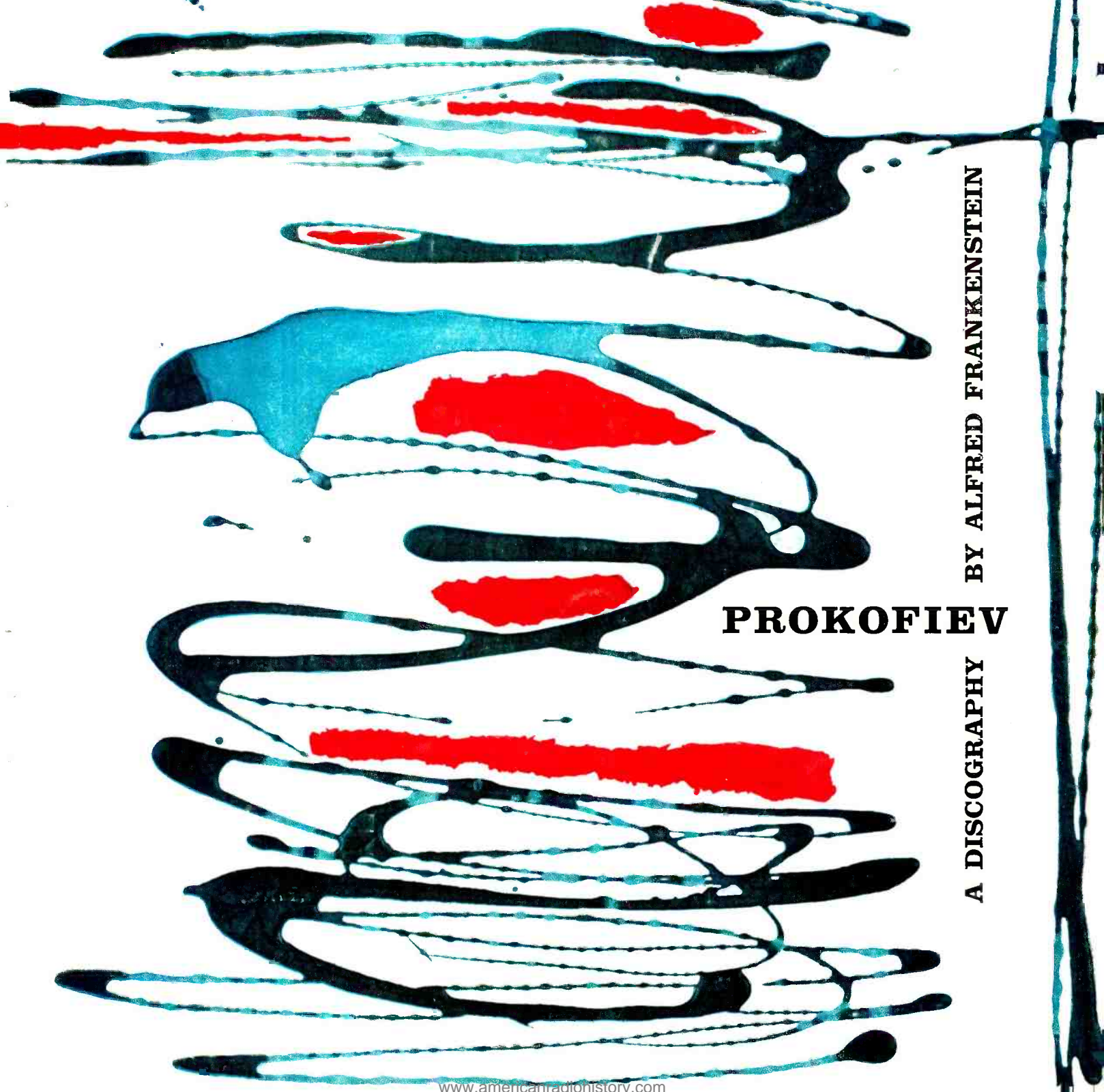


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High Fidelity

MARCH • 60 CENTS



BY ALFRED FRANKENSTEIN

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A DISCOGRAPHY



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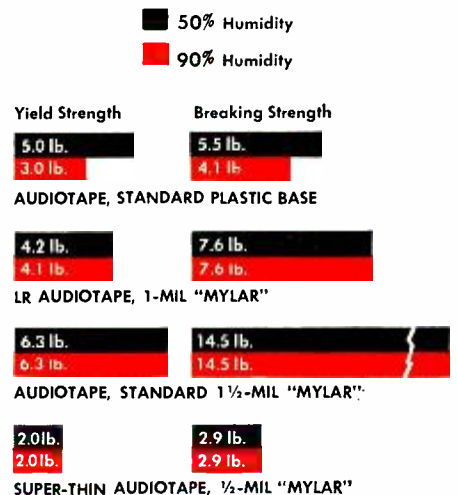
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THE MAGAZINE FOR MUSIC LISTENERS

The Cover. This month's discography, by Alfred Frankenstein, features the music of the clever and controversial Russian, Serge Prokofiev, and is appropriately presented under a clever (if hardly controversial) cover by Richard M. Powers. His equally clever and even less controversial Bach cover for the September issue, incidentally, was so well received in certain important quarters that Mr. Powers now is under contract to produce a series of jacket designs for Music Appreciation Records, the disk series of The Book-of-the-Month Club.

This Issue. Everyone has something to complain about, or nearly everyone. Berlioz complains about the lack of choral facilities in France, while lauding those of England. Eric Bentley complains, in effect, that Shakespeare got too many characters into his historical plays to make them ideal phonographic material. Gordon Holt complains about loudspeaker makers who make for us the choice of whether we'd rather have the concert hall in our living rooms or vice versa. George Jellinek complains that artistic rectitude in the opera house threatens to drive the glamor out of singing, a mournful prospect if ever we heard of one. In fact, the only unmitigatedly happy note in the issue seems to come from William Weaver, as well it should. Nothing to do except ramble around sunny Italy and listen to the *contadini* whistling Vivaldi, that's *his* situation. No further comment.

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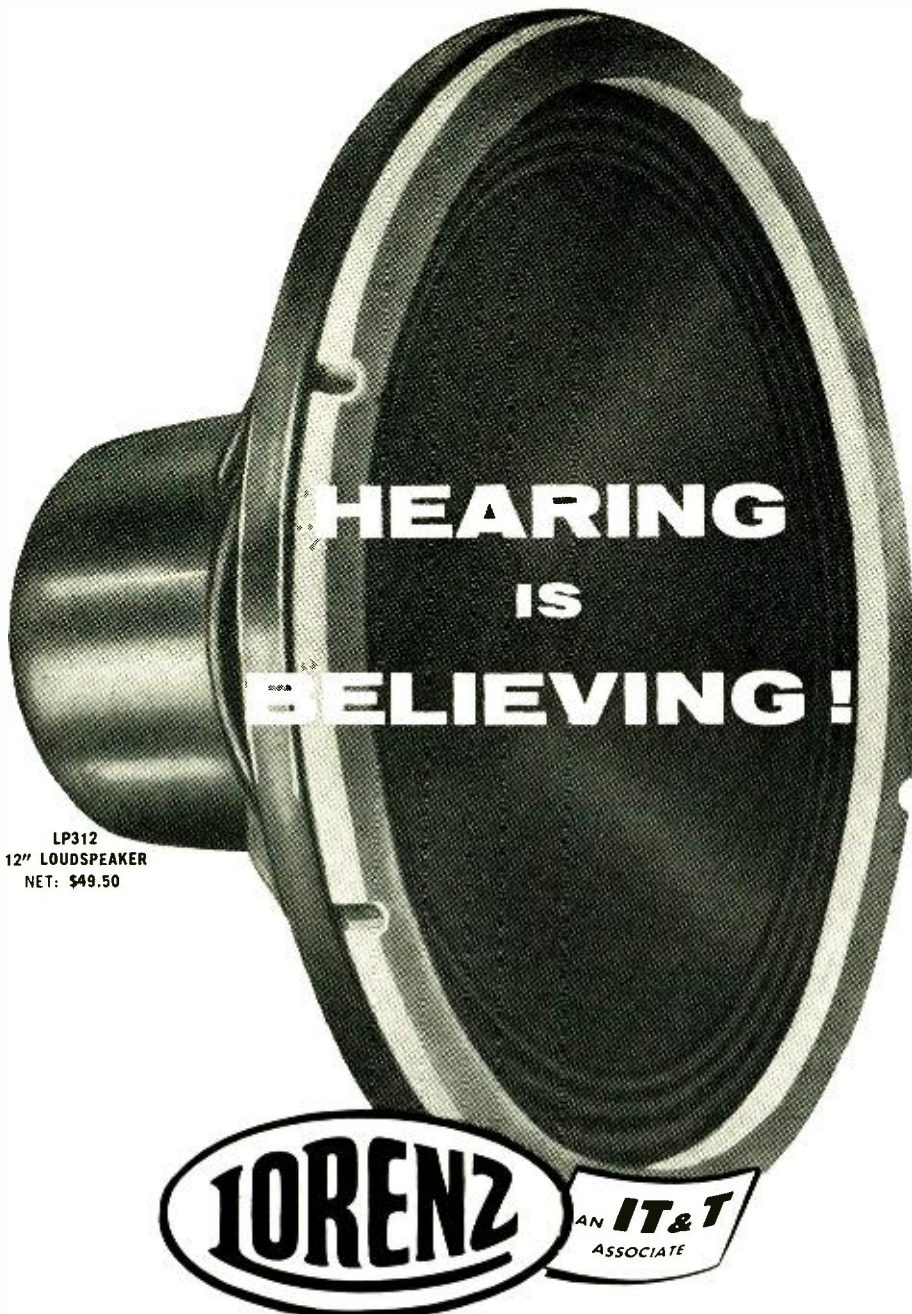
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High Fidelity Magazine is published monthly by Audiocom, Inc., at Great Barrington, Mass. Telephone: Great Barrington 1300. Editorial, publication, and circulation offices at: The Publishing House, Great Barrington, Mass. Subscriptions: \$6.00 per year in the United States and Canada. Single copies: 60 cents each. Editorial contributions will be welcomed by the editor. Payment for articles accepted will be arranged prior to publication. Unsolicited manuscripts should be accompanied by return postage. Entered as second-class matter April 27, 1951 at the post office at Great Barrington, Mass., under the act of March 3, 1879. Additional entry at the post office, Pittsfield, Mass. Member Audit Bureau of Circulation. Printed in the U. S. A. by the Ben Franklin Press, Pittsfield, Mass. Copyright 1956 by Audiocom, Inc. The cover design and contents of High Fidelity magazine are fully protected by copyrights and must not be reproduced in any manner.



