback, which refers to the use of multiple feedback loops (instead of a single overall negative-feedback path) to reduce distortion and stabilize the output stage. Yamaha introduced three more integrated amplifiers to fill out its new line; each includes a separate loudness-compensation control and separate input and recording selectors, a feature Yamaha first made popular. The A-1060 (140 W/ch, \$800) includes a separate MC phono stage, selectable phono-cartridge impedance loading, and a power supply that varies the voltage at the output transistors according to the demands of the musical signal. The A-560 (55 W/ch, \$300), with an MC phono input, and the A-460 (35 W/ch, \$220) complete the Yamaha line.

Two more integrated amplifiers deserve special notice, if only because they aren't made in the Orient. The Arcam A60 is Brit-

ish. Sold in England under the A&R/Cambridge name, it is perhaps the slimmest amp on the market; barely 2 3/8 inches high, its low profile is made possible by the use of a toroidal power transformer. At a price of \$600 its power rating of 35 W/ch may seem low, but its output stage is free of current limiting and so exhibits substantial headroom above its rated power when driving complex speaker impedances. And Amber Electronics in Virginia is introducing its Series 50A integrated amplifier (\$500). It incorporates much of the same circuitry found in Amber's audiophile preamp and power-amp separates, including an MC phono input, a high-current power supply with 40,000 microfarads of filter capacitance, and an output stage completely free of current limiting.

In a similar vein, Harman Kardon's new 600 series includes three integrated amplifiers with high-current output stages designed to drive realistic speaker impedances. Of course the PM640i (35 W/ch, \$270), PM650i (50 W/ch, \$370), and PM660i (80 W/ch, \$530) also embody H-K's focus on wide bandwidth and low transient distortion.

well-heeled audiophiles. For \$2,195 you get gold-plated military/space-quality circuit-board construction, high-grade FETs and capacitors, MC inputs, and dead-accurate RIAA phono equalization. For a little more you also get an "a.c. power sequencer" that filters noise and transient spikes in the power line, monitors the line voltage, and switches on the various components in an elaborate system with programmed delays to eliminate the thumps of turn-on.

Power amplifiers are always in season. Of this year's crop perhaps the most imposing is the Soundcraftsmen RA7503 professional amp, whose front panel sports a power meter in the form of two twenty-LED columns with calibrations scaled from 0.05 to 1,000 watts into 4 ohms, plus an additional hundred LEDs comprising an octave-band spectrum-analyzer output display. This workhorse amplifier is rated at a continuous output of 250 W/ch into 8 ohms, 375 W/ch into 4 ohms, and a full horsepower (750 watts) in bridged monophonic operation. Moreover, the "class-H" dynamically variable power supply provides an extra 2 dB of 1HF headroom above each of these figures during musical peaks, so the 1,000-watt calibration on the power meter is no joke. Strictly speaking, this \$1,150 amplifier is intended for professional use; the same amp in domesticated form, with the LED power meter but without the spectrum-analyzer display, retails for \$850 as the Soundcraftsmen MA-5002A. It also features in each channel a LED that is triggered by waveform distortion to indicate the true onset of amplifier clipping—if you ever play it that loud. The amp will drive speaker impedances down to 2 ohms with no problems.

High power outputs are also available from another California company, SAE, whose new "01" series is topped by the \$1,900 A1001 power amp rated at 500 W/ch into 8 ohms and 750 W/ch into 4 ohms, with safe operation into load impedances down to 1 ohm. Other high-current amplifiers in this series are the SAE A501 (250 W/ch, \$1,050), the A301 (150 W/ch, \$800), and the A201 (100 W/ch, \$600). And also from the West Coast comes the Questar pair of "class-A" power amplifiers (111 W/ch, approx. \$490; 222 W/ch, approx. \$690) and the QED 7 preamplifier (approx. \$400).

Purity rather than potency is the object of pure class-A operation, with its high idle currents and rock-stable circuit operation (not to be confused with the "quasi-class-A" performance of dynamic-bias amplifiers). Sumo's Model Nine power amp (70 W/ch, \$600) is evidently an in-between design, with an auto-biasing circuit closer to traditional class-A operation than most dynamic-bias designs, but it still cuts the power dissipation at idle in half. An impressive example of no-holds-barred true class-A design was introduced by Denon as the POA-8000, a 200-watt mono power amp weighing 48 pounds and costing \$2,300 each (\$4,600 for a stereo pair). Its massive front panel is dominated by a large peak-reading output meter.

Luxman's entries in the cost-is-no-object race toward perfection include the M-300, a 66-pound solid-state model that can be switched to operate either as a 40-W/ch

true class-A amp or as a 150-W/ch class-AB amplifier. It employs negative feedback not only in the audio circuitry, but also in the power supply to prevent any voltage modulation caused by the current demands of the musical signal. A second Luxman entry is the vacuum-tube MQ-68C, which uses no negative feedback whatsoever and is rated at 25 watts/channel. Sony's state-of-the-art power amp is the TAN-900 "Esprit," a 200-watt single-channel unit. It has fast power MOSFET output transistors, an ultrasonic switching power supply with pulsewidth-modulation control regulators supplying high currents with very stable supply voltages, and no feedback to reduce distortion. Instead, the nonlinearity of the output stage is predetermined and the incoming signal is subjected to corrections in the driver stages in order to cancel the output-stage distortion, yielding an overall distortion rating of 0.05 per cent.

In addition to its standard line of stereo components, Marantz has also designed a no-compromise series of "Esotec" models. This series includes the SM-6 power amplifier (\$950), which can be switched to operate either in true class-A at 30 W/ch or in class-AB at 120 W/ch, and the massive SM-1000 with thirty-six output transistors and a rated output of 400 W/ch for \$5,500. Less exotic in price, though hardly conventional in technology, is Carver's M-500 "magnetic-field" power amplifier, about 4 inches high with standard 19-inch rack width. It is rated at 250 W/ch and priced at \$550.

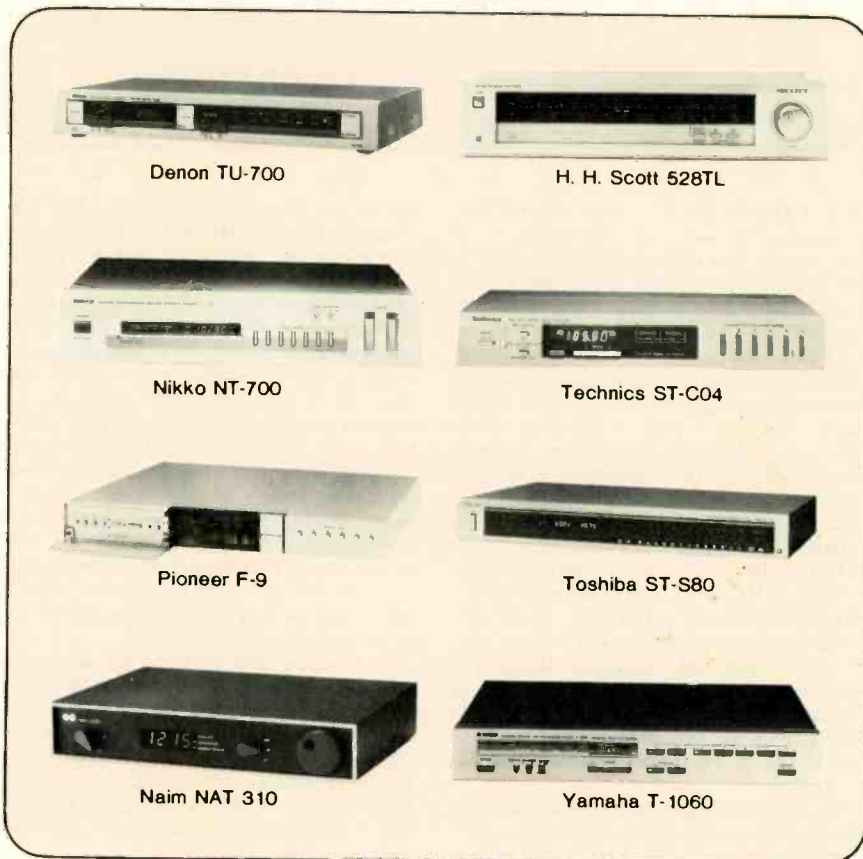
The Boothroyd-Stuart "Meridian" 105 mono power amp packs 100 watts of rated

power into a 2-inch-high chassis (\$495, two needed for stereo) in terms of the standard 8-ohm rating, but its headroom and high-current capacity yield short-term outputs of over twice that figure into lower-impedance loudspeakers.

Tuners

Judging from the units demonstrated at the summer CES, we are on the threshold of a major advance in useful tuner performance. Both Carver and NAD were showing independently developed circuits that dramatically improve the effective sensitivity of stereo FM tuners, converting a noisy, distorted, fringe-area signal into a clean, quiet, fully listenable one. NAD's version of this idea is being incorporated first into a portable radio and won't appear in a domestic stereo tuner until next year, but Carver's new TX-11 tuner is scheduled to be in the stores this fall with an under-\$500 retail price. In addition to its "noise-eliminator" switch, the TX-11 is equipped with a second button labeled "multipath eliminator" which does just that (see the August issue "Bulletin"). The Carver TX-11 is a digital-synthesis tuner with six station presets and a new front-end design said to be unusually resistant to strong-signal overload.

Another attention-getting tuner was the Toshiba STS-80 (\$419.95, a low-profile digital-synthesis unit with fifteen presets each for FM and AM and a readout that displays not only the station's frequency but also its call letters (or any other four-letter expression you care to program into the tuner's memory to identify the station). This is



Denon TU-700

H. H. Scott 528TL

Nikko NT-700

Technics ST-C04

Pioneer F-9

Toshiba ST-S80

Naim NAT 310

Yamaha T-1060

not the first "alphanumeric" tuner ever marketed, but it's good to see such a design available again.

Digital-synthesis tuning with convenient presets for favorite stations continues to appear under virtually every brand and often at economical prices. New examples include the Hitachi FT-5500 (\$350) with five presets each for FM and AM and a rated signal-to-noise ratio (S/N) of 79 dB in stereo; the Hitachi FT-4500 (\$250) with six presets for each band and 75-dB S/N in stereo; the Onkyo T-35 with seven presets each (\$350); and three models from Technics, each with eight presets and selectable i.f. bandwidth for dealing with closely spaced stations—the ST-S4 (\$280), ST-S6 (\$380), and ST-S8 (\$500). All of these are low-profile components only two to three inches high. Yamaha has filled out its tuner line with the T-160, a digital voltage-synthesis model with five presets for each band, plus two economy-price analog-tuned models. Denon and Luxman each showed a new tuner. The Denon TU-900 (\$590) is analog-tuned with servo-lock fine tuning, a digital frequency display, and a rated S/N of 85 dB in stereo; the Luxman T-115 is a digital frequency-synthesis model with six presets on each band. Nikko has a new digital-synthesis tuner with six memory presets, the \$300 Model NT-700, plus the analog-tuned NT-500 at \$180. And Pioneer's newly re-engineered and restyled series of components includes three tuners, an analog-tuned model with digital frequency display (F-5, \$200) and two digital-synthesis models (F-7 and F-9) with six presets each and front-end circuits that are said to be unusually resistant to crossmodulation caused by strong-signal overload. The \$450 F-9 also employs a digital pulse-count detector for minimum distortion.

Several U.S. manufacturers are launching new tuners this year. SAE's T101 (\$650) is a digital-synthesis unit with five presets, automatic stereo blending for improved quieting of weak signals, and switchable i.f. bandpass. Adcom's GFT-1 is also a digital model, while the Studio Three from PSE (Professional Systems Engineering) is analog-tuned with a digital frequency display featuring a surface acoustic wave (SAW) filter in the i.f. circuit for an optimized combination of high selectivity and linear phase response as required for low distortion in stereo. Crown's FM Two digital-synthesis tuner (\$600) features a JFET cascode front end for improved immunity to overload and crossmodulation, plus a pulse-count detector for lowest distortion.

And at the very high end, there's the NAT 310 from Naim Audio of England. Priced at \$3,500, the Naim tuner's special talent is its ability to adjust its reception parameters to optimize the subjective sound quality. On FM this optimization involves stereo blending for weak signals and, if needed, a treble rolloff to minimize the audible noise. On AM, the tuner adjusts its reception bandwidth to suit the signal and even tunes its external AM antenna for optimum reception. The Naim tuner's AM performance is particularly advantageous in Europe, where much music broadcasting is found on medium-wave and long-wave AM stations rather than on FM.



TURNABLES CARTRIDGES SPEAKERS



A report by
Ralph Hodges

Turntables

From a purely technical standpoint, the great novelties in record-player design have been the radial-tracking tone arm (exemplified so far by quite a number of products) and the servo-controlled conventional arm. The first attempts to make the arm independent of certain geometrical errors and externally generated forces. The second tries to make the arm independent of the consequences of its own mass.

A new Biotracer servo tone arm is employed on Sony's PS-X600 turntable, and it is compatible with virtually any cartridge. For those unfamiliar with its operating principle, the Biotracer is a totally motorized arm; tracking force, skating compensation, and all other arm functions are electronically established and governed by control signals derived from the movement of the arm and cartridge on the record. It is a complex and fairly costly approach to record playing, but it can be quite effective in subduing the consequences of such practical problems as arm-cartridge resonance and record warp.

New turntables with radial-tracking

arms come from Pioneer, Akai, and Technics. The direct-drive Pioneer PL-L800 (about \$500) is further distinguished by an internal suspension system that isolates platter and tone arm—something new in direct-drive designs. A host of other new Pioneer players—the PL-8, PL-7, PL-5, PL-4, and PL-2, descending in price to about \$100—share the same suspension, although the PL-2 is in fact a belt-drive machine. Pioneer has included its PC-4MC high-output moving-coil cartridge with the PL-L800.

Akai's radial-tracking offerings are the AP-L95 (\$575) and AP-L45 (\$400). The principal difference is in automation. The AP-L95 has an optical sensor on a separate "sub-arm" and can be programmed to play—or not play—as many as sixteen bands on a record in any desired sequence. At \$475, the AP-Q80 offers similar programming capability, plus optional remote control, but it has a conventional pivoted arm instead of a radial tracker. The machine is specifically intended for use with Akai's top minicomponent system.

Technics appeared at the Summer CES with nine new turntable models, the most stirring of which were the SL-QL1 (\$470) and SL-DL1 (\$360), both with radial-tracking arms in the tradition of the SL-10 and optical sensors to govern the arms' operations. Technics includes cartridges in the prices of these machines, but it should be noted that alternative cartridges that will work with them and their special connectors are rapidly appearing from many other manufacturers. For the rest of its offerings, Technics descends to \$100 in price and runs the gamut from quartz-locked direct-drive to comparatively modest belt-drive units.

Dual has completed its stylistic transition to a new metallic-finish scheme, has built its line up to ten models with either direct-drive or belt-driven platters, and has even devised a dust cover that requires no clearance behind the turntable when lifted. Two of the machines, the Models 1258 (\$150) and 1268 (\$200), are changers. The other new models, rising in price to \$370 (Model 728Q), are variously equipped with sophisticated suspension systems and very-low-mass tone arms with tunable anti-resonance counterweights to accommodate a wide range of cartridge compliances.

Kenwood's turntable story for this show revolved around high platter mass, specialized materials (often in laminated form), base assemblies designed for maximum immunity to external vibration, and elaborately executed tone arms. The company's claim is that a record player inert and accurate enough to do justice to today's better disc recordings is more than a match for digital technology. The prominent exemplar of this philosophy is the L-07D, with an outboard power supply, a precise arm-height adjustment, and a quartz-regulated direct-drive motor. The new KD-650 and KD-600 carry the idea to lower price levels.

Luxman, which has come under the aegis of Alpine Electronics, remains dedicated to the idea of a vacuum bond between disc and platter to keep the disc firmly in place and unable to vibrate. The least expensive realization of this concept yet is the \$600 PD-375, a two-speed machine with a direct-drive motor system. (Continued overleaf)

Marantz reports that nearly 2,000 computer-simulation studies have gone into the geometrical design of its latest tone arms, which have become available on the direct-drive TT 6200 and TT 4200 (\$310 and \$250), the direct-drive TT 2200 (\$200), and the belt-drive TT 1200 (\$130). The former two are fully automatic single-play machines.

Micro Seiki is one of the great advocates of belt-drive, and its latest products—the BL-21 (\$330), MB-38 (\$470), and MB-12ST (\$150)—reflect this attitude. The BL-21 has an ebony-finish base and no tone arm; the MB-38 is automatic in operation, with a separate motor to control its tone arm; the MB-12ST is the least expensive Micro Seiki turntable yet. Also new from the company is the \$160 CFX-2 tone arm with carbon-fiber shaft and cartridge shell. Another belt-drive entry, the \$130 NP-500, comes from Nikko. A bit upscale in price, the \$230 NP-800 is the company's statement on the design of direct-drive record players.

Onkyo and Aiwa have also split their latest turntable offerings evenly between belt- and direct-drive. In the former category, the Onkyo CP-1012F (\$150) provides a pitch control augmented by a two-color LED display to indicate speed errors. For \$135, the belt-drive Aiwa AP-D35 constitutes a basic but well-executed record-playing system that includes a pre-installed moving-magnet cartridge. Onkyo's direct-drive CP-1027F (\$189) has a separate motor for the tone arm, plus an optical sensor to trigger that motor at the end of a record. The \$245 Aiwa AP-D60, also direct-drive, locates its optical sensor below the turntable mat where it can read record diameter and thereby control the cueing functions of the arm. It is also supplied with a moving-magnet cartridge installed.

Four new Sanyo turntables range in price from \$90 to \$150. The belt-drive TPX-1 is the basic, no-frills machine. An additional \$10 buys either a pre-installed cartridge (TPX-1C) or a pitch control with strobe display (TPX-1S). The TPX-2 goes to automated features, and the direct-drive TPX-3 will repeat records indefinitely.

Sherwood claims that its new MTD ("minimum tracking distortion") players, the ST-901 (\$130) and ST-902 (\$160), are among the very few available machines whose tone arms are geometrically correct. Both turntables are belt-driven, with the costlier ST-902 offering a more sophisticated motor, independent pitch controls for the two speeds, and a stroboscopic speed indicator.

The Scott PS48A and PS68A, belt- and direct-drive, respectively, are described as semiautomatic machines with prices comfortably under \$200. Mesa's prices are comfortably under \$100 for three record players, two of which (Models 65 SV and 70) come equipped with Audio-Technica AT70 moving-magnet cartridges and one (Model 2600 SV) with a ceramic cartridge of unspecified origin. The machines with SV suffixes are changers.

Denon broke backs and bank accounts to get the mighty DP-100 direct-drive machine to the show (weight approaches 200 pounds; price is around \$5,000, arm not in-

cluded), but Denon's commercial prospects are probably more closely bound up with the new DP-32F (\$325) and DP-31L (\$225), machines whose prices are surprisingly low for this manufacturer and whose platter systems are floated on magnetic fields. Further isolation is provided by spring-suspended motorboards, and tone-arm functions are controlled by microprocessors.

To summarize this show's developments

in turntables: speeds are almost exclusively 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ and 45 rpm; drive systems are belt or direct; single-play machines remain supreme; tone arms are almost all of the so-called "straight" pivoted configuration (no exotic bends or swoops) unless they're radial-tracking; truly new or different technology is not much in evidence; and prices are tending to go down.

(Continued on page 73)



Akai AP-L95



Nikko NP-800



Denon DP-31L



Onkyo CP-1012a



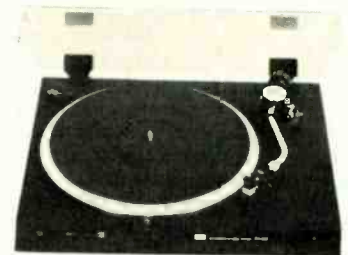
Dual 728Q



Pioneer PL-LB00



JVC QL-A51



Sansui FR-D25B



Technics SL-QL1



Yamaha PX-3

Sound so noise-free, it could only be dbx.

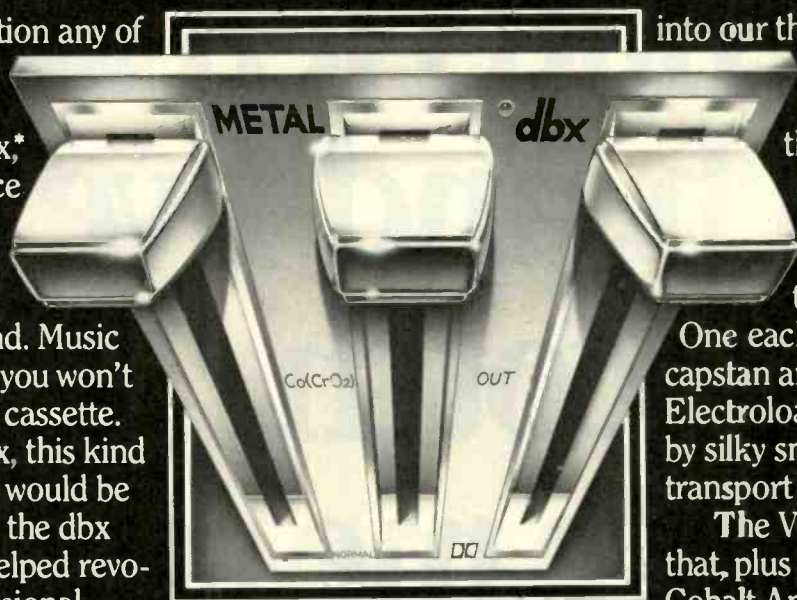
When you audition any of our three new cassette decks with built-in dbx,* you'll experience something you've never heard before.

Noise-free sound. Music so well-defined you won't believe it's on a cassette.

Without dbx, this kind of performance would be impossible. But the dbx system which helped revolutionize professional recording, is now helping us move cassette performance into a new era.

That's because the dbx system is more than just noise elimination. You can set average record levels much lower, so when the music suddenly peaks you get it all—crisp, clean and undistorted.

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Along with the kind of quality that makes a TEAC a TEAC.

For instance, we use three motors to drive the V-5RX.

One each for the reels, the capstan and our unique Electroload system. All run by silky smooth, silent transport controls.

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Its frequency response—20 Hz to 20 kHz—covers the full range of human hearing.

In the C-3RX, you get three separate heads: erase, record and play. Plus double dbx circuitry for true off-the-tape monitoring.

Three new cassette decks from TEAC. Each with a distinctive complement of features. All with built-in dbx. For completely noise-free sound and the broadest musical range possible.



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**“I’ve had rich
Scotch, and I’ve had
poor Scotch.
Believe me rich is
better.”**



**Teacher's Scotch.
Rich is better.™**

Phono Cartridges

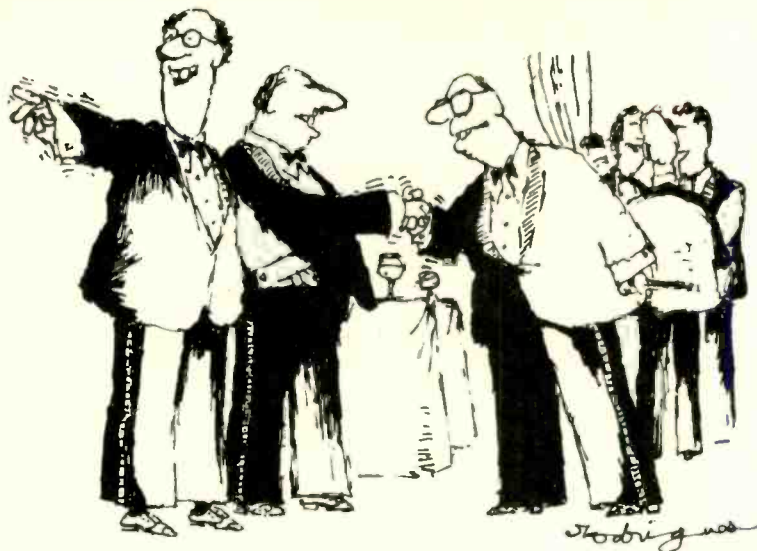
If you were paying attention through the previous section, you will have noted an increasing trend toward record players with pre-installed cartridges. The other side of that trend is the growing number of cartridges designed to be used in one particular record player. At this show Shure Brothers joined other manufacturers who are accommodating the popular Technics radial-tracking turntables with special models. The V15 LT (\$130) is essentially the equivalent of the V15 Type IV, but it is specifically configured for installation in the Technics SL-10. In like manner, the M97LT (\$107) is recommended for the Technics SL-7. Both cartridges, along with three other new Shure models, have hyper-elliptical styli. Another Shure product, the MV30 HE, is again the equivalent of the V15 Type IV, but it is integrated with an arm shaft for the SME 3009 Series tone arms. Price is \$230.

From all evidence, interest in moving-coil cartridges is not slowing down but rather quickening. Pioneer has just introduced three, priced from approximately \$100 to \$250. One, the PC-4MC, has a user-replaceable stylus and an output comparable to that of a moving-magnet design, making a head amp or step-up transformer unnecessary. The PC-70MC and PC-50MC offer more conventional moving-coil performance, and the former has a beryllium rather than an aluminum cantilever.

ADC has joined the moving-coil camp with the \$235 MC 1.5, the performance of which is likened to that of the company's Astrion pickup. A titanium cantilever and very small elliptical stylus are said to result in reduced tip mass. The Signet MK110E (\$125) is another moving-coil design with a replaceable stylus. It debuted with three other Signet cartridges, the dual-moving-magnet TK9Ea (\$275) and TK9LCa (\$295), and the \$1,200 TK100LC, with a hollow ruby cantilever and toroidal coils (non-moving) wound with silver wire.

Audio-Technica's new models AT30HE, AT31E, and AT35E are all moving-coil designs with replaceable styli. Prices range from \$135 to \$250 for the beryllium-cantilevered AT35E, called the smallest and lightest pickup in the A-T moving-coil line. Smaller and lighter still are the Audio-Technica dual-moving-magnet AT55XE, AT57XE, and AT59XE (\$125 to \$145). The second in this series is integrated with a standard bayonet connector to fit those arms with the appropriate mount, while the third has a connector made for some of the latest straight-arm turntables.

Adcom has a new moving-coil model, the HC-E at \$130, and so does Yamaha, the MC-5 at \$180. The Yamaha device appears to respond to purely vertical and lateral stylus movements, and to derive stereo outputs from a signal matrix. The \$130 EPC-310MC, a moving-coil design, is but one of five new cartridges from Technics. Boron cantilevers are a feature of the costlier Technics models. The 310MC is integrated with a bayonet-type connector, while the new moving-magnet EPC-p22, EPC-p22s, EPC-p23, and EPC-p205CMK3 adapt to a number of mounting systems, including the



"... Jeff, you remember Phil—Phil makes the world's finest speaker. Phil, you met Jeff, who makes the world's finest speaker, at last year's show. Oh—there's Sir John Hudspeth from England! Sir John makes the world's finest speaker, you know. . . ."

arms of the Technics radial-tracking machines. The EPC-p23 is priced at \$70; prices for the other moving-magnet models were unavailable.

Pickering claims to offer a sonically valid alternative to moving-coil cartridges in the form of moving-magnet designs with very low coil impedances. The latest such, the SV-7500S, is said to benefit from the use of a special preamplifier. Stanton has adopted the same policy with the new 980LZS (\$250); a companion step-up preamplifier, the BA-26, is available for \$189.

The three latest pickups from AKG combine the company's transversal stylus-suspension system with a new high-resolution stylus shape ("Analog-6") and other refinements. All are of the induced-magnet type. Prices: PS 25 MD, \$250; PS 15 MD, \$165; P 10 ED, \$115.

Ortofon's MC10 MkII is priced at \$185 and is an attempt to create a moving-coil cartridge with a minimum of effective tip mass using a nude elliptical stylus and low-mass aluminum cantilever. A new addition to the Ortofon Concorde line, the EC10, is priced at \$65.

Sonic Research has revived its calibration-standard program in the form of the Dimension 5, a high-compliance pickup that, at \$350, features hand selection and calibration, with individual test results included. To complement the characteristics of the Dimension 5, the manufacturer recommends the new Sonus Formula 4 tone arm (\$265), a design that aims at a minimum of effective mass.

Mass is also a concern of Osawa, which has cut the weight of its newest cartridges to about half that of previous ones. The new models are the OS-1001 (\$60), IS-2001 (\$80), and OS-3001 (\$100). Nagatronics has introduced a new brand name, IMS, which is a direct reference to the induced-magnet principle. The four IMS models, starting with the \$55 1400ER and rising to the \$90 1460IE with integrated headshell,

are designed to be used with low-mass tone arms.

Finally, considerations of mass have influenced John Marovskis Audio Systems in a different way. The new Mirror Image Transducer MIT-1 moving-coil cartridge employs a mass-loaded van den Hull stylus. The claimed benefits of providing a carefully calculated increase in effective tip mass are complex in the explanation, but they have to do with the correction of certain groove deformations presumably introduced as a part of the record-cutting process. The MIT-1 costs \$550.

Speakers

They may not be, at \$3,300 the pair, for everybody, but anybody who actively follows developments in sound reproduction is bound to be curious about the first new loudspeakers from the British manufacturer Quad in almost twenty-five years. Like its predecessor, the Quad ESL-63 is an electrostatic reproducer, but with directional characteristics like no other electrostatic. The electrodes that drive the planar-film diaphragm are divided into concentric rings, and the drive signal is progressively delayed electronically for the outer rings. With such an arrangement, it is possible for the diaphragm to develop a wave pattern that is effectively a spherical section—one of the theoretical ideals for a loudspeaker. In addition, the ESL-63 is said to be improved in uniformity, sensitivity, power handling, and maximum output. Quad enthusiasts should be glad to learn that the screens have been sealed within acoustically transparent membranes, which means they won't double as electrostatic air cleaners.

Another exotic speaker principle that has been some years in development is the Walsh design pioneered by Ohm Acoustics. The Ohm Walsh 2 (\$275) is smaller, cheaper, and more efficient than its Ohm F ancestor, and it utilizes the same sort of me-

chanical-transmission-line driver to propagate a cylindrical wavefront.

The Bose 601 Series II system, with forward- and upward-firing 8-inch woofers and four 3-inch tweeters facing in various directions, aims to realize the company's preferred ratio of reflected to direct sound. The floor-standing system costs \$445.