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AUTHORitatively Speaking

In January we asked rhetorically whether Mozart would have been a hi-fi fan. With respect to Hector Berlioz, the question would be unnecessary. Of course he would have been. Anyone who doubts it, read his ecstatic analysis of St. Paul's cathedral as a resonance chamber, on page 44. Berlioz was an eminent journalist as well as a composer, hence the brisk and sprightly tone of his writing, which has been preserved almost perfectly in the translation by Jacques Barzun of *Evenings with the Orchestra*. The book is a collection of news reports and satirical essays, set in a connective "conversational" narrative by Berlioz, all of it extremely amusing. Alfred A. Knopf will bring it out next month, and you should read it. Barzun of course, is also author of *Berlioz and the Romantic Century* and editor of *Pleasures of Music*, the latter a collection of short writings about music and musicians by people of note throughout the ages.

Eric Bentley, who discusses the shortcomings of recorded drama on page 50, is one of the leading drama critics in the world. He is also Brander Matthews Professor of Dramatic Literature at Columbia University and, on the side, something of a dramatic director himself: at the time of this writing, he had just launched an off-Broadway production of Berthold Brecht's *Private Life of the Master Race*, in translation by Eric Bentley. He has guest-directed in various European theaters as well. As author he is responsible for *A Century of Hero Worship*, *The Playwright as Thinker*, *Bernard Shaw*, and *In Search of Theater*; as editor, for *The Importance of Scrutiny*, *From the Modern Repertoire*, and *Naked Masks*, a collection of Pirandello plays. He is consultant and/or contributor to numerous periodicals on both sides of the Atlantic.

George Jellinek, who stands up for *bel canto* on page 52, was born in Budapest and began playing the violin before he was six, which he says isn't surprising in Budapest. Eleven years later, having convinced his family he was no second Szigeti, he stopped. At languages he showed more talent, so that he now makes a sideline (his main job is with a music agency) of translating Italian, German, and Spanish librettos for record companies. His wife is an editor at Prentice Hall, and they have one daughter, seven, who is good at water colors, her father says, but sings only atonal music. He owns, and still uses (for acoustical disks) an enormous 1920 Victrola, which he says makes the pre-electrical sound better than does his high fidelity set.

Philip Miller, whose charming lines on listening to a Melba recording appear on page 53, usually doesn't listen to such on an antique phonograph, but could if he wanted to. He is assistant music librarian of the New York Public Library, and has charge of their old recordings and gramophones. He is also author of *Vocal Music*, part of the Knopf trilogy, *The Guide to Long-Playing Records*.

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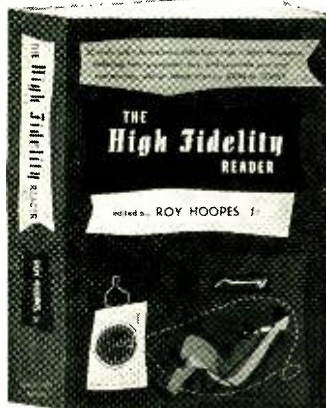
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FOR the past four years the most literate and informative writing on the subject of sound reproduction has appeared in *High Fidelity Magazine*. Now, for those of you who might have missed some of *High Fidelity's* articles and for those of you who have requested that they be preserved in permanent form, *High Fidelity's* Managing Editor, Roy H. Hoopes, Jr., has selected 26 of them for inclusion in a HIGH FIDELITY READER. The introduction was written by John M. Conly.

ALTHOUGH the READER is not intended as a "layman's guide" to high fidelity, it tells you everything you need to know, and perhaps a little more, for achieving good sound reproduction.

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LISTENER'S

by R. D. Darrell

BOOKSHELF

HOW MANY regular readers of this column have noticed, I wonder, its neglect, so far, of one of the most important types of books on music — that concerned with the basic principles and technical practices of the art itself? This omission hasn't been entirely deliberate, for I have no idea just how large, or small, a proportion of the contemporary audience for reproduced music is *seriously* anxious to learn more about what they hear — beyond, that is, the background information normally supplied by program notes and specific record annotations or found in popular books dealing with music "appreciation" and artists' lives. I don't doubt that all earnest listeners have at least a vague hankering to acquire or extend a personal familiarity with the vocabulary, grammar, and rhetoric of the "language" of music. But how active and deep is this desire? Is the craving for knowledge strong enough to sustain itself through the undeniably formidable rigors of independent home study?

If you're not sure of your own answers, perhaps you can judge by comparing your interest in acquiring musical knowledge with your experience in audio. If your urge to know more about the techniques of sound reproduction has been lively enough to provoke both some serious study of audio principles and some active experimentation in building or repairing equipment, surely a comparable "drive" to learn more about music itself well may lead to your undertaking comparable musical studies and activities.

After all, it certainly isn't any harder for a technical novice to learn how to read a circuit schematic than to read musical notation and even a full orchestral score. And if it isn't any easier, either, many a novice has discovered that even though his efforts fall short of complete success, the

very attempt has its own rewards. No matter how clumsily he flounders, he can at least learn to follow the main outlines and he is sure to achieve some working familiarity with the terminologies involved, and thus can read further with some general, however fuzzy, understanding of what the "experts" are talking about. At the very worst, the foolhardy novice who plunges into waters far over his head often gets an illogical thrill of pleasure merely from his frantic struggles to keep afloat. Even if he's reckless enough to venture prematurely into such depths as, say, Dr. Harvey Fletcher's *Speech and Hearing in Communication* or Sir George Dyson's *The New Music*, the experience itself may well be obscurely exhilarating if by no means completely comprehensible.

For myself, some of the most exciting reading experiences I have ever had have been with books which at the time were largely "over my head"; and even although I always had to admit (like Alice), after I had turned the last page: "It seems very pretty, . . . but it's rather hard to understand." (You see she didn't like to confess, even to herself, that she couldn't make it out at all.) 'Somehow it seems to fill my head with ideas — only I don't know exactly what they are!'

McGuffey's First (Musical) Readers

Happily, few novices want — or need — to remain content with such somewhat metaphysical illuminations. As long as eager novices exist, there always will be perambulator manufacturers and expert nursemaids to guide their first steps. Last month and in several earlier columns I had occasion to discuss various books designed primarily to serve as introductions to the technical mysteries of audio. There are more coming soon, but meanwhile it is high time I made some attempt to sound out this column's reader-

ship interest in comparable primer-approaches to musical techniques. Many so-called appreciation books include a little such material, and of course most of the detailed information itself may be found (if one knows where to look!) in the larger musical dictionaries and encyclopedias. But in its more extended, and more assimilative, exposition, the best place to find it is in one of the many books devoted to what is misleadingly called music "theory," but which actually is no more than the Rudiments of Practical Musicianship.

There are hundreds if not thousands of these, of course; but for the most part they are textbooks, better adapted to formal courses and supervised instruction than to personal home study. The best general survey I know of the whole field and its problems is Howard A. Murphy's *Teaching Musicianship: A Manual of Methods and Materials* (Coleman-Ross, 1950), but obviously this is oriented to a prospective teacher's, rather than to a pupil's or an interested layman's, point of view. The complete novice, especially a timid one, probably would be best advised to turn to a primer ostensibly written for children, but which—unlike most of its kind—is admirably readable as well as usable by adults: Nicolas Slonimsky's *The Road to Music* (Dodd Mead, 1947).

In recent years, the sensational growth of audiences who combine an avid interest in the best of old and new music with little if any grounding in musical technology has naturally led to the appearance of many "theory" books written specifically with the adult, but uninformed, listener in mind. An excellent example of this type is Klaus Liepmann's *The Language of Music* (Ronald Press, 1953), which is particularly suitable for special audiophile recommendation, since Liepmann's work is the outgrowth of music courses devised for potential engineers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. But the latest arrival, while considerably less extensive in scope, boasts a more novel and less textbookish approach.

Stepping-Stones

This is *The Perceptive Music Listener* by Hans Tischler (Prentice-

Continued on next page

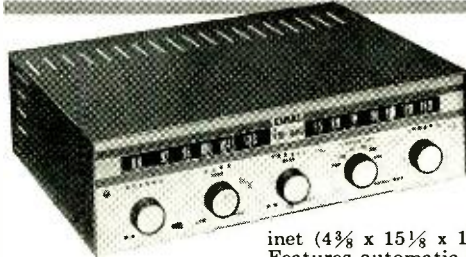
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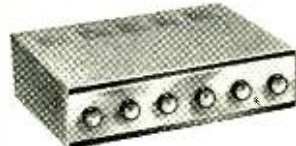


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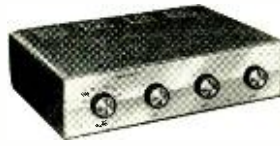
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BOOKSHELF

Continued from preceding page

Hall, \$7.65), which strikes me as coming very close to just what beginners need as an introduction to the rudiments of musicianship. Instead of concentrating on listing, defining, and illustrating the multitudinous elements that go to make up all kinds of music, Tischler concentrates on individual pieces of music, calling attention as he goes to whatever elements they particularly demonstrate. He divides the musical repertory into categories based on the relative length and complexity of the compositions, beginning with Short Single Pieces; going on to "Composite" Works (i.e., those made up of several more-or-less loosely linked short pieces); advancing then to Larger Single Pieces; and concluding with the Largest Instrumental Works (comprising several closely linked large pieces or "movements"). In the various subdivisions of each category he selects characteristic illustrative examples (parts of which are shown in musical notation, but all of which are given references to recorded performances) for fairly detailed, if very elementary and simplified, technical analysis. And it is only incidentally, as it were, that in the course of these analyses each new technical term is defined and explained as it is encountered for the first time.

Sounds reasonable, doesn't it? And while it may shock the orthodox, simply because it departs from common practice, this treatment should be an extremely effective one for the lay listener. If the actual sequence in which the technical terms and devices themselves are discussed is quite arbitrary, it hardly is more irrational than in most textbooks where they too often seem to be presented as important for their own sake rather than as conventions and symbols of some utility.

Anyway, I heartily approve of Tischler's general scheme of attack; his sense of proportionate values and the emphases he gives them; his refusal to acknowledge the usual phony compartmentations between very old and very new music, between music for voices and music for instruments, or between so-called "absolute" and "programmatic" musical characterizations; and above all his constant in-

Continued on page 12

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- Cathode-follower output permits leads up to 200 feet. ■ Completely shielded and shock-mounted construction, including bottom plate. ■ Flywheel tuning.
- Slide-rule tuning dial with logging scale. ■ Beautiful, brushed-brass control panel. ■ Four controls: Power/Sensitivity. Function. Tuning. Output Level Control. ■ Tube Complement: Total of Eight: 3—6BJ6, 1—6BE6, 1—6AL5, 2—6C4, 1—6X4. Size: 12¾" wide, 4" high, 8¼" deep, including knobs.

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BOOKSHELF

Continued from page 10

sistence on working from individual pieces of music to the general techniques they exploit.

On the other hand, I don't care much for his rather pedestrian style and sometimes over-painstaking concern with insignificant details (although these are hardly grave faults in what after all is an instructional primer). My severest criticism must be levelled at a feature for which Tischler himself hardly can be entirely blamed, for obviously his book has required many years of preparation, during which many of the recordings he cites have been withdrawn or reissued. His twenty-nine pages of combined discography and bibliography (including many suggestions for further listening and reading) include too many 78s and not enough — or the latest — LPs. Since most of the former have either been reissued or newly recorded in LP versions, however, no one familiar with current disk catalogues should be unduly handicapped.

The reader who will be handicapped insuperably is one foolish or naïve enough to "read" this book (or indeed any other of the same general kind) without direct, attentive, and repeated study of the music it discusses — as heard either via his own fingers and throat, no matter how stumbling that performance may be, or via intent listening to recorded versions. No words, printed or spoken, can do more than stimulate and guide one's ears and mind to a keener consciousness of the purely tonal meanings themselves!

Advanced Textural Studies

This stricture remains true, of course, when the partly informed apprentice leaves his musical ABC's to tackle intermediate and advanced studies, and even (or especially!) when he meets a mentor who is far more lucid, penetrating, and infectiously provocative than Tischler. Such a man is Robert Erickson, author of one of the most brilliantly enlightening works of tone-textural analysis which has come to my attention in many years: *The Structure of Music: A Listener's Guide* (Noonday Press, \$4.00). This is a small book, barely over 200 pages

(as contrasted with Tischler's 458) and purportedly it deals only with a subsidiary tonal technique—that of counterpoint. But it is no dry study of outmoded practices only: counterpoint, even in the widest sense of this term, serves mainly as a springboard for a survey of the basic practical operating procedures used by all great composers from Okeghem to Alban Berg.

Erickson is enticingly "easy" to read, in one sense, for he writes vividly and marshals his arguments with powerful logic; but what he is talking about and the music he cites are by no means easy to grasp in their full significance. Here is an apt opportunity for the relatively ungrounded listener to demonstrate for himself the true measure of his interest in musicianship, for if he's to get the real meat in this book, he'll have to chew hard on it—and listen just as hard to its illustrative examples (and even look up the recorded versions for himself, for unfortunately no discography is included here). But if he doesn't find all this some of the most rewarding musical and intellectual labor he has ever attempted, then he must be forever damned to eschew the red meat of genuine musicianship and to diet the rest of his life on the thin pap of "appreciation." My only regret about Erickson's book (which, by the way, is as exceptional in its typographic distinction as it is in that of luminosity) is that it didn't exist years ago when I was learning the rudiments the hard way—via the Tappers, Chadwicks, *et al.*, of a music-educational era happily now as dead as the dodo.

The Special Pleasures of Shop-Talk

One of the minor, often overlooked, but particularly enjoyable rewards of obtaining at least an empirical familiarity with musical terminology is the enhanced ability to enlarge one's own personal experience by listening to or reading the shop-talk of professional musicians. Much of this may be trivial, but it can be fascinating too, and at its best it can immensely broaden one's horizons. I can't imagine what a complete musical novice would make of D. E. Inghelbrecht's *The Conductor's World*, translated by Prerauer and Kirk (Library Pub-

Continued on next page



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BOOKSHELF

Continued from preceding page

lishers, \$4.75), and I shouldn't dare suggest that he try it, for it's a completely haphazard soliloquy on the musical director's special problems and procedures—musical shop-talk *in excelsis*, which can only be unintelligible or completely boring to anyone unfamiliar with the techniques and terminologies involved.

But, given some interest in the subject itself, anyone else will find M. Inghelbrecht a glorious spellbinder—as well as unmistakably a musician of the keenest insights and liveliest fervors. I had relished his "conversations" immensely, but it was only after I put them down that I began to realize how much there was to learn from them. (There are now many orchestral and operatic passages I'll never be able to hear again, on records or off, without remembering where and how Inghelbrecht has pointed out that performers can go sadly wrong—or triumphantly right.) Casual listeners can pass by this *Conductor's World* safely but certainly no potential conductor or critic can possibly afford to miss it.



Grace Notes

Encyclopedia of Jazz. Although the bulk of this superb 360-page documentary monument by Leonard Feather is actually a biographical dictionary of jazz musicians (no fewer than 1065 of them!), the title is no misnomer, for the work is truly encyclopedic in size and scope. Even apart from the unique value of its never-before-assembled biographical material, it boasts some 200 photographs—mostly highly dramatic—a foreword by Ellington, concise histories and technical analyses of jazz, a basic list of records, a glossary of terms, lists of jazz organizations and recording companies, etc. The three-page bibliography is a bit skimpy, but in everything else Lennie has done a magnificent job, and the big book is itself a striking piece of typographical design (Horizon Press, \$10.00—and worth every cent of it!).



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MODEL 80-T
\$199⁵⁰

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LETTERS



SIR:

Stung by a sneaking suspicion (aggravated by the comparison of many photographs) that some Great Barrington gremlin substituted a portrait of Sir Max Beerbohm for one of Sir Edward Elgar (the "Gerontius" review in the magnificent January issue), I submit the following exchange:

Spoke Sir Edward to Sir Max,
 "What—you're probing my enigma?
 Quoth Sir Max, "my dear Sir Edward,
 Similarity's no stigma!"

Klaus George Roy
 Newton Centre, Mass.

In similarity there may be no stigma,
 But about this erratum there's no enigma.
 We'd like to blame the pixies and elves;
 The fault, dear Klaus, is in our selves.

—The Editors (with apologies to Sir Edward, Sir Max, and W. Shakespeare)

SIR:

H. S. Rummell's *Bach to Brubeck and Back* (November, 1955) illuminates neither end of the journey. It is certainly true that aspects of Brubeck's jazz conception and execution are strongly debatable. A favorite avocation, in fact, of many jazz musicians in recent months has been the comparing of notes on "What's Wrong with Brubeck."

But Brubeck, however controversial, is a musician of integrity and seriousness of intent. He deserves at the least to be criticized by a man who knows enough of the jazz language and tradition to be aware of what Brubeck is trying to do within the context of that language.

Continued on next page



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- Meter for micro-accurate, center-of-channel tuning. ■ Sensitivity: 3 microvolts for 20 db of quieting. ■ Uniform response, ± 1 db, 20 to 20,000 cycles.
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LETTERS

Continued from preceding page

The main argument in Mr. Rummell's exercise is that Brubeck is not of the stature of Bach. I know of no one in the jazz field, Brubeck included, who would even facetiously oppose Mr. Rummell on the point. No one in jazz — musician or critic — has ever been so fervently ingenious as to state that "Brubeck is the greatest improviser on a theme since Bach" (a sentence Mr. Rummell quotes in his article without source, thereby leaving the implication that this is a common assertion among jazz audiences).

The language of jazz, including Brubeck's variations thereon, has its roots in three centuries of Afro-American musical preparation through spirituals, work songs, ring games, the blues, etc. The most recent layer of tradition has been built of the richly diversified growth of jazz itself in the past sixty years as collective improvisation has ranged from New Orleans brass bands to the work of Charlie Parker, Miles Davis and the Modern Jazz Quartet.

It is footless to begin an analysis by using the same critical criteria for jazz and classical music just as it profits little to use the same measuring standards for Hindu ensembles or Balinese gamelans that one utilizes for a jazz band or a symphony orchestra. Jazz deserves to be understood first in terms of its own language, and this Mr. Rummell has failed to do with respect to Brubeck.

After preferably having been understood on the basis of its own history and language, then inevitably, jazz or a Hindu raga or Bach reaches each listener at the most basic of all levels — the emotional. My own feeling is that the best of jazz is equal to the best of classical and Eastern music in its emotional penetration and increasingly, in its intellectual stimulation as well. This assertion Mr. Rummell obviously does not believe since he regards jazz as "music in slang" with a range of expressiveness that "has the same restrictions as slang." He also talks of "the mock lugubriousness of the blues" and calls the saxophone "hardly more than a marginal instrument at its best."

Mr. Rummell undeniably is entitled to these views, but a man who holds



"Breathtaking!" — EDWARD
TATNALL
CANBY

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SERIES 80-C

"**S**TARTLINGLY DIFFERENT," says Edward Tatnall Canby, *Audio Magazine*. "Has everything, at a very reasonable price for top-quality hi-fi equipment. The easiest to read and operate I've ever seen. The specs on performance are breathtaking and the over-all quality of its electrical operation is pretty closely comparable to that of a professional broadcast console control board. This is the current standard for really hi-fi operation of controls in the home. Hum, distortion, *et al* are so low as to be inaudible and mostly unmeasurable in the lab. And all this, mind you, in the middle price range."

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Remarkable Features of THE FISHER 80-C

- Professional, lever-type equalization for all current recording characteristics.
- Seven inputs, including two Phono, Mic and Tape.
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- Complete mixing and fading on two, three, four or five channels.
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- Separate equalization and amplification directly from tape playback head.
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- Separate, high-gain microphone preamplifier.
- Push-Button Channel-Selectors with individual indicator lights and simultaneous AC On-Off switching on two channels (for tuner, TV, etc.)
- Master Volume Control plus 5 independent Level Controls on front panel.
- 11 Controls plus 5 push-buttons.
- Three auxiliary AC receptacles.

SIZE: Chassis, 12 3/4" x 7 1/4" x 4 1/4" high. In cabinet, 13-11/16" x 8" x 5 1/4" high. Shipping weight, 10 pounds.

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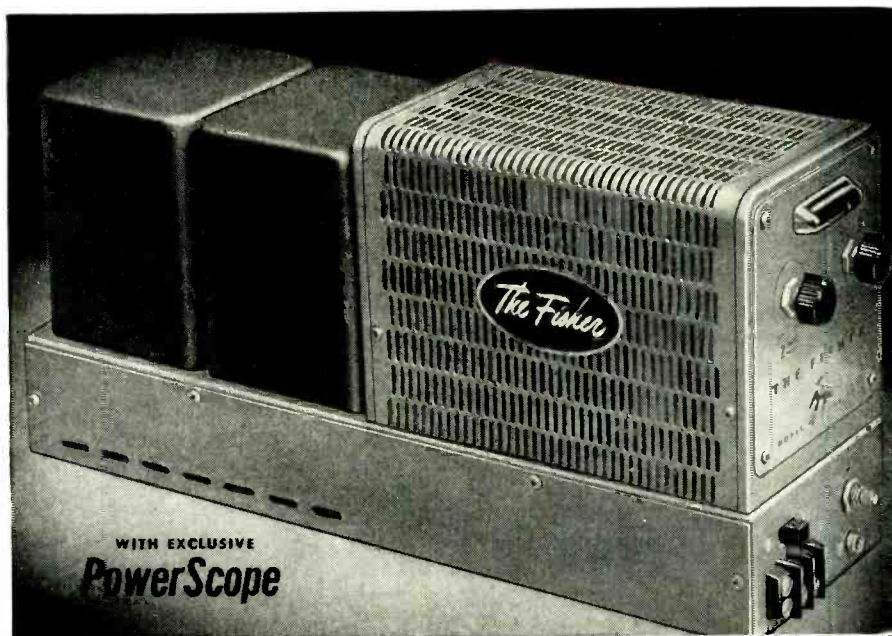
these views and obviously feels that jazz has serious restrictions as an art form, should also provide some evidence that he has listened to jazz widely and long enough to have enough substantive knowledge of the art by which he can document these views. Has Mr. Rummell heard and does he regard Bessie Smith, for one example, as mockly lugubrious? Has he heard and does he regard Charlie Parker's alto as having been hardly more than a marginal instrument at its best?