Another bookshelf system from Acoustic Research, the \$200 AR48s, is a three-way design (10-inch woofer, 4-inch sub-enclosed midrange, and 1-inch dome tweeter) that now leads the line of AR bookshelf systems. In a somewhat smaller format, the Kenwood two-way LS-10 exemplifies this manufacturer's idea of a bookshelf design, with a radially ribbed woofer just over 7 inches in diameter and a planar-type tweeter measuring about 1 1/2 inches.

Design activity at JBL has given birth to a new four-model "Radiance" line of two- and three-way designs, the largest of which (the floor-standing R133) has a 10-inch passive radiator together with a 10-inch woofer. The smallest system, the R82, has an 8-inch woofer and 1 1/2-inch tweeter. For professional uses, JBL has announced a pair of new studio-monitor systems, the Models 4430 and 4435, employing controlled-directivity horns, high-frequency compression drivers, and 15-inch woofers.

ADS showed the Subsat-2300, a sophisticated powered-subwoofer/satellite system using optoelectronic techniques. The three-piece ensemble costs \$1,650.

Sansui's new SP-X9 (\$400) has a 17 1/4-inch (!) woofer plus a 6 1/2-inch cone midrange, two midrange sectoral horns, and three 2-inch tweeters, one of which radiates through an acoustic lens. The \$350 SP-X8 is almost identical, but it drops the acoustic lens and one of the midrange horns. Two more SP-X introductions descend to the \$260 SP-X6 with a 13-inch woofer. At similar price points are the three new JVC speaker systems, the Zero 6 (\$440), Zero 4 (\$330), and Zero 2 (\$250). Here the emphasis is on such proven devices as the JVC ribbon tweeter as well as on new midranges using improved diaphragm materials.

Design Acoustics has gone to a satellite system, the \$595 Triad, for its latest product. Each satellite unit contains a 5-inch midrange and 1-inch dome tweeter, while the separate bass cabinet has a 12-inch dual-voice-coil woofer. The Triad can be biamplified or used with a single stereo amplifier, in which case the dual woofer voice coils and completely separate crossover networks "decomplicate" the load presented to the amplifier.

Three new "Phase-Link" loudspeakers from Bang & Olufsen bring the line to five; all use a 1-inch dome tweeter, and all but one a 3-inch dome midrange. The latest models also use 8-inch woofers in air-suspension enclosures. Prices go from \$995 for the S 120 to \$550 for the two-way S 50.

From David Hafler comes an interesting two-way system (Model 355), for just \$200, utilizing a tallish cylindrical enclosure. A 3/4-inch tweeter and two 6 1/2-inch woofers are the drivers; their acoustic centers have been aligned to maintain arrival-time coherence. And from B&W comes an interesting new material, Fibrecrete, a form of glass-reinforced concrete that is being used

in the construction of the sub-enclosures housing midrange and tweeter for the Models 801 and 802 systems. The material is said to be uncommonly strong and inert.

Osawa, which distributes the Heco loudspeakers in this country, has now officially brought to market the \$1,850 Heco Lab 2 and \$2,450 Lab 3. Both are tower systems with large, upward-firing woofers and front-mounted arrays of tweeter and midrange domes. The presence of front-firing smaller woofers makes them four-way systems. Moving in the opposite direction, Celestion presented two rather small systems, the Ditton 110 at \$175 and the Ditton 100 at \$130. Woofer sizes are 8 and 6 1/2 inches; tweeters are both 1-inch domes.

KEF, another overseas manufacturer, has new two-way systems, the Models 203 and 204, at prices of \$300 and \$550, respectively. The costlier model has an oval passive radiator. BSR has improved two of its existing models, the 103 and 123, giving them both "B" suffixes in the process, and added a new three-way system with a 15-inch woofer, the \$200 Model 153.

Akai has essentially replaced its previous models with three new systems in three- and two-way configurations. Prices run from \$270 per pair for the CW-T33 to the same price apiece for the CW-T77. Scott has added to its "Slimcom" line with the Model 208 two-way (\$110) and Model 311 three-way (\$250). Aiwa has a single new speaker, the E60, which is small enough to be called a minispeaker and costs \$125.

Benjamin has announced that it will indeed handle the Vieta line of speaker systems from Spain. The Benjamin series of three models is distinguished by the \$3,500-per-pair B-10,000, a nine-driver multidirectional system with alternating midranges and tweeters mounted in a horizontal ring. The other two systems, at \$600 and \$300, are more conventional.

Subwoofers are still a lively area. ADC's new one, the \$198 MS10W, is an attractive entry, as are its Model 260 satellite system and two new three-way full-range systems, the Models 310 and 312. Cizek now has the "Sound Window" subwoofer (\$249), which is designed to complement the previously introduced Sound Window small systems in a satellite array. (Another new Cizek product is the Model 727 two-way speaker system at \$97.) Audio Pro builds the necessary amplifier into its new B2-40 subwoofer.

ONE of the most celebrated and controversial tweeters in audio history was known in this country as the Ionovac. It had no moving parts, but instead persuaded air to move itself by the application of a high ionizing voltage. It is born again in the intriguing Plasmatronics speaker system from Alan Hill, and according to Jon Dahlquist it will continue to live in the Magnat tweeter, which Dahlquist will soon import from its Viennese manufacturer. The device resembles a ball-type microphone windscreen atop a chunky electronics package.

Another tweeter featured at the show comes from RTR; it is set off by a dome diaphragm stiffened with an intersecting pattern of Dupont Kevlar filaments—a design that is said to make the dome's behavior more predictable. The "Acoustic Fila-



Polk Audio RTA 12B



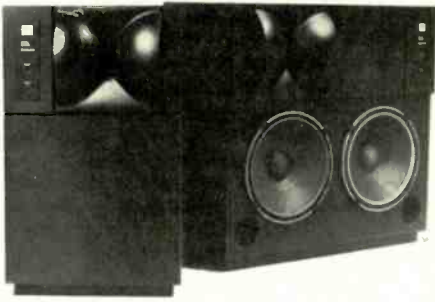
Bang & Olufsen MS-150 and M-150



KEF Model 204



BES SM 300, SM 270, SM 255, and SM 250



JBL Models
4430 and 4435



Acoustic Research
AR48s



Micro-Acoustics
Model 2dx



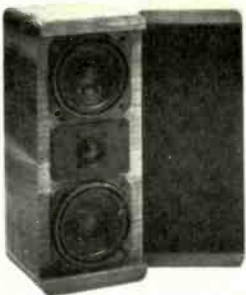
JVC Zero 4



Celestion
Ditton 110



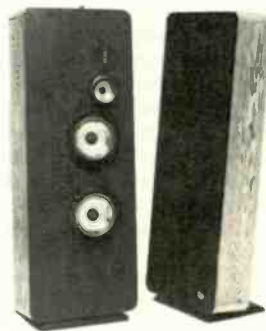
Quad ESL-63



Koss Dyna-Mite



Ohm Acoustics
Walsh 2



Infinity
Reference Standard III

ment Technology" (AFT) tweeter is used in the new RTR AFT 6.1 speaker system, along with a 6-inch air-suspension woofer. Other new RTR products include the DAC-2 subwoofer, incorporating two 8-inch woofers plus a large passive radiator, and a large (84 inches high) wide-range (132 to 35,000 Hz) electrostatic speaker system, the ESR-24.

BGW has become the distributor for the British Tannoy loudspeakers in this country, and the latest Tannoy designs are the T110 "Stratford" at \$229 and the enormous Tannoy "Dreadnaught," offering 126-dB sound-pressure levels for \$6,000 the pair. Polk Audio is enthusiastic about its RTA 12B, successor to the RTA 12, which is the first system the company has designed with a computer. IMF is similarly enthusiastic about its Special Application Control Monitor, a large floor-standing system with separate midrange and high-frequency sub-enclosures. The "ruthlessly accurate" ensemble is available by special order only, but some of its components can be had in a small system designed for rear-channel applications in Ambisonic sound systems, an outgrowth of four-channel technology that IMF is vigorously involving itself with.

Boston Acoustics' line progresses downward in size this year to the A40 two-way bookshelf system. And the Delphi line progresses upward, with the \$795 "Tower" scheduled to go into distribution immediately. It follows the Delphi practice of reproducing almost all audio frequencies with arrays of wide-range 8-inch drivers. Getting back to small again, there are the DCM "Macrophones"; at \$360 the pair, these diminutive two-way systems represent the smallest designs the manufacturer thinks could legitimately be called full-range.

Shahinian Acoustics seems never to use the same enclosure shape twice. The latest Shahinian designs are the \$235 "Pipe" (which looks it), the \$385 "Arch" (an upright trapezoidal wedge, actually, but you can see what the name is getting at), and the \$1,250 "Contra Bombarde" subwoofer, containing two horn-loaded 8-inch drivers. Another pipe comes from Daniel Queen Laboratories: a gracefully proportioned 52-inch-high cylinder intended to achieve absolute spectral and arrival-time uniformity throughout the lateral plane. The system is called the "Controlled Arrival Loudspeaker," and the price is \$1,250.

New Fried speaker systems for the show included updates of several existing models plus the \$1,500 three-way Model HPS, a large pyramidal design, and the \$400 three-way Model G. The new speaker from Pyramid is a mini, the Metronome Model 7, having a cone tweeter and a price of \$300. The newer Hartley models have been both dramatically big (witness the 24-inch "Polymer" woofer) and not quite so big (for example, the four-piece SPL-1 system, with two largish bass modules and two much smaller "phasor array" satellites intended for stereo-image enhancement).

Cerwin-Vega has begun to use its recently developed coaxial mid-bass/tweeter assembly in home speaker systems, the first model of which will be the 812S. And Janszen has begun to use its newly improved electrostatic elements in the Model A-210b,

a two-way design with a 10-inch woofer and two electrostatic screens. The 1200 SMT ("Tower") introduces a new line of systems from Sound Dynamics with a \$400 two-way-plus-passive-radiator configuration.

Finally, here are a few additional notes on some overseas manufacturers beginning to brave the vicissitudes of the U.S. market. England's ARC makes two-way systems that can be bi-amplified or used with their own removable passive crossovers. The

Model 101 is \$850 per pair, the Model 202 \$1,400 per pair. Bi-amping is particularly recommended for the two systems in England's Meridian line, the M2 and the M3, both of which are two-way designs. The Morel loudspeakers from Israel do not anticipate bi-amplification, but they do address highly individual tastes by offering a striking variety of shapes and sizes within a five-model line whose prices range from \$160 to \$550.

comes with the System 400. The speakers are said to be identical to the KLH Model Three—except, of course, for the latter's bass-reinforcement circuitry.

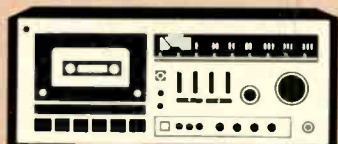
There were many new entries into the minicomponent field. BSR introduced the MCR 200, which includes a 20-W/ch receiver, a solenoid-operated cassette deck, and a pair of two-way acoustic-suspension speakers for \$530. Rotel debuted three systems, of which the biggest, the Micro 90, has complete remote control. Blaupunkt introduced a mini system with a 15-W/ch integrated amp; an AM/FM/longwave tuner; a cassette deck which accepts chrome, ferrichrome, or metal tape; and a pair of 8-inch two-way speakers. While the Blaupunkt minis were obviously designed for the home and not for the car, Sony exhibited a micro system, the XF-5000 Transsound, which looks like car components in a portable box. It includes a digital-synthesis tuner/tape deck/preamp with Dolby, plus a pulse power supply "booster amp." The system can run on 12 volts. And Hitachi introduced its first mini system, the J-2, for \$800. Aiwa has improved its mini line with a new 30-W/ch power amp that has a moving-coil phono input and a front-loading tape deck with a flywheel-assisted load/eject system. The M-606 package is \$525.

Even those portable "boom boxes" are beginning to develop fissures, the front panels being divided into sections to provide the look of separates. JVC's Quintet system, however, really is made up of separate pieces; they can be spread out on a low shelf or clipped together with a handle for traveling. The Quintet has a tuner that will receive AM, FM, and two short-wave bands including marine frequencies; there is also a 12-W/ch amplifier with phono preamp and aux input, plus a solenoid-operated metal-compatible tape deck with full-logic control, Super ANRS noise reduction, and program-search mode. The Quintet uses full-range 4-inch speakers in vented cabinets; price, \$650.

Another battery-operated system is Telefunken's HI-FI-Studio 1 (\$600). The Studio 1, which is available in either metallic brown or silver, sports 5-inch, three-way detachable speaker systems. There is a four-band tuner (AM, FM, short-wave, and long-wave), a cassette deck with the High Com broadband noise-reduction system plus Dolby playback, and a power-amp section rated at 30 W/ch during a.c. operation and about 15 when the system is running from its batteries.

There was also a full complement of one-brand systems, those non-standard "racks" that are the industry's latest flier in a new component format. This is a fast-developing field, with new entrants almost weekly, and we plan to monitor it closely for a short while in order to bring readers a more comprehensive roundup of the breed in the December issue. □

This report on the 1981 Chicago Consumer Electronics Show will be concluded next month with Ivan Berger's reports on Audio Accessories and some new developments in the rapidly expanding Audio/Video field.



MINIS CASCEIVERS AND PORTABLES



A report by
Brad Meyer

Writers habitually resort to categorization in trying to make sense of large collections of unwieldy facts. Manufacturers, on the other hand, regard any space between categories as an untapped market, and in their unceasing efforts to fill in the product gaps they blur carefully drawn distinctions. For instance: halfway between a "rack" audio system and a minicomponent system there has popped up another type that is made up of smallish regular components and sold as a unit but designed to sit on a shelf instead of being lodged in a separate piece of furniture. The Pioneer X-50 Shelf Component System (\$1,200) contains a 40-W/ch (watts per channel) integrated amplifier, a quartz-synthesized tuner with integral timer, and a two-head cassette deck, plus a pair of two-way speaker systems with 7-inch acoustic-suspension woofers. The amp and tape deck have large metal plates on the front panel which serve the main control functions: on the tape deck you press the top of the plate for play, either side for fast winding, and the bottom for stop. An optional turntable (\$235) is only 8¼ inches deep; the record and tone arm project from the front when in use.

Hitachi has a similar system, the Systematics M235 DR "Midi" (\$850), which sits in a two-shelf open rack 18 inches high. And Aiwa's new Slim Line components, comprising a tuner, a 50-W/ch integrated amplifier, an auto-loading cassette deck with Dolby-C, and an automatic turntable, make a stack whose total height is only 12 inches. The price for all four is \$1,225.

A system that looks like a stack of slim-

line components, but is really one piece, is the Saba C3000. It contains a cassette deck, an integrated amplifier, a tuner, and a turntable that is set into the top. The package is 16 inches wide and 18 inches high; it sells for \$700. A matching pair of two-way speakers with 7-inch woofers is \$120.

American consumers are apparently not as willing as their Japanese and European counterparts to suffer the inconveniences of cramped front panels and tiny controls merely to save a little space. Manufacturers are therefore evolving other, somewhat larger systems. The intermediate-size slim-line ensembles discussed above are one example of this. Another new tactic is to put a minicassette-deck mechanism and a small receiver into a single package and call it a "casceiver." Many manufacturers—including JVC, Pioneer, Sansui, Panasonic, Fisher, Kenwood, and Sony—introduced examples of this genre in Chicago. The typical casceiver is about the size of a low-profile cassette deck; it has a 30-W/ch output, quartz-synthesized tuning with scanning and seven or more presets, a solenoid-operated cassette deck with metal-tape capability, and optional automatic level controls for recording.

KLH's contribution is the System 400 (\$800), whose electronic section looks like a cassette deck, tuner/preamp, and power amp stacked together with walnut side panels. The three pieces cannot be separated, though, because they all run from one power supply. Functionally, it's the same as a casceiver. A pair of Model Four loudspeakers (two-way units with 4-inch woofers)

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BEST OF THE MONTH

STEREO REVIEW'S SELECTION OF RECORDINGS OF SPECIAL MERIT



• Gidon and Elena Kremer: Exceptional Music Making •

GIDON KREMER seems to have turned up on a different label nearly every time we've heard from him since his Western recording debut on Angel five years ago in the Brahms Violin Concerto with Herbert von Karajan, who was quoted then as declaring Kremer "the greatest violinist in the world." Not all of Kremer's recordings have inspired that sort of enthusiasm—his Tchaikovsky concerto and the package of concerted novelties by Beethoven and Schubert on Deutsche Grammophon were rather disappointing to me—but his debut with Philips is an especially happy occasion. There are two discs—one made up of twentieth-century works by French and Russian composers, the other bringing some surprises by Beethoven and his contemporaries—and they also represent, as far as I know, Kremer's first Western recordings in the company of his pianist wife Elena. The cover photographs and, even more, the performances suggest that the two Kremers selected pieces they themselves especially love and enjoy. All four sides fairly brim over with affection and enthusiasm for the music—and beautiful playing on the part of both participants.

Actually, the Franco-Russian package is not entirely twentieth-century. One of its major attractions is the one-movement sonata Ravel composed in 1897, thirty years before he completed the violin sonata we all know. This work was not performed in public until Gerald Tarack and Leon Pommers presented it in the Ravel centenary recital

organized by the composer's biographer Arbie Orenstein at Queens College in 1975 (their recording of it is on Musical Heritage Society MHS 3581, together with other premières from that event). The Kremers are a good deal more intense and impassioned than Tarack and Pommers, never overwhelming the music but making quite clear its relationship to the string quartet Ravel completed a half-dozen years later. In

GIDON KREMER. Ravel: *Sonata Posthume*. Satie: *Choses Vues à Droite et à Gauche (sans Lunettes)*. Milhaud: *Le Printemps*. Stravinsky: *Duo Concertant*. Prokofiev: *Sonata for Violin Solo, Op. 115*. Gidon Kremer (violin); Elena Kremer (piano). PHILIPS 9500 912 \$9.98, © 7300 912 \$9.98.

GIDON KREMER. Schubert: *Fantasy in C Major, Op. 159 (D. 934)*. F. X. W. Mozart: *Grand Sonata in E Major, Op. 19*. Beethoven: *Variations on "Se vuol ballare" (WoO 40)*. Gidon Kremer (violin); Elena Kremer (piano). PHILIPS 9500 904 \$9.98, © 7300 904 \$9.98.

Stravinsky's *Duo Concertant* they manage to make both the flinty and the lyrical sections more compelling than I can remember hearing them before, and the unaccompanied sonata by Pro-

kofiev exudes a charm and wit that must make any listener wonder why it isn't one of the most popular pieces in the repertoire. Satie's *Choses Vues à Droite et à Gauche (sans Lunettes)* and Milhaud's *Le Printemps* are just the sort of shorter pieces one wants to fill out the Ravel side, and they too are done to a turn.

Schubert's sprawling *Fantasy in C Major* is obviously much closer to Kremer's heart than the Schubert concerted pieces in the aforementioned DG collection. The side this work occupies would be treasurable enough simply for the big, beautiful tone the violinist displays, but there is a great deal more than surface luster to compel the listener to return. There is, first of all, taste: the Kremers seem to sense just how far to go in indulging the lyrical and dramatic elements. There is an unflinching sense of proportion as well as utterly Schubertian momentum and vivid give-and-take between violinist and pianist to sustain it. I don't think either Johanna Martzy and Jean Antoniotti, in their unforgettable Schubert series, or David Oistrakh and Frieda Bauer, wonderful as their performances were, brought the *Fantasy* to life quite as successfully as the Kremers do. (What a delightful indulgence, though, to listen to all three recordings seriatim!)

The rest of the Viennese package is less imposing, but enjoyable enough on its own level—with, as I've already mentioned, a surprise or two for the listener who thinks he's heard everything. The "Grand Sonata" in E Major by

"There is an unflinching sense of proportion as well as . . . vivid give-and-take . . ."



Gidon and Elena Kremer
(Photo courtesy of Philips Records)



BEST OF THE MONTH RECENT SELECTIONS YOU MAY HAVE MISSED

CLASSICAL

- J. S. Bach: *Goldberg Variations*. ARCHIV 2533 425. "A thoroughly seasoned and mature reading by Trevor Pinnock." (July)
- J. S. Bach: *The Six Partitas*. ARABESQUE 6501-3. "A sensational comeback recording by João Carlos Martins." (June)
- Bartók: *Piano Concertos Nos. 2 and 3*. LONDON CS 7167. "The partnership of Vladimir Ashkenazy and Sir Georg Solti is complete and electrifying." (July)
- Corigliano: *Clarinet Concerto*. Barber: *Third Essay for Orchestra*. NEW WORLD NW 309. "New creations that magnificently celebrate the New York Philharmonic." (May)
- Janáček: *Glagolitic Mass*. SUPRAPHON 1112 2698 G. "Personal, national, indispensable." (August)
- Rossini: *L'Italiana in Algeri*. RCA ARL3-3855. "A delightful comic totality springs to triumphant life." (July)
- Stravinsky: *The Firebird*. LONDON LDR 10012. "A must for the Stravinsky fan." (June)
- Wagner: *Parsifal*. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2741 002. "Outstanding singers and the grand line in a luminous, transparent recording." (August)
- Weber: *Der Freischütz*. LONDON OSA 13136. "A lovingly conducted realization of a glorious score." (June)

POPULAR

- Stanley Clarke and George Duke: *The Clarke/Duke Project*. EPIC FE 36918. "A wonderful musical splash in some deep pop waters." (July)
- Fleetwood Mac: *Live*. WARNER BROS. 2WB 3500. "All in all . . . a first-class way to go." (May)
- Ellen Foley: *Spirit of St. Louis*. EPIC/CLEVELAND INTERNATIONAL JE 36984. "A most impressive album in the difficult cabaret genre." (July)
- Emmylou Harris: *Evangeline*. WARNER BROS. BSK 3508. "Awesome music making." (June)
- Leo Kottke: *Guitar Music*. CHRYSALIS CHR 1328. "Kottke is at the top of his form as both artist and producer." (August)
- Jean Redpath: *The Songs of Robert Burns*. PHLO PH 1048. "Mostly sweet, sometimes sally, simply wonderful." (June)
- Carole Bayer Sager: *Sometimes Late at Night*. BOARDWALK FW 37069. ". . . amounts to a summation of the attitudes of the women of her generation." (August)
- Phoebe Snow: *Rock Away*. MIRAGE WTG 19297. "This album is a real charmer." (July)
- Leon Ware: *Rockin' You Eternally*. ELEKTRA 6E-332. "A fine showcase for a fine songwriter." (June)

Franz Xaver Wolfgang Mozart (who, as everyone seems so determined to point out lately, may not have been the great Wolfgang Amadeus' son after all, but possibly Franz Xaver Süssmayr's) is a pleasant, well-crafted piece, but hardly a memorable one, and the twenty-one-year-old Beethoven's variations on "Se vuol ballare" (from the Mozart's *Marriage of Figaro*) may be even more forgettable. If the music itself is slight, however, it nonetheless provides a frame for some exceptional music making—and it's not too likely to create duplication problems for most collectors. The recorded sound on both discs is splendidly focused and alive.

—Richard Freed

The Latest from Kitty and the Haywoods: Sweet, Old-fashioned, Get-down Soul Singing

JUST as it is possible to sniff out a real stinker of a recording almost the moment its protective shrink wrap is slit, so can one pick up the heady scent of a really special release. Take Capitol's new "Excuse Me, I've Got a Life to Catch," for example. It exudes an es-

pecially appealing essence of freshness, one telegraphed, moreover, by the brightly optimistic smile of lead singer Kitty Haywood in the cover photo. These advance signals turned out to be perfectly accurate: from the very first listening, the album made a snug home for itself in that cushiony part of my psyche that responds to sweet, old-fashioned soul singing, particularly when it is served up by musicians like these, four ladies who wouldn't touch a rare bit of harmony with anything other than tender loving care.

News of Kitty and the Haywoods had missed me until I received this, their debut disc for Capitol, but I'm going to make up for lost time fast. The group is composed of three Haywood sisters—Kitty, Vivian, and Mary Ann—plus Vivian's daughter Cynthia "1 Cent" Harrell. The trio of sisters has been active as back-up singers for many artists, including Aretha Franklin and Curtis Mayfield, and they have performed on numerous commercial jingles. Cynthia joined the Haywoods in 1976, and the quartet recorded its first album the next year.

The women have tailored a personal style using some of the now-traditional tonal fabrics woven by r-&-b "girl groups" over the years. The result is a wholesome "get-down" quality that is most apparent on dance tunes like *I Can't Wait for Your Love* and the title song, but they can also be coolly seductive, as on *You Are the Reason*. Their main musical asset is the voice of Kitty

Left to right: Vivian, Kitty, Cynthia, and Mary Ann





At the Lincoln Center gala: Horne, Bonyngue, Sutherland, and Pavarotti

Haywood, as bright and firmly resonant as that of a fire-baptized church soprano, but tempered somewhat along the edge in a way that makes it both distinctive and appealing.

The other three members are meticulously on target with their supporting vocals, especially on *Mystic Stranger* where they punch out the line "Don't *cha* remembah" with enough persuasive insistence that you'll answer "Yeah!" even if you haven't the vaguest idea what it is they want you to remember. They are at their best in a gospel selection, Walter Hawkins' *Holy One*, all majestic sweeps and swirls of religious passion. The added female choir and a bluesy-jazzy instrumental arrangement together make this production number a fittingly dramatic climax to the album.

My nose may be quivering a mite prematurely, but it tells me that the sweet smell of success already surrounds Kitty and the Haywoods.

—Phyl Garland

KITTY AND THE HAYWOODS: *Excuse Me, I've Got a Life to Catch.* Kitty and the Haywoods (vocals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Excuse Me, I've Got a Life to Catch; Mystic Stranger; Someone to Somebody; Sweet Taste of Honey; You Are the Reason; Holy One; Can't Wait for Your Love; It's Real; You Can't Say I Didn't Try.* CAPITOL ST-12149 \$8.98, © 4XT-12149 \$8.98.

Sutherland, Horne, and Pavarotti: Dazzling Vocal Virtuosity in the Concert of the Century

ACCORDING to estimates by officials at New York's Lincoln Center, fully ten million of the nation's TV sets were tuned in to the Public Television broadcast of the operatic gala featuring Joan Sutherland, Marilyn Horne, and Luciano Pavarotti at Avery Fisher Hall the night of March 23. That well-publicized event has now been documented by London Records in a set of two digital discs that may have a few drawbacks but offers many compensatory thrills as well.

There is first, alas, a great deal of applause to contend with, fervent and at times almost hysterical. For the home listener this will be something of an intrusion on the musical experience—too bad, for it could easily have been edited out in some instances. But if you can ignore that frequent annoyance, you will doubtless enjoy three extraordinary singers in excellent form in a program of more than usual interest.

Marilyn Horne's dazzling rendition of "Mura felici" from Rossini's *La Donna del Lago* is the set's highlight, a

brehtaking display of *bel canto* virtuosity coupled with disciplined musicianship (when you hear it you'll probably want to join the audience in frenzied applause). Joan Sutherland contributes a similar virtuosity in the cabaletta from *I Masnadieri* and exhibits astonishing ease and security in all her scenes, including the one from *Norma* (in which Miss Horne appears as a luscious-toned but perhaps too commanding-sounding Adalgisa). If Miss Sutherland could only invest her singing with more clarity to convey textual *meaning* and not just a generalized *mood*! But we have all been waiting for that in vain some twenty-five years . . .

You are not likely to hear elsewhere the kind of honeyed *mezza-voce* Luciano Pavarotti displays here in the music of Otello, Manrico, and Enzo. In "*Che gelida manina*," however, he is evidently inclined to sing faster than conductor Richard Bonyngue wishes the music to go, and his careless habit of rounding off phrases with gratuitous vowel endings ("*Chi son(e), chi son(e)?*") is again in evidence.

Not all the musical selections are on an equally high plane. The *Ernani* trio (in which Miss Horne absurdly takes the part of the vengeful bass) is paced rather mechanically by the conductor, and, some splendid vocalizing aside, the *Norma* scene sounds tense (it was prob-

ably under-rehearsed). All the same, we are treated on these two discs to a luxuriant vocal display by three fabulously gifted singers who are generally well supported by a good orchestra and a dedicated conductor. The brief trio from *Beatrice di Tenda*, given as an encore at the concert but not televised, is a recording first with these principals.

—George Jellinek

SUTHERLAND/HORNE/PAVAROTTI: *Live from Lincoln Center. Verdi: Ernani: Grand Trio from the Finale to Act IV. I Masnadieri: Tu del mio Carlo. Otello: Gia nella notte, Duet from Act I. Il Trovatore: Finale to Act IV. Bellini: Norma: Scena and Duet from Act I; Finale to Act I. Beatrice di Tenda: Angiol de pace. Puccini: La Bohème: Che gelida Manina. Ponchielli: La Gioconda: Trio from Act IV; Deh, non turbare, Duet from Act II. Rossini: La Donna del Lago: Mura felici.* Joan Sutherland (soprano); Marilyn Horne (mezzo-soprano); Luciano Pavarotti (tenor); Jake Gardner (baritone, in *Il Trovatore*); New York City Opera Orchestra, Richard Bonynghe cond. LONDON ● LDR 72009 two discs \$21.96, © LDR5 72009 \$21.96.

Will famed TV commentator Tess Harding ever find happiness with cartoonist husband Sam Craig? Can a pitcher of water dumped on Tess' head at the decisive moment bring the estranged couple back together? These are some of the soapy questions posed in the course of the Broadway musical *Woman of the Year*, based on the 1942 movie starring Katharine Hepburn and Spencer Tracy. Scoffers may laugh at the worn-out story line, but this old-fashioned entertainment nonetheless furnishes a couple of hours of pleasant diversion, thanks largely to the indomitable personality and wry delivery of Lauren Bacall, whose performance in the Barbara Waltersish title role won her a Tony award this year as best actress in a musical.

On record, *Woman of the Year* is almost more diverting than it is on stage, since playing time dictated that much of the tedious plot argument be deleted. On the other hand, you don't get to see Tony Walton's stylish sets, the dazzling Tony Charmoli dances, or the animated

done himself—in such numbers as *I Wrote the Book* and the title song—in supplying words of witty topicality for Bacall to put over in her inimitable chalumneau register. However, both the tune and the lyrics of *One of the Boys* ("I'm one of the girls/Who is one of the boys..."), the most exuberant item of the lot, sound as though they were borrowed for the occasion—something, say, Jerry Herman wrote for Carol Channing or Angela Lansbury—the formula is *that* familiar. Harry Guardino, whose voice is an instrument a mite more musical than Bacall's, has his in-nings in the solid ballad *Sometimes a Day Goes By* and in *So What Else Is New?*, his duet with Katz.