Or does Mr. Rummell believe, as does Henry Pleasants in his remarkably confused *What Is This Thing Called Jazz?* (HIGH FIDELITY, December 1955) that one can best approach jazz from limited, short-time knowledge of it? Pleasants says: "I have not been around long enough to become either mired or bored. I have not heard a great deal of any type of jazz, but I have now heard a little of each . . . I have not gotten close enough to the currents to be sucked in by the prejudices." If HIGH FIDELITY plans to extend this charmingly innocent principle of criticism to the rest of its coverage, I assume we shall soon find Marilyn Monroe writing divertingly of Palestrina.

I do not mean that only jazz enthusiasts should write about jazz. But it helps no one to have an article on jazz by a writer who gives little evidence that he knows what the language and history of the music are. Jazz—particularly now, in its present multiple experimental stages—can use sound criticism by classical critics who know jazz too, and who can point out what cross-usages are most effective for each language. But what actually does an article like Mr. Rummell's accomplish? He has gratuitously ridiculed an honest musician who deserves better and more penetrating consideration, even in terms of satire. Has his article told us anything of worth except that Bach cuts Brubeck, an item I suspect even Henry Pleasants has discovered in his brief, fresh wanderings in the meadows of jazz.

What, finally, are Brubeck's goals? As he stated them recently in a letter to English jazz critic-musician, Steve Race, Brubeck sums them up this way: "Although while improvising, I play for the moment, I am aiming at something more—the inspired moment; that is, the balance of human

Continued on next page



AN EXCEPTIONAL, NEW THIRTY-WATT AMPLIFIER • HANDLES SIXTY-WATT PEAKS!

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- Unique cathode feedback circuit for triode performance with the efficiency of triodes. ■ Output transformer has interleaved windings and a grain-oriented steel core. ■ Three Controls: *PowerScope*, *Z-Matic* and *Input Level*. ■ Handsome, brushed-brass control panel (with sufficient cable for built-in installations.) ■ Tube Complement: 1—12AT7, 1—12AU7A, 2—EL-37, 1—5Y4-G, 1—*PowerScope* Indicator, 1—Regulator. ■ 8- and 16-ohm outputs. ■ Size: 15½ x 4¼ x 6¾" high. WEIGHT: 22 lbs.

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AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE TO THOSE WHO OWN A RECORD CHANGER... OR INTEND TO BUY ONE

**let's separate fact from fancy . . .
on the subject of rumble and wow!**

We are astonished by the growing defiance of fact inherent in claims made for some record changers. . . . namely, that they have **NO RUMBLE OR WOW!** Such patently inaccurate statements may only serve to confuse you . . . and most certainly cannot aid in your selection of equipment.

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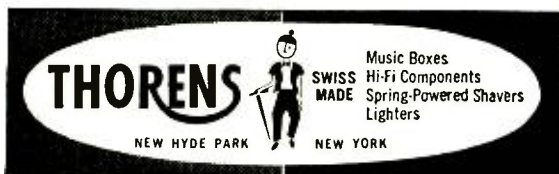
The quietest record changer made today is the Thorens Concert CD-43. In fact, it performs as well as many fine turntables. Its noise ratio is -48 db below program level and for this reason we believe it rightly deserves its reputation as the "**ONLY TRULY HIGH FIDELITY RECORD CHANGER.**"

How does this vast difference come about? The answer lies in Thorens' use of a big, powerful Swiss-precision direct-drive motor with a separate gear for each standard speed. Rubber belts, pulleys and other elements common to rim or friction drive units are not present to cause undesirable noise or speed variation. The huge cast-iron frame and mechanical filter further act to reduce rumble content, and a flyball governor on the electronically-balanced main shaft provides freedom from undesirable wow.

ARE CONVENIENCE FEATURES IMPORTANT? — Indeed they are . . . and it was Thorens of Switzerland who originated many of the now well-known functional advantages. No other changer has Thorens' simple three-speed selector with integral fine tuner for exact pitch adjustment . . . and you can intermix automatically, 10" and 12" records — with special switch for 7". The fine tone-arm has adjustments for tracking weight and cartridge alignment. Pause and reject controls, manual-play switch, muting condenser . . . all these and more, are found in the Thorens.

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Also manual and automatic players, and turntables.



**CD-43
price \$93.75 net**

LETTERS

Continued from preceding page

emotion, creativity, imagination and a technical facility equal to the idea of the moment. When this happens, I am inclined to believe that this inspired unified instant has more lasting value, captured either on record or just in the minds of the audience, than a perfect stylized performance.

"I believe that the jazz musician's technique should be a study toward the mastery of the inspired moment . . . The greatest thrill that a jazz musician can know and give his audience is an inspired execution at an inspired moment of something he has never done before, will never do again, and no one else will ever be able to recreate — not even himself. This to me is the real jazz — creation."

There are several astute theorist-practitioners in jazz, notably John Lewis, who would valuably disagree with this credo as to the optimum motivation for a jazz musician. But it is a credo worth knowing when one is writing about Brubeck.

It tells us nothing of either Bach or Brubeck to say that Bach is superior to Brubeck. Tell us rather how well and how often Brubeck fulfills his own goal, how or whether that goal is valuable or feasible, and where Brubeck's achievement stands when measured against that of the major jazz improvising artists. That sort of article would have a degree of value. I fail to find that anything of value has been contributed to a further understanding of either destination in Mr. Rummell's journey *From Bach to Brubeck and Back.*

*Nat Hentoff
New York, N.Y.*

And Mr. Rummell's reply:

Thank you for giving me the opportunity of replying to Mr. Hentoff's letter.

My article was written to show how the Brubeck Quartet struck one pair of old, tired, but open ears. In his comments Mr. Hentoff, after mislabelling the 'main argument', gives us a brief essay on the evolution of jazz, makes the reasonable point that Brubeck's performances should be judged in terms of Brubeck's own credo, emphasises the worthlessness of an article written from such a clearly

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LETTERS

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meager knowledge of this esoteric subject, deprecates the judgment of a distinguished fellow music critic (Mr. Pleasants), and deplores the editorial policy of HIGH FIDELITY. He even drags in Marilyn Monroe.

On one point Mr. Hentoff and I are in the closest possible agreement: Nothing could be sillier than an article written for the sole purpose of showing that Bach is of greater stature than Brubeck.

I think Mr. Hentoff does an excellent job of setting forth his position as a critic of jazz. His knowledge of his field, evident to any reader of *Down Beat*, is rather awesome, and the fearlessness — and solemnity — with which he rewards the efforts of jazz practitioners with one to five stars has a certain majestic charm about it. Like many others, I wouldn't consider buying a jazz record without first checking its Hentoff rating in *Down Beat*.

He also shows a sturdy fearlessness about getting himself into positions that could easily become awkward. For example, when he allows that Bach is of greater stature than Brubeck, he must mean that his music is greater; there is no other basis for such a judgment. Yet he objects violently and elaborately to any comparison between them. How, I wonder, can he concede this point ("Bach cuts Brubeck"), when, as he says in one place, there can be no valid standard of comparison applicable to both? But we can overlook this little lapse and still get his meaning: he means, I'm sure, that the music of the one is greater than the music of the other because, in phraseology he uses himself, of its greater 'emotional penetration' or 'intellectual stimulation', or both. These are universally-accepted and applicable measures; they are basic, and can be applied with equal validity (assuming proper preparation on the part of the measurer) to jazz, Balinese gamelan music, Hindu ragas or whatever. Mr. Hentoff touches on this point himself, and I don't see how any reasonable person could disagree.

But next he makes a statement that strikes me as the most provocative in the entire essay; certainly its impor-

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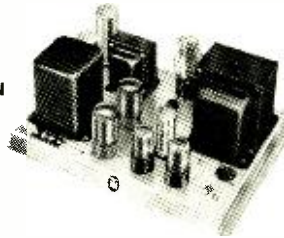


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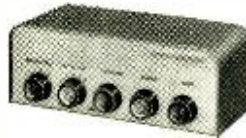


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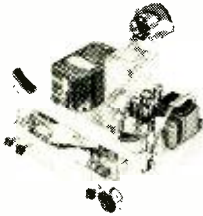


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LETTERS

Continued from preceding page

tance to thousands — maybe millions — of music lovers makes our little quibblings about Brubeck fade into insignificance. I quote, "My own feeling is that the best of jazz is equal to the best of classical and Eastern music in its emotional penetration and increasingly (increasingly equal?) in its intellectual stimulation as well."

Now if the measure of quality in music is its degree of emotional penetration and/or intellectual stimulation, and if the best of jazz and the best of classical music hit Mr. Hentoff with equal impact, then, unless he has a higher susceptibility to one than the other, the creative powers behind them must be equally great. But the jazzman and his music cannot be separated. It must follow, therefore, that there's at least one jazzman or jazz group somewhere (not Brubeck; he's out) whom Mr. Hentoff would rank with Bach, Beethoven or — you name the others — at their greatest heights. If his man were of lesser power, of course, his music couldn't be as emotionally penetrating or intellectually stimulating as theirs.

In all seriousness, I think that this is an exciting disclosure, and I hope sincerely that Mr. Hentoff will take the time to tell us where we can find this jazzman and his music. We will know it when we hear it, for it will carry the degree of emotional impact we find in the *Crucifixus* from the *Credo* of the *Mass in B Minor*, the *Cavatina* of the *Quartet in B-flat*, or the intellectual excitement of the first movement of the *Eroica*.



Selfishly, I want this information for my own use. And I'm sure there must be many others who would welcome the enrichment Mr. Hentoff's revelation would bring them: people whose love of music includes a genuine affection for jazz and who are familiar with the story of its Afro-American origins, knowledgeable enough to judge it in its proper context, and eager to see it evolve into something of deep artistic significance.