The high point of the score is another duet starring the heroine and her ex-mate's new, housewifely spouse (played, with magnificent frumpiness, by Marilyn Cooper—who also walked off with a Tony this year). It's called *The Grass Is Always Greener*, and it simply leaps off the record like the show-stopper it is. In all, a most lively



Merie Debuskey

Eivind Harum, left, and Roderick Cook, right, with Lauren Bacall in the Kander/Ebb success *Woman of the Year*

The Award-winning *Woman of the Year*: Brisk, Bright, and Beautifully Recorded

SHOULD a woman of keen intellect and impressive worldly accomplishments give up her career for marriage?

And clever patter it is. Ebb has out-

cartoon cat (named Katz, naturally) who rivals the human principals in plain personality. And since this is one of those musicals with a score tailor-made for singers of (to put it kindly) limited range, the tunes are little more than strings of notes on which to hang the pitter-patter of the lyrics. (Even so, Tony awards went also to John Kander and Fred Ebb for the score and to Peter Stone for the book.)

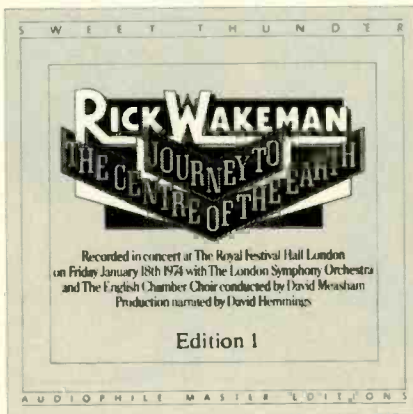
affair, brisk, bright, and beautifully recorded to boot.

—Paul Kresh

WOMAN OF THE YEAR (John Kander-Fred Ebb). Original-cast recording. Lauren Bacall, Harry Guardino, Eivind Harum, Grace Keagy, Daren Kelly, Tom Avera, Rex Hays, Lawrence Raikin, Gerry Vichi, Marilyn Cooper, Rex Everhart, Jamie Ross, Roderick Cook (vocals); chorus and orchestra, Donald Pippin cond. ARISTA AL 8303 \$9.98, © ACT 8303 \$9.98, © A8T 8303 \$9.98.

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Classical Music Briefs



Jim Coburn: Photographers



CBS

LIKE politics of any kind, musical politics requires a certain amount of baby-kissing. Irish flutist **James Galway** (left) and French flutist **Jean-Pierre Rampal** both posed for photographs with the youngest of their fans at recent (separate) album-signing sessions at a Sam Goody store in New York. What are they trying to prove? Perhaps that classical music re-

ally does appeal to the young. Or perhaps they want to remind us that the original Pied Piper, who was a flutist, had the power to influence and lead voters of the future.

In any case, both of these candidates for the office of World's Premier Flutist were pushing recent albums. Galway, an exclusive RCA artist, was signing copies of his newest re-

lease on that label, "French Flute Concertos." Rampal, who has recorded for many companies, was autographing his latest CBS Masterworks album of sonatas by Moscheles and Schubert with pianist John Steele Ritter.

Meanwhile, America's own front-running flutist Ransom Wilson was on the hustings in the provinces. Following a tour of

the Eastern United States with the Chamber Orchestra of Nice, Wilson appeared at a number of U.S. summer music festivals including the one at Chataqua, New York, where he played Leonard Bernstein's latest composition, *Halil* for flute and strings. Wilson's latest Angel record, which will be reviewed here next month, is "Pleasure Songs for Flute." □

ATIRELESS advocate of American music, the young American conductor **Michael Tilson Thomas** has recorded all the music of Carl Ruggles for CBS Masterworks. In August he recorded Charles Ives' Second Symphony with the Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam, the first step in a cycle of all four Ives symphonies with that orchestra for CBS. Surprisingly, this will not be the first integral set of the symphonies recorded by a European orchestra. Harold Farberman recorded all four with the New Philharmonia Orchestra of London, and those performances are still available on Vanguard. □



Chris Bannion

Johanna Meier, who is singing *Isolde* in Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* at the Bayreuth Festival this summer, is the first

American-born soprano to perform the role there. She is the thirteenth *Isolde* in the history of the festival, and her most recent predecessors in the role were Astrid Varnay, Birgit Nilsson, and Caterina Ligendza, all of whom were born in Sweden. Miss Meier, a long-time member of the New York City Opera Company, has sung regularly with the Metropolitan since 1976. She sang *Isolde* for the first time in Mexico City in 1979 and has since performed the role in Toronto, Cardiff (Wales), Venice, and Seattle.

A native of Chicago, Miss Meier will make her debut with Lyric Opera of Chicago this fall

as Leonore in Beethoven's *Fidelio*. On September 21, in Exxon's Great Performances series on PBS, she will be seen in a performance of Samuel Barber's *Vanessa* from the Spoleto Festival in Charleston, South Carolina. □

CURRENTLY available musical memorabilia includes a 1943 medal of Beethoven newly reissued by the state mint of France. On its face the medal shows Beethoven composing at the piano while a spirit hand is about to crown him with a wreath of oak and olive leaves. The reverse shows the com-

poser's piano and a pastoral scene symbolizing the Sixth Symphony. Measuring 50 millimeters in diameter, the medal is available in sterling silver for \$261 and in bronze for \$26.50 from International Government Trading Corporation, 575 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022.

The Ricordi-La Scala series of opera posters (reproductions of turn-of-the-century posters for *Tosca*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Parsifal*, etc.) has been expanded to include such items as a 1930 poster for the Folies-Bergère, cabaret singer Mistinguett at the Casino de Paris, and the American debut of Anna Pavlova and her Ballet Russe. Prices: \$8 and \$15. A color brochure is available for \$2 (refundable with the first order) from Fiesta Arts, Inc., Greenvale, N.Y. 11548. □

CONDUCTOR **Erich Kunzel** has been appointed music director of the San Francisco Pops Orchestra founded by the late Arthur Fiedler in 1931. Fiedler encouraged Kunzel to go into the pops field and frequently invited him to appear as guest conductor with the pops orchestras of San Francisco and Boston. For his first concert in his San Francisco post on July 8, Kunzel programmed

Aaron Copland's *Lincoln Portrait*, and the narrator he chose was his mentor's widow, Ellen Fiedler.

Kunzel is well known to collectors of audiophile recordings for his Telarc digital recording of Tchaikovsky's *1812 Overture* with the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, and Telarc has just brought out Kunzel's recording of Gershwin's *An American in Paris* and *Rhapsody in Blue* with the Cincinnati Symphony and pianist Eugene List. Due in September on the Vox Cum Laude label is a digital recording (D-VCL 9006) by Kunzel and the Cincinnati Pops of Offenbach's *Gaîté Parisienne* and Meyerbeer's *Patineurs*. □

IN 1958, when pianist Van Cliburn returned from Moscow where he had won first prize in the Tchaikovsky Competition, he was treated as a national hero. This summer, when New York pianist **André-Michel Schub** returned from Fort Worth, Texas, where he had won first prize in the Sixth Van Cliburn International Piano Competition, he was given similar treatment as a home-town boy who made good, and Mayor Edward Koch put on a reception for him at City Hall. Visibly moved by the honor, Schub said that he grew up in



Van Cliburn, his mother Rildia Bee Cliburn, André-Michel Schub, and New York Mayor Edward Koch

Brooklyn, where he attended public schools, and that he considers the many cultural treasures of the city among his personal resources.

"Growing up in New York was one of the most important influences on my musical development," he continued, "because here I was able to attend frequent concerts by such great pianists as Van Cliburn and Arthur Rubinstein. Winning the Cliburn Competition was exciting in many ways. One of the greatest thrills came in the Dallas airport when I saw a front-page story in the *New York Times* headlined 'New Yorker Wins Piano Contest' and realized the story was about me."

Schub's next performances in his home town will occur when he heads the roster of soloists with the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival during its week-long residency at Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center (August 29-September 3). With such colleagues as violinists Ani and Ida Kavafian and violist Walter Trampler, Schub will perform chamber works by Dvořák, Mozart, and Schumann. His performances then can be heard not only by his fellow New Yorkers, but by anyone within range of a station in the National Public Radio network, which will broadcast the concerts live by satellite. Check local stations for time. —W.L.

Disc and Tape Reviews

By RICHARD FREED • DAVID HALL • GEORGE JELLINEK • PAUL KRESH
STODDARD LINCOLN • ERIC SALZMAN

Ⓢ = stereo cassette

Ⓢ = eight-track stereo cartridge

● = digital-master recording

Ⓛ = direct-to-disc

□ = quadraphonic disc

Ⓜ = monophonic recording

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

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

ALKAN: *Sonate de Concert for Cello and Piano, Op. 47*. Yehuda Hanani (cello); Edward Auer (piano). FINNADAR SR 9030 \$7.98.

Performance: **Luminous**

Recording: **Very good**

How does one begin to describe, let alone react to, this sprawling, witty, poignant work? Charles-Valentin Alkan's designating it a *Sonate de Concert* seems at odds with the intense, heart-stopping intimacy of its slow movement, over which he inscribed a passage from the book of Micah: "... as a dew from the Lord, as the showers upon the grass, that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of man." On the other hand, the first movement's principal theme

might almost have come from a Marx Brothers or Chaplin film score. The second movement, with the peculiarly Alkanesque marking "*Allegrettino*," is less a scherzo in any ordinary sense than a Mahlerish fantasy. (The sonata was introduced in Paris in 1857, three years before Mahler was born.) Contrasting with the suspended-animation *Innigkeit* of the slow movement is the succeeding *Finale alla Saltarella*, a dozen times more demonically freewheeling than Alkan's *Saltarelle* for solo piano recorded by Bernard Ringeissen on MHS 1344. Listening to this work is something like a musical confrontation with the Circus of Dr. Lao, leaving one amused, touched, at times almost a little frightened, but most of all eager to repeat the experience. Yehuda Hanani and Edward Auer not only give luminously beautiful performances of their re-

spective parts but show the sort of give-and-take that would suggest they grew up together loving this work. The sound is very good without in any way calling attention to itself, and there is unusually enlightening and entertaining annotation by Raymond Lewenthal, who is rightly credited as one of the prime movers in getting Alkan's music once again before the public. **R.F.**

ARNOLD: *Guitar Concerto, Op. 67*. **BROUWER: *Concerto for Guitar and Small Orchestra*.** John Williams (guitar); London Sinfonietta, Elgar Howarth cond. CBS M 36680, © MT 36680, no list price.

Performance: **Skillful**

Recording: **Excellent**

Malcolm Arnold's imaginatively conceived, meticulously executed *Guitar Concerto*,

IVO POGORELICH is a young (twenty-three) Yugoslavian pianist who was a contestant in the 1980 Chopin Competition in Warsaw. Despite achieving great popularity with the Polish audiences, especially the younger members, Pogorelich did not make the finals. Martha Argerich, who was one of the judges, resigned in protest. Ultimately, Pogorelich was awarded a special prize for "exceptionally original pianistic talent," but the "scandal" had started.

The pianist, whose personal appearance has been described as "a cross between Oscar Wilde and Sid Vicious," but who somehow brings to my mind the name of Prince

(many of my colleagues were not), and I still find many of his recorded performances convincing if quixotic. On the other hand, we have apparently ceased hearing from Nyiregyházi.

With Pogorelich I am not convinced. Yes, his dynamic range is great—excessively so, I would think; not every piece is the Liszt Sonata. Whatever new fingerings or techniques he may have devised, I hear nothing that smacks of Prokofiev, Ravel, or Rachmaninoff, and let me add that, in the context, I'm just as happy not to. Rather than offering a new and deeper Chopin, Pogorelich seems to be to be giving us some-

published in 1961, managed not only to release the classical guitar from the prison of Spanish clichés in which it had so long languished but set it singing in a twentieth-century English accent—there's even a passage in which, for a few piquant moments, it sings the blues. Despite some experimental touches, the work is conservative in form, though there isn't a dull moment in it. It was written for Julian Bream, but it gets devoted and skillful treatment here from John Williams, Elgar Howarth, and the London Sinfonietta. The same forces also prove equal to the more difficult concerto by the Havana-born Leo Brouwer, whose work is decidedly experimental, mingling the rhythms of the country songs of Cuba with the avant-garde influences of such composers as Cage, Ives, and Nono. Some of the writing is reputedly aleatory, but the work as a whole is firmly outlined and makes an arresting impression. P.K.

BARTÓK: *Allegro Barbaro; Fifteen Hungarian Peasant Songs; Improvisations on Hungarian Peasant Songs, Op. 20; Three Folk Songs from the Csík District; Quatre Nénies, Op. 9a; Esquisses, Op. 9b.* Zoltán Kocsis (piano). PHILIPS 9500 876 \$9.98, © 7300 876 \$9.98.

Performance: **Stylish, appealing**
Recording: **Close, present**

This record leads off with a mushy, good-taste performance of the infamous *Allegro Barbaro*. It is the same piece that was once ripped off by the pop-rock trio Emerson, Lake, and Palmer; it has also been battered to death by more than one generation of classical pianists. I can understand a pianist wanting to avoid for a change the usual punch-it-out, wild-man style, but, alas, the piece really doesn't have much else going for it. Never mind. This is the wrong piece in the wrong performance in the wrong place. It gives no clue to the interest and excellence of the rest of the album, which is in fact dedicated to Bartók's early path as a collector, arranger, and inspiree of Eastern European (not just Hungarian) folk music.

The music here ranges from simple settings dating from the first few years of the century to the much more modernist and composed *Improvisations* of 1920. The poetic *Nénies (Elegies)* and *Esquisses (Sketches)* of 1910 are only peripherally connected with actual folk songs, but the spirit of East Europe is everywhere present. It is surprising that this music is not better known. It is most effectively played here by the Hungarian pianist Zoltán Kocsis. His performances, full of presence, have wonderful style and feeling. The odd corners of the Bartók piano literature are, it turns out, well worth looking into. E.S.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

BARTÓK: *Violin Concerto No. 2.* Peter Zazofsky (violin); Orchestre National de Belgique, Georges Octors cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON CONCOURS 2535 012 \$6.98.

Performance: **Brilliant**
Recording: **Fine live job**

Bartók's 1938 Violin Concerto is the most complex and subtle of his works with or-
(Continued on page 88)



Orlovsky from *Fledermaus*, has convinced himself, and some parts of the world, that he has created a new and deeper style of Chopin interpretation. Reportedly, he has little use for most practitioners of the "old style." He claims to use a much greater range of dynamics than is customary as well as techniques developed in the twentieth century by Prokofiev, Ravel, and Rachmaninoff—in short, a fuller employment of pianistic resources for the purpose of greater contrast and a deeper explication of the contradictory elements of the music. (I hope I have stated his position fairly.) He has enormously impressed some very serious musicians and received some very wild reviews, and now Deutsche Grammophon has released a recording of some of his Chopin performances.

Musicians who come along (and periodically they do) with such out-of-the-ordinary claims and excessive-sounding buildups present a particular critical problem: it is difficult to be neutral. One is either predisposed in favor of their arguments or faintly antagonistic because of them, feelings brought on not by the playing but by the publicity. I found myself convinced by the odd claims of the elderly Ervin Nyiregyházi

thing naive and parochial, interpretations based on less of an understanding of the music, not more. I won't say that it's impossible for a twenty-three-year-old to undercut a hundred years of tradition, but I don't think he has done it.

On the stage Pogorelich has certain mannerisms which, happily, cannot be conveyed by records. What one gets from the very nicely recorded DG disc are some technically very well assured, very clean performances with a lot of odd tempos and overdone dynamics, a lot of throwaway phrasing, some exceedingly beautiful passages, and the feeling of everything not quite coming together. It is an interesting record (some will find it infuriating) and Pogorelich is an interesting artist. But boy, is he young.

—James Goodfriend

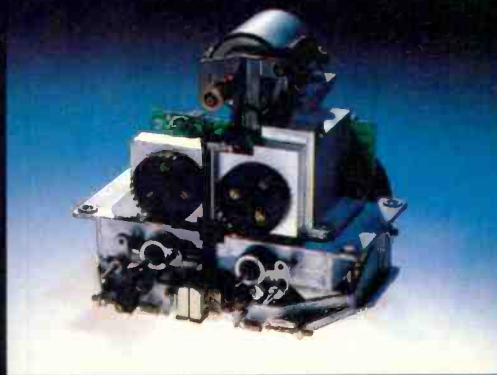
CHOPIN: *Sonata No. 2, in B-flat Minor, Op. 35; Prelude in C-sharp Minor, Op. 45; Scherzo in C-sharp Minor, Op. 39; Nocturne in E-flat Major, Op. 55, No. 2; Etude in F Major, Op. 10, No. 8; Etude in A-flat Major, Op. 10, No. 10; Etude in G-sharp Minor, Op. 25, No. 6.* Ivo Pogorelich (piano). DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2531 346 \$9.98, © 3301 346 \$9.98.

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chestra. Beginning with the very first Yehudi Menuhin/Antal Dorati collaboration, done with the Dallas Symphony Orchestra just after World War II, this score has never lacked for distinguished readings on disc. The recent recordings by Itzhak Perlman and André Previn on Angel and Pinchas Zukerman and Zubin Mehta on CBS are notable for a transcendent virtuosity on the part of both soloist and orchestra that enable the listener to give all his attention to the music itself. This newest version is from a 1980 performance by the second-prize winner of the Queen Elizabeth Competition, Boston-born Peter Zazofsky, and it is right up there in the same league as the Perlman and Zukerman records.

Compared with the rough-hewn, sinewy approach espoused by Menuhin and Dorati or the more sensuous treatment favored by Zukerman and Mehta, Zazofsky and his excellent Belgian conductor, Georges Octors, lean toward the former, but they by no means slight the score's coloristic elements. Considering that the recording was done live before an audience, which makes itself evident chiefly by rustling and intake of breath after the spellbinding interpretation of the slow movement, the sound is remarkably well focused and amply spacious. At the \$6.98 list price for Deutsche Grammophon's new Concours series featuring young artists, I would rate this disc a "best buy." *D.H.*

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RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

BEETHOVEN: *Piano Concerto No. 5, in E-flat Major, Op. 73 ("Emperor")*. Rudolf Serkin (piano); Boston Symphony Orchestra, Seiji Ozawa cond. TELARC Ⓢ DG-10065 \$17.98.

Performance: **Classical-humanist**

Recording: **Perfect Imagery**

Nearly twenty years have passed since Rudolf Serkin last essayed the *Emperor* Concerto for records, at that time with Leonard Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic. His pianistic and interpretive prowess is undiminished in this digitally mastered recording made in Boston's Symphony Hall just a few weeks shy of his seventy-seventh birthday. True, there are one or two awkwardly negotiated tricky spots in the finale, but they do not detract from Serkin's overall achievement.

The Serkin/Ozawa collaboration emphasizes the deeply human and expressive aspect of the *Emperor* rather than the proto-Lisztian facets that performers often seize upon. This is not a low-key treatment, but here, more than in many other performances, the slow movement becomes the true heart of the work and not merely an exquisite intermezzo separating two brilliant display vehicles. Musically Serkin's is a wholly fulfilling reading, and Ozawa and his players are at one with the soloist's lofty conception of the work.

Sonically, the recording ranks with the best of Telarc's achievements in Cleveland's Masonic Auditorium. Symphony Hall in Boston is a notoriously tricky place in which to record, and I was aware here of its reverberation and coloristic content—but never uncomfortably so. What I especially appreciated was the fine capture of the sound of a piano that is beautifully voiced and even from top to bottom. The piano-orchestra balance is a model of its kind. Placing the microphones so as to leave ample sonic space around both the orchestra and the solo instrument has allowed the digital technology to display itself to the best possible advantage. The result is well worth the premium price tag. *D.H.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

BEETHOVEN: *Piano Sonata No. 23, in F Minor, Op. 57 ("Appassionata"); Piano Sonata No. 26, in E-flat Major, Op. 81a ("Les Adieux"); Polonaise in C Major, Op. 89*. Emanuel Ax (piano). RCA ARL1-2752 \$9.98, © ARK1-2752 \$9.98.

Performance: **Honest**

Recording: **Good; check pressing**

These are superb, strongly felt, brilliantly played, no-nonsense performances. For Emanuel Ax everything is in the phrase, and he shapes the color, dynamics, accent, and rhythmic articulation around it. There is no lingering here, no soft sighs in the moonlight. The slow movements ("*andante*," remember, means "going," "moving along") flow right along. But everything moves—a singing, flowing, articulated, dramatic motion that is by turns exciting, tense, and exhilarating. The Polonaise in C Major, Op. 89, written and played for the Russian Empress Elisabeth Alexievna, is a curiosity. It is a bit flashy for Beethoven: an

odd salon encore to the epic pieces that preceded it.

The piano sound is generally good, but there is occasional distortion—a buzz or fuzz on the edge of the tone—that may derive from the individual pressing. *E.S.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

BEETHOVEN: *Sonata in A Major for Violin and Piano, Op. 47 ("Kreutzer"); Sonata in F Major for Violin and Piano, Op. 24 ("Spring").* Wilhelm Kempff (piano); Yehudi Menuhin (violin). DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2531 300 \$9.98, © 3301 300 \$9.98.

Performance: **The best**

Recording: **The best**

BEETHOVEN: *Sonata in A Major for Violin and Piano, Op. 47 ("Kreutzer"); Sonata in F Major for Violin and Piano, Op. 24 ("Spring").* Dénes Kovács (violin); Mihály Bächer (piano). HUNGAROTON SLPX 12279 \$9.98 (from Qualiton Records, Ltd., 39-28 Crescent Street, Long Island City, N.Y. 11101).

Performance: **Brittle**

Recording: **Dry**

The basic difference between these two sets of performances is in the relationships of the artists. Wilhelm Kempff and Yehudi Menuhin are mature, well-seasoned performers whose purpose is to play these Beethoven works as they were intended, that is, as duets for two equal artists. No matter who has the leading part or who the accompaniment in the constant shifting back and forth, it is the projection of the musical ideal that governs their reading. Dénes Kovács and Mihály Bächer are fine performers too, but their reading gives the impression that they conceive of the music as sonatas for violin with piano accompaniment. Kovács seems unwilling to take on the role of accompanist, and his figurations intrude when the piano has the melodic interest.

In general, the Kempff/Menuhin team takes slower tempos, which afford spaciousness and lyricism to their readings. The Kovács/Bächer team opts for quicker tempos, which give a pushy nervousness to the music, as is most obvious in the variations movement of the *Kreutzer* where the repeated notes, especially in the violin part, sound brittle and without line. Menuhin makes the same notes throb and never loses the line. Kovács and Bächer turn out a capricious *Spring* Sonata while Kempff and Menuhin disclose its lyric quality. Also in favor of the Deutsche Grammophon disc is its superior sound. *S.L.*

BLOW: *No, Lesbia, No, You Ask in Vain* (see PURCELL)

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

BRAHMS: *Piano Concerto No. 2, in B-flat Major, Op. 83.* Daniel Barenboim (piano); New York Philharmonic, Zubin Mehta cond. CBS M 35885, © MT 35885, no list price.

Performance: **Impassioned**

Recording: **Excellent**

For all Daniel Barenboim's activity as a conductor, he remains a solo pianist of the

very first rank and an interpreter of high gifts. The rapport between Barenboim and conductor Zubin Mehta here is complete, and they have produced a strikingly satisfying realization of this most heroic of the Romantic piano concertos. Their conception of the work is definitely on a grand scale. Barenboim does not hesitate to give his romantic impulses full rein in the soloist's big entry following the orchestral exposition in the first movement, but his performance is still well disciplined. His attention to accents within a phrase is singularly effective throughout, and the way in which he executes such details adds to the dramatic impact of the whole. The great second movement is as "*appassionato*" as one could ask,

and the mighty offbeat accents in the orchestra come off just as one always hopes they will. The slow movement is meltingly lovely; Barenboim achieves a highly dramatic contrast by treating the early pages in a leisurely, ruminative fashion, which makes the central recitative very exciting indeed. The final pages are done most touchingly. Instead of being a lightweight affair, the finale is accorded strong lyrical emphasis, and Mehta makes the most of the gypsy aspect. The performance leaves one exhilarated.

The recording is excellent, large-scale and rich in sonic substance. Most important, the solo piano is not stuck in your ear
(Continued on page 92)

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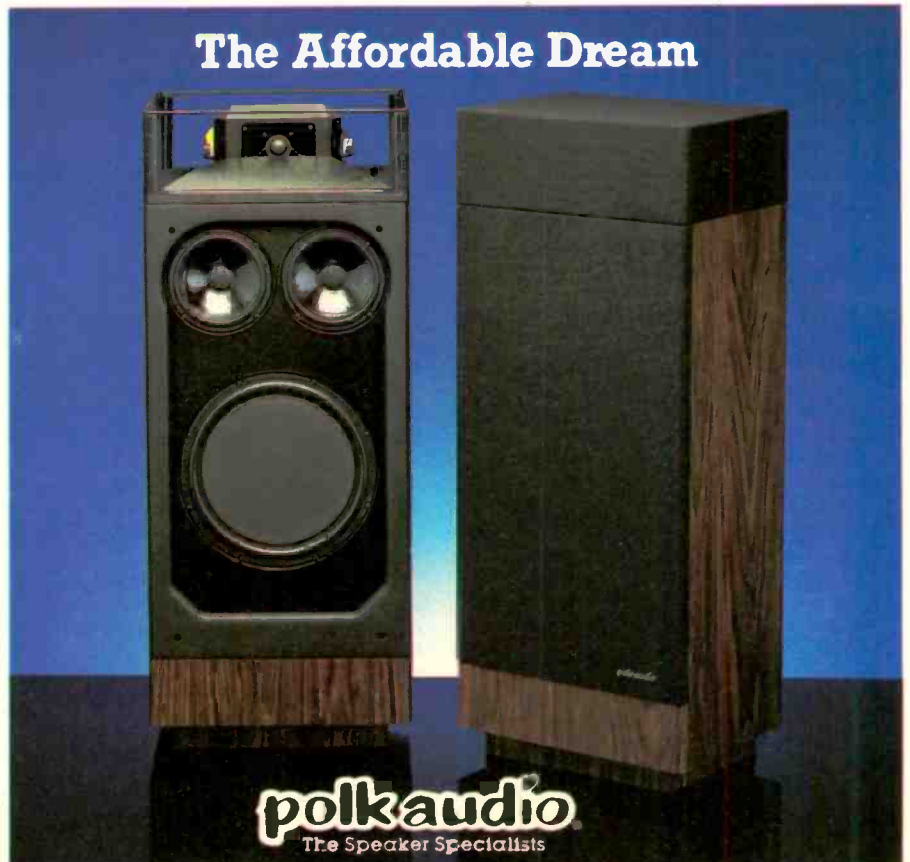
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IN recording Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana*, a perennial audio demonstration piece, producers have always faced a stimulating challenge: the preservation of Orff's calculated balances and contrasts among vocal soloists, three choruses, and a very full orchestra. It is not surprising, then, that *Carmina*'s sonic variety and excitement have proved irresistible to would-be demonstrators of the latest advances in recording techniques as well.

Recently, no fewer than four recordings of *Carmina* have been released (by Telarc, CBS Mastersound, Mobile Fidelity, and RCA), each embodying a different combination of current high-technology recording processes. Comparisons are more fruitful than usual here, since two of the recordings feature the same baritone soloist, two the same soprano, two the same orchestra and chorus. In addition, two have been half-speed-mastered from analog master tapes (CBS and Mobile Fidelity), two real-time-mastered from digital originals (RCA and Telarc), and three (all but CBS) are presented on imported pressings.

Mobile Fidelity, of course, is in the business of remastering other people's recordings. They have made some curious choices in the past, and this is another. Why they chose André Previn's rather bland performance and not particularly distinguished recording to send through their excellent disc processing, particularly when other choices might have been available, is beyond me. No amount of skill in remastering and pressing is ever going to pump life into a listless, lackluster original.

Nor will technology bail out so manic a performance (and recording) as Michael Tilson Thomas' on the domestically well-pressed CBS Mastersound reissue. The record was acclaimed for both performance and recording quality when it was first issued at the height of the quadraphonic era (1975), but it now shows its age badly. Per-

haps listeners then were more impressed by exotic sonic effects. The recent popularity of simply microphoned, minimally mixed recordings is an indication, I hope, of the public's disillusionment with such intrusively produced recordings as this one, in which the listener, in the producer's words, "will not find in the recording realistic consistency in the deployment of performers from one section to another." The purpose may have been "to provide the listener with a truly involving musical experience," but high fidelity as some of us prefer to know it goes right out the window.

That such "creative producing" is not necessary to provide an involving musical experience is amply demonstrated by the new Telarc recording, which sets the sonic standards for all future *Carminas*. Telarc used the minimalist microphone and production techniques for which it has become justly famous, and the recording is helped in no small measure by being spread over three sides. Cramming the sixty minutes of a work like *Carmina* onto two record sides used to be considered a technological achievement, but what many listeners fail to realize is that such crowding is accomplished at the expense of dynamic range, high- and low-frequency response, and low noise levels. Played at realistic volume, the judiciously spaced grooves of the Telarc recording are the only ones to emit a sound that approaches the full acoustical impact of a live performance.

The musical side of the project also deserves praise. The Atlanta Symphony Chorus maintains impeccable ensemble while singing with sensitivity and spirit. Robert Shaw's pacing is much more conventional than Thomas', but it is not dull like Previn's. The solo singers are all fine.

There are, to be sure, a few nits to pick. The solo singers' microphones were placed too close and/or turned up a bit too high, the tam-tam is inaudible in the opening and

closing choruses (if, indeed, it was played at all), the spaced-omni main-microphone technique gives a very slight "hole-in-the-middle" stereo image, and the hall ambience is a little on the dry side. But Telarc's is still the best-sounding recording of *Carmina*. As a bonus, the fourth side of the set contains a smashing performance and recording of Hindemith's *Symphonic Metamorphosis of Themes by Weber*.