H. S. Rummell
Deansboro, N.Y.

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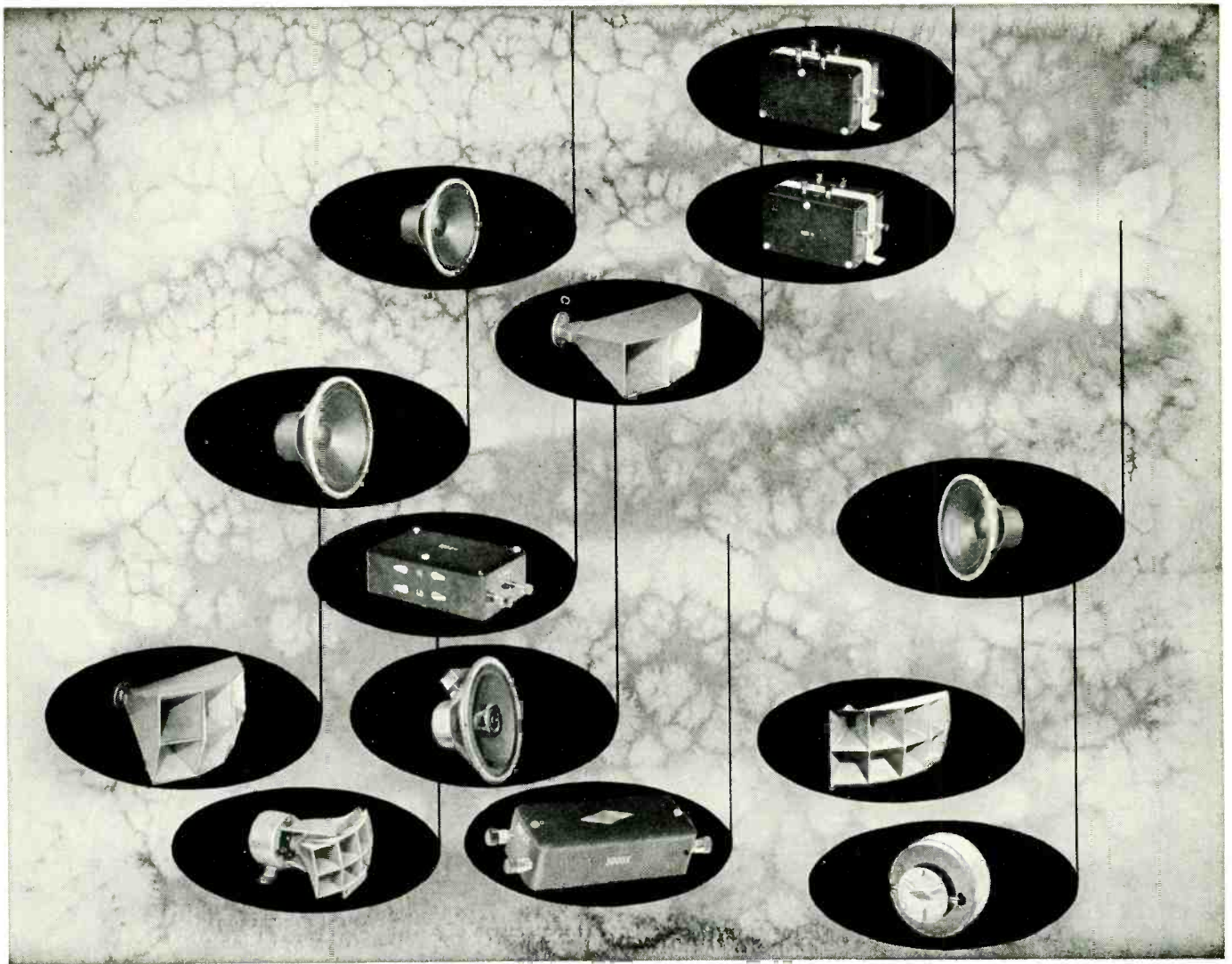
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The following are lists of records for trade: if any records listed here interest you, write directly to the person offering them and give him your trade list. The records listed below are stated to be in good condition; however, we cannot be held responsible for any records obtained through this column.

Lists submitted for publication in this column must be limited to ten records for trade and ten which are wanted. Composer, title, performers, recording company, record number and speed must be supplied by the trader. Only 33 1/3 and 78 rpm records will be listed.

J. Simard, 28 Ave. Vieux Moulin, Giffard, P. Quebec, Canada, has the following LPs for trade, and particularly wants some recent hi-fi recordings by Philadelphia Orchestra, Boston Symphony, and London Philharmonic on Victor, Columbia, and London labels.

Mahler: Symphony No. 1 in D. Steinberg, Pittsburgh Symphony Orch. CAPITOL P 8224, 12-in.

Sibelius: Symphony No. 5; Finlandia. Von Karajan, Philharmonic Orch. ANGEL 35002, 12-in.

Berlioz: Symphonie Fantastique. Monteux, San Francisco Symphony Orch. VICTOR LM 1131, 12-in.

Mozart: Così Fan Tutte (highlights). Busch, Glyndebourne Festival Orch. VICTOR LM 1126, 12-in.

Haydn: Symphonies No. 103 and 80. Scherchen, Vienna Symphony. WESTMINSTER WL 5050, 12-in.

Mozart: Concertos in D minor and C minor. Schnabel, Philharmonia Orch. LHMV 1012, 12-in.

Schubert: Symphony No. 9, in C. Toscanini, NBC Orch. VICTOR LM 1040, 12-in.

Wagner: Parsifal; Schubert: Rosamunde Ballet Music. Stokowski and Orch. VICTOR LM-1730, 12-in.

Mozart: Piano Quartet No. 1, in G minor; No. 2, in E-flat major. Curzon, Amadeus Quartet. LONDON LL 679, 12-in.

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Jacob S. Schneider, 128 W. 66th St., New York 23, N. Y., has "over 2,000 rare operatic vocal deletions" which he will trade for 78 rpm records consisting of jazz, sweet, hot, pop, or personality, providing the records were made before 1940.

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Jazz Goes to College: Brubeck; Louis Armstrong Plays W. C. Handy; Pajama Game (Columbia ML 4840); Music from Hollywood: Percy Faith; Guiomar Novaes Encores; Oklahoma! (Columbia ML 4598); B. G. Presents Fletcher Henderson; Strauss Waltzes: Kostelanetz; Pictures at an Exhibition; Firebird Suite: Ormandy.

Continued on page 26

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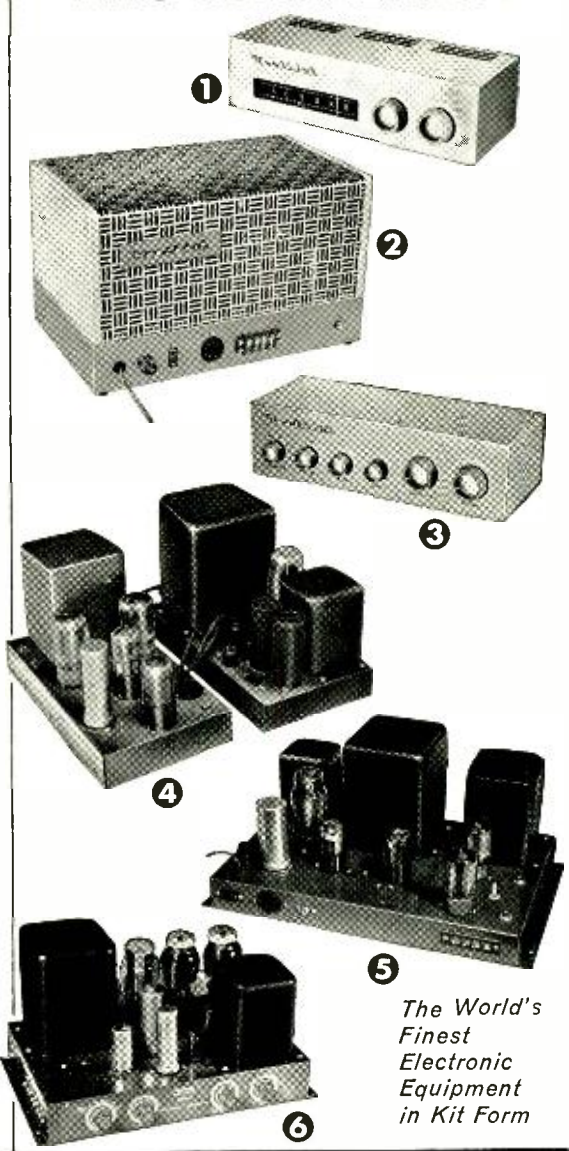
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SWAP-A-RECORD

Continued from page 24

In exchange for opera recordings, in particular, John J. Haner, 815 N. Henderson, Galesburg, Ill., offers the following:

Tchaikovsky: Romeo and Juliet; Francesca da Rimini. Golschmann, St. Louis Sym. Capitol P 8225.

Tchaikovsky: Piano Concerto No. 1. Cherkassky, Ludwig, Berlin Philh. Decca 9605.

Rimsky-Korsakov: Scheherazade. Monteux, San Francisco Sym. Victor LM 1002.

Carmen, Opera for Orchestra. Kostelanetz. Columbia ML 4826.

Beethoven: Piano Concerto No. 5. Two editions: Schnabel, Stock, Chicago Sym. Victor LCT 1015; Matthews, Süsskind, Philharmonia Orch. Columbia RL 3037.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 1; Haydn: Symphony No. 104. Munch, Boston Sym. Victor LM 1200.

Schumann: Symphony No. 4; Mozart Symphony No. 38. Stock, Chicago Sym. Columbia RL 3026.

Handel: Water Music Suite; Royal Fireworks Music. Harty, London Philh. Columbia RL 3019.

Dvořák: Cello Concerto in B minor. Piatigorsky, Ormandy, Philadelphia Orch. Columbia ML 4022.

Tchaikovsky: Swan Lake. Golschmann, St. Louis Sym. Victor LM 1003.

Grieg: Peer Gynt Suite No. 1; Liszt: Hungarian Rhapsodies, 1 and 2. Ormandy, Philadelphia Orch. Columbia ML 4132.

Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 5. Dorati, Minneapolis Orch. Mercury 50008.

* * * * *

Peter Poulakis, 1687 Hoe Ave., Bronx 60, N.Y., offers a list of LPs, in exchange for which he would especially like symphonies by Haydn, Mahler, Bruckner; any modern works; chamber and vocal works.

Beethoven: Four Piano Quartets. Balsam, Pascal Quartet members. Concert Hall CHS 1205, 12-in.

Beethoven: Symphonies Nos. 2 and 4. Toscanini, NBC Sym. Orch. Victor LM 1723, 12-in.

Bizet: Carmen (Highlights). Albanese, Stevens, Pearce, Merrill, Reiner, RCA Victor Orch. Victor LM 1749, 12-in.

Brahms: Violin Concerto. Olevsky, Mitchell, National Sym. Orch. Westminster 5273, 12-in.

Brahms: Double Concerto. Heifetz Feuermann, Ormandy, Philadelphia Orch. Victor LCT 1016, 12-in.

Bruch: Concerto No. 1 for Violin; Beethoven: Romances for Violin. Francescatti, Mitropoulos, N. Y. Philh. Orch. Columbia ML 4575, 12-in.