RCA's effort, like CBS', is a multimicrophone production, but it takes a solid second place in this sweepstakes, proving that the number of microphones used is no sure indicator of final sonic quality. Missing only is a completely integrated sonic image in which performers and hall ambience are intimately related, and what image there is also somewhat lacking in consistency of depth. RCA's recording is spread over only two sides, which, though well pressed (by the same firm as the Telarc), leave insufficient room for the work's full dynamic range. And I find the digital splices in the "*Veni, veni, venias*" a bit too obvious. But Eduardo Mata's performance, which starts slowly and at other times seems a bit rushed, has an impressive cumulative impact. The vocal soloists are the best of all four recordings, soprano Barbara Hendricks giving a particularly fresh-sounding impression. In short, the RCA release is one of the best single-disc recordings of *Carmina* available today (there are more than a dozen).

TELARC supplies a new verse translation of the *Carmina* text. RCA reprints the often used Deutsche Grammophon translation, Mobile Fidelity provides my favorite translation, that by William Mann, and CBS, while promising a text on the jacket, delivered, in my copy, only a pamphlet on the Mastersound process. —David Ranada

ORFF: *Carmina Burana*. Sheila Armstrong (soprano); Gerald English (tenor); Thomas Allen (baritone); St. Clement Danes Grammar School Boys Choir; London Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, André Previn cond. MOBILE FIDELITY SOUND LAB MFSL 1-506, no list price.

ORFF: *Carmina Burana*. Judith Blegen (soprano); Kenneth Riegel (tenor); Peter Binder (baritone); Cleveland Orchestra, Chorus, and Boys Choir, Michael Tilson Thomas cond. CBS MASTERSOUND HM 43172, no list price.

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but allowed to emerge naturally from the orchestral fabric. There are, of course, at least a half-dozen outstanding available recorded versions of the Brahms B-flat, but this new one certainly belongs in that select company. *D.H.*

BROUWER: Concerto for Guitar and Small Orchestra (see **ARNOLD**)

BRUCH: Violin Concerto No. 1, in G Minor, Op. 26. MENDELSSOHN: Violin Concerto in E Minor, Op. 64. Shlomo Mintz (violin); Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Claudio Abbado cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2531 304 \$9.98, © 3301 304 \$9.98.

Performance: **Good to superb**
Recording: **Fine**

Shlomo Mintz has given us here an absolutely superb account of the Bruch concerto and a fully professional, adequate, but hardly thrilling one of the Mendelssohn. This might lead one (it led me) to surmise that he had the temperamental affinity for one but not for the other. The truth, as Mintz very casually mentioned to me, is different. The Bruch was recorded after a series of live performances by the same forces; the Mendelssohn was not, being a walk-into-the-studio-and-play job. Beyond that, as the violinist said, he had just gotten part way into the first movement when his violin came apart in his hands, ending up one piece in each hand. He finished the session with someone else's fiddle. I won't say that you can hear the moment where this hap-

pens on the disc, but it was unquestionably a sobering experience and could well account—by itself—for the sobriety of the performance.

The Bruch is something else again. Almost needless to say, it is violinistically stunning, but it is also a wonderfully convincing performance—convincing us that this really is one of the big concertos of the repertoire and not an apology for Brahms' not having written a second one. The orchestral collaboration is splendid, the fire obviously having spread from soloist to conductor and ensemble and back again, and the recording is good enough so that one pays no attention to it as recording. It's a great one-half of a record, and the Mendelssohn is certainly not *bad*.

—James Goodfriend

BRUCKNER: Symphony No. 5, in B-flat Major. Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Sir Georg Solti cond. LONDON Ⓢ LDR 10031 two discs \$21.96.

Performance: **Lacks mystique**
Recording: **Impressive dynamics**

Of the Bruckner symphonies that have been aptly characterized as "sound cathedrals" (the others are Nos. 7, 8, and 9), the Fifth is in many respects the most difficult to bring off in performance. Listening to Sir Georg Solti's digitally mastered reading with his formidable Chicago Symphony, I was impressed by the overall sonic impact—especially in the finale, which Solti holds together as well as any and better than most—but I have reservations about other

aspects of the performance. Although Solti's rhythmic control in the scherzo and emphasis on contrasting elements are brilliantly effective, I'm at a loss to understand why he would begin the slow movement at a pace somewhat faster than Karajan's rather stately one, then slacken the pulse in its later pages. It seems to me that in this music a rock-steady pulse throughout works best. But what really is missing here is the sense of mystery and dramatic suspense that informs almost every moment of Karajan's 1977 Deutsche Grammophon recording.

The London sound is superbly detailed, if rather too close-up in ambience for my taste. I prefer the acoustic perspective DG gave Karajan, even though the recording has less punch and clarity at the lower end of the tonal spectrum than the new London discs, especially in the double-bass fugals in the finale. *D.H.*

DVOŘÁK: Symphony No. 9, in E Minor, Op. 95 ("From the New World"). St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, Leonard Slatkin cond. TELARC Ⓢ DG-10053 \$17.98.

Performance: **Straight**
Recording: **Full-bodied**

DVOŘÁK: Symphony No. 9, in E Minor, Op. 95 ("From the New World"). Philharmonia Orchestra, Andrew Davis cond. CBS M 35834, © MT 35834, no list price.

Performance: **Nicely inflected**
Recording: **A bit thin-sounding**

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there is surely one for every possible taste: the rich sentiment of Rostropovich, the German-Viennese touch of Böhm, the Czech volatility of Kubelik—you name it. Neither of these two new recordings offers enough of a new slant musically to rank it among the top contenders. Leonard Slatkin does have Telarc's full-blown digital tape mastering going for him, but I find in his rather "straight" reading very little of the intensity of phrasing and rhythm achieved by, say, Toscanini in his 1953 recording.

Andrew Davis and the Philharmonia treat us to a reading notable for felicity of detail, especially in the woodwinds. The first movement lacks the exposition repeat that Slatkin retains but is nevertheless superior in terms of subtle tempo modifications, which keep the music from being merely hectoring. The largo is done with tender loving care, but the scherzo is a high point here, not only by virtue of marvelous woodwind playing, but also because of the ravishing lilt Davis brings to the *sousedska* dance episode in the trio. What keeps this disc out of the top category is the recorded sound, which is rather thin. *D.H.*

GERSHWIN: *Rhapsody in Blue* (Version for Two Pianos); *Piano Concerto in F* (Version for Two Pianos). Katia and Marielle Labèque (pianos). PHILIPS 9500 917 \$9.98, © 7300 917 \$9.98.

Performance: **Fine but not right**
Recording: **Generally very good**

The Labèque sisters are a first-rate two-piano team—technically assured, musically

sophisticated—and whatever problems they may have with Gershwin should not obscure that fact. The problems derive from the almost unique situation of Gershwin among

twentieth-century composers: his music is not meant to be played as it is written.

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Brendel's Haydn

WHILE there is a lot to be said (and a lot being said) for the idea of performing the piano music of Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven, and Schubert on instruments of the composers' own times, there is an interesting counter-argument to support the use of a modern concert grand: namely, that these composers were not inhibited or delimited by the range and character of the instruments available to them but conceived their works for some ideal keyboard of the future. This view is given powerful support in a Philips release of Alfred Brendel's first recording of Haydn's music for piano solo, including unusually large-scale—and unusually convincing—performances of the earlyish (1771) Sonata in C Minor (Hob. XVI:20, No. 33 in the late Christa Lan-

don's Vienna Urtext Edition) and the Sonata in E-flat Major (Hob. XVI:49, Landon No. 59), dated June 1, 1790, but apparently actually composed the previous year.

Both of these sonatas were high points in Haydn's production, and both are extremely forward-looking in their almost unprecedented depth and expressiveness. H. C. Robbins Landon has described the C Minor as the "single but monumental contribution to the *Sturm und Drang* movement" in all of Haydn's keyboard output, a work of "power and ultimately . . . profound pessimism." In the E-flat we hear almost literal pre-echoes of Beethoven and Schubert. But what makes these sonatas so striking is not so much their anticipation of later composers' music as what they themselves contain, and no other performances known to me have made this so dramatically clear as Brendel's. I can, in fact, think of no other item in his by now very large discography that offers such stimulating revelation or such exceptional all-round pleasure as this disc.

BRENDEL does not attempt to turn this music into Beethoven or Schubert but seems determined that all of Haydn's own points be registered in full. A Classical poise and elegant sense of proportion temper the power—as in the writing itself, which is at once subtle and direct. Haydn's originality and profundity (a profundity not without humor) perhaps ought not to surprise us by now, but such qualities can never be taken for granted, and in Brendel's vital yet impeccable realizations they seem self-renewing and self-expanding. The piano sound is just about ideal in terms of realism and focus. A determined nit-picker might wish only that Philips, having commissioned so distinguished a Haydn scholar as Jens Peter Larsen to annotate the album, had been able to allow more space for his text than the trilingual format permits. Even though we are barely two-thirds of the way through 1981, I expect this to be my piano record of the year. —Richard Freed

HAYDN: Piano Sonata in C Minor (Hob. XVI:20, Landon No. 33); Piano Sonata in E-flat Major (Hob. XVI:49, Landon No. 59). Alfred Brendel (piano). PHILIPS 9500 774 \$9.98, © 7300 862 \$9.98.

and the jazz style of a certain day, and the rhythms of the piece were meant to be played originally as a jazz-oriented musician of that time would feel them. So, if you play the music straight, you miss the point entirely.

The Labèque sisters are by no means naive enough to do *that*. But there is a further problem. Rhythmic perceptions and feelings change over the years—and very quickly in jazz and American popular music. And so, anyone who tries to copy exactly Gershwin's own rhythmic interpretation—even allowing that one could do it—will produce a performance that sounds curiously dated and unidiomatic to modern ears. We still feel the jazz in the music, but

we feel it a little differently. What is necessary to perform this music well is instinct and familiarity with the jazz idiom, so that the way you play any passage is the direct result of the way you played the previous passage. You simply have to *feel* it because the listener familiar with the idiom can feel whether you're doing it right or wrong.

The Labèque sisters give us the results of a careful study of the score, of research into Gershwin's own recordings, and of an association with such contemporary jazz-influenced musicians as John McLaughlin of the Mahavishnu Orchestra. Theirs are intelligent and perfectly listenable interpretations, but they come from outside the idiom. What it is is very objective Gershwin with a

French accent, not the home-town stuff, and though the record reportedly sold over 60,000 copies in France before its release here, 60,000 Frenchmen can be wrong.

—James Goodfriend

HAYDN: Symphony No. 100, in G Major ("Military"); Symphony No. 103, in E-flat Major ("Drum Roll"). Mostly Mozart Festival Orchestra, Johannes Somary cond. VANGUARD ◉ VA-25007 \$12.98.

Performance: **Good**

Recording: **Excellent**

The *Military* Symphony performance on this release made its first appearance last year with digital- and analog-master recordings of it being coupled back to back. In my review of that disc (October 1980), I noted that "The recording locale, the Masonic Temple on 23rd Street in New York City, has an ideal acoustic ambiance for the modest-size Mostly Mozart Festival Orchestra, and in consequence the presence, reverberation characteristic, and coloration are just right." Interpretively, I found the reading of the *Military* elegant but a bit lacking in character. I'm happy to say that the *Drum Roll* on this new issue has a lot more going for it. There is elegance indeed, but also verve, and there are some fine things in the slow movement, notably the oboe descant episode and some lovely solo-violin work. The excellence of the room acoustic combined with the digital mastering works wonders with the textures of the minuetto middle section and with the episodes of closely woven imitation in the finale. A fine recording job throughout.

D.H.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

KREISLER: La Precieuse (In the Style of Couperin); Siciliano and Rigaudon (In the Style of Francoeur); Aubade Provençale; Menuet (In the Style of Porpora); Toy Soldier's March; Scherzo (In the Style of Dittersdorf); Syncopation. CHAMINADE/KREISLER: *Sérénade Espagnole.* LEHÁR/KREISLER: *Frasquita Serenade.* PADEREWSKI/KREISLER: *Melody, Op. 16.* TCHAIKOVSKY/KREISLER: *Andante Cantabile; Chansons sans Paroles.* DVOŘÁK/KREISLER: *Slavonic Dance No. 1, in G Minor.* PAGANINI/KREISLER: *Caprice No. 20.* GRAINGER/KREISLER: *Molly on the Shore.* Itzhak Perlman (violin); Samuel Sanders (piano). ANGEL SZ-37630 \$9.98, © 4ZS-37630 \$9.98.

Performance: **Excellent**

Recording: **Excellent**

KREISLER: Toy Soldier's March; Berceuse Romantique, Op. 9; French Song; Liebesfreud; Tambourin Chinois, Op. 3; Recitativo and Scherzo Caprice; Schön Rosmarin; Liebesleid; Polichinelle; Episode; Aucassin et Nicolette; Romance, Op. 4; Rondino on a Theme by Beethoven. Takako Nishizaki (violin); Monique Duphil (piano). CAMERATA CMT-1501 \$11.98.

Performance: **Very good**

Recording: **Excellent**

What a unique phenomenon Fritz Kreisler was!—a true *Fiedelkavalier*, a knight of the fiddle, who wrote for the instrument with a caressing love that was reflected in his own

playing. No wonder all violinists play Kreisler, and, because they usually play him well, there is always a responsive public for him, a public that looks for style and not substance, that longs to be charmed and lulled into Kreisler's bygone world of elegance and enchantment. His legacy of violin pieces is enormous: the Angel release is already the third such collection from Itzhak Perlman, and the insert that accompanies Takako Nishizaki's release (which is called "Fritz Kreisler Edition, Vol. 1") hints at a complete series of Kreisleriana.

There are twenty-eight pieces on these two discs and only one duplication: the tiny *Toy Soldier's March*. A glance over the titles conjures up the image of Kreisler the constant traveler, either back into the historical past to recapture the style of such forebears as Couperin, Francoeur, or Dittersdorf, or around the globe to evoke the moods and landscape of Spain or Provence or China—or Jazz Age America (*Syncopation*). The vignettes are invariably tasteful, the ethnic suggestions always appropriate, even though the traveler never seems to stray too far from his native Vienna.

Perlman's admirable way with this music has been displayed in previous recitals: his tone is sumptuous but his touch is light. He knows when to be playful and when to display the kind of sweet sentimentality inherent in music of a period that should not be reinterpreted in cooler twentieth-century terms. Listening to his playing we can almost see the violinist's own enjoyment.

Takako Nishizaki (Japan- and Juilliard-trained) mixes some basic "Viennese" Kreisler with concert pieces that are more ambitious yet ultimately less significant. They are written with Kreisler's characteristic elegant craftsmanship but lack enough musical interest to sustain their length. *Episode* reveals some Lisztian flourishes, and *Berceuse Romantique* suggests Fauré on a Viennese sojourn. The *Romance, Op. 4*, another novelty, is pretty but unmemorable. The violinist displays a sweet tone and a great deal of communicative charm. Her technique is impressive, but there are a few lapses in the chordal passages, so vital in Kreisler's writing. Furthermore, her phrasing and accentuations in *Liebesfreud* and *Schön Rosmarin* are at variance with the Kreisler models.

Both violinists are ably accompanied, and both discs are engineered with exceptional presence and clarity. G.J.

MAHLER: *Symphony No. 4, in G Major*. Margaret Marshall (soprano); Scottish National Orchestra, Sir Alexander Gibson cond. CHANDOS ● ABRD 1025 \$17.98, © ABRT 1025 \$17.98.

Performance: **Bright-eyed**
Recording: **Spacious**

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

MAHLER: *Symphony No. 4, in G Major*. Elsie Morison (soprano); Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, Rafael Kubelik cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON RESONANCE 2535 119 \$6.98, © 3335 119 \$6.98.

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

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Alexander Gibson's bright-eyed, straightforward account of the Mahler Fourth. The playing is so handsome, indeed, as to remind us that this orchestra numbers among its former conductors such men as Barbirolli, Szell, and the late Walter Susskind, all of whom came to be closely identified with Mahler's music. Margaret Marshall is a very appealing soloist, and the fine digital recording is as spacious and true as one could ask. A most enjoyable record.

Turning to the reissued Rafael Kubelik Fourth, however, one feels at once confronted by a more specifically Mahlerish presence, enveloped, one might say, in an unlabeled intimacy. Kubelik has never been given to interpretive excess or indulgence; his tempos in the Fourth (as in most of his Mahler) are brisker, steadier, and more flowing than those favored by many of his colleagues—very close to Gibson's, in fact. The difference between them manifests itself in the form of subtle rubato, in the sort of caressing of a phrase that never turns into a bear hug but whose affectionate poignancy can't be missed. Elsie Morison (Mrs. Kubelik), in what was apparently her last recording before her retirement, is a very touching soloist, the orchestra is in splendid form, and the late-Sixties sound is still quite competitive. On Deutsche Grammophon's full-price label, Abbado (2530 966) and Karajan (2531 205) offer more sumptuous and somewhat more mystical views of the Fourth, but not necessarily more convincing ones. I am delighted to see Kubelik's distressingly underrated Mahler cycle reappearing bit by bit, and I look forward to the return of his magnificent Ninth. R.F.

MENDELSSOHN: *Violin Concerto in E Minor, Op. 64* (see BRUCH)

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

NIELSEN: *Five Piano Pieces, Op. 3; Symphonic Suite, Op. 8; Humoresque-Bagatelles, Op. 11; Festive Prelude; Chaconne, Op. 32; Theme and Variations, Op. 40; Suite, Op. 45 ("Lucifer"); Piano Music for Young and Grown-up, Op. 53; Three Piano Pieces, Op. 59; A Dream of "Silent Night"; Piano Piece in C Major.* Elisabeth Westenholtz (piano). Bis LP-167/8 two discs \$21.96 (from Qualiton Records, Ltd., 39-28 Crescent Street, Long Island City, N.Y. 11101).

Performance: **Strong**
Recording: **Clean, bright**

The late Arne Skjold Rasmussen, regarded by his fellow Danes as a foremost interpreter of Carl Nielsen's piano music, did an integral recording for the Danish Fona label that found its way into a Vox Box (SVBX-5449) over here in 1970. That set is regrettable no longer available, but we can be grateful to Sweden's Bis label for coming up with a new and equally meritorious one that is even more comprehensive, including as it does the composer's last completed composition, the Piano Piece in C Major, and a hitherto unknown vignette built around the first four notes of *Silent Night*. The extraordinarily gifted Elisabeth Westenholtz—who, by the way, studied with Skjold Rasmussen—has also recorded for Bis the complete Nielsen organ works (LP-131).

(Continued on page 99)

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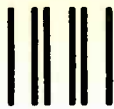
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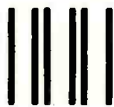
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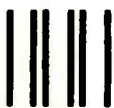
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Unlike the organ works, which fall wholly into Nielsen's final creative period, the piano music is divided between his youth and his maturity. The *Opp. 3, 8, 11* and the *Festive Prelude* are all from before the turn of the century, and of them only the *Symphonic Suite, Op. 8*, with its proto-Busonian accents, offers a glimpse of the master to be. The *Festive Prelude* is a brief ceremonial piece meant to usher in the new century; the others are agreeable and occasionally striking miniatures. With the *Op. 32 Chaconne* and the great *Op. 40 Theme and Variations* we are in the presence of the composer of the *Fourth Symphony* and the opera *Saul and David*. The *Op. 45 Piano Suite* was dedicated to Artur Schnabel but never played by him; although the "Lucifer" subtitle was intended by the composer to have Promethean rather than Satanic significance, the very brilliant and demanding music contains an element of the demonic like that in the *Fifth Symphony* and the *Clarinet Concerto*. This demonic element seems even more present in the final pages of the *Op. 59* pieces, wherein Nielsen also explores the possibilities of "pantonal-ity." The twenty-five pieces of *Op. 53*, to which the valedictory *Piano Piece in C* is akin, are beautifully crafted teaching pieces after the fashion of those by Béla Bartók; but, of course, Bartók's teaching pieces are very Bartókian and Nielsen's are equally Nielsenesque.

Both the performance approach and the recorded sound of these readings by Elisabeth Westenholz differ markedly from those by Skjold Rasmussen, and also from those on the earlier Danish Odeon discs by Herman D. Koppel. In the big works the "flint and steel" aspect of the music here comes to the fore; nowhere is there any attempt to soften the rugged contours of Nielsen's writing. The rather close piano pickup and bright sonics tend to emphasize this, but there can be no question about the utter integrity of these interpretations. I hope that these records will help bring the big Carl Nielsen piano works into the permanent concert repertoire, where they so richly deserve to be. *D.H.*

PURCELL: *Come Ye Sons of Art; High on a Throne of Glitt'ring Ore; O Dive Custos Auriacae Domus; Incassum Lesbia, Incassum Rogas.* **BLOW:** *No, Lesbia, No, You Ask in Vain.* Julianne Baird (soprano); James Bowman, Peter Becker (countertenors); Wilbur Pauley (bass); New York Ensemble for Early Music's Grand Bande, Frederick Renz cond. MUSICMASTERS MM 20005 \$8.98, © 40005 \$8.98.

Performance: **Fresh**

Recording: **Unbalanced**

This is a disc devoted to music in honor of Queen Mary: we celebrate her birthday, pay tribute to her as a beloved ruler, then mourn her passing in three funeral odes. Purcell's music is stunning in its courtly gestures, wit, and pathos, and the funeral ode by John Blow, Purcell's teacher, is a particularly welcome addition to the catalog. Listeners familiar with Blow's *Ode Upon the Death of Mr. Henry Purcell* or his masque *Venus and Adonis* will recognize his technique in the wild, keening notes of despair in *No. Lesbia, No. Those* who do not already know Blow's work will discover

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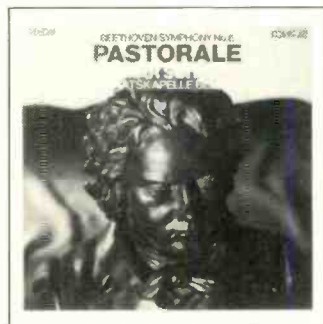


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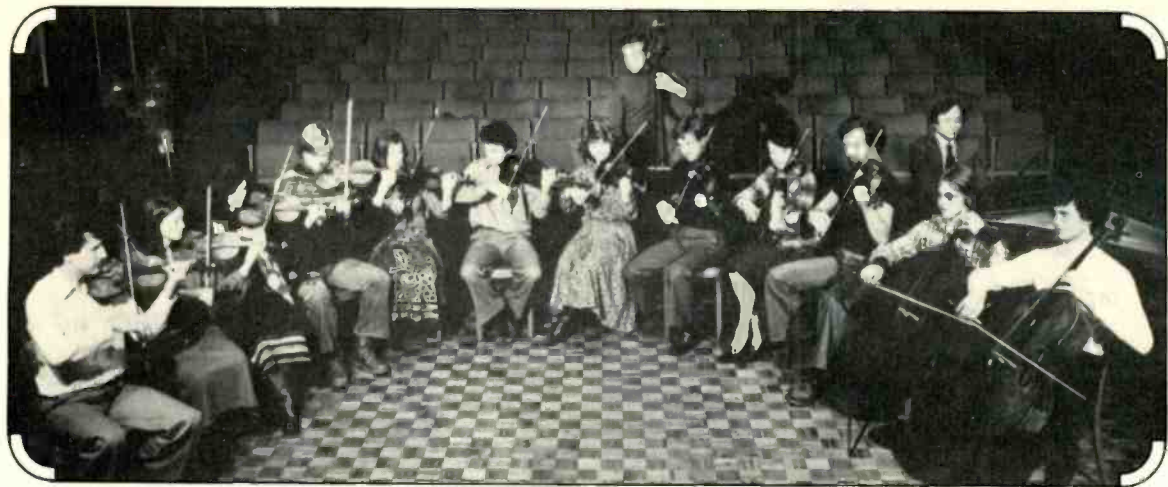
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Camerata Bern Plays the Mannheim School

THE music of the Mannheim School is more talked about than played, being usually viewed as merely pre-Classical experimentation paving the way for the high Classical style of Haydn and Mozart. A delightful three-disc Deutsche Grammophon Archiv album remedies that situation considerably by presenting a fine sampling of Mannheim School symphonies and concertos that are far more than experiments. The program is well chosen and allows us to hear works by composers of the school's first generation (Johann Stamitz and Franz Xaver Richter), by some of that generation's pupils (Anton Filtz, Ignaz Holzbauer, and Christian Cannabich), and by a Mannheim-trained composer (Ludwig August Lebrun) writing in the fully developed Classical style.

Although Mannheim never produced a Haydn or a Mozart, it did boast a group of highly talented composers whose music is well crafted, stunningly orchestrated, and spaciouly proportioned. Filtz's cello concerto and Lebrun's oboe concerto, for example, are among the finest works for their instruments written in the Classical era and ought to have entered the standard repertoire long ago.

The Camerata of Bern is a handsome-sounding outfit of about twenty-five musicians directed by concertmaster Thomas Fürti. Their playing is precise, and, though they make very little of Classical articulation, their phrasing is neat and well molded. The various soloists are all excellent and bring virtuosity and intelligence to their readings. My overall impression is of a very

suave ensemble that is quite devoted to playing this rarely heard but high-quality music.

—Stoddard Lincoln

THE MANNHEIM SCHOOL. Richter: *Sinfonia in B-flat Major; Flute Concerto in E Minor.* J. Stamitz: *Violin Concerto in C Major; Orchestral Trio in B-flat Major, Op. 1, No. 5.* Filtz: *Cello Concerto in G Major.* Holzbauer: *Sinfonia Concertante in A Major; Sinfonia in E-flat Major, Op. 4, No. 3.* Cannabich: *Sinfonia Concertante in C Major; Sinfonia in B-flat Major.* Lebrun: *Oboe Concerto in D Minor.* Aurèle Nicolet (flute); Heinz Holliger (oboe); Manfred Sax (bassoon); Thomas Fürti (violin); Christoph Schiller (viola); Thomas Demenga (cello); Camerata Bern, Thomas Fürti cond. ARCHIV 2723 068 three discs \$29.94.

in him a composer of passion and daring.

Frederick Renz's ensemble is a brave group that handles its period instruments with enthusiasm. While there are occasional problems with intonation, ensemble, and balance, the overall effect is spirited and lively. The singing, what with countertenors and the women's deliberately flat, white voices, sounds somewhat sexless. Renz's own harpsichord realizations of the figured-bass lines are rather too bland for the music; I wish he had offered more arpeggiations and "sprinkled" the chords a bit more in the many declamatory passages. Still, this is a good and interesting release, one of the first on Musicmasters, a new, sold-in-stores label from the Musical Heritage Society.

S.L.

RAVEL: *Shéhérazade; Cinq Mélodies Populaires Grecques (excerpts); Deux Mélodies Hébraïques.* Frederica von Stade (mezzo-soprano); Boston Symphony Orchestra, Seiji Ozawa cond. *Chansons Madécasses.* Frederica von Stade (mezzo-soprano); Doriot Anthony Dwyer (flute); Jules Eskind (cello); Martin Katz (piano). CBS MAS-

TERSOUND ● IM 36665, © HMT 36665, no list price.

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

This is probably the most generous current representation of Ravel songs on one disc, and it has much to commend it: subtle balancing of elements, fine instrumental performances, and, certainly, the many attractive qualities of Frederica von Stade's singing—her musicianship, tonal purity, and idiomatic handling of the texts.

There are a number of things, however, that I miss here. A wider emotional and dynamic range is certainly called for, to say nothing of more pronounced timbral contrasts. To be more specific: the singer suggests the primitive elements in the *Chansons Madécasses* but fails to hint at the fierceness in such a song as "Aoua!" In the Hebraic songs I miss the dimension of earthiness. Much of the singing has a beautiful, almost hypnotic quality—Ravel's exquisite sonorities tend to dull the senses—and I am by no means ungrateful for streams of beautiful sound. But at times I'd

like to hear more angularity, or, perhaps, more spontaneity. The overall recorded sound is marvelous.

G.J.

ROSSINI/RESPIGHI: *La Boutique Fantasque.* Toronto Symphony, Andrew Davis cond. CBS MASTERSOUND ● IM 35842, © HMT 35842, no list price.

Performance: **Hard-riden**
Recording: **Wide-ranging**

A sophisticated if casual listener, hearing the strains of *La Boutique Fantasque*, asked, "Slavic? A Russian ballet score? It has a French influence but it must be Russian." *La Boutique Fantasque* was orchestrated by Respighi from Rossini's French-period *Sins of My Old Age* for Diaghilev. But Russian? Well, Respighi studied with Rimsky-Korsakov. In fact, the more one listens and thinks about it, the more this score sounds like a tribute to the traditional Russian ballet. It is, of course, a delight.

Andrew Davis offers a lively and hard-riden performance that pushes constantly for brilliance and dynamism. The Toronto Symphony, not especially known as one of

the first-rank North American ensembles, makes a virtuoso impression. The digital sound is exceptionally wide-ranging, and the disc shows off both the brilliance of the playing and the noisy quality of the vinyl to perfection. *E.S.*

VIVALDI: *The Four Seasons.* Yehudi Menuhin (violin); Camerata Lysy, Alberto Lysy cond. ANGEL ● DS-37755 \$10.98.

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

Not that we need another recording of *The Seasons*, but when another does manage to crowd its way into the catalog we are lucky if it is as good as this one. Except for a few upward slides between phrases, Yehudi Menuhin is stylistically in good form; his ornamentation, especially of the slow movement of *Spring*, is beautifully worked out. The Camerata Lysy of Gstaad, Switzerland, an outgrowth of the International Menuhin Music Academy, is a fine group of enthusiastic young players who bring spontaneity and freshness to this work, which, despite the warhorse treatment it has suffered for years, will always retain its power and originality. *S.L.*

COLLECTIONS

NANCY ALLEN: *A Celebration for Harp.* Loeillet: *Toccata*. J. S. Bach: *French Suite No. 6*, in *E Major*; *Allemande and Courante*. Sonata No. 2, in *A Minor*, for Unaccompanied Violin: *Andante*. D. Scarlatti: *Sonata in E Major (Kk. 380)*; *Sonata in B-flat Major (Kk. 545)*; *Sonata in A Major (Kk. 208)*; *Sonata in A Major (Kk. 209)*. **Francisque: *Courante; Pavane; Bransles.*** **Daquin: *Le Coucou.*** Prokofiev: *Romeo and Juliet, Op. 64: Aubade. Prelude in C Major, Op. 12, No. 7.* Respighi: *Siciliana.* Couperin: *Les Barricades Mystérieuses.* Nancy Allen (harp). ANGEL ● DS-37334 \$10.98, © 4ZS-37334 \$10.98.