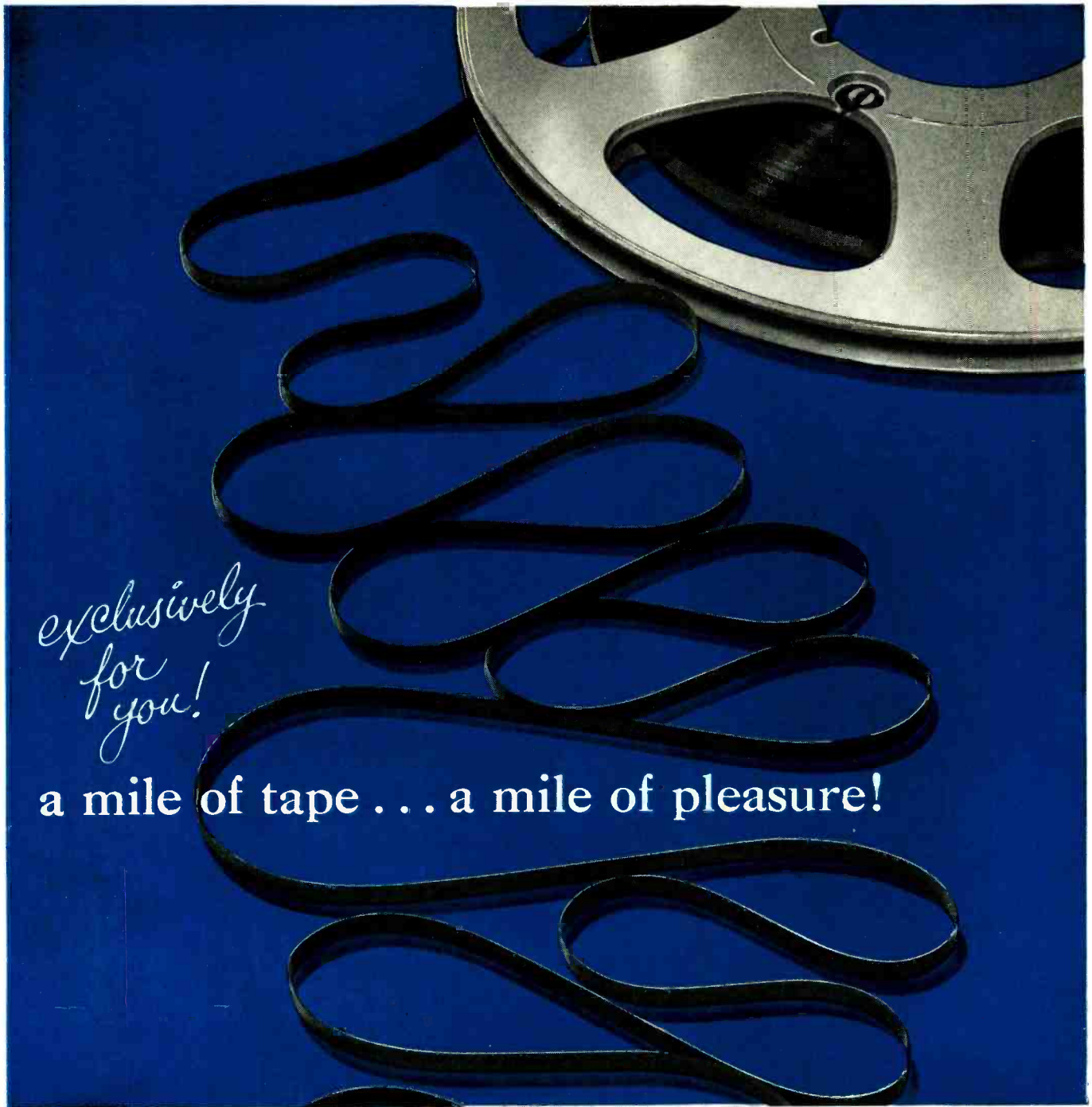
Mozart: The Marriage of Figaro (excerpts). Soloists, Goehr, Netherlands Philh. Orch. MMS 2010, 12-in.

Orff: Catulli Carmina. Hollreiser. Vox PL 8640, 12-in.

Rimsky-Korsakov: Scheherazade. Quadri, Vienna State Opera Orch. Westminster WL 5234, 12-in.

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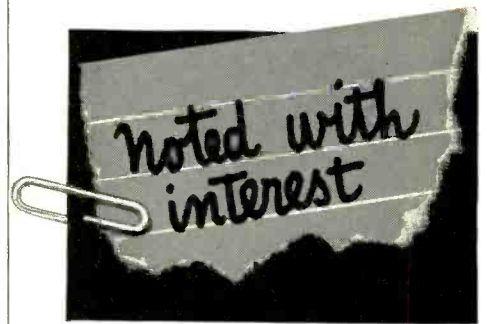
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Interpretation

Everybody, but everybody, is talking about high fidelity these days. On January 1, Dr. William E. McCormack, pastor of the First Congregational Church in San Francisco, had as the topic of discussion at his morning worship, "High Fidelity." We're willing to bet, though, that when he says those two words he doesn't mean the same thing we do.

Construction Notes

A reader wrote in recently to ask if we knew how to make a Catenoid. Of course we do. It's simple; and with the permission of the National Co. we'll tell you how: just step on its tail! (haw, haw).

"Understanding High Fidelity"

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"Recently we have received several letters from readers of HIGH FIDELITY indicating that they have not received our 56-page book, "Understanding High Fidelity," though they had each sent us 25¢ for their copies some weeks ago, in response to our advertisements. Naturally, we have sent books to these individuals immediately.

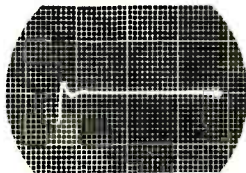
"We have reason to believe that, for reasons beyond our control, other readers have not received their copies

Continued on page 32

What does McINTOSH STABILITY mean?

Every McIntosh amplifier is guaranteed to meet the following stringent tests for STABILITY:

- The response of the amplifier to a UNIT STEP FUNCTION (a test set-up to measure a single square wave) must conform to the standard of graph "A" below. (Graph "B" shows poor Unit Step Function.)
- If either an MC-30 or MC-60 is driven to full output, opening or shorting the output circuit must not damage any component tube or part of the power amplifier.
- When the output circuit is either open circuited or shorted no oscillation is allowed to develop independent of input termination.
- When the output circuit is connected to any size commercial inductance (dividing networks, magnetic loudspeakers) or any size capacitance (dividing networks, electrostatic loudspeakers) no oscillation is allowed to develop independent of input termination.



Oscillogram showing good stability in the McIntosh Amplifier.

McINTOSH 60 watt AMPLIFIER MC-60

The Standard of Excellence in today's high fidelity! Tremendous reserve power contributes immeasurably to realism, provides a distinct advantage in handling transients and crescendos cleanly, without overloading. Reproduces all elusive overtones with amazing ease. Here is an outstanding achievement in amplification — 1/3 of 1% Harmonic Distortion at full 60 watts, from 20 to 20,000 c. p. s.! Be sure you get *all* that audio science has made available — the McIntosh 60.



MC-60 \$198.50

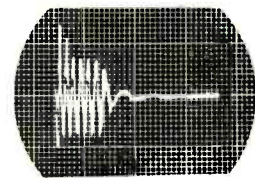
The McINTOSH *patented* CIRCUIT

The world-renowned McIntosh Bifilar Circuit, with Unity Coupling, was developed by pioneer specialists in high fidelity sound. It possesses exceptional characteristics not obtainable with conventional circuits. Push-pull circuits, which use two halves of a transformer to join the two halves of a wave, develop wave-form distortion because there is not perfect coupling. In the McIntosh circuit only one (bifilar) winding is used, therefore the two halves of the sound wave are perfectly coupled. The inherent electrical advantage allows the lowest distortion, highest efficiency, and the greatest stability of any amplifier made. The basic superiority of the McIntosh circuit makes it the only modern circuit, ready for any advances in associated equipment.

*U. S. Patents 2,477,074 (1949); also 2,515,788; 2,646,467; 2,654,058.

Such Guaranteed Performance means:

- NO muddy bass due to amplifier "ringing" at low frequencies. GOOD UNIT STEP FUNCTION in both the McIntosh amplifier and pre-amplifier contributes a clean bass characteristic, therefore eliminating any need for variable damping controls or other pseudo-corrective measures.
- Long dependable life even under adverse operating conditions.
- NO harsh mid-or treble range reproduction of percussion sounds.
- NO waste of linear excursion of speaker cone at very low frequencies.
- NO oscillation problem when connected to a long line or the large capacitance of electrostatic loudspeakers.



Oscillogram of unstable amplifier under identical test conditions.

McINTOSH

Professional Audio Compensator

An equalizer-preamplifier that is the perfect complement to the remarkable MC-60 basic amplifier. Exclusive compensation switches provide the ultimate in flexibility for living realism in sound reproduction. Possesses great *stability*, wide *frequency response* and typical McIntosh *low distortion*. Hear the flawless reproduction possible with McIntosh *uncompromising* audio control.



C-8 Less Cabinet \$88.50

Blonde or Mahogany Cabinet \$8.00
Self-Powered Model \$99.50

Write today for Free Booklet, "The Picture Story of High Fidelity Sound", with guide to correct record equalization

McIntosh

McINTOSH LABORATORY, INC., 322 WATER ST., BINGHAMTON, N. Y.

Export Div.: 25 Warren St., New York 7, N. Y.

Cable: Simontrice, N. Y.

Give your recordings

Vitality Color Realism

Choose

SHURE

Studio Microphones

If you are attempting to maintain standards as high as those of motion picture, TV, radio and professional recording studios . . . if you desire recorded music that is *alive* with clarity and richness . . . if you require a durable microphone that can be used for years without deviation from its original standards . . . you *need* a SHURE Studio Microphone for your recordings.



Model "333"

A slender, uni-directional microphone of amazing ruggedness and striking design. It reduces random noise pickup by 73%, *almost completely eliminating the distracting background noises so frequently encountered in making recordings outside a controlled studio.* The "333" provides a readily accessible multi-impedance switch that permits its use with all types of amplifiers and varying lengths of cable. Other features include a Voice-Music Switch, anti-"Pff" filter screen, and a vibration-isolation unit mounted in live rubber. The "333" provides high-output and a smooth frequency response, with a production uniformity guaranteed to $\pm 2\frac{1}{2}$ db, 30 to 15,000 cps.



Model "525"

An exceptionally fine probe microphone of broadcast quality. The "525" is an omni-directional microphone with a frequency response of 40 to 15,000 cps, production uniformity guaranteed to $\pm 2\frac{1}{2}$ db. Other features include multi-impedance switch . . . high output . . . and "Duracoustic" diaphragm, specially designed to withstand moisture, heat, cold, and physical shock. The "525" is furnished with a swivel adaptor and a neck lavalier cord and belt clip assembly.



Model "300"

A bi-directional gradient microphone that reduces reverberation and the pickup of random noise energy by 66%! The "300" can be placed at a 73% greater distance from the performer than is possible with omni-directional microphones, providing greater freedom and allowing group recording. This high fidelity microphone also features a readily accessible Voice-Music Switch, multi-impedance switch, anti-"Pff" filter screen, vibration-isolation unit mounted in live rubber . . . frequency response with a production uniformity guaranteed to $\pm 2\frac{1}{2}$ db, 40 to 15,000 cps.

NOTE: Models "333" and "525" multi-impedance switch is for 50-150-250 ohms impedance. Model "300" multi-impedance switch is for 50-250 ohms and high impedance.



SHURE BROTHERS, INC.

225 WEST HURON STREET • CHICAGO 10, ILLINOIS

NOTED WITH INTEREST

Continued from page 28

. . . either — and have not written us to complain due to kindness, forgetfulness, or inability to obtain our address.

"The Bogen Company is anxious that all those who have sent us money receive their copies. Therefore, if you ordered the booklet a few weeks ago and haven't heard from us, please send a postcard to us at 29 Ninth Avenue, New York 14, N. Y., mentioning the name of this magazine. Copies of "Understanding High Fidelity" will go forward to you as fast we get the cards."

Caruso Fans, Hear This!

If you're interested in obtaining some 1903 recordings of Caruso, in solo or duet arias, write to Mrs. Ethelyn Ball, 1926 Mason St., East Toledo 5, Ohio. The five records she has include "Dreams of Long Ago," excerpts from *Il Trovatore*, *Carmen*, *Faust*, *Forza del Destino*. She also has old recordings of Paderewski, Jascha Heifetz, Mischa Elman, Rachmaninoff, Arthur Pryor's Band, John McCormack, Alma Gluck, and others. The records are "in good condition, considering their age."

Penguins and Pelicans

To you who like to follow music with the score in hand, do you know that Penguin Books Inc. (3300 Clipper Mill Rd., Baltimore 11, Md.) has about twenty-five music scores priced at \$1.00 or less? Write them for their list.

Know Thy Neighbor

Don't trust that kindly, old lady next door who stops you to comment on that new Mahler symphony you played at 2 a.m.! Until you are pretty certain that her motives are in the interest of better music to be enjoyed by *all*, distrust her; deny it was you who played it; tell her it was the cats whooping it up on the fence, or a fireman's ball, or anything. Just don't admit you had your phonograph on pretty loud.

Being the trusting souls we usually are, we should explain what's brought on this turnabout in us: Last Novem-

Continued on page 34

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

INSTALLATION SIMPLIFIED

*that's the story
behind the
2 new series
of the...*

Collaro

RC-54

*Automatic Intermix
RECORD CHANGER*



Three Speeds: 33 1/3, 45 and 78 rpm

More people can now enjoy the reliable quality and performance of the Collaro RC-54—because something has been done about the installation problem.

The two new RC-54 series have power and sound leads wired and soldered in position.

Both are supplied with Automatic 45 rpm Spindle Adapters and both offer a choice of pickup cartridges: either the G.E. dual-sapphire magnetic or Collaro Studio O dual-sapphire crystal.

The 'C' Series are supplied with *pre-cut, unfinished mounting boards*, suitable for easy installation into record cabinets and consoles—without the need for intricate carpentry.

The 'M' and 'B' Series are supplied with *hardwood bases* instead of mounting boards

—'M' for mahogany and 'B' for blond. These require no carpentry whatever. They can be fitted into most cabinets, or placed on open shelves, tables or any other convenient surface.

With woodworking, wiring and soldering eliminated—it takes no time at all to install an RC-54. And of this you can be sure . . . there is no finer record changer than Collaro.



Sold by Leading
Sound Dealers



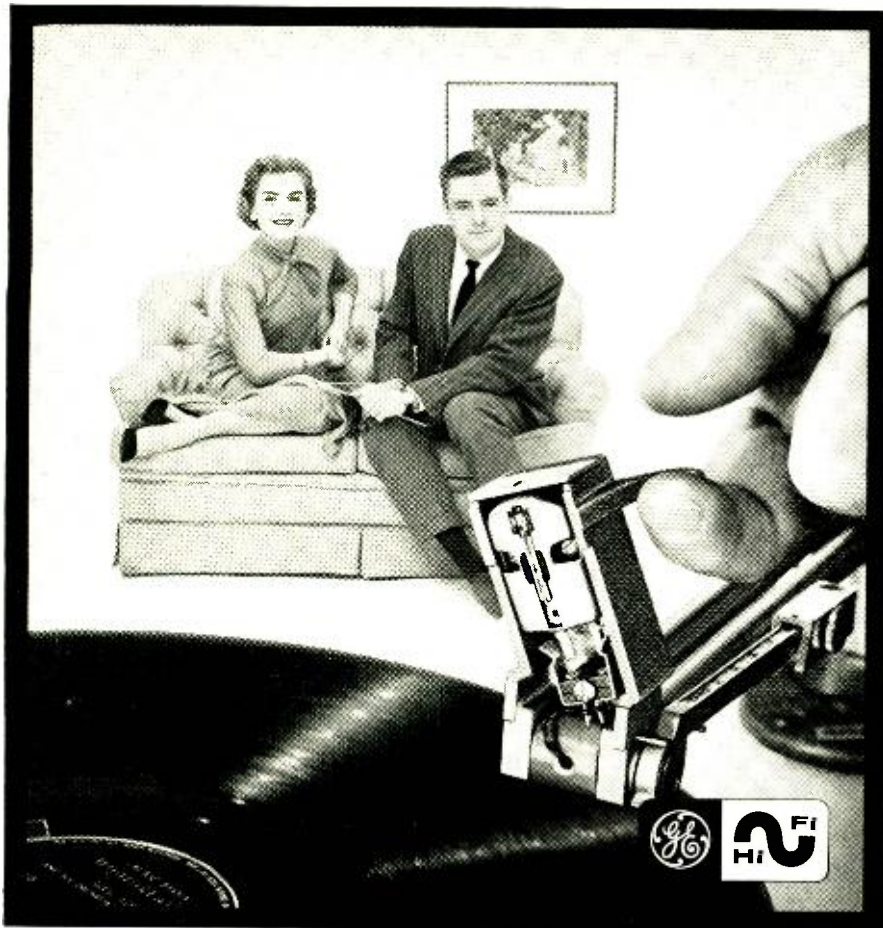
Priced from **\$56.00**

Write for complete specifications to Dept. CC-2

ROCKBAR CORPORATION • 215 East 37th Street, New York 16, N. Y.



Made in England



G-E "GOLDEN TREASURE" CARTRIDGE with new Clip-In-Tip Diamond Stylus brings you front row fidelity—at home

EVERY NOTE of music from the sonorous bass viol to the tinkle of the triangle is reproduced with stunning clarity by the "Golden Treasure" Cartridge. Long-lasting G-E diamond styli* reduce wear on record grooves to make records last longer, sound better. General Electric is the choice of audio experts, professional broadcasters, home music lovers everywhere.

Only General Electric has the exclusive Clip-In-Tip design that makes stylus re-

placement so easy. With Clip-In-Tip, anyone can replace a G-E stylus instantly. Now it's easy to use good styli all the time—and protect your records, too.

When buying a new cartridge, or replacing a worn-out stylus—be sure you insist on the genuine G-E. See your hi-fi dealer for a demonstration. *General Electric Co., Special Products, TV Dept., Section R5436, Electronics Park, Syracuse, New York.*

**G-E sapphires available at lower cost.*



IT'S EASY! Raise the tone arm to permit free rotation of the Clip-In-Tip stylus. . .



IT'S QUICK! Worn stylus slides out—new stylus clips in. That's all you have to do!

Progress Is Our Most Important Product

GENERAL  ELECTRIC

NOTED WITH INTEREST

Continued from page 32

ber, down in the Washington, D.C. vicinity, a couple were fined \$3,500 for "maintaining a condition that is a nuisance to their neighbors"—i.e., playing the radio at full blast. There's a common law against that. We don't know what the answer is for folks who live in apartments, or in neighborhoods where houses are only a couple of feet apart. Maybe a gent who wrote a letter-to-the-editor of the *New York Daily News* has one answer. He says: "Why doesn't someone do over one of those old brownstone buildings to provide soundproof apartments for us hi-fi lovers? As is, we spend \$500 or \$600 on our equipment, and when we are finished and have them on a little loud, the way they have to be in order to hear them at their best, you hear nothing but the people upstairs hitting on the floor, the ones below on the pipes, the ones on each side hitting on the walls, and across the court they are yelling out their windows. I'm off to the hills with my machine!"

What hills, buddy?

Back Copies

The following have complete sets of back copies they'll sell to the highest bidder: George S. Koch, Jr., Colonia San Antonio, San Francisco del Oro, Chih., Mexico; Morton Dressler, 510 W. 123 St., New York 27, N. Y.; H. C. Jung, 1060 Cragmont Ave., Berkeley, Cal.

T. A. Flournoy, Route 1, Mineola, Tex., has a complete set, with exception of Nos. 4 and 5, for resale at \$15, pp in U.S., plus postage outside.

George P. Bristow, Jr., 156 Parkway Dr., San Antonio, Tex., will sell his complete set for 50¢ per issue.

Neil Stringer, 117 N. Genois St., New Orleans 19, La., has copies 7 through 21 which he'll give to anyone who'll pay Express charges.

Dr. V. Arnett, 127 E. 54th St., New York 22, N. Y., has all the back issues for sale. Price: copies through 1954, \$15; through 1955, \$20.

Bernardo Cohn, Echeverria 3584, Buenos Aires 30, Argentina, S.A., has issues Nos. 9, 19, and 25 he will sell.

Thomas Roby, 202 Glendale Ave., Alexandria, Va., will sell issues Nos. 2,

Continued on page 37

NOTED WITH INTEREST

Continued from page 34

3, 5-8, 10-13 at \$1.00 each or \$7.50 for the lot, including a Beethoven Discography reprint.

Wanted

Dr. Nestor Arreaza-Colizza, c/o Hospital Central, Valencia, Venezuela, S.A., wants copies of back issues Nos. 1 through 8.

Bill Schroeder, 181 Congress St., Jersey City 7, N. J., wants (you guessed it) No. 4. If he can't get one, you can buy his complete set (with No. 4 missing) for \$20, plus postage.

John M. McCoy, Sunset Rock Rd., Andover, Mass., wants Nos. 1, 4-7, 9, 13-15, 19.

New Openings

Belatedly we extend our congratulations and wishes for great success to Shadle Associates, 234 E. College Ave., State College, Pa. They were scheduled to open a new hi-fi sales and demonstration studio at that address back in October. You State Collegers been over to see them?

Also, recently opened in Cincinnati, Ohio, at 5912 Hamilton Ave., is Electro-Sound, Inc. Go around to see them. They carry records, high fidelity components, tape recorders, and make home installations.

Speaker Guide

Electro-Voice, Inc., Buchanan, Mich., has available a new booklet called "Guide to High-Fidelity Loudspeaker Systems." Send them 25¢ and ask for Catalogue Guide No. 177.