Performance: **Fine**
Recording: **Lifelike**

There is no reason, I suppose, for harpists not to help themselves, via transcriptions, to the vast repertoires of other instruments, as guitarists have done so effectively. Nancy Allen's first solo record, like most such collections, is made up almost entirely of transcriptions, only the Prokofiev prelude being actually composed for the harp; all the rest were transcribed either by Allen herself or by the unforgettable Marcel Grandjany, who was one of her teachers. The performances are without exception on a very high level, and their appeal is enhanced by the lifelike digital recording. *R.F.*

WERNER HOLLWEG: *Ballads.* Schubert: *Erlkönig; Der Zwerg; Loda's Gespenst.* Loewe: *Graf Eberstein; Harald.* Schumann: *Die Wandelnde Glocke; Die Feindlichen Brüder; Der Soldat; Belsazar; Die Beiden Grenadiere.* Werner Hollweg (tenor); Roman Ortner (piano). TELEFUNKEN ● 6.42620 \$11.98.

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

Werner Hollweg's previous recorded appearances in operas and oratorios have always shown him to be a singer of unspectac-

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ular competence; here he strikes me as a superior lieder recitalist. The program he has chosen is anything but "commercial" insofar as the American market is concerned, and, in what appears to be a determined gesture to sink the vessel by those who have launched it, the poems have been printed without English texts (Telefunken seems to be guilty of this more often than any other company).

It so happens that Hollweg's artistry is least impressive in the two ballads that are most familiar to international audiences. In *Erlkönig* he is overpowered by the pianist, and in *Die Beiden Grenadiere* his tones simply lack the weight for the proper dramatic utterance. But when it comes to virtuosic handling of poetic texts, to clarity of diction, to sensitive gradation of dynamics, Hollweg gives us a triumphant demonstration of the recitalist's art. His technique too is exceptional: Carl Loewe's witty, fast-paced *Graf Eberstein* and the tricky vocal line of Schumann's *Belsazar* find in him an outstanding interpreter. I particularly welcome the two Loewe ballads (Hollweg gives an absorbing account of *Harald* too) since these excellent examples of German song literature are so difficult to come by. Schubert's *Lodas Gespenst*, a narrative ballad nearly fourteen minutes in length, may, on the other hand, be too much of a good thing.

All in all, this is not an album likely to be a best seller, but lieder fanciers should not allow such a masterly recital to slip by.

G.J.

GIDON AND ELENA KREMER: Works for Violin and Piano (see Best of the Month, page 78)

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LONDON EARLY MUSIC GROUP: La Mantovana. Zannetti: *La Mantovana*; *Aria del Gran Duca*; *Fuggi, Fuggi, Fuggi*. Vecchi: *So Ben Mi Chi Ha Bon Tempo*. Calvi: *La Bertazzina*. Banchieri: *Sonata Sopra l'Aria Musicale del Gran' Duca*. Rore/Rogniono: *Anchor Che Col Partire*. Garsi: *La Lisfeltina*. Farina: *Pavana*. Stefani: *Par-*

goletta Che Non Sai. Negri: *La Nizzarda*. Anon.: *Spagnoletta*; *Pavaniglia*; *Va Pur Superba Va*. London Early Music Group, James Tyler cond. NONESUCH H-71392 \$5.98.

Performance: **Delightful**

Recording: **Very good**

James Tyler has put together one of the most delightful-sounding early-music ensembles to be heard today. A lutenist himself, he shows a preference for plucked instruments by including a theorbo, mandora, guitar, harp, and harpsichord along with the usual complement of strings and winds. The sound of the full ensemble is utterly ravishing, as are the many smaller combinations used for this disc. The use of the early harp, in particular, lends a sensuous quality to the sonority.

The program here is well chosen, tracing the tune *La Mantovana* through its various guises. This main thread is supplemented by other gems drawn from the popular music of Italy during the years of change from the Renaissance style to the early Baroque. The performances are generally excellent and preserve the dance-like quality of the music. Paul Eliot's light tenor voice is perfect in the three vocal selections; he manages the rhythmic dance style and the florid style equally well, giving a masterly performance of Rogniono's elaborately embellished arrangement of Cypriano de Rore's *Anchor Che Col Partire*. Ian White's performance on the Baroque viola in Calvi's *La Bertazzina* also deserves special mention for the rich sound and engaging ornamentation. I could go on pointing out the merits of individual performers, but I will leave it to listeners to judge for themselves. In any case, this is a most attractive release. S.L.

MORMON TABERNACLE CHOIR: The Power and the Glory. Haydn: *Awake the Harp*. J. S. Bach: *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring*; *A Mighty Fortress Is Our God*. Mozart: *Gloria in Excelsis Deo*. Schubert: *Ave Maria*. Handel: *Hallelujah Chorus*. Mendelssohn: *Rise Up, Arise*. Sullivan: *Onward, Christian Soldiers*. Malotte: *The Lord's Prayer*. Trad. (arr. Wilhousky): *The Battle*

Hymn of the Republic. Mormon Tabernacle Choir; Columbia Symphony Orchestra, Jerold Ottley cond. CBS MASTERSOUND ◊ IM 36661, © HMT 36661, no list price.

Performance: **Ringling**

Recording: **Excellent**

There's nothing wrong with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir that a good program of corn-free music couldn't cure, and this is such a program. It's a little strange to hear passages from the choral works of Haydn, Bach, and Schubert sung in English (only Mozart's *Gloria in Excelsis Deo* stays in Latin), but Sullivan's *Onward Christian Soldiers* was written in English and Mendelssohn was at home enough in our language, so why not? The choir has never sounded more ravishing than in this digital recording of an all-religious concert, complete with a fervid rendition of their public's favorite, Malotte's setting of *The Lord's Prayer*. Director Jerold Ottley gets clean, sturdy performances of everything. Even the theatrical treatment of *The Battle Hymn of the Republic*, which begins off in the distance and sounds louder and closer as the troops advance, is more to be enjoyed than censured.

P.K.

JOAN SUTHERLAND, MARILYN HORNE, AND LUCIANO PAVAROTTI: Live from Lincoln Center (see Best of the Month, page 81)

20TH CENTURY UKRAINIAN VIOLIN MUSIC. Lyatoshinsky: *Sonata for Violin and Piano*, Op. 19. Kosenko: *Two Pieces*, Op. 4. Hrabovsky: *Trio for Violin, Contrabass, and Piano*. Stankovych: *Triptych, "In the Highlands"*. Eugene Grativich (violin); Virko Baley (piano); Bertram Turetzky (contrabass, in Hrabovsky). ORION ORS 79331 \$8.98.

Performance: **Excellent**

Recording: **Very good**

Let no one think this is a provincial production of provincial music. Eugene Grativich and Virko Baley, both emigrés from the Ukraine to this country, are first-class musicians, as is also, of course, the well-known

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American bass player Bertram Turetzky. The music, ranging in date from 1919 to 1972, is all from the Soviet Ukraine, and it is all well performed, nicely recorded, and very intelligently and interestingly annotated by Mr. Baley.

Although the Ukraine is a distinct region with a distinct Slavic population, culture, and language, it has long been part of Russia, and under the czars the indigenous culture was violently suppressed. The Soviet Ukraine has enjoyed a bit more autonomy, but, at least from the outside, it has hardly been distinguishable from Soviet Russia. Victor Kosenko was a straightforward late Romantic in the most traditional sense: the classic "provincial *rétardaire*." But Boris Lyatoshinsky (1895-1968) was very much in the European modernist mainstream, and his Op. 19 sonata is a strong, highly worked, individual piece of atonal expressionism.

For many years Lyatoshinsky headed the Ukrainian Composers' Union and taught at the Kiev Conservatory, where one of his pupils, Leonid Hrabovsky, became a founder of the Kiev avant-garde, a young Soviet group that broke decisively with the traditionalist canons of Socialist realism. Hrabovsky's Trio for Violin, Contrabass, and Piano, written in 1964 but later slightly revised, was one of the first works to make that break, and it is an effective and individual serialist piece. Yevhen Stankovych, another Lyatoshinsky pupil, was also influenced by avant-garde developments. The work at hand, however, synthesizes folk elements into a post-Bartók modernist style. All in all, an interesting off-beat record.

E.S.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

VIRTUOSO TRUMPET CONCERTOS OF THE BAROQUE. *Neruda: Concerto in E-flat Major for Trumpet, Strings, and Continuo.* *Endler: Concerto in F Major for Trumpet, Two Horns, Oboe, Bassoon, Three Violins, Timpani, and Continuo.* *Molter: Concerto No. 2, in D Major, for Trumpet, Strings, and Continuo.* *Telemann: Concerto in D Major for Trumpet, Oboes, Strings, and Continuo.* Wolfgang

Basch (trumpet); German Bach Soloists, Helmut Winschermann cond. PRO-ARTE ❶ PAD-100 \$10.98, ❷ PCD-100 \$10.98.

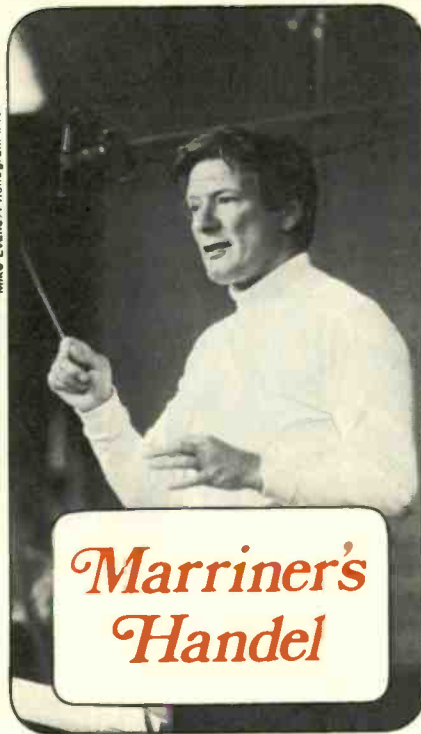
Performance: **Wonderful**
Recording: **Thrilling**

Despite the album title, these concertos are really not Baroque but pre-Classical. They are splendid representations of the work of several mid-eighteenth-century masters who helped forge the new musical language that found its ultimate expression in Vienna during the last two decades of the century. The most obscure of the four pieces, that by the German composer Johann Samuel

SOME of Handel's most brilliant instrumental writing is to be found in his three *Concerti a Due Cori*, and they are to be found on a thrilling new Philips release by the Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields. These works "for two choirs" are concertos in the sense that two solo groups, each consisting of an oboe and two horns, are pitted against a body of strings; they make the most of the possible antiphonal effects together with sheer instrumental virtuosity. The horn writing alone is enough to make your spine tingle. The music represents Handel at his most vital: broad French overtures are followed by sparkling dance-inspired movements and instrumental arrangements of choruses from *Messiah*, *Se-mele*, and *Belshazzar*.

Neville Marriner whips up the Academy players into a frenzy of brilliance. Much depends on the work of the four horn soloists, and they fulfill their roles with a bravura that would frighten the hide off Superfox. Don't miss this one. —Stoddard Lincoln

HANDEL: *Concerti a Due Cori: No. 1, in B-flat Major; No. 2, in F Major; No. 3, in F Major.* Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, Neville Marriner cond. PHILIPS 9500 756 \$9.98, ❸ 7300 837 \$9.98.



Mike Evans/Photogram International

Endler (ca. 1700-1762), is also the most interesting. Scored for trumpet, two horns, oboe, bassoon, three violins, timpani, and continuo, it produces a wild and prickly sonority of disparate forces in keen competition. The altitude of the *clarino* trumpet passages is breathtaking.

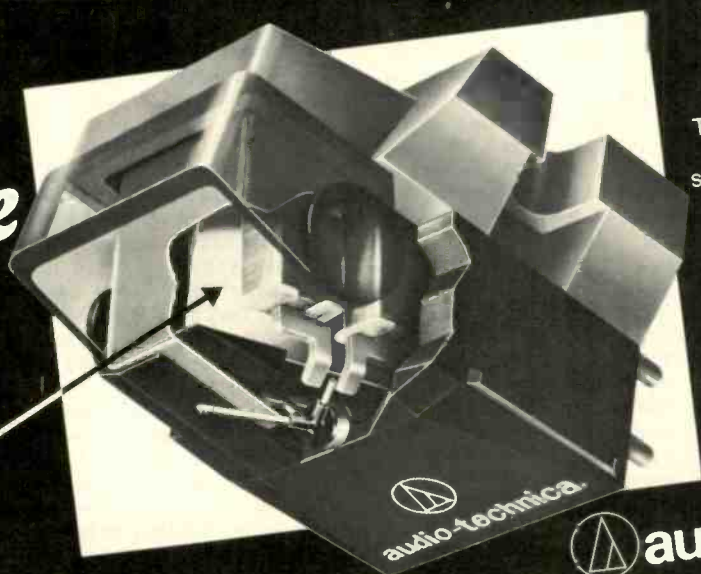
Trumpeter Wolfgang Basch is a supreme master of his instrument. Unlike Baroque trumpet players, who stayed in either the *principale* (low) or *clarino* (high) register, Basch plays in both with assurance and sensitivity. The German Bach Soloists offer sturdy support and bring vigor and sparkle to their ritornellos.

S.L.

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CIRCLE NO. 4 ON READER SERVICE CARD

Popular Music Briefs



RSO

In terms of commercial success, the British team of lyricist **Tim Rice** (above) and composer **Andrew Lloyd Webber** probably has no rival in the musical theater anywhere in the world today. Their first big show, *Jesus Christ, Superstar*, played for eight years in London and was the longest-running musical in the history of the English theater; the two-disc album sold over six million copies, more than any other recording made in Britain up to that time. Their current hit, *Evita*, now running in London, New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Madrid, Sydney (Australia), and Vienna, has grossed more than \$85 million since it opened in London three years ago, and Paramount has just bought the movie rights.

We talked to Rice when he was in New York this summer for a two-night stand in the 92nd Street YMHA's "Lyrics and Lyricists" series, and he explained the method he and Webber have devised of recording a show before it is staged. "We stumbled on it by

accident. We couldn't find anyone who would stage *Jesus Christ, Superstar*, but MCA in England was willing to record it. At first the album didn't do very well there, but it became an enormous hit in this country, and then it was easy to find backing to produce it in the theater. We did the same thing with *Evita* and will do it again with our next show. Making a recording first has become our equivalent of an out-of-town tryout."

Rice enjoys the trappings of success and says it's nice having the cash, but he adds that success endangers one's happiness. "Elvis Presley's last years were tragic. A writer is not subjected to the same kind of pressure an artist is, but success can still make it difficult to lead a normal life." Rice lives with his wife and two children in Oxfordshire and has just acquired a house in London. A tall, husky man, he enjoys running a cricket team, and he has a pop-music group that performs for fun at parties.

"It's ludicrous that one should have had such great success with only two shows—that's what the song *High Flying, Adored* is about in *Evita*—but it's depressing too. Why should I try again if there's nowhere to go from here but down? There's no financial reason to work, but for me work is the only answer." To stay busy and maintain a semblance of a normal life, Rice works regularly as a broadcaster on radio and television. He has just produced an album for Elaine Paige, the original London *Evita*, and for her record he collaborated with Paul McCartney on one song, *Hot As Sun*. He also provided

lyrics for a Rick Wakeman concept album based loosely on George Orwell's *1984*.

Rice would also like to work on the movie version of *Evita*. "Since it was my idea to do a show about Eva Perón, I'd like to have a crack at writing the screenplay, and I'd like to be involved in casting, but writers often lose control of their work when it's sold to the movies."

Rice and Webber's shows have no dialogue, but consist of music from beginning to end. This innovation dates from their earliest successful collaboration, the comic cantata *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*. MCA has kept that album (MCA 399) in the catalog since 1974, and the work, which has been performed all across America, will go into an off-Broadway theater in October. "There's always a jolt when you shift from talk to music," Rice says, "and we solved the problem of integrating the chat with the music by dispensing with the chat. It suits our style."

THE new show Rice and Webber are working on now is about a female chess champion from Eastern Europe who defects to the West but is blackmailed back to her own country. They hope to have the bulk of the work done by the end of this year and to record it before the end of 1982.

Webber has just had another big success in London with *Cats*, a musical setting of T. S. Eliot's *Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats*. "It has made Andrew very hot. He's really the *Número Uno* composer among the Brits," says Rice, who insists he is not jealous of Web-

ber's collaboration with Eliot (1888-1965). "I'm thinking of starting a relationship with Mozart myself," he adds. "I've used that Mozart line as a joke a couple of times, but think about it. One could take fourteen or fifteen of Mozart's greatest melodies and turn them over to a brilliant orchestrator. Then it would be lyrics by Tim Rice, music by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart! I'm beginning to like the sound of it." —W.L.



Kevin Cronin, Gary Richrath

Epic Records

A YEAR ago **REO Speedwagon** was a decently successful mainstream rock band with a mostly Midwestern following. Bound to the grind circuit, they toured secondary markets and occasionally sold a few records, a pattern essentially unchanged since they first escaped from rock clubs in Illinois almost ten years ago. Last Christmas, however, they released their umpteenth album, "Hi Infidelity" (Epic FE 36844), and became the overnight success story of 1981. The album is platinum several times over, hit singles are (in their words)

"falling off the record," and they are selling out stadium concerts even in New York City.

The question, of course, is why? It should be emphasized that "Hi Infidelity," given the limitations of its genre (metal with pop overtones) is a very pleasant record; in fact, as Top-40 fodder goes, it's much better than it needs to be. But any claims that it is more substantial than MOR are ridiculous. And when I caught up with REO live recently (in Nashville) I was mildly astonished to see just how average they are, an anachronistic poodle band to the manner born (they end their show with smoke bombs).

After the show, I chatted briefly with Kevin Cronin and Gary Richrath, respectively the band's front man and lead guitarist (and its songwriting team). The pair proved to be genuinely nice and down-to-earth, thoroughly unaware of how out of step they are with fashion, and with an unshakable self-assurance about the validity of what they're doing (clearly justifiable given their current commercial success).

"We have a certain minimum standard of excellence that we never go below," Cronin told me. "We always work our hardest under any circumstances. I mean, there was a show we did last year in Peoria, which is Gary's home town, where simultaneously during the second

song, the PA blew up and Gary's pants ripped . . ."

Richrath: ". . . right in front of all my relatives, who range from very religious to very loose . . ."

Cronin: ". . . and another time we played outdoors in Kansas City, at Royal Stadium, which seats about 45,000 people. We were getting messages in the dressing room that tornadoes were touching down two miles away. When we got on stage, we had to stop every couple of songs so the roadies could sweep the water off the stage. Then all the lights went out in the stadium. So I just stood there with a flashlight over my head, and we finished the show, and none of the kids left. I think that's the kind of stuff that kind of endears you to an audience."

Fine, I said. But still, why did you guys happen now, as opposed to 1975?

"Because we're better songwriters," Cronin replied. "I don't think, five years ago, I could have written *Keep On Loving You* [the first big single from "Hi Infidelity"]. Plus, we've gotten better as producers. This time out, we had a chance to really rehearse the album before we did it, to really learn the songs. It used to be that nobody in the band except the songwriter would really know what the songs were about, which is not a good way to make records.



John Huston, Adam

GRACENOTES: Rolling Stone **Keith Richards**, less than thrilled about the use of his name, is suing a New Jersey record label over his billing on reggae star Max Romeo's recent album "Holding Out My Love to You." . . . Latest old-time rockers on the comeback trail are the **Ventures**, the instrumental surf combo who gave us such hits as *Walk Don't Run* and that immortal paean to Jack Lord, *Theme from Hawaii Five O*. Glimpsed at Manhattan's Lone Star Café (they also showed up at the trendy Peppermint Lounge), the band (original members all) put on a powerful show that not only be-

lied their age but served to reveal the frivolous surf-music roots of a lot of what passes for serious avant-garde rock these days. . . . *Stand and Deliver*, the new **Adam and the Ants** single, is being packaged as a bonus seven-inch addition for future pressings of the group's already released debut album. Meanwhile, Adam is pictured at left with legendary film director John Huston, perhaps discussing a remake of *Treasure of the Sierra Madre*. . . . DIR Broadcasting's recent **Rod Stewart** radio special had, according to an ABC spokesperson, the highest ratings of any national FM broadcast since the rebirth of national radio in the late Sixties. DIR claims the Stewart show "reached approximately nine million people that night, and tripled the average audience for the more than 350 participating stations." And you were wondering why your local FM rocker doesn't program more New Wave. . . . It had to happen. **It's Rock 'n' Roll**, a TV game show centered around rock trivia, will make its syndicated bow this fall. Comedian Richard Belzer, noted for his impression of Bob Dylan at seventy, will host. —S.S.

"This time we rehearsed the songs till we were blue in the face, but it was fun; the pre-production was like a party."

How has success affected the band? Cronin smiled. "This is STEREO REVIEW, right? Well, now we all have stereos." —S.S.

Disc and Tape Reviews

By CHRIS ALBERTSON • IRV COHN • NOEL COPPAGE • PHYL GARLAND
PAUL KRESH • PETER REILLY • STEVE SIMELS • JOEL VANCE

Ⓢ = stereo cassette

Ⓣ = eight-track stereo cartridge

Ⓛ = digital-master recording

Ⓛ = direct-to-disc

Ⓛ = quadraphonic disc

Ⓛ = monophonic recording

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

THE A'S: *A Woman's Got the Power*. The A's (vocals and instrumentals). *Johnny Silent*; *Little Mistakes*; *I Pretend She's You*; *Heart of America*; *When the Rebel Comes Home*; and five others. ARISTA AL 9554 \$8.98, Ⓢ ATC 9554 \$8.98, Ⓣ AT8 9554 \$8.98.

Performance: **Okay**

Recording: **Okay**

The A's tend to holler and twang instead of sing and play, and their producers have opted here for a mix that makes them sound as if they were recorded in a steel box. All concerned must have an eye on market demographics. Thus we get a bit of mellow macho from the title tune and *I Pretend She's You*, a dash of contrived social con-

cern with *Heart of America* and *Working Man*, and bombastic padding with *Electricity* and *How Do You Live*. Oddly enough, one cut works despite the hoopla. *Little Mistakes*, about a mismatched marriage, is not enough to save the album, but it suggests what it might have been. J.V.

ADC BAND: *Brother Luck*. ADC Band (vocals and instrumentals). *Celebrate*; *Waiting for You*; *Super Freak*; and five others. COTILLION SD 16041 \$8.98, Ⓢ CS 16041 \$8.98, Ⓣ TP 16041 \$8.98.

Performance: **Spirited**

Recording: **Good**

The ADC Band (in case you're wondering, the initials stand for—believe it or not—

Aid to Dependent Children) works up a full head of steam dishing out heavy funk fare. There's nothing racy or suggestive here, and nothing that's especially clever, but the group seems to be having a stomping good time. They do better on the uptempo numbers, such as *Brother Luck* and *Celebrate*, than on the ballads (in *Waiting for You* some of the singers seem to be in a different key than the others). This is a good party record, fun for fun's sake, but the ADC Band makes a better impression when you don't listen too closely. P.G.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

KAREN AKERS: *Presenting Karen Akers*. Karen Akers (vocals); instrumental



Gordon Munro/Warner Bros.

Chaka Khan

CHAKA KHAN's new "What Cha' Gonna Do for Me" is an album that fairly sizzles with her distinctive brand of high-energy singing. Once again we are treated to well-crafted and powerfully executed instrumentals that blast Khan into the vocal stratosphere where she so gracefully soars. In format, style, and overall sound, the new album closely resembles her previous Warner Bros. set, the superb "Naughty" (BSK 3385), although none of the selections here jump out at you quite the way that disc's *Clouds* and *Papillon* did.

The highlight this time around is a marvelously popped-up, electrified version of the Dizzy Gillespie jazz classic *Night in Tunisia*. Here it's called *And the Melody Lingers On*; the lyrics supplied by Khan and producer Arif Mardian pay tribute to the musical legacy of the Forties, citing the influence of Bird, Max, Miles, and especially Dizzy on all that have followed, up through Stevie Wonder. It's about time someone

tried to overcome the collective amnesia of today's pop artists, whose ignorance of the jazz tradition has sadly limited them. Contemporary musicians can still learn from the masters of the past. Chaka Khan has evidently learned her lessons well. If any further proof were needed that she is an exceptionally gifted singer with platinum pipes, her dazzling performances here should do the trick. —Phyl Garland

CHAKA KHAN: *What Cha' Gonna Do for Me*. Chaka Khan (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *We Can Work It Out; What Cha' Gonna Do for Me; I Know You, I Live You; Any Old Sunday; We Got Each Other; And the Melody Lingers On (Night in Tunisia); Night Moods; Heed the Warning; Father He Said; Fate; I Know You, I Live You (Reprise).* WARNER BROS. HS 3526 \$8.98, © W5 3526 \$8.98, ® W8 3526 \$8.98.

accompaniment. *Send In the Clowns; Taught by Experts; Trouble Man; After the Show; Sometimes When We Touch; Cloud of Music;* and five others. BLACKWOOD 81-750091 \$10.98 (from Blackwood Productions, 251 West 57th Street, New York, N.Y. 10019).

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

This is an impressive debut. Karen Akers sounds like a born cabaret singer in the tradition of Felicia Sanders and all those other

ladies of the late Fifties who used to enliven the Manhattan night scene at such places as the Blue Angel, the Bon Soir, and Le Reuban Bleu. Akers was discovered at the only modern-day equivalent of those places, Reno Sweeney's (now closed), by Christian Blackwood, who produced this album and the PBS television special that it's taken from. Her voice is a fine, clear, dramatic instrument, and her diction, timing, and phrasing are superb. The only thing that limits this album is the repertoire. Only three songs—*Send In the Clowns, Non, Je*

Ne Regrette Rien, and Life Is—really allow her the scope to show what remarkable things she can do in performance. Everything else is either precious (*Song for Old Lovers*) or stogy (*Trouble Man*) or an ill-advised attempt to be "with it" (Billy Joel's *She's Always a Woman*). But the three good ones are pure fresh caviar. P.R.

ATLANTIC STARR: *Radiant*. Atlantic Starr (vocals and instrumentals); instrumental accompaniment. *When Love Calls; Does It Matter; Mystery Girl; Under Pressure;* and four others. A&M SP-4833 \$7.98, © CS-4833 \$7.98, ® 8T-4833 \$7.98.

Performance: **Easy-listening funk**
Recording: **Excellent**

When Atlantic Starr vocalist Sharon Bryant is in charge, everything this talented nine-person band does comes together. It isn't that the other eight Starrs are shirkers; on the contrary, these guys are out there *playing* all the time. Augmented with some carefully placed strings, a bit of electronic gimmickry, and very little else, their strutting, Latin-funk instrumental back-ups are refreshingly clean and imaginative.

The trouble is that Bryant is the only vocalist in the group with enough power not to get swamped by the instrumentals. When she joins David Lewis in singing the second verse of *Am I Dreaming*, for instance, her vibrant, thrilling sound positively transforms the song (her harmonies are wonderful). I have to pick *Send for Me*—a cool, classy ballad in the Commodores style that's beautifully sung by Wayne Lewis—as the album's best cut, but if Atlantic Starr would concentrate on developing Sharon Bryant's talent, it could become an important group. I.C.

BILLY AND THE BEATERS. Billy Vera (vocals, guitar); the Beaters (instrumentals). *Strollin' with Bones; Corner of the Night; I Can Take Care of Myself; Millie, Make Some Chili; At This Moment;* and three others. ALFA AAA-10001 \$7.98, © ACA-10001 \$7.98.

Performance: **Not bad**
Recording: **Good**

This is the result of a collaboration by a group of L.A. studio hotshots. Billy Vera, it says here, wrote the "hits"—which I can't remember—*With Pen in Hand* and *Storybook Children*, and he was part of the first interracial duet to make the Top 40 along with someone named Judy Clay. Can't remember that either. I don't figure to remember this album either, although some things about it are well done. It is too rough-textured and big-bandy for me. Four saxophones in one group is too damned many saxophones. Vera's vocals are capable but don't have much style. The album does have a nice informality about it, though, and the songs are better than average, and Jim Ehinger plays, with wild abandon, some very neat piano. The recording is clear but a bit on the crisp or trebly side. I think a smaller combo could have done the same thing better, but inflation never sleeps. N.C.

BLUE MAGIC: *Welcome Back*. Blue Magic (vocals); vocal and instrumental ac-

companionment. *The Oscar; Feelin' the Love; Who Could Ever Leave You; Welcome Back; Land of Make Believe; Seems I Haven't Seen Her*; and four others. EMI ST-12143 \$8.98, © 4XT-12143 \$8.98, © 8XT-12143 \$8.98.

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

You can depend on Blue Magic to deliver mellow, moderately paced dance music that pleases the ear. This time their vocalizing is supported by what sounds like a cast of thousands, at least on the opening track, *The Oscar*. With all those rumbling drums and singing strings, you'd expect to hear Charlton Heston reciting the Ten Commandments rather than the modest little ballad that follows. Aside from that lapse into pretentiousness, this is the sort of sturdy—if not overwhelmingly original—material they do so well. Among the better tracks are *Welcome Back* and *Standin' on the Edge of a Love Affair*. P.G.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

CAMEO: *Knights of the Sound Table*. Cameo (vocals and instrumentals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Knights by Nights; I Never Knew; Don't Be So Cool; I Like It*; and four others. CHOCOLATE CITY CCLP 2019 \$8.98, © CCL5 2019 \$8.98, © CCL8 2019 \$8.98.

Performance: **Exciting**
Recording: **Too bright**

As in Cameo's previous release, "Cameosis," this ten-man rhythm-and-blues organization lays claim to an interesting middle ground in contemporary black music. Their music is far more organized than the funky extravaganzas of, say, Parliament. But it's far freer—more progressive—than the laundered productions of groups like Chic. Oh, Cameo can sweeten things up; they have no aversion to supplementing the steady rhythm of an uptempo (and totally winning) item like *Use It or Lose It* with closely harmonized choruses and nonstop strings. But even here and in similar material the arrangement is strong and busy in the jazz/funk tradition.

The album is recorded without a trace of mushiness no matter how much is going on. Unfortunately, the price of that achievement is an overly bright sound. In an understandable desire to capture everything his virtuoso musicians lay down, producer and group leader Larry Blackman has overcompensated a bit. So turn down the treble, turn up the bass, and enjoy yourself. I did. I.C.

KIM CARNES: *Mistaken Identity*. Kim Carnes (vocals, piano); instrumental accompaniment. *Bette Davis Eyes; Hit and Run; Mistaken Identity; Draw of the Cards; Break the Rules Tonight; Still Hold On*; and four others. EMI/AMERICA SO-17502 \$8.98, © 4XO-17502 \$8.98, © 8XO-17502 \$8.98.

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

The hit here, *Bette Davis Eyes*, written by Donna Weiss and Jackie DeShannon, is considerably more interesting than anything else. Kim Carnes has the vocal equivalent of bedroom eyes, possibly owing to the

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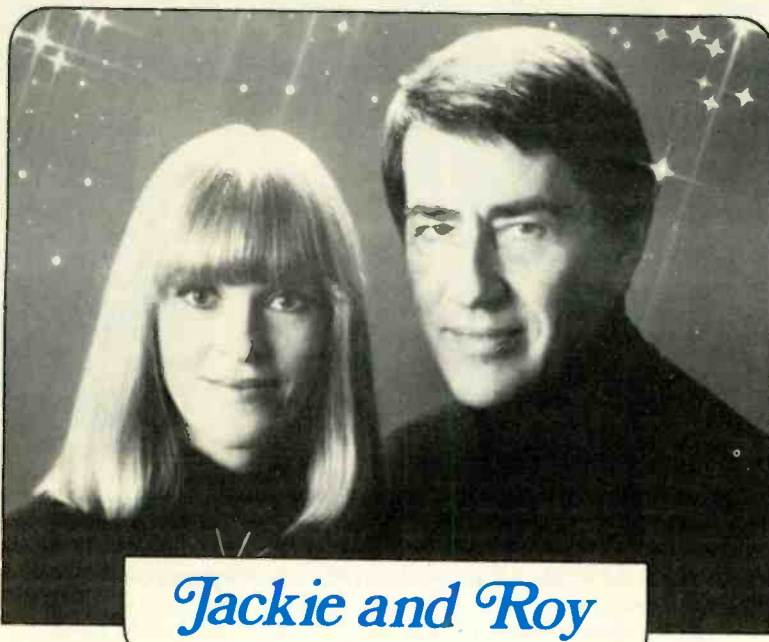
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Jackie and Roy

THE style of Jackie Cain and Roy Kral has not undergone much of a change since 1947, yet there is nothing anachronistic about their singing. They are consummate jazz artists, and they were way ahead of their time in 1949, when they bopped and scatted their way to national attention as a vital component of saxophonist Charlie Ventura's septet. "East of Suez," a new album that takes its name from one of the duo's most celebrated numbers, is a wonderful blend of straight jazz singing and vocal harmonizing applied to both old and new material. It is the couple's second Concord Jazz release, and it should do much to further a career that has survived more than three decades of public neglect.

Roy Kral's piano and Paul Johnson's vi-

braphone tastefully dominate the accompaniment, which includes strong input from bassist Brian Torff and percussionists Jeff Hamilton and Ralph Hardimon. Jackie and Roy should be known and savored east of Suez, west of the moon, and wherever discriminating ears yearn for relief.

—Chris Albertson

JACKIE AND ROY: *East of Suez*. Jackie Cain (vocals); Roy Kral (vocals, piano); Jeff Hamilton (drums); Ralph Hardimon (percussion); Paul Johnson (vibes); Brian Torff (bass). *Don't Be Blue; D'Light; Close Enough for Love; East of Suez; Wings of Love; Travelin'; It's So Peaceful in the Country; Anthropology.* CONCORD JAZZ CJ-149 \$8.95.

same kind of throat damage that Rod Stewart has suffered, but the songs—both hers and other people's—deal only with the surface of things. The slick production adds to the impression that what they're trying for is a sound acceptable for today's radio programming, although some good musicians are involved and a scintillating lick is heard now and then. Richard Stekol's *My Old Pals* runs a distant second among the songs; at least it's about something. Whatever's third is even more distant.

N.C.

THE CHIPMUNKS: *Urban Chipmunk*. The Chipmunks, Jerry Reed, Brenda Lee (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *The Gambler; I Love a Rainy Night; On the Road Again; Made for Each Other*; and six others. RCA AFL1-4027 \$9.98, © AFK1-4027 \$9.98, © AFS1-4027 \$9.98.

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

Okay, okay, it's a one-joke act. But I'm reminded of an old *New Yorker* cartoon in

which a dog sits at a typewriter next to a monstrous stack of manuscript paper. His master is reading some of it with a pained expression, and the dog says, "Of course it's doggerel. What did you expect?"

So the Chipmunks are a one-joke act. Of course. What did you expect? It's a joke I have yet to tire of, but, then again, I'm old enough to view it somewhat nostalgically, since the very first record I actually paid for out of my own lunch money was the original *Chipmunk Song* way back in 1958. And there's something oddly soothing about the furry trio's harmonies; they sound so organic, so natural, to ears lately abused by their spiritual heirs, the Bee Gees. Moreover, most of the country hits that the tiny rodents essay here are of the ultra-commercial, protest-the-smell-of-cow-manure variety, so the Platinum Vermin's vocal approach seems eminently appropriate, far more idiomatically authentic than they were on the otherwise admirable "Chipmunk Punk."

In fact, now that I think of it, this may

turn out to be a two-joke act, the second joke being that since these songs are not at all defaced by the ridiculous gimmick of the Chipmunks' electronically speeded-up singing, we may have to come to the grim realization that mainstream country is as bland, plastic, and soulless as any other musical genre that gets played on the radio a lot. To Alvin, Simon, and Theodore, then—thanks a lot, fellas. S.S.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

GUY CLARK: *The South Coast of Texas*. Guy Clark (vocals, guitar); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Who Do You Think You Are; Crystelle; New Cut Road; Rita Ballou; South Coast of Texas; Heartbroke*; and four others. WARNER BROS. BSK 3381 \$7.98, © M5 3381 \$7.98.

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

Guy Clark, in case you don't speak Austin, is the guy who wrote *L.A. Freeway* and *That Old Time Feeling* for Jerry Jeff Walker. There is at least a spark of something special in a high percentage of Clark's songs. As a singer he's limited, but he does make up some ground in expressiveness. The production of this album, by Rodney Crowell, is stripped clean to the bone, as Hemingway said language should be, and not only will you want to listen to every sound that remains in it (including a vocal by Rosanne Cash), but you'll be able to hear it with no interference whatever. Only *Heartbroke* and *Calf Rope* (a Southern expression for "I give up") leave me gasping a bit for melody; everything else has something to say and says it well. N.C.

ROSEMARY CLOONEY: *Come On-a My House*. Rosemary Clooney (vocals); various orchestras. *Come On-a My House; This Ole House; Tenderly; Mambo Italiano; Mixed Emotions; Hey There!*; and six others. ENCORE © P 14382 \$8.98.

Performance: **Fifties classics**
Recording: **Variable**

Here are a dozen commercial classics from the Fifties as sung by Rosemary Clooney, the Golden Girl of the Eisenhower years. The ballads stand up best; *Tenderly, I'm Glad There Is You*, and *Hey There!* all foreshadow the really splendid singer Clooney has become in the last few years. This lucky Golden Girl of the past has turned into a Platinum Lady of today.

P.R.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

BRUCE COCKBURN: *Résumé*. Bruce Cockburn (vocals, guitar); instrumental accompaniment. *Silver Wheels; The Coldest Night of the Year; Can I Go with You; Laughter; Water into Wine; Lord of the Starfields*; and four others. MILLENNIUM BXL1-7757 \$8.98, © BXX1-7757 \$8.98, © BXS1-7757 \$8.98.

Performance: **Greatest spritz**
Recording: **Mostly very good**

Only one song here, *The Coldest Night of the Year*, is previously unreleased. The rest are from the albums "In the Falling Dark," "Circles in the Stream," and "Further Ad-

ventures Of" (1976, 1977, and 1978, respectively). The outside of the jacket does not tell you this, unless you can divine it from the title. So it is a sampler, but it's a good sampler, and most Americans and some Canadians don't have that many of Cockburn's earlier albums anyway.

The tunes selected are a little more straight-ahead than those in Cockburn's last couple of albums, and I don't mean that in the sense of the slightly pejorative term "accessible." I mean that the tunes are less convoluted and the language less opaque; access is easier, but what I like more is that it's also more graceful. The music is airy and bright and mostly acoustic; the attitude behind the running commentary on the passing scene seems coy sometimes, but the lyric style is both inventive and polished. You get the feeling of being in good hands. N.C.

RANDY CRAWFORD: *Secret Combination*. Randy Crawford (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *You Might Need Somebody*; *Rainy Night in Georgia*; *That's How Heartaches Are Made*; *Two Lives*; *You Bring the Sun Out*; *Rio de Janeiro Blue*; and four others. WARNER BROS. BSK 3541 \$8.98, © M5 3541 \$8.98, © M8 3541 \$8.98.

Performance: **Easy listening**
Recording: **Good**

Sometimes I feel that Randy Crawford's considerable vocal talents have been put on hold until someone comes up with a suitable formula to market her to the broadest possible audience. She has produced a series of disconcertingly uneven albums that have rarely showed off the wondrously full voice I first heard in 1975 when she was an unknown belting out *Gonna Give Lovin' a Try* on Cannonball Adderley's "Big Man." "Raw Silk" was one of the few albums that gave her latitude to use her interpretive talents. Since then, she seems to have been wandering through a mist of easy-listening, sleepy-time-down-South songs that are as comfortable as an old bedroom slipper—and just as exciting. "Secret Combination" is no exception. Typically, it includes *Rainy Night in Georgia*, a song well on its way to becoming a cliché. While her rendition of the golden oldie *That's How Heartaches Are Made* touches a soft spot of nostalgia and *Rio de Janeiro Blue* is an engaging little ditty, this sort of merely pleasant fare is hardly challenging to a young woman who could grow into a major singer if she ever got the chance. P.G.

LAMONT DOZIER: *Working on You*. Lamont Dozier (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *Cool Me Out*; *Why (Ain't My Love Enough)*; *Nobody Told Me*; *Too Little Too Long*; *Playing for Keeps*; *Working on You*; and four others. COLUMBIA/ARC 37129, © RCT 37129, © RCA 37129, no list price.

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

Although Lamont Dozier attained prominence during the Sixties as a member of Motown's top songwriting team, Holland-Dozier-Holland, I have found his singing and songwriting rather pedestrian in recent years. His musical concepts have been lim-

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ited, and there have been too many sound-alike songs with unimaginative melodies. And while he is an earnest and industrious singer, his voice just doesn't have very much individuality.

This time around, however, he surprised me. Somehow he has tapped a spring of creativity to produce an album that is bright, spirited, and likely to inspire some singing along. Doing lead and background vocals, he employs a lot of close harmonies, including some daring *cappella* passages. *Cool Me Out* and *Chained (To Your Love)* sparkle with touches of reggae rhythms, and there are a few exciting moments when Dozier sounds more than a bit like the late Sam Cooke. This album is a promising start in a new direction. P.G.

PETER FRAMPTON: *Breaking All the Rules.* Peter Frampton (vocals, guitar, keyboards); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Dig What I Say; Don't Wanna Let You Go; Rise Up; Wasting the Night Away; Going to L.A.; You Kill Me;* and three others. A&M SP-3722 \$8.98, © CS-3722 \$8.98, © 8T-3722 \$8.98.

Performance: **Paging Shaun Cassidy**
Recording: **Nothing special**

Poor Peter Frampton. From biggest rock star in the Free World to near has-been in the blink of an eye. I'd feel sorry for him, except that he never has to work another day in his life, and besides, he did it to himself. Nobody put a gun to his head to force him to record the treacly "I'm in You" album or to make an utter buffoon of himself in the *Sgt. Pepper* film fiasco. Clearly, the man convinced himself that his enormous success was based not on his modest talents as a guitarist and songwriter, but rather on performing charisma, a quality that he has in roughly the same proportions as Snooky Lanson.

In any event, this new album is Frampton's attempt to toughen up his act (read: wet his toe in the New Wave), and it is not at all unpleasant, or even particularly forced sounding, merely unmemorable. His new band plays with some grit, and he does get a chance to stretch out somewhat on lead guitar, but the songs are banal, characterless, riff-based concoctions that go nowhere. Though his version here of the classic *Friday on My Mind* is fully as unimaginative as you might expect, the song's being interestingly constructed and tuneful, unlike Frampton's own, serves to throw the album's inadequacies into even sharper relief. I say the guy should hire himself out as a sideman and be done with it. S.S.

ROBERT GORDON: *Are You Gonna Be the One.* Robert Gordon (vocals); the Wildcats (instrumentals); other musicians. *Are You Gonna Be the One; She's Not Mine Anymore; Someday, Someway; Look Who's Blue; Drivin' Wheel; Take Me Back;* and four others. AFL1-3773 \$8.98, © AFK1-3773 \$8.98.

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

I'm of an age and a geographic background to have feelings about rockabilly music that are not to be trifled with, so it's difficult for me to give a Robert Gordon record a fair chance. I respect him more than I respect

one of those ghoulish Elvis Presley impersonators, of course, but the two subjects do seem related, especially when Gordon slips into his rockabilly-profundo voice, as he does, for example, in a semi-neat old song called *Standing on the Outside of Her Door* and in a stillborn Elvis-reminder called *Lover Boy*. Gordon does sound more sincere than he looks, though, and there are some pretty good tunes here (including the hit *Someday, Someway* by the up-and-coming writer/performer Marshall Crenshaw), although they're all on side one. On the other hand, the band exacerbates my underlying suspicion that cynical dilettantes may have been at work on this by playing as if they had learned it all from records. Not only is the backing unimaginative; it is obviously a second-generation product, full of second-generation perceptions and understandings. Technically, Gordon is fairly well equipped, but, since parody doesn't seem to be his intent, he needs to work on projecting a presence that isn't quite so arch. N.C.

GREAT BUILDINGS: *Apart from the Crowd.* Great Buildings (vocals and instrumentals). *Hold On to Something; One Way Out; . . . And the Light Goes On; Dream That Never Dies; Heartbreak; Combat Zone;* and four others. COLUMBIA JC 36920, © JCT 36920, no list price.

Performance: **Fair**
Recording: **Loud**

Great Buildings sounds scrappy and energetic, and their three-part harmonies are pleasing, but do we need still another Top-40 L.A. pop band? And do we need ten more songs about the pain of love? Or such loud ones? Maybe Great Buildings will survive doing just what they do here, or maybe they'll disband and the members will wind up in other groups. Or maybe—let's hope—they'll make another album and put their evident energy and ability to better use. J.V.

ISLEY BROTHERS: *Grand Slam.* Isley Brothers (vocals and instrumentals); instrumental accompaniment. *Tonight Is the Night; Hurry Up and Wait; Young Girls; Who Said?;* and three others. T-NECK FZ 37080, © FZT 37080, © FZA 37080, no list price.

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

Despite a playing time of thirty-one minutes and fifteen seconds, "Grand Slam" seems like the briefest Isley album I've ever heard. I got the feeling that the brothers couldn't wait to finish up and go home. Possibly their programming has become so standardized that things seem to go quicker than they really do.

Side one begins with ballads sung by Ronald Isley in his best turn-down-the-sheets manner, but the tempo picks up with the closing cut on the side and from there on things whiz by pell-mell. By the end of side two we have the Isley trademark of Ernie's Hendrix-disciple guitar wailing to a prominent accompaniment of multi-overdubbed handclaps. The Isleys have had their act set since the early Seventies and have virtually remade the same album ever since. Since I respect their earlier work from the Fifties and Sixties, I am delighted that they contin-

ue to prosper. But they're not exactly enriching my life lately. J.V.

WALTER JACKSON: *Tell Me Where It Hurts.* Walter Jackson (vocals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *When I See You; Never Sing the Song; At Last; If It's Magic;* and four others. COLUMBIA FC 37132, © FCT 37132, no list price.

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

For someone who has been making good records for such a long time, Walter Jackson shows a remarkable ability to maintain a low profile. But the credit for his obscurity should go to those who have marketed his talent. For instance, take the cover of this album, his Columbia debut. I mean, how could anyone not already familiar with Jackson even begin to imagine the pleasurable experiences that rest in the grooves behind that dull, unimaginative cover? But don't let it fool you. Jackson delivers far more than the cover promises: eight fine tunes sung in a mellow, well-controlled, mature voice over arrangements that either roll in like early-morning mist or carry Jackson on boppy ripples across a soulful sea. The program is a good, durable mixture of smooth ballads and bounce soft enough for even hardened middle-of-the-roads to warm up to. If you like Brook Benton, it's time you discovered Walter Jackson. C.A.

TOM JOHNSTON: *Still Feels Good.* Tom Johnston (vocals, guitar); instrumental ac-

companiment. *Madman; Wastin' Time; Baby, Take Me In; Last Desperado; Wishing;* and three others. WARNER BROS. BSK 3527 \$7.98, © M5 3527 \$7.98.

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

Tom Johnston is an old Doobie Brother. Of course, I'd never go so far as to say Doobies should be smoked and not heard—but I'd defend *your* right to say it. The band has never really spoken to me, and neither does this, but what we've got here (in both cases) is a failayah to communicate rather than a lack of talent. I think. I mean, Johnston's songwriting really is overwhelmingly mundane, when you think about it—and these latest efforts almost force you to think about it. In that regard, although the back-up sounds a little different, this album makes almost exactly the same impression on me that most of the Doobies' albums have, namely, that someone mistook the rise of rock to mean you could get by with chants instead of tunes. The lyrics are a thicket of banalities. Johnston may be writing for his own voice, which has a sort of polished-brass trademark sound, best at bursting out at you periodically. Technically he seems capable enough, but he seems to give everything, both here and back on the Doobies' albums, the same inflection. It is hardly surprising that Michael Omartian, the power behind Christopher Cross, produced this one too. You know what Don Meredith says: if you've got just one trick, you've got no trick. N.C.

GRACE JONES: *Nightclubbing.* Grace Jones (vocals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Pull Up to the Bumper; Use Me; Art Groupie; Feel Up; Demolition Man;* and four others. ISLAND ILPS 9624 \$7.98, © M5 9624 \$7.98.

Performance: **A serious try**
Recording: **Terrific**

I won't go so far as to call this newest set of Grace Jones performances a revelation, but it is certainly her most musical, listenable album yet. Jones has kept intact the forces that made her last LP, "Warm Leatherette," a success, but this time out the focus shifts even farther from the funky, punky mannerisms of her disco era.

Most of the interest in "Nightclubbing" lies in a series of relatively spare percussive arrangements. The best tracks are the haunting *Art Groupie*, co-authored by Jones, and the sprightly *I've Seen That Face Before*, which sounds like what might have happened if composer Nino Rota had written a disco number for a Fellini movie. There's harder material here too. *Demolition Man*, *Pull Up to the Bumper*, and the David Bowie title song fit neatly into the Jones persona: tough, unemotional, hard as steel. But these cuts are also well produced, especially *Bumper*, with its ambitious Caribbean lilt.

The voice that is set into these arrangements is still an extremely limited one. Jones does find a way to add intimate coloration to her hard-edged alto in the puzzling but winning ballad *I've Done It Again*, but

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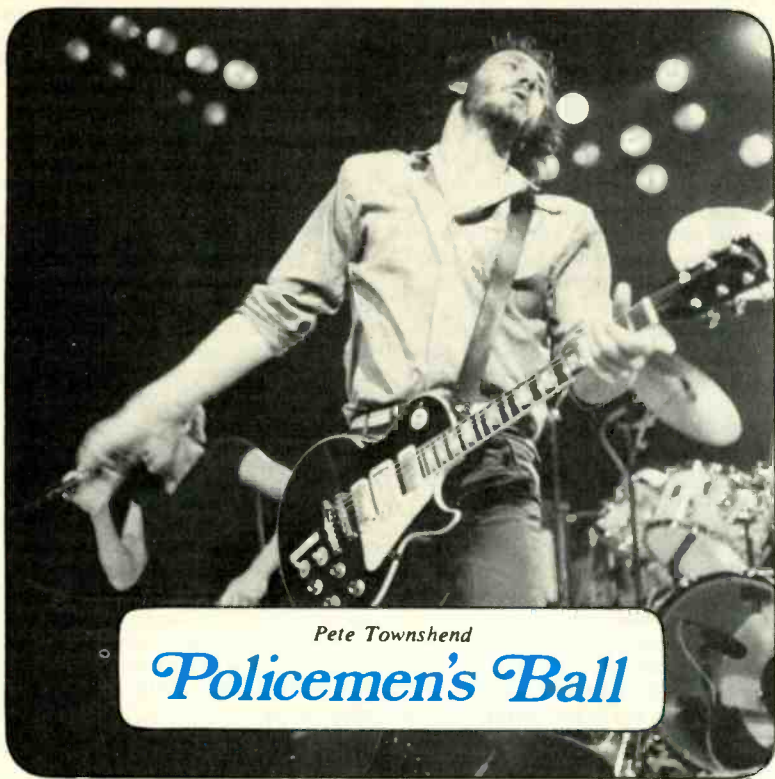
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Pete Townshend
Policemen's Ball

THE Secret Policeman's Ball" documents the musical segment of a London charity event in 1979, and the album may just be the most worthwhile fund-raising tool ever marketed. The profits go to Amnesty International, truly a nonpartisan cause, and the music is uniformly terrific. The big news is the acoustic Pete Townshend stuff, perhaps the finest work the man has committed to vinyl since "Who's Next." The transmogrification of *Won't Get Fooled Again*, a song that in its original version was a gigantic production number, into a delicate chamber-music piece for two guitars without losing a scintilla of the tune's intensity is by itself a good enough reason to add this to your collection, and his other performances here are equally compelling. I am now a Born Again Pete Townshend fan: this is a great, great man.

There's not a dud in the package, actually. Tom Robinson's new *1967* is a mordant

stunner, and his update of the Brechtian *Glad to Be Gay* is thoroughly chilling. Ex-Bonzo/Python Neil Innes weighs in with a marvelous parody of Nelson Riddle's big-band Fifties pop (*Spontaneous*), and John Williams is his usual impeccable self on two classical-guitar essays. In short, this is an artistic triumph for all concerned, and you couldn't contribute to a more deserving cause regardless of your politics. Get it. And get another one for a friend.

—Steve Simels

THE SECRET POLICEMEN'S BALL—THE MUSIC. Pete Townshend: *Pinball Wizard*; *Drowned*. Tom Robinson: *1967 (So Long Ago)*; *Glad to Be Gay*. Neil Innes: *Spontaneous*. John Williams: *Cavatina*; *Bach—Bourée from Cello Suite No. 3*. Pete Townshend and John Williams: *Won't Get Fooled Again*. ISLAND IL 9630 \$5.99.

everything else is half-chanted, half-growled in her familiar fashion. What's new is the variety of textures here and the serious attempt to widen her appeal. I.C.

TOM JONES: *Darlin'*. Tom Jones (vocals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Darlin'*; *One Night*; *But I Do*; *Lady Lay Down*; *No Guarantee*; and seven others. MERCURY SRM-1-4010 \$7.98, © MCR4-1-4010 \$7.98, © MC8-1-4010 \$7.98.

Performance: **The same as always**
Recording: **Good**

It's been a long time since Tom Jones made the charts, and, judging by the media push

behind this album, he misses that a lot. Instead of changing his act, however, he's apparently counting on fan loyalty; what he does here is exactly the same thing he's been doing over and over again for the last fifteen years. That's a pity, because by now he's beginning to sound like a parody of a parody. P.R.

KITTY AND THE HAYWOODS: *Excuse Me, I've Got a Life to Catch* (see Best of the Month, page 80)

KRAFTWERK: *Computer-World*. Kraftwerk (vocals and instrumentals). *Computer-World*; *Pocket Calculator*; *Home Com-*

puter; *Computer Love*; and three others. WARNER BROS. HS 3549 \$8.98, © W5 3549 \$8.98.

Performance: **Provocative fun**
Recording: **Superb**

The entire lyric of the title song in this, Kraftwerk's first album in some years, is a little list repeated over and over: "Interpol and Deutsche Bank/FBI and Scotland Yard." Judging by its prominent place in the album (*Computer-World* appears twice, at the beginning and end of side one), the list is clearly supposed to be important, but what it means seems to be left to the listener. Is it a rallying cry of left-wing European radicalism? A reaction to the multinational corporate technocrats and their police-state allies?

Whatever, this Kraftwerk album is more to be appreciated intellectually than enjoyed viscerally; you could dance to their stuff a few years ago, but no longer. These are computerized, programmed electronic melodies with an eerie Oriental feeling played against sparks and sputters of sound on the very edge of what is traditionally thought of as music. In this emotionally numb atmosphere, even an innocent item like *Numbers* becomes ominous simply because a guttural, ghostly voice repeats the numbers one through eight in German, and the simple line "I am the operator of my pocket calculator" takes on all kinds of symbolic overtones. I happen to enjoy this kind of exercise. Kraftwerk's new album is filled with attractive sounds as well as provocative ideas, and how many records can you say that about these days? I.C.

L.A.: *Doyawanna*. L.A. (vocals and instrumentals). *The Reaper*; *W-O-M-A-N*; *Doyawanna (Make Love)*; *I Need You So*; *Don't Hurry Love*; *Runaround*; and four others. RADIO RR 16035 \$8.98, © CS 16035 \$8.98.

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

First, the initials. They don't stand for Los Angeles but for Love Affair. Second, the band. The members are quite young and come from Cleveland, Ohio. What saves them from sounding too provincial is an occasional twist in their arrangement, an interesting chord resolution, and a generally straight-ahead way of playing.

Some of the lead vocals are literally juvenile, but it's rather endearing to hear a singer suddenly realize he can't hit the note dead-on and breathe up to it instead. Midwestern bands like this tend to be too anxious to write their own material instead of accepting tunes that will emphasize their strengths and cover their weaknesses. Many of the songs here are also juvenile, although some of the lyrics show promise. The two best cuts, not written by the band, are *Runaround*, by Jack Tempchin and Tom Seurgert, and *The Reaper*, by Steve Wittmack, who also produced the album. L.A. definitely has potential. J.V.

KAREN LAWRENCE AND THE PINZ: *Girl's Night Out*. Karen Lawrence (vocals, keyboards, accordion); the Pinz (vocals and instrumentals). *Girl's Night Out*; *I Won't Stop*; *Sealed with a Kiss*; *Blondes*; *So Tough*; *March of the Pins*; and four others.

RCA AFL1-4006 \$8.98, © AFK1-4006 \$8.98.

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

Despite this album's cover design and photos, which show Karen Lawrence in a Fifties prom dress, the music isn't, as you might expect, a comment on the mores of that decade. Instead it's a so-so program of songs written by Lawrence and lead guitarist Fred Hostetler that purport to be comments on the square world (*March of the Pins*), sexual liberation (*Girl's Night Out*), nurturing (*Fix It*), and the blahs (*Modern Times*). There is one specific nod to the Fifties in *Sealed with a Kiss*, which Lawrence sings better than the original. For most of her own material she affects a talk-sing manner and tries to sound slightly punk-ominous. Ho hum. J.V.

DAVID LINDLEY: *El Rayo-X*. David Lindley (vocals, guitar, bass, fiddle, banduria); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Mercury Blues; Quarter of a Man; Twist and Shout; Don't Look Back*; and eight others. ASYLUM 5E-524 \$8.98, © 5C5-524 \$8.98, © 5T8-524 \$8.98.

Performance: **He's got rhythms**
Recording: **Good**

If you want to hear David Lindley, sidekick of Ry Cooder and Jackson Browne (co-producer and occasional vocalist here), play some hot guitar, you've come to the wrong place. Nine out of the twelve numbers here, including *Bye Bye Love* and *Twist and Shout*, are given some kind of Caribbean beat, and rhythms—New Wave, r-&-b, and attempted Cajun—are important to the other three as well. But it's a likable little record. The songs are carefree, lazy, and whimsical. Lindley sings about as well as Joe Walsh and in a similar sort of controlled nasal whine. This would be a little stronger, perhaps, if he didn't seem a foil for the rhythm section so much of the time, but the rhythm section is fun to listen to. N.C.

MARSHALL TUCKER BAND: *Dedicated*. Marshall Tucker Band (vocals and instrumentals); Charlie Daniels (fiddle); Norton Buffalo (harmonica). *Love Some; Silverado; This Time I Believe; Ride in Peace*; and six others. WARNER BROS. HS 3325 \$8.98, © M5 3325 \$8.98, © M8 3325 \$8.98.

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

My usual complaint about Marshall Tucker albums, weak songwriting, applies here, but it doesn't apply as much as it did with the last two or three. This time the songs are good enough to be called mediocre, possibly because the album is dedicated to the memory of bass player Tommy Caldwell (killed in an accident April 28, 1980) and the boys tried harder. Still, you can't help thinking about the albums this band could make with good material, even though on this one the instrumentals aren't quite as sprightly as they've been in the past. Jerry Eubanks' flute isn't heard much, possibly because of a yen to sound "Western" to match the sunset-in-mesa-country cover painting. But this still sounds like one of the more capable bands where playing the tune is concerned.

It just goes a long time between standout tunes, and this batch, even though it raises the overall recent quality average, essentially prolongs the wait for the next one. N.C.

JOHN MARTYN: *Grace & Danger*. John Martyn (vocals, guitar); Tommy Eyre (keyboards); John Giblin (bass); Phil Collins (drums, vocals). *Some People Are Crazy; Johnny Too Bad; Sweet Little Mystery*; and five others. ANTILLES AN 7081 \$7.98.

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

John Martyn does his own kind of psychedelic folk-jazz. As I recall, he ended what other people thought were his "pure" folkie days by

running his guitar accompaniment to an ancient ballad through a revolving Leslie speaker. Well, the British have a way of evolving in that direction, as Steeleye Span fans know, and I usually like Martyn's stuff quite a lot. This time, though, he seems to be forcing the vocals a bit, perhaps reaching for some effect he has not adequately written into the song in the first place. Either that or his throat hurts. The songs themselves are a bit less, um, active than usual; these might remind you a little too much of the midnight oil in the late Tim Buckley's lesser works. Martyn seems here neither as graceful nor as dangerous as I'd come to expect. N.C.

(Continued overleaf)

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ULLANDA McCULLOUGH: Ullanda McCullough (vocals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Bad Company; I'll Just Die; It's You; You're Gonna Wanna Come Back;* and four others. ATLANTIC SD 19296 \$7.98, © CS 19296 \$7.98.

Performance: **Unrealized potential**
 Recording: **Fine**

Nickolas Ashford and Valerie Simpson alternate between starring in their own productions and writing and producing for others (most recently Diana Ross). In this new release, they've confused their two roles by starring their productions instead of their client, Ullanda McCullough.

McCullough has a rather special voice with an impressive range. Her powerful top is effectively exploited in these typical Ashford and Simpson sets, riding easily up and over the big, energetic disco-soul orchestrations. But McCullough also has a warm, husky middle voice that is more distinctive, and this aspect of her talent is steamrollered into oblivion here. There are only three ballads in the album and only one song—*Warm and Gentle Explosion* (my favorite cut)—that gives her any extended lines in her middle register. There's plenty of drama, of course; this is an Ashford and Simpson production. *Love Has Changed My Mind* is virtually operatic as it builds from big to bigger to huge. *Rock Me* does just that in a straightforward dance arrangement that is hot and stylish at the same time, and the electric-guitar break in *Rumors* is both exciting and intimate. But the rest is all too frantic for me—and, I'm afraid, for Ms. McCullough as well. Somewhere along the way someone forgot who was supposed to be in the spotlight. **I.C.**

CHARLEY PRIDE: Roll On Mississippi. Charley Pride (vocals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Roll On Mississippi; She's As Good As Gone; He Can Be an Angel; Fall Back on Me;* and six others. RCA AHL1-3905 \$8.98, © AHK1-3905 \$8.98, © AHS1-3905 \$8.98.

Performance: **Strings galore**
 Recording: **Good**

The usual Charleypride album problems—none having anything to do with Pride's singing ability—afflict this one. The thing is overproduced, as Charley and producer Jerry Bradley have brought back the Nashville Sound with a vengeance. Pride's big voice is mixed so you can hear it, but a cloying and unnecessary string section siphons off far too much attention. The other major vocal problem is that most of the songs aren't very interesting—they almost seem designed not to be—and almost all seem to gravitate down to the status of filler around the title tune, on which hopes for the release were justifiably pinned. **N.C.**

THE PSYCHEDELIC FURS: Talk Talk Talk. The Psychedelic Furs (vocals and instrumentals). *Pretty in Pink; Mr. Jones; No Tears; Dumb Waiters; She Is Mine;* and five others. COLUMBIA FC 37339, © FCT 37339, no list price.

Performance: **Trashy**
 Recording: **Dank**

The psychedelic tag here is, of course, ironic. Unlike some of the other recent Eng-

lish bands that have been so labeled by the press, the Furs are being campy about their Sixties connections, and what you really get on their albums (this is the second) is a mannered, metallic sound tempered with Bowie-esque vocals and some honking sax reminiscent of Andy MacKay's work on the early Roxy albums. One could, I suppose, argue that the Furs' scrap-heap cacophony also has a certain tenuous connection with the Velvet Underground (who were thought of, incorrectly, as an acid band by their hipper peers), but I suspect the similarities are mostly accidental.

The Furs deal in fashionable themes of punk alienation (anybody who can write a song called *I Wanna Sleep with You* is not exactly a dewy-eyed romantic), but the songs occasionally verge on pop when you ignore the racket and singer Richard Butler's Ziggy-Stardust-on-barbiturates affections. In short, this is another instant bargain-bin classic from the Brave New World of post-punk modernism, but I must confess that I rather enjoy the Furs' trashiness. Potential hit single: *Pretty in Pink*. **S.S.**

HELEN REDDY: Play Me Out. Helen Reddy (vocals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Optimism Blues; Do It Like You Done It When You Meant It; I Can't Say Goodbye to You; Save Me; You Don't Have to Say You Love Me;* and five others. MCA MCA-5202 \$7.98, © MCAC-5202 \$7.98.

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

It's hard to decide from this particular album whether Helen Reddy is continuing on her way out or is on the verge of a comeback. Whatever her destination, this seems to be a transitional effort. She's still milking a fatuously romantic repertoire (*When I Dream*, the pseudo-country *Save Me, You Don't Have to Say You Love Me*), but she is so sweetly and forthrightly appealing in *Optimism Blues, Do It Like You Done It When You Meant It*, and a heartfelt *Play Me Out* that it would be ridiculous to write her off yet. There's wicked humor, too, in her treatment of *The Stars Fell on California*, and when she puts the full force of her personality at the service of a cozy ballad such as *Let's Just Stay Home Tonight*, it's nice to know she's still making records. **P.K.**

JERRY REED: Dixie Dreams. Jerry Reed (vocals, guitar); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Bayou Woman; Good Friends Make Good Lovers; Love Me Tonight; Rhythm and Blues; Dixie Dreams; One Way Rider;* and four others. RCA AHL1-4021 \$8.98, © AHK1-4021 \$8.98, © AHS1-4021 \$8.98.

Performance: **Mixed bag**
 Recording: **Pretty good**

Jerry Reed was working on this when I visited him last year (STEREO REVIEW, August 1980), when he said he was mightily impressed with George Benson. The whole first side reflects that impression; it presents him speaking uncharacteristically softly and suggests jazz. It takes him a little out of his element vocally, although his guitar seems right at home. The songs aren't very strong, though. On side two, he gets back to

being a rampaging redneck—still flashing some jazzy flat-picking, however. He introduces a new backwoods character, Soddy Hoe, pays tribute to Chuck Berry, and converts Charlie Daniels' fiddling contest with the devil into a guitar-picking contest (the Georgia boy wins again, in case you were wondering). The album leaves a rather disjointed impression, but some of it is fun and the picking is sweet. *N.C.*

ROOMFUL OF BLUES: *Hot Little Mama!* Roomful of Blues (vocals and instrumentals). *Long Distance Operator; Caravan; New Orleans Shuffle; The Big Question; Little Fine Healthy Thing; Two Bones and a Pick;* and six others. BLUE FLAME BLUE 1001 \$8.95 (from Blue Flame Records, P.O. Box 49, Bradford, R.I. 02808).

Performance: **Good, but . . .**
Recording: **Good**

Roomful of Blues has been together for ten years, appearing with such luminaries as Fats Domino, Count Basie, Lou Rawls, B. B. King, and the late Roy Brown and Professor Longhair. They are primarily a dance band that puts on a solid show of rather obscure late-Forties and mid-Fifties rhythm-and-blues items. The trouble with "show" bands is that no matter how much they believe in the music they're playing or how well they play it, the translation from live performance in a dance hall to studio recordings rarely works. The only such group that managed the transition was the Average White Band (and I use the past tense deliberately, for their style has since changed), but by the time they came along "soul" music had been largely reduced to standardized riffs and predictable structure. Roomful of Blues tries to re-create the brief period in music when black bands were moving from bop to rock-and-roll. Despite their hearty playing and obvious sincerity, their sound remains an acquired taste. *J.V.*

SIDE EFFECT: *Portraits.* Side Effect (vocals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *I Can't Play; I Need Your Lovin'; Midnight Lover; Reggae Dancin'; The Lord's Prayer;* and five others. ELEKTRA 6E-335 \$7.98, © TC5-335 \$7.98, © ET8-335 \$7.98.

Performance: **Bland**
Recording: **Muddy**

The three men and one woman in Side Effect are supported in these ten songs by a veritable army: guitars, drums, percussion, horns, flutes (tenor and baritone), an ARP synthesizer, violas, cellos, ten violins, a harp, background vocalists, and more. Despite all this—and the participation of a horn arranger, a vocal arranger, a string arranger, and a horn orchestrator—very little happens. The songs are uninspired r-&-b stuff, and the arrangements are even less interesting than the songs. The only good singing comes from velvety-voiced Gregory Matta on *Loneliest Man in Town*, and the only lively playing comes from a suddenly awakened horn section in *It's Got to Be Love (I Just Feel Like Dancin')* and the effectively re-created sound of swing laid on *If You Believe*. To make matters duller, a heavy fog seems to have settled on the album, muffling the sonics. A bore. *I.C.*

SKY: *Sky 3.* Sky (instrumentals). *The Grace; Chiropodie No. 1; Westwind; Sarabande; Meheeco;* and six others. ARISTA AB 4288 \$8.98, © ACT 4288 \$8.98, © A8T 4288 \$8.98.

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

"Sky 3," like its predecessors, features the larky efforts of an Australian quintet whose members—John Williams, Kevin Peek, Tristan Fry, Herbie Flowers, and Steve Gray (who replaces Francis Monkman)—manage to keep their musical wits about them even while trying to consummate almost impossible marriages between the classics and a rock beat. The sound of Sky is cool, clean, and mercurial with an unexpected twist at every turn in the road. This album offers such clever exercises as *Chiropodie No. 1*, which is not a parody of the Satie *Gymnopédies* but a kind of answer to them; Handel's *Sarabande* (you may recall this as the piece they kept ringing changes on in the soundtrack for *Barry Lyndon*) translated from the harpsichord to an arrangement dominated by John Williams' superb guitar; and the drolly titled *Dance of the Big Fairies*, which turns out to be a rather slight but inoffensive routine for the tuba. At times I got the feeling that Sky is almost too inventive for its own good, but at least there's never a dull moment. *P.K.*

G. E. SMITH: *In the World.* G. E. Smith (vocals, guitar); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Rita; The Blind Boy Rag; Nuns with Guns; James Brown; Sad About Girls;* and three others. MIRAGE WTG 16038 \$7.98, © CS 16038 \$7.98, © TP 16038 \$7.98.

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

A perplexing performer, this G. E. Smith. The opening cuts on both sides of this album are typical crash-boom rock-and-roll, but halfway into each side it becomes a bit quirky. *Rita* details the fears of a female lead singer who keeps changing her hair color to conform to fashion and worries about capturing an audience ("My manager says wait until February when the record is out"). *The Blind Boy Rag* combines a goof on folk-blues with references to golden calves, *Moby Dick*, Columbus, and the Holy Grail. Nostalgia—and sophisticated nostalgia at that—is parodied on *James Brown* ("Remember Slim Harpo . . . the B-side of *Funky Broadway*"), and *Nuns with Guns* is a masochistic fantasy.

Like Alice's adventures, G. E. Smith gets curiously and curiously. This is an album to file, but not to forget. Who knows what he may do next? *J.V.*

GINO SOCCIO: *Closer.* Gino Soccio (vocals and instrumentals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Try It Out; Street Talk; Love Is;* and three others. RFC/ATLANTIC SD 16042 \$7.98, © CS 16042 \$7.98, © TP 16042 \$7.98.

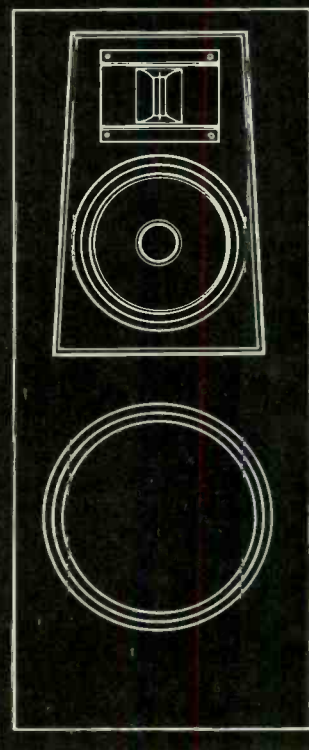
Performance: **Always Inventive**
Recording: **Terrific**

A female vocalist named Erma Shaw and a Harry James-type trumpet player named Roger Walls may be two reasons why Gino
(Continued on page 117)

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Video Review

"Michael Nesmith in *Elephant Parts*"

MICHAEL NESMITH, in case you've forgotten, was the Thinking Man's Monkee, and while I'm aware that there are still some people out there who might consider that characterization to be a contradiction in terms on the order of "Army Intelligence," his career, both as a group member and on his own, belies any negative assessment. (While we're on the subject, and without getting, in Martin Mull's phrase, all warm and runny about it, it's now obvious that the Monkees, crass and plastic as they undoubtedly were, were quite a bit better than they got credit for being.)

Nesmith obviously learned a lot during his TV days—working with the likes of Bob Rafelson and Jack Nicholson, who wouldn't?—and lately, in between writing occasional hit songs both for himself and for other artists, he's quietly set out to become the D. W. Griffith of the video explosion. He's done promo films (for Kim Carnes, among others), plus some commercial parodies and film satires that have turned up on *Saturday Night Live* and the like, all produced out of his own self-contained studio complex in Carmel, California. Now he's given up the audio record business to concentrate on video full time, and the fruits of this visionary labor are finally available: "Michael Nesmith in *Elephant Parts*," the first musical comedy produced specifically for home videocassette (*Guinness Book of Records* please note). If this is the future, we're in for a rowdy good time, because Nesmith's achievement is an unfettered delight.

What's "*Elephant Parts*" like? Like a lot of things you've seen before, I suppose, but with enough new wrinkles that it comes off almost thoroughly fresh. There are big-budget song-and-dance production numbers, blackout sketches, fake advertisements, satirical digs at Detroit and the oil companies, running gags (the world's most inept saloon singer), plus quiz-show and foreign-film parodies featuring a talented rep company centered around Nesmith, who retains the lanky charm and flair for gentle physical comedy he displayed back in the Sixties. There are a couple of truly priceless bits (my favorite is the opening, in which Nesmith simultaneously demolishes a tiny Japanese village in the style of the schlock monster movie *Rodan* and his own image as a hippie minstrel), and with the exception of a drug-culture take-off on *Name That Tune*, which strikes me as a bit dated, they hold up well with repeated viewing.

The musical numbers, however, are what you're going to watch most, and they're little gems all. Nesmith intended them as mini-movies, and that's what they are: they tell stories with beginnings, middles, and ends, they're gorgeous to look at it (real, old-fashioned Hollywood-production gloss), and they're genuinely, even poetically, witty in their use of the video medium. *Rio*, for example, is a splendid, spaced-out Carmen Miranda-style dance number that fuses state-of-the-art video technology with slapstick zaniness and achieves visually something of the piña-colada charm of a Jimmy Buffett Caribbean fantasy. *Tonight* is a gorgeous Fifties drive-in dream sequence that manages, in its three or four concise little minutes, to trash absolutely the inept entirety of *Grease*. The humor is reminiscent in tone of some of the stuff Nesmith did with the Monkees, but there's simply more careful thought and effort here; in fact, there's not a wasted moment in *any* of these bits.

Nesmith's music is, of course, pure California pop. There's no Springsteenian epic

drama in it; it means solely to entertain. But, unlike the usual run of California pop—say, the Doobie Brothers or Christopher Cross—it is not brainless. It deals with ideas, and it communicates them with a sly wink and immense, warmhearted style. And, as presented here, it is music that is inseparable from the video images that go with it; the connections between the songs and the action on your screen are organic and seamless.

I realize I have been making all this sound like high art, which of course it isn't. But the shock of seeing something this good and this smart produced for the home video market is rather disarming. Suddenly the fevered claims that this really is a brand new medium rather than just movies on a small screen seem plausible—nay, obvious. Certainly no one working in the rock-and-roll ballpark has come up with anything remotely as entertaining, and comparisons with what's available on commercial television are simply pointless.

So . . . is "*Elephant Parts*" more worth buying than last week's Hollywood blockbuster movie or a tape of Blondie lip-synching "Eat to the Beat"? Is it the kind of thing you'll sit through more than once, like your favorite audio-only records? On both counts, the answer is a resounding "You bet!" Me, I can't wait till Nesmith takes a crack at something linear with a full-length story line, a real musical for the TV media (all three of them) rather than just a revue. On the basis of "*Elephant Parts*," he's clearly the man who could pull it off, the man who—let me go 'way out on a limb here—could create the home-video equivalent, the revolutionary impact, of the original *Jazz Singer*.

(A technical postscript: Not only does "*Elephant Parts*" look splendid, but Nesmith has had the good sense to release the thing, at least the VHS version, with a stereo soundtrack. I've heard it, and it sounds great. When the hardware catches up, which should be soon, your copy won't be obsolete. Plus: a videodisc—in the MCA/Philips/Pioneer laser system—is due out before the end of the year.)

—Steve Simels



Pacific Arts Video Records

"The man who could create the home-video equivalent of the original *Jazz Singer*"

MICHAEL NESMITH: *Michael Nesmith in Elephant Parts*. Michael Nesmith; other performers and musicians. *Rio*; *Cruisin'*; *Tonight*; *Light*; *Magic*. PACIFIC ARTS VIDEO RECORDS PAVR-529 VHS (stereo) or Beta (mono) \$59.95.

Soccio's new album is called "Closer." They are the forces behind *Try It Out*, previously released as a single and the album's opening cut, and they bring Soccio's music closer to the pop mainstream than anything he's done before. The beat is slower and the tone is straight rhythm-and-blues. Soccio touches on his Eurodisco style here, but "Closer" is mainly new for him. If *Try It Out* is what it takes to introduce him to a wider audience, that's just fine with me. New listeners may stick around to hear the rest of the album, and they'll hear such good music as the danceable *Street Talk* and the sexy dance-tempo number called *Hold Tight*, with a gorgeous haze of electronic sound softening the hand claps, the horns, and the sharp-edged vocal.

All the cuts on "Closer" are arranged in an almost casual way. "Pleasant" is the word that comes first to mind; "satisfying" might be a better one. Soccio is relaxing. These are not the complex, ambitious, rhythmically intricate productions that made his name, but they succeed on their own terms, successfully marrying contemporary American pop with European-style electronics. I.C.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

SPIDER: *Between the Lines*. Spider (vocals and instrumentals). *Better Be Good to Me; It Didn't Take Long; Can't Live This Way Anymore; Go and Run; I Love; Faces Are Changing*; and six others. DREAMLAND DL-1-5007 \$8.98, © CT-1-5007 \$8.98, © 8T-1-5007 \$8.98.

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

Spider is a straightforward band, solid and durable, easy to listen to and easy to like. What makes them special is the way they take a riff or a phrase, extend it, and turn it into something substantial. Where most other bands would be monotonous, Spider riffs the way old jazz bands did—they put meat on the bone. *Better Be Good to Me, Can't Live This Way Anymore*, and *Faces Are Changing* are three juicy ribs; the first is also noteworthy for containing a drum solo that is *rhythmic*, a rare departure in rock, where most drum solos are mere pounding for the groundlings. There's also a nice ballad, *It Didn't Take Long*. This is a fine album that deserves a shot. J.V.

SPINNERS: *Labor of Love*. Spinners (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *Long Live Soul Music; Standing on the Rock; Almost All the Way to Love; The Winter of Our Love; Be My Love; The Deacon*; and five others. ATLANTIC SD 16032 \$8.98, © CS 16032 \$8.98.

Performance: **True to form**
Recording: **Satisfactory**

The Spinners have all but defied the laws of nature by exhibiting so little stylistic change during their more than twenty years as a staple r-&-b group. But resistance to change is not always a good thing, as this record indicates. The old reliable funk seems to have lost much of its pungency; too many of the numbers here sound like material on the group's previous records. Though there are indications that the Spinners are scratching about for fresh pickings, the re-

sults are mixed. *Give Your Lady What She Wants* has a trace of reggae in the instrumentals, but the tune is trite and the lyrics inane; *The Deacon*, however, is a spirited mix of rapping and traditional singing. My Poor Taste award for the month goes to *Be My Love*, a popped-up treatment of the pseudo semiclassical Mario Lanza piloted to the charts in the days of yore; the song just can't afford this sort of tampering.

The best tracks here are *Almost All the Way to Love* and *The Winter of Our Love*. Both get lively treatments, and the latter features some spectacular falsetto singing. The rest aren't exactly clinkers, but their glow is mighty dim. P.G.

SQUEEZE: *East Side Story*. Squeeze (vocals and instrumentals). *Someone Else's Heart; Piccadilly; Woman's World; Messed Around; Tempied; Is That Love; In Quintessence*; and seven others. A&M SP-4854 \$7.98, © CS-4854 \$7.98, © 8T-4854 \$7.98.

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

Squeeze can be very funny—I thought their "Argy Bargy" album was a gem—but this time around their humor is so dry as to be parched. Their character studies of fools and losers are dreary rather than satirical, the vocals and arrangements are as sparse as the sentiments, and the lyrics, though quite literate and detailed, read like the report of a psychologist who has given up on his patients. It sounds like they've been strongly influenced by their producer on this outing, Elvis Costello.

What few moments of humor there are come from musical jokes about past playing styles, as on *In Quintessence* (significantly, the only cut produced by Dave Edmunds), with its reference to British Invasion early-Sixties pop, and *Messed Around*, which spoofs the cautious drumming and "ticking" string bass that were a feature of Bill Haley and the Comets. Fourteen selections (the usual number on a British LP, as opposed to the ten typical of American albums) are just too many considering the consistent gloom. This is one time when an album would have sounded better with less to hear. J.V.

JIM STEINMAN: *Bad for Good*. Jim Steinman (lead vocals, keyboards); Rory Dodd, Karla DeVito (vocals); Todd Rundgren (vocals, guitar); New York Philharmonic Orchestra, Steven Margoshes cond.; other musicians. *The Storm; Bad for Good; Love and Death and an American Guitar; Rock and Roll Dreams Come Through; Dance in My Pants*; and five others. EPIC/CLEVELAND INTERNATIONAL FE 36531, © FET 36531, © FEA 36531, no list price.

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

Jim Steinman wrote and arranged the material for Meat Loaf's "Bat Out of Hell" album and toured with him as keyboardist and associate zany. No one can argue with the commercial success of that album—some 8,000,000 sold—so Steinman was given a lavish budget to write and produce his first solo LP. This is it, and it is awful.

(Continued overleaf)

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Steinman attempts to be sensual, mystical, and violent, but his songs are little more than collections of clichés and his singing is ludicrously melodramatic. Guest vocalists Rory Dodd and Karla DeVito (who appeared on "Bat" and has replaced Linda Ronstadt in the Broadway *Pirates of Penzance*) are infinitely more professional, but there's little they can do with the material. Todd Rundgren, who plays guitar, sings, and co-produced, swings between being extraordinary and being pedantic in his choice of projects and performances; here he is pedantic. Steinman apparently thought of this mess as a "concept" album, though the "concept" is hazy in the extreme. He even includes an extra 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ -rpm EP with a "prologue" and an "epilogue." The latter is called *Rock and Roll Dreams Come Through* (not in this case), the former *The Storm*; performed by the New York Philharmonic, it only shows what 105 first-class musicians can do with certifiable hokey. Worst of all is Steinman's dramatic monologue on *Love and Death and an American Guitar*, a wretched example of raving mediocrity. Don't waste your allowance. J.V.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

SYLVESTER: *Too Hot to Sleep*. Sylvester James (vocals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Thinking Right; Too Hot to Sleep; Here Is My Love; Can't You See; Ooo Baby Baby*; and four others. FANTASY R-9607 \$7.98, © 5-9607 \$7.98.

Performance: **Solid**
Recording: **Fine**

Sylvester's familiar falsetto gives both urgency and gentleness to the gospel-touched love song *Can't Forget the Love* and Smokey Robinson's *Ooo Baby Baby*. But on this album Sylvester reveals that he can do an equally solid job with his chest voice, as in a fun ballad with a Forties setting called *Thinking Right*.

That's only part of the good news about "Too Hot to Sleep." The title song alone radically upgrades my assessment of Sylvester as a vocalist, while the album as a whole reinforces my respect for him as an arranger/producer. Sylvester was an innovator in disco. Now he has moved on. This album's r-&-b selections are well thought out, appropriately set, impeccably balanced, with a vibrancy that gives them the impact of a live performance. *Give It Up* throbs with power, and the joyous *Can't You See* is a show-stopper. Kudos, by the way, to the well-used, hard-working backup vocalists. I.C.

BRAM TCHAIKOVSKY: *Funland*. Bram Tchaikovsky (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *Stand and Deliver; Shall We Dance?; Heart of Stone; Model Girl; Soul Surrender; Miracle Cure*; and five others. ARISTA AB 4292 \$8.98, © ACT 4292 \$8.98, © A8T 4292 \$8.98.

Performance: **Mostly good**
Recording: **Good**

Listening to this album, I couldn't figure where Bram Tchaikovsky's constituency lies (or jumps up and down). When you encounter someone with a gimmick for a name, you expect some sort of clowning or irony, but this album would have been at

home during the progressive-rock heyday of 1968. It wouldn't have been considered heavy, but parts of it would have qualified for play on FM radio stations with soft-talking jocks. Yet I don't think many of the actual people left over from that period are still looking for that kind of sound. The more modern references—the first three songs on side two—could also be taken as references to the old Who, especially in the case of *Why Does My Mother Phone Me?* The thing reminds me of an adult cereal packaged for kids—say, Product 19 behind Frankenberry graphics. Parts of it aren't bad, if you don't mind revisiting some old formulas. N.C.

ROBIN TROWER: *B.L.T.* Robin Trower (guitar); Jack Bruce (vocals, bass); Bill Lordan (drums). *Into Money; What It Is; Won't Let You Down; No Island Lost; It's Too Late; Life on Earth*; and four others. CHRYSALIS CHR 1324 \$8.98, © CCH 1324 \$8.98, © 8CH 1324 \$8.98.

Performance: **Too much lettuce**
Recording: **Very good**

The bacon-lettuce-and-tomato sandwich featured in full color on the front and back covers of this is all *wrong*. Anyone who lives by the sandwich knows you don't make a BLT with rye bread, as the photos indicate. The bread isn't toasted, another mistake, and there's way too much lettuce in there and it's still wet. But the worst is that the bacon looks dangerously undercooked. Yuck. In addition to tasting icky, it could give you worms or something. I know you can't judge a record by its cover, yet anyone who can't get a BLT sandwich right ... well.

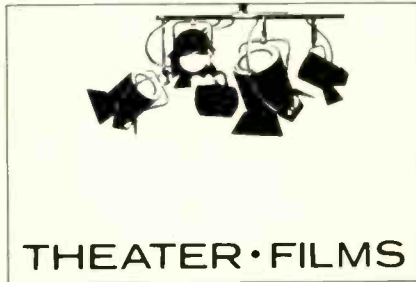
I find a similar lack of crispness in the way the music is cooked up. Jack Bruce sounds good enough, back in this Cream-style trio after his adventures in near-jazz, but aside from *Carmen* and *End Game*, the songs aren't very interesting. Bruce, who is an authoritative singer, makes you respect some of them without really liking them. Robin Trower, of course, is used to playing—or appearing to play—both rhythm and lead guitar at the same time, a must in trios, but he's in love with feedback. Where Eric Clapton (and some bluesmen before him) managed to sound dirty, Trower just sounds scratchy. The album's fairly honest and straightforward, though, and I could stand another round of this trio with some tunes. And a decent sandwich. N.C.

WANDA WALDEN: *Searchin' for Love*. Wanda Walden (vocals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Wanna Love You Tonight; Holdin' On; Take Your Heart; Lost and Found; Don't You Want My Lovin'*; and three others. ELEKTRA 6E-338 \$7.98, © TC5-338 \$7.98.

Performance: **Routine at best**
Recording: **Beautiful**

Wanda Walden and her brother-in-law, producer-arranger-songwriter-singer Narada Michael Walden, team up on this album's title song, and though they try a little too hard to sound like Olivia Newton-John and Andy Gibb, the harmonies click and the song works. Yet, as I played through the seven other tracks on this very well recorded disc, I found myself more interested in the

arrangements than the songs or the singer. Ms. Walden has a warm but undistinctive voice, and most of the songs have weak melodies and cliché lyrics. But the vigorous arrangements are extremely sensitive to the singer's needs. The big, fruity back-up chords impressively support the vocal in *Lost and Found*, there's a surprisingly effective flute obbligato in *Don't You Want My Lovin'*, and *Just to Love You* has a good saxophone solo by Marc Russo. The dance-tempo *Holdin' On* manages to be both danceable and listenable. It's all slick and contemporary, but not memorable. **I.C.**



THEATER • FILMS

LOVESONG (Michael Valenti). Original-cast recording. Melanie Chartoff, Sigrid Heath, Robert Manzari, Jess Richards (vocals); orchestra, Michael Valenti cond. ORIGINAL CAST OC 8022 \$8.95 (plus \$1 postage and handling from Broadway/Hollywood Recordings, P.O. Box 496, Georgetown, Conn. 06829).

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

The latest prize from the forgotten-musicals vault is *Lovesong*, a 1976 off-Broadway "musical entertainment" by Michael Valenti, who also wrote the musical *Blood Red Roses* (its title song is included here) and incidental music for a number of plays. It is a collection of settings of love lyrics by great poets from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries. The selections are beyond cavil: Sir Walter Raleigh's *What Is Love*, Christina Rossetti's *A Birthday*, Anne Bradstreet's *To My Dear and Loving Husband*, and others by Lord Byron, A. E. Housman, Robert Herrick, Thomas Hood, Richard Brinsley Sheridan, that prolific author Anonymous, and more. Valenti's music is more problematical. When he takes the moving stanzas of James Agee's *Open All Night* and fits them to contemporary rhythms and a haunting nocturnal melodic figure, the results are touching, but when he tries to marry Herrick, Rossetti, or Raleigh to music that sounds like Kurt Weill on an off day, the effect is jarring.

Lovesong does have its moments: Peter Motteaux's *Man for Woman Made* makes a charming roundelay, the bitterly antiwar *Blood Red Roses* is penetratingly sere, the rock finale to Richard Crashaw's *An Epitaph* works better than I dared hope. And the four singers are versatile and skillful. But Valenti's range, though considerable, is not equal to the task he set himself. **P.K.**

WOMAN OF THE YEAR (see *Best of the Month*, page 82)

(Continued overleaf)

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ERNESTINE ANDERSON: *Never Make Your Move Too Soon*. Ernestine Anderson (vocals); Monty Alexander (piano); Ray Brown (bass); Frank Gant (drums). *As Long As I Live; Poor Butterfly; Old Folks; What a Difference a Day Made*; and four others. CONCORD JAZZ CJ-147 \$8.95.

Performance: **Andersonian grace**
Recording: **Excellent**

Ernestine Anderson handles a song as if Sarah Vaughan had just tossed it her way with instructions to be gentle. Her robust voice, never strained or affected, hugs a lyric lovingly, then sends it out with a precision that could make more widely heralded singers weep with envy. And if you can stay still through "Never Make Your Move Too Soon," you have more body control than I do. Not that this is a finger-popping set that will send you gyrating across the room—though two or three of these tracks just might do that—but if you are not moved to a mild stomp by the more rhythmic selections, you are bound to find yourself swaying ever so gently to Anderson's ballad artistry on such numbers as *Why Did I Choose You?* and *Old Folks*.

The accompaniment by Monty Alexander, Ray Brown, and Frank Gant is flawless; the recording is excellent. It all adds up to a lot more than \$8.98. C.A.

TERESA BREWER: *A Sophisticated Lady*. Teresa Brewer (vocals); Shelly Manne and

His Men (instrumentals). *Don't Get Around Much Anymore; Solitude; Come Sunday; Duke's Place; It Don't Mean a Thing if It Ain't Got That Swing*; and four others. COLUMBIA FC 37363, © FCT 37363, no list price.

Performance: **Smooth**
Recording: **Could be better**

More than thirty years have passed since Teresa Brewer's novelty hit *Music, Music, Music* secured her a place in the history of America's popular music. She has enjoyed much success since then, but it has been difficult for her to shed the image of a squeaky teenage heart-throb. Sure, everybody knows she isn't one any longer, but there is a tendency to shrug off her attempts to cross musical borders. I was cured of such prejudice a few years back when—accompanied by the Count Basie band—Brewer made an album of Bessie Smith songs. Teresa Brewer singing Bessie Smith? The juxtaposition appealed to my sense of humor, so you can imagine my surprise when the record actually appealed to my musical sense. Brewer sang Bessie Smith's songs in her own way, and it worked. So, too, does her handling of eight Duke Ellington songs on "A Sophisticated Lady," a release clearly designed to take advantage of the success currently being enjoyed by a certain Broadway musical.

Brewer's voice has matured over the years, though it has not changed character; she still sounds essentially like the Teresa Brewer some of us remember from the days of chaperoned bobbysoxers and campus panty-raids. What has changed is the material and Brewer's style: she seems quite comfortable in a jazz milieu and has clearly listened to a lot of it, which is not at all surprising when you consider that she is married to Bob Thiele, a veteran jazz record producer. He is credited with producing this album as well as the Bessie Smith tribute.

Greatly enhanced by the presence of Benny Carter's alto saxophone (which carries the set's only instrumental, *Sophisticated Lady*), Shelly Manne's quintet does a commendable job of accompaniment, but I

wish trumpeter Oscar Brashear had not been recorded with so much echo—it sounds as if they stuck him in the bathroom. "A Sophisticated Lady" is not the year's greatest tribute to Ellington, but it is a worthy one. I have heard so-called jazz singers do a far less creditable job. C.A.

GARY BURTON: *Easy As Pie*. Gary Burton (vibraphone); Jim Odgren (alto saxophone); Steve Swallow (bass); Mike Hyman (drums). *Reactionary Tango; Tweek; Isfahan*; and three others. ECM ECM-1-1184 \$8.98, © MSE-1184 \$8.98.

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

The alliance of vibraphonist Gary Burton and ECM, the pioneering German label, continues to be a productive one. "Easy As Pie" features a quartet with Steve Swallow, a consistently gratifying bassist, and two players who are new to me—at least I don't recall having heard saxophonist Jim Odgren and drummer Mike Hyman before, but I may have, for neither exhibits a particularly memorable or individual style. They are, however, quite effective within the context of Burton's group, playing a clinical sort of jazz that, while skillfully executed and quite pleasant, lacks warmth. I don't mean this as a total put-down, but jazz this aloof is rather like a glass of water: there are times when it quenches a thirst, but it is rarely wholly satisfying, and even an inexpensive wine is often preferable. I would like to hear Burton, whose playing I greatly admire, with a saxophonist who doesn't sound like he is playing kazoo. This set is just too calculated. C.A.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

RON CARTER: *Patrão*. Ron Carter (bass); Chet Baker (trumpet); Kenny Barron (piano); Jack DeJohnette (drums); Nana Vasconcelos (percussion); other musicians. *Ah, Rio; Nearly; Yours Truly*; and two others. MILESTONE M-9099 \$7.98.

Performance: **Slightly Latin**
Recording: **Very good**

Bassist Ron Carter is one of the most reliable players around. That is to say, his music is consistently interesting and substantial; he cares about his albums—which he produces himself—and never ceases to explore new avenues. Add to that his phenomenal skill as a bassist, and you have an artist whose records are invariably worth listening to.

"Patrão" contains five selections, two of which feature a Latin-flavored septet with guitarists Amaury Tristao and Aloisio Aguiar and the superb percussionist Nana Vasconcelos (whom we know from several ECM releases with Egberto Gismonti). On the remaining three we hear a more conventional quartet with Jack DeJohnette, Kenny Barron, and Chet Baker, but there is nothing conventional about the music. Baker and Barron ought to be heard together more often; their rapport is particularly striking on the very beautiful *Yours Truly*, which, like all the rest, was written by Carter. Baker also appears in the septet; his playing is at times reminiscent of the early, muted Miles Davis, at other times recalling his

(Continued on page 122)

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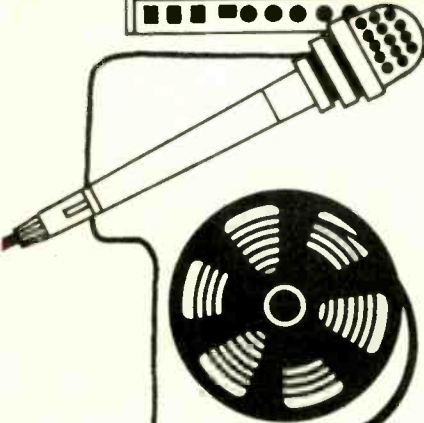
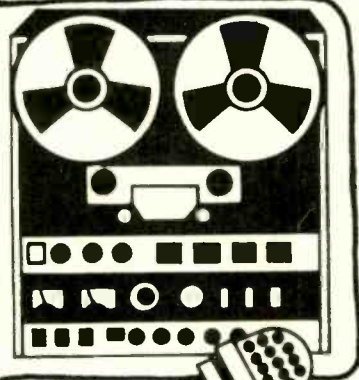


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own work on the classic pianoless quartet sides of nearly three decades ago.

It should come as no surprise to Carter fans that the highlight of this album is the leader's own playing. It is a source of constant amazement to me how Ron Carter handles his bass, the seeming ease with which he bends, twists, and wraps fat, rich notes around his melodies while never missing a beat. Chalk up another win for Ron Carter. *C.A.*

BOB COOPER AND THE MIKE WOFFORD TRIO: *The Music of Michel Legrand.* Bob Cooper (saxophone); Mike Wofford (piano); Jim Plank (drums, percussion); Tom Azarello (bass). *To Love; Her Hair; Watch What Happens; Siren Song;* and four others. DISCOVERY DS-822 \$8.98.

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

This is a pleasant tribute to the soft-spoken talent of Michel Legrand. The saxophone has always figured prominently in Legrand's arrangements, and Bob Cooper's playing is technically and stylistically faithful to the sentimental, slightly too-sweet material. What's always made Legrand's music a bit special to me is his ability to suggest musically what I guess everyone's adolescent reveries were like—sugary fantasies long on hearts and flowers, short on logic and substance. However, eight tracks of swooning saxophones and swooping melodies proved a bit more than my ear could stomach. And this is only Volume 1 of a projected series. *P.R.*

AL DiMEOLA/JOHN McLAUGHLIN/PACO DELUCIA: *Friday Night in San Francisco.* Al DiMeola, John McLaughlin, Paco DeLucia (guitars). *Mediterranean Sundance/Rio Ancho; Short Tales of the Black Forest; Frevo Rasgado;* and two others. COLUMBIA FC 37152, © FCT 37152, no list price.

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

Gentle readers and listeners are hereby advised that this album consists of forty minutes and seventeen seconds of three whiz guitarists apparently trying to determine which of them can play the fastest flamenco run. So intent are they on displaying their virtuosity that not one moment of real emotion is allowed; with all the dazzling zip, the result is sterility. Not that the audience minded—the Pavlovian cheers and screams from the good folk gathered at the Warfield Theatre in San Francisco are a perfect match for the musicians. I'm sure that the ticket buyers and the entertainers alike had an inspirational evening of showing off their conditioned reflexes. *J.V.*

TAL FARLOW: *Trilogy.* Tal Farlow (guitar); Mike Nock (piano); Lynn Christie (bass). *My Shining Hour; Flamingo; There Is No Greater Love; Angel Eyes; But Not for Me;* and four others. INNER CITY IC 1099 \$8.98, © TIC 1099 \$8.98.

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

Guitarist Tal Farlow first made his mark on the professional music scene in the late For-

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ties when he became one of 52nd Street's many bopping, swinging denizens. The jazz world perked up its ears when it heard him in the Red Norvo Trio, sharing original ideas with bassist Charles Mingus. Today—back on the scene with some regularity after two decades of semiretirement—Farlow is as strong and lucid an improviser as ever. "Trilogy" offers a good demonstration of his current style, although it is not a new recording. It was made in 1976 for the Japanese market, as are so many of the sessions released here on Inner City.

Except for *Funk Among the Keys*, this is a trio session with pianist Mike Nock and bassist Lynn Christie. These three men play with a rapport that brings to mind the work of the late, lamented Modern Jazz Quartet. The odd track adds drummer Bob Jaspé and features Farlow with uncharacteristic electronic "enhancements." It is the set's only Farlow original, a sort of heavy stomp through ripples of Miles Davis' bitch's brew. That's not surprising, for the album's producer is Teo Macero, the man who helped shape the rejuvenated and at times slightly juvenile sound of Miles Davis in the Flower Age. But so what if *Funk Among the Keys* is not up to Farlow's standard? When the rest of the album is so fine, one tiny indiscretion is forgivable. **C.A.**

W. C. HANDY: *Father of the Blues.* W. C. Handy (vocals, guitar, trumpet); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Joe Turner; Mr. Crump; Way Down South Where the Blues Began; Beale Street Blues; St. Louis Blues;* and three others. DRG © SL 5192 \$7.98, © SLC 5192 \$7.98.

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

By the time these recordings were made in 1952 and 1953, W. C. Handy had entered into his twenty-fifth year as a respected public figure. In 1938 he had published his autobiography, *Father of the Blues*, and he had been interviewed on the *Believe It or Not* radio program as "the inventor of jazz." In the years since his death in 1958 he has been both hailed as a saint and gently debunked.

In truth, Handy was neither the father of the blues nor the inventor of jazz, but a well-trained, talented, and determined popular-song writer. He might have been much happier as a black Irving Berlin or Jerome Kern or if he had written a waltz like *After the Ball* or a march to equal Sousa's *The Stars and Stripes Forever*. He was very much a contributor to, and a product of, the Tin Pan Alley genre of the early 1900s, and perhaps the worst thing that ever happened to him was his success as a "blues" composer; it frustrated him for the rest of his life.

Nothing so well typifies Handy's musical ideas and period as *The Big Stick Blues*, which he sings on this album. Written around 1948 (there are references to Harry Truman's civil-rights bill and the two world wars), it was an outgrowth of a triumphal march he wrote in 1904 in honor of Theodore Roosevelt. While it is charming and naively bellicose, musically it is firmly rooted in the turn-of-the-century style.

Some of the statements Handy makes in the spoken tracks on this album are ludicrous to modern ears. He describes the ragtime era as "syncopation without much

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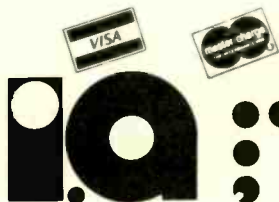
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Grappelli/Grisman

THE high point of many David Grisman Quintet concerts these days is the segment in which the group plays together with jazz violinist Stéphane Grappelli, and a new live recording from Warner Bros. captures some of that magic. Perhaps it took a whole quintet to succeed Django Reinhardt as Grappelli's partner, but they're getting the job done and then some. Grappelli introduces *Tiger Rag* here as the first composition he played with Reinhardt, back in 1934, then lapses into a mild coughing fit; recovering, he says, "When I remember how tough 1934 was, eet make me cough." The tune has been rearranged for a second violin, played by the quintet's Mark O'Connor. All of the other selections are familiar too except for a medley of three Grisman compositions at the end that show a Klezmer/gypsy feel for minor chords, thus evoking an Eastern European atmosphere. Seems appropriate in that it rounds out the violin statement, which, of course, is featured.

Grisman plays second soloist, but the others in his fine group aren't relegated to playing only rhythm: besides the fiddling, O'Connor gets a couple of guitar breaks in

Misty and *Sweet Georgia Brown*, Mike Marshall gets a mandolin break, and Rob Wasserman plays just about perfect bass throughout. O'Connor is an excellent violinist and an incredible guitar player, and at an age so young it's obscene. Grappelli plays, as always, with robust verve. His tone is as sweet as it is unmistakable, but there's nothing tentative about it, and if he's lost anything over the years, he must have been absolutely awesome when he was younger. He and the quintet complement each other just about as well as I can imagine. Not many living legends have a setting so close to the ideal.

—Noel Coppage

STÉPHANE GRAPPELLI/DAVID GRISMAN: *Live*. Stéphane Grappelli (violin); David Grisman (mandolin); Mike Marshall (mandolin, guitar); Mark O'Connor (guitar, violin); Rob Wasserman (bass); Tiny Moore (electric mandolin). *Shine; Pent-Up House; Misty; Sweet Georgia Brown; Tiger Rag; Satin Doll; Swing '42; Tzigani/Fisztorza/Fulginiti*. WARNER BROS. BSK 3550 \$7.98, © M5 3550 \$7.98.

melody" and recalls a childhood trip to Mississippi where he "heard the crude singing of the Negro." Despite his recurring composity, Handy's narration (like his singing) is quite entertaining and warm, and the facts seem less important than the mood. Whether or not his tales of how he came to write *St. Louis Blues* and *Memphis Blues* are strictly accurate, they are wonderful stories. The man was gutsy, as he needed to be to start a music publishing company to compete with the New York houses in the early 1900s, and his two attacks of blindness (the second one permanent) didn't slow him down at all. Even if the honorary titles assigned him were inaccurate, even if some of his claims are invalid, and even if he was more of an entrepreneur than a creator, it is not his fault that the world praised him for the wrong reasons. This valuable record is not an accurate documentary, but it is certainly a most revealing portrait of an intriguing personality.

J.V.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

ALBERTA HUNTER: *The London Sessions—1934*. Alberta Hunter (vocals); Jack Jackson and His Orchestra. *Two Cigarettes in the Dark; What Shall I Do?; Soon; Where the Mountains Meet the Sea; A Lonely Singing Fool; Long May We Love*; and five others. DRG © SL 5195 \$7.98.

Performance: **Stunningly styled**
Recording: **Good remastering**

Back in 1934, at the same time Josephine Baker was knocking them out in Paris, another beautiful black singer, Alberta Hunter, was in London appearing at the Dorchester with Jack Jackson's orchestra, bending the ballads of the moment to her will and leaving the customers breathless with admiration. After her debut at a Chicago bordello in 1908, Hunter sang with Louis Armstrong, Sidney Bechet, and Fats Waller. In 1925 she went to Europe for a

vacation and wound up singing in clubs in Paris and Monte Carlo, then on the London stage with Paul Robeson in *Show Boat*. The eleven numbers in this album were culled from her later London appearances, by which time the microphone was a common fixture on pop stages; its use enabled Hunter to make her style (her singing is really the epitome of that word) even more intimate than it had been.

Most of the time here she has no trouble making each song her own, whether it's the wistful *Two Cigarettes in the Dark*, the haunting *Be Still My Heart*, or Noël Coward's melancholy *I Travel Alone*. But when it comes to the special kind of humor of Cole Porter's *Miss Otis Regrets*, she's no match for Ethel Waters. Despite that lapse, as a souvenir of a legendary performer in a legendary time (the back cover shows Hunter in London with her chums Bricktop, Mabel Mercer, and Woolworth heir Jimmy Donahue), this is a welcome release. *P.K.*

ETTA JONES: *Save Your Love for Me*. Etta Jones (vocals); Houston Person (tenor saxophone); Cedar Walton (piano); George Duvivier (bass); other musicians. *Georgia on My Mind; East of the Sun; Let's Beat Out Some Love; The Man That Got Away*; and four others. MUSE MR 5214 \$7.98.

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

Female jazz vocalists probably enjoyed their greatest popularity in the late Fifties and early Sixties, when the likes of Dakota Staton, Lorez Alexandria, and Nancy Wilson became regular voices on the FM band along with such predecessors as Peggy Lee, Dinah Washington, and June Christy. If I left out your favorite, forgive me—there were so many of them in those days, weaving in and out of styles evolved from the foundations laid by Bessie Smith, Louis Armstrong, Billie Holiday, and others.

Having come along in the mid-Forties, Etta Jones was no newcomer in those later days, but she did enjoy a comeback of sorts with *Don't Go to Strangers*, a 1960 Prestige hit. It has not exactly been all peaches and cream for her since then, but she has stuck to the style prevalent twenty years ago and is still a master of it. "Save Your Love for Me" is Jones' fourth album for Muse, and again she is accompanied by a group under the leadership of tenor saxophonist Houston Person. The result is most pleasing to the ears; the voice is still strong and authoritative, the accompaniment (with Cedar Walton's piano) is impeccable, and the program is familiar without being trite. Could one ask for more? Yes, but chances of getting it these days are slim.

C.A.

CHUCK MANGIONE: *Tarantella*. Chuck Mangione (flugelhorn, electric piano); Dizzy Gillespie (trumpet, jew's harp); Chick Corea (acoustic and electric pianos, trumpet, percussion); other musicians. *Tarantellas; The XIth Commandment Suite; Bel-lavia; Manteca; All Blues*; and six others. A&M SP-6513 two discs \$11.98, © CS-6713 \$11.98, © 8T-6713 \$11.98.

Performance: **For fans**
Recording: **Good**

This two-disc set contains selections from Chuck Mangione's benefit concert in Roch-

ester for the victims of the recent Italian earthquakes and from an eight-hour jam session that immediately followed it. Despite the presence of such stars as Dizzy Gillespie, Chick Corea, Charles Meeks, and others, there just isn't enough musical substance or inventiveness displayed here to sustain interest through four very long sides. Mangione provides some solid entertainment, notably in *Tarantellas* and *Legend of the One-Eyed Sailor*, but much of the rest is more of a reflection of a dominant performing personality and bottomless energy than of real music making. P.R.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

MARIAN McPARTLAND/TEDDI KING: *Marian Remembers Teddi.* Marian McPartland (piano); Teddi King (vocals); Rusty Gilder (bass); Eric Nebbia (drums). *A Fine Romance; Sometimes I'm Happy; Skylark; While We're Young; By Myself; Baby, Won't You Please Come Home; Always; But Not for Me; Little Girl Blue;* and eight others. HALCYON HAL 118 two discs \$10.98 (from Halcyon Records, P.O. Box 256, Merrick, N.Y. 11566).

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

"Marian Remembers Teddi" is a recording of an absolutely marvelous concert by Marian McPartland and the late Teddi King at the New York Public Library in 1973. The concert was intended "to create an aural supplement to Alec Wilder's landmark book, *American Popular Song*," but it stands very well on its own as a pop-jazz classic. That it is also a master class for aspiring instrumentalists or vocalists in how to combine nonchalance, style, and musicianship is a not-so-incidental plus.

As she always did, Teddi King here illuminates everything she touches with her magical technique and voice. McPartland's piano seems at times a bit straightforward and pedestrian in supporting the elegant, blithe-spirited King approach, but that's about my only complaint. For the time capsule: a performance of Cole Porter's *In the Still of the Night* that pulses with restlessness and desire and one of *While We're Young* that shimmers with the fleeting but lovely light of fireflies drifting in a summer night. Simply beautiful. P.R.






RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

JAY McSHANN: *Tuxedo Junction.* Jay McShann (piano); Don Thompson (bass). *Tuxedo Junction; One Sided Love; Robbins Nest; Froggy Bottom; Gee, Baby, Ain't I Good to You;* and two others. SACKVILLE 3025 \$7.98 (plus \$1 postage and handling charge from Sackville Recordings, P.O. Box 87, Station J, Toronto, Ontario M4J 4X8, Canada).

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

Jay McShann's robust Kansas City keyboard style is entirely to my liking. His choice of material is wide-ranging and sophisticated, and he goes at the tunes with hearty appetite and infectious *bonhomie*. It's great fun to hear him casually but confidently display his close to fifty years' experience. He's joined on this set by bassist

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RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

ANNE MARIE MOSS: *Don't You Know Me?* Anne Marie Moss (vocals); Mike Renzi, Jim McNeely (piano); Bob Zottola (trumpet, flugelhorn); Jerry Dodgion (flute, tenor saxophone); Eddie Gomez (bass); Randy Jones (drums); other musicians. *My Romance; Baltimore Oriole; Corner of the Sky; I'm Old Fashioned; How Long Has This Been Going On?* and three others. STASH ST 211 \$7.98.

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

Anne Marie Moss is a Canadian who first came to the United States as a vocalist with the Maynard Ferguson band. She and her husband, singer Jackie Paris, formed a duo that appeared widely on the club circuit throughout the Sixties, and Anne Marie did a brief stint as part of Lambert, Hendricks, and Moss. But in the Seventies the sound of disco drowned out almost everything else, and the clubs where Moss could be heard became smaller and more remote.

Moss has her loyal followers, though, and there are bound to be more of them now that she has made her first recording. She has an arrestingly attractive voice, and, though she remains true to the mood and melody of every song she sings, she performs amazing feats of improvisation, twisting and turning a line with extraordinary art and bringing to everything here—Mercer and Kern, Rodgers and Hart, the Gershwins—a contagious, almost timeless fervor. The album's program, in which everything has been arranged especially for Moss by Hale Rood and Carlos Franzetti, harks back to the past without apology. Moss sings *I'm Old Fashioned* with particular conviction, yet one could hardly call her dated. She seems rather to belong to a future when much of the noise of this moment will have died down and the melody will linger on. P.K.

ART PEPPER: *Winter Moon.* Art Pepper (clarinet, alto saxophone); Stanley Cowell (piano); Howard Roberts (guitar); Cecil McBee (bass); Carl Burnett (drums); other musicians. *Here's That Rainy Day; Our Song; Blues in the Night; When the Sun Comes Out;* and three others. GALAXY GXY-5140 \$7.98.

Performance: **Not up to snuff**
Recording: **Good**

Art Pepper's alto saxophone becomes slightly quarrelsome on *That's Love*—a blues of his own making—and he has brief moments of hysteria on *When the Sun Comes Out* and *The Prisoner*, but mostly this reed-and-strings set consists of harmonious statements on familiar themes. The

unmelodious outbursts notwithstanding, "Winter Moon" is an album that could have been made in the late Fifties. Stanley Cowell heads the rhythm section, which also contains the fine talent of Cecil McBee, but they play too subordinate a role. While the album is pleasant enough, it has a blandness about it that belies the high level of musicianship present. C.A.

LEE RITENOUR: *Rit.* Lee Ritenour (vocals, guitar); instrumental accompaniment. *Mr. Briefcase; No Sympathy; Countdown (Captain Fingers); On the Slow Glide;* and five others. ELEKTRA 6E-331 \$7.98, © TCS-331 \$7.98, © ET8-331 \$7.98.

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

Some years ago Lee Ritenour made at least one album in which he tried very hard to demonstrate his jazz chops. Now he has taken to "fusion," and judging by this new album, it would be hard to tell that he'd ever had much interest in jazz. Ritenour has been blessed with excellent technique as a guitarist, but he lacks ideas. The "Rit" material he wrote with Eric Tagg is throwaway stuff, and his vocals infringe on Stevie Wonder's patents. I suspect that Ritenour is looking for an ingratiating sound that will ease him into the big time à la George Benson, but right now he sounds like a fancy lounge act on the Los Angeles steakhouse circuit. J.V.

BILLY TAYLOR: *Where've You Been?* Billy Taylor (piano); Joe Kennedy (violin); Victor Gaskin (bass); Keith Copeland (drums). *All Alone; Capricious; Antoinette; Ray's Tune;* and four others. CONCORD JAZZ CJ-145 \$8.95.

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

Pianist Billy Taylor's new Concord album, "Where've You Been?", reminds me of the very first recordings I heard by him. They were made by the late Timme Rosenkrantz at a 1947 Town Hall concert in New York and featured Taylor as a sideman in a trio led by violinist Stuff Smith. Joe Kennedy, whose violin is a prominent fourth of the Billy Taylor quartet heard here, plays in a style that recalls the late Mr. Smith, especially on such uptempo numbers as the title tune and *All Alone*.

Taylor's piano is, as usual, impeccable, and one can only hope that Joe Kennedy—who makes his living as supervisor of music for the Richmond, Virginia, public school system—will step into the limelight more often. C.A.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

CLARK TERRY: *Yes, the Blues.* Clark Terry (trumpet, vocals); Eddie "Cleanhead" Vinson (alto saxophone, vocals); Art Hilleary (piano, organ); other musicians. *Railroad Porter Blues; Kidney Stew; Swingin' the Blues;* and four others. PABLO TODAY D2312127 \$11.98, © K12127 \$11.98.

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

Clark Terry and Eddie "Cleanhead" Vinson have more in common than just being
(Continued on page 129)

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respected jazz players: both are excellent instrumentalists, both deliver a vocal with more humor and better timing than most stand-up comedians, and both speak the blues as a second language. All these virtues are displayed on this Pablo session from last January, a first-class romp through timeless material with an excellent supporting cast that includes bassist John Heard and drummer Roy McCurdy, and with "Harmonica George" Smith giving the whole thing a more down-home flavor. I dare you to find a flaw—even the notes (by Gary Giddins) are intelligent and informative. C.A.

SARAH VAUGHAN: *Songs of the Beatles.* Sarah Vaughan (vocals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Get Back; And I Love Her; Eleanor Rigby; Fool on the Hill; You Never Give Me Your Money; Come Together; Blackbird;* and six others. ATLANTIC SD 16037 \$7.98, © CS 16037 \$7.98, © TP 16037 \$7.98.

Performance: **Surprisingly apt**
Recording: **Excellent**

Sarah Vaughan is so much Sarah Vaughan that I expected her to Vaughanise the Beatles the same as she has the music of most other popular composers. I had not reckoned with the strong personalities of the songs themselves, all by John Lennon and Paul McCartney except *Something*, which is by George Harrison. Try as she will, Vaughan cannot make *And I Love Her* or *Yesterday* or the hardy *Hey Jude* lie down at her command; they have taken her over instead, with generally salutary results. However, when it comes to the tale of poor jilted *Eleanor Rigby* and all the lonely people, Vaughanizing works. Vaughan's treatments are backed by a staggering lineup—guitars, keyboards, bass, drums, percussion, harmonica, tenor sax, and strings, plus three other vocalists in the background. P.K.

LESTER YOUNG: *In Washington, D.C., 1956, Vol. III.* Lester Young (tenor saxophone); Bill Potts (piano); Norman Williams (bass); Jim Lucht (drums). *Up 'n Adam; Sometimes I'm Happy; There'll Never Be Another You;* and three others. PABLO LIVE 2308-228 \$9.98, © K08-228 \$9.98.

Performance: **Salvaged gems**
Recording: **Surprisingly good**

This is the third volume of recordings made by Lester Young during a six-night engagement at Olivia Davis' Patio Lounge in Washington, D.C., in December 1956. I don't know how it compares with the second volume, which I haven't heard, but it fully measures up to the first, which I praised in these pages quite a while back.

Young breezes through familiar material, shaping it in his own way as usual, and the trio that breezes along with him does a commendable job of keeping up with what to them was an "old-timer." Actually, Lester Young was only forty-seven at the time, but a life in jazz has a way of taking its toll early, and the rapid development of the music also tends to make a couple of decades seem like a lifetime. Young lived only another two years and three months after this session, which makes these gems all the more precious. C.A.

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Charles Stewart

Willie "The Lion" Smith

WILLIE "THE LION" SMITH was one of the three major Harlem "stride"-style pianists, the other two being Fats Waller and James P. Johnson. Smith seldom ventured into the recording studio during his prime; one notable exception was a January 10, 1939, solo session for Milt Gabler's independent Commodore label. Commodore has now rereleased those tracks, and I must agree with Len Lyons, the annotator of the album, that they represent Smith at his best.

Side one is a collection of originals written between 1934 and 1939. Smith's sense of harmonic variations was advanced, as were Waller's and Johnson's, but on *Morning Air* some of the chording and the attack are reminiscent of Jelly Roll Morton, whom the striders usually derided as old-fashioned. Smith, like Waller, also occasionally flirted with (or rather paraphrased) some boogie-woogie patterns, even though they normally looked down on the form. Smith's compositions are quite inventive, often delicate, but always sturdy and a treat to hear. Side two contains six popular ballads that Smith decorates tastefully, especially *I'll Follow You*. It's interesting to see that Fats Waller's *Squeeze Me* is listed here by its original title, *The Boy in the Boat* (the original lyrics, by Waller and Spencer Williams, were "cleaned up" by publisher Clarence Williams).

The reissue even includes a bonus. In November 1938, two months before the solo session, Smith played celeste on *Three Keyboards* with Jess Stacy and Joe Bushkin on piano and George Wettling on drums; *The Lion and the Lamb* from the same session teams Smith on piano with Bushkin and Wettling. These were "novelty" items of the kind occasionally attempted for the sheer hell of it, and if neither track is substantial, at least no harm was done. But the solo performances are the definitive Smith, and this album, together with Johnson's "Father of the Stride Piano" (Columbia CL 1780) and Waller's "Piano Solos 1929-1941" (RCA Bluebird AXM2-5518), is indispensable for anyone who wants to hear the exquisite essence of the stride style. —Joel Vance

WILLIE "THE LION" SMITH: *The Original 14 Plus Two, 1938-1939*. Willie "The Lion" Smith (piano). *Morning Air*; *Echoes of Spring*; *Concentrating*; *Fading Star*; *Passionette*; *Rippling Waters*; *Sneakaway*; *Finger Buster*; *What Is There to Say*; *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*; *The Boy in the Boat*; *Tea for Two*; *I'll Follow You*; *Stormy Weather*. Willie "The Lion" Smith (piano, celeste); Jess Stacy, Joe Bushkin (piano); George Wettling (drums). *Three Keyboards*; *The Lion and the Lamb*. COMMODORE Ⓜ XFL 15775 \$8.98.

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