Gibson Girl, Jr.

Robins Industries Corp., 214-26 41st Ave., Bayside 61, N.Y., has produced a new tape splicer which is smaller, lighter, and lower in cost than other models, no great burden to carry around with you. It cuts tape diagonally, and trims the splice so as to produce a slightly narrower waist, therefore preventing contact of the adhesive you use with the recorder. That we like.

Also announced by Robins is a Phono-Cushion made of plastic (Poly-

Continued on next page

BROCINER

PRINTED CIRCUIT AUDIO AMPLIFIERS

HIGH FIDELITY Magazine says

"top quality"

Mark 30C Audio Control Center

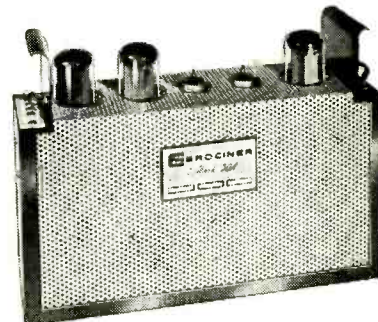
"... distortion has been reduced almost to the vanishing point... Strictly a top-quality control unit worthy of the very finest associated equipment, and well suited to the needs of the high fidelity perfectionist."—HIGH FIDELITY Magazine



Feedback type preamplifier with extreme flexibility of control and input-output facilities, functionally designed for ease and simplicity of operation. Separate Turnover and Roll-off controls. Exact compensation for all recording curves, rigidly controlled in production. Feedback-type bass and treble controls. Rumble filter and loudness compensation front-panel controlled. Facilities for two phono inputs. Adjustable pickup load. Tape output jack. I.M. distortion virtually unmeasurable. Extremely low hum and noise level. Highly styled, legible front panel; maroon and gold cabinet. For use as remote control unit—self adjusting feature for cabinet installation. Size: 3½" x 10¾" x 6". **\$88.50**

Mark 30A Power Amplifier

30 watts of low-distortion power in a compact, attractively styled, easy-to-install package. Long life assured by novel chassis design providing perfect ventilation of components. I.M. distortion below 1% at 30 watts; ¼% at 20 watts; 1/10% at 10 watts. 43 db. multiple-loop negative feedback. Wide-band phase compensation assures absolutely stable operation with all types of speakers. Perfect freedom from transient oscillation and fast recovery time result in audibly cleaner performance. Genuine, licensed Ultra-Linear Circuit. Size 3½" x 12" x 9" **\$98.25**



Mark 10 Integrated Amplifier and Control Center

"ASTONISHED ME."

—B. H. Haggin, "The Nation"

A complete, truly high fidelity amplifier at a moderate price. Features flexibility with simplicity of control. Accurate record compensation, adjustable for all recording curves. For all high quality phonograph pickups. Bass and treble controls. Rumble filter. Loudness-compensated volume control. Tape output jack. 20 db. feedback. 10 watts at less than 1% distortion. Attractive maroon and gold finish. Compact: 4½" x 11" x 8". **\$75.00**



Available at better high-fidelity distributors. (Prices slightly higher west of Rockies). Literature on request.



BROCINER

ELECTRONICS CORPORATION

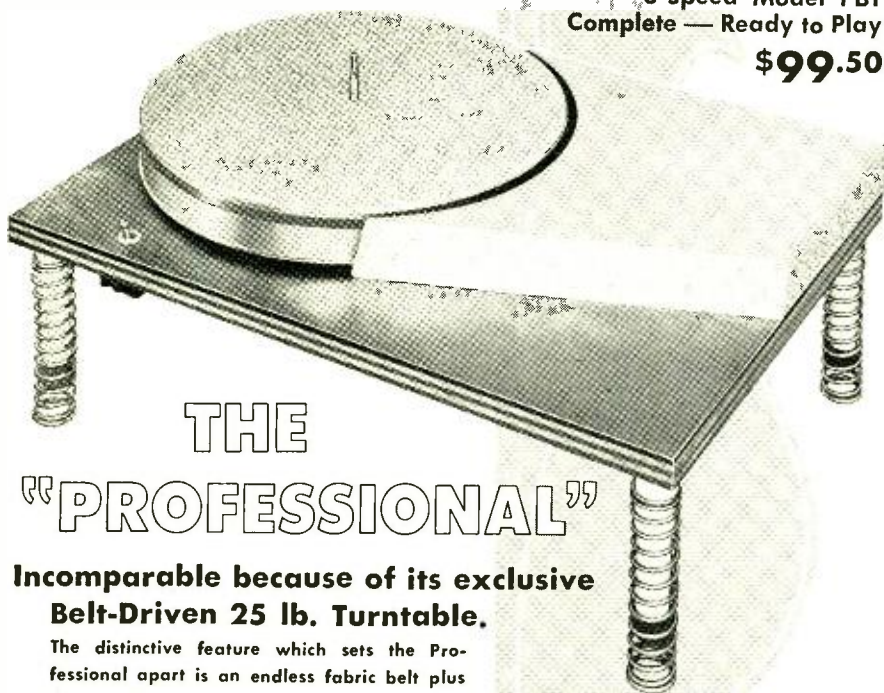
Dept. HF3
344 E. 32nd St.
New York 16, N. Y.

You can't get complete performance with half an instrument!

For top performance get a "PROFESSIONAL" turntable.... it's ready to play!

You can't expect good performance from half a violin — neither can you expect perfect reproduction with a turntable lacking essential design features. The Professional insures top performance because it is engineered with all the necessary features to eliminate distorting rumble, flutter and wow. It is the only complete turntable unit with base and built-in shock mounting legs, power switch and cord as standard equipment — it comes ready to play! Remember, no extras to buy!

**3-Speed Model PBT
Complete — Ready to Play
\$99.50**



THE "PROFESSIONAL"

Incomparable because of its exclusive Belt-Driven 25 lb. Turntable.

The distinctive feature which sets the Professional apart is an endless fabric belt plus the 25 lb. turntable. It reduces rumble to minus 70 db, wow and flutter to .05%. There are no noisy rubber idlers — no maintenance problem!

**4-Speed Model
\$109.50**

Write

for more descriptive literature or visit your dealer for a side-by-side "listening comparison."

Components Corporation

DENVILLE, NEW JERSEY

NOTED WITH INTEREST

Continued from preceding page

ester foam). It comes in several colors; is enclosed in a plastic envelope which can be used for storage of 10-inch LPs. (Incidentally, these plastic envelopes may be bought separately for 10-inch record storage.)

New Product

A new company with a new product: Metzner Engineering Corp., 1041 North Sycamore St., Hollywood 38, Cal., has announced a "high-fidelity, center-drive turntable." Four speeds (16 $\frac{2}{3}$ rpm being the fourth); four-pole drive-motor; built-in stroboscope; retails at \$49.50, less pickup. For more information, write their Dept. R.

Fairchild's New Child

A new high power amplifier has been announced available by Fairchild. It's Model 275, "designed to deliver 75 watts continuously, and capable of peaks up to 150 watts."

Great Danes, 1955

The Danish Gramophone Society has announced the winners of the Danish Gramophone Record Awards for disks recorded during the period July 1, 1954 to June 30, 1955, by Danish artists and ensembles of Danish music and speech. The Society limits the Awards to national accomplishments because it is their aim "to emphasize the extraordinary efforts for Danish art and artists made by the Danish gramophone companies." The awards went to the following records: Decca (English) LXT 2979: Carl Nielsen's Flute Concerto; Holger Gilbert-Jespersen, Danish State Radio Orchestra, Thomas Jensen, cond. Columbia 33KC 1: Igor Stravinsky: Octet for Wind Instruments; Members of Copenhagen Royal Orchestra. Decca (English) LXT 2980: Nielsen: Symphony No. 5; Danish State Radio Orchestra, Thomas Jensen, cond. Decca (English) LXT 2934: Nielsen: Three Motets, Op. 55; Danish Radio Madrigal Choir, Mogens Wöldike, cond. Tono LPX 35007: Runar Schildt. *Galgemanden*; Anna Borg and Poul Reumert. Special Award went to H.M.V. KCLP 1: "From the Danish Resistance Movement" — situations from the German occupation 1940-45.

AS THE EDITORS SEE IT

SUPPOSE you become interested in the literature on Christopher Columbus and conceive a desire to read Washington Irving's authoritative life of the great explorer. It was first published in 1828 and has been out of print for some time. But that is not of serious consequence. You will find the book in any large reference library in the English-speaking world.

Suppose, on the other hand, that you need some information on Busoni's interpretation of Bach. Nothing more authoritative in this regard exists than the recordings Busoni himself made for English Columbia shortly before his death in 1924. These too have been out of print for a long time, and in this case with far more serious consequences. For there is not in the whole United States one really large collection of out-of-print records to which the public has access. So far as most of us in this country are concerned, Busoni's Bach must remain unheard.

There is only one way to describe this state of affairs. It is scandalous. The phonograph record is in its own way just as valuable a reference tool as the printed book, and it does not deserve to be so slighted. Recordings of sound, in one form or another, have been made in abundance for about seventy years. Vaudeville comics and opera singers, pianists and actors, poets and statesmen, dance bands and symphony orchestras have all been immortalized within the grooves of records. An era has been documented in sound. Surely, the time has come when this entire documentation should be collected, catalogued, and made available to those who need it.

It is true that a beginning has been made toward this goal. Two archives of recordings already exist in the United States. One of them belongs to the Music Division of the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. This collection comprises somewhat more than 100,000 recordings of all kinds. At present it is only partially catalogued, and no estimate can be made of the number of LPs in relation to 78s, or of the percentage of acoustic (pre-1925) recordings as opposed to electric. Most of the musical recordings belong to the "classical" category, as the Library's systematic acquisition of popular recordings did not begin until the 1940s. The Library has had to depend mainly on the generosity of manufacturers for its records, and there are a few large companies who have not felt at all generous in this respect. Funds for the purchase of records are very small. Thanks to a grant of \$41,520 from the Carnegie Corporation in 1940, the Library of Congress has some excellent recording and playback equipment. However, there is enough of it to accommodate only serious researchers, who must make appointments in advance.

The other large archive of recordings belongs to the Music Division of the New York Public Library. Here there are approximately 30,000 disks, of which some 3,000 are

microgrooves. About 17,000 of the 78s have been catalogued, and these are mostly of post-1925 vintage, though the New York collection does include about 200 exceedingly rare acoustics and a few hundred others of lesser rarity. This collection, like the one in Washington, has been built up principally as the result of gifts. For several years Columbia and RCA Victor have kept the New York Public Library supplied with all new releases; other companies have contributed more sporadically, and some not at all. Many individuals in the New York area have also given records to the Library. Unfortunately, there is no way for the public to use this collection. The records are stored in the basement and see the light of day only when record concerts are held under the Library's auspices.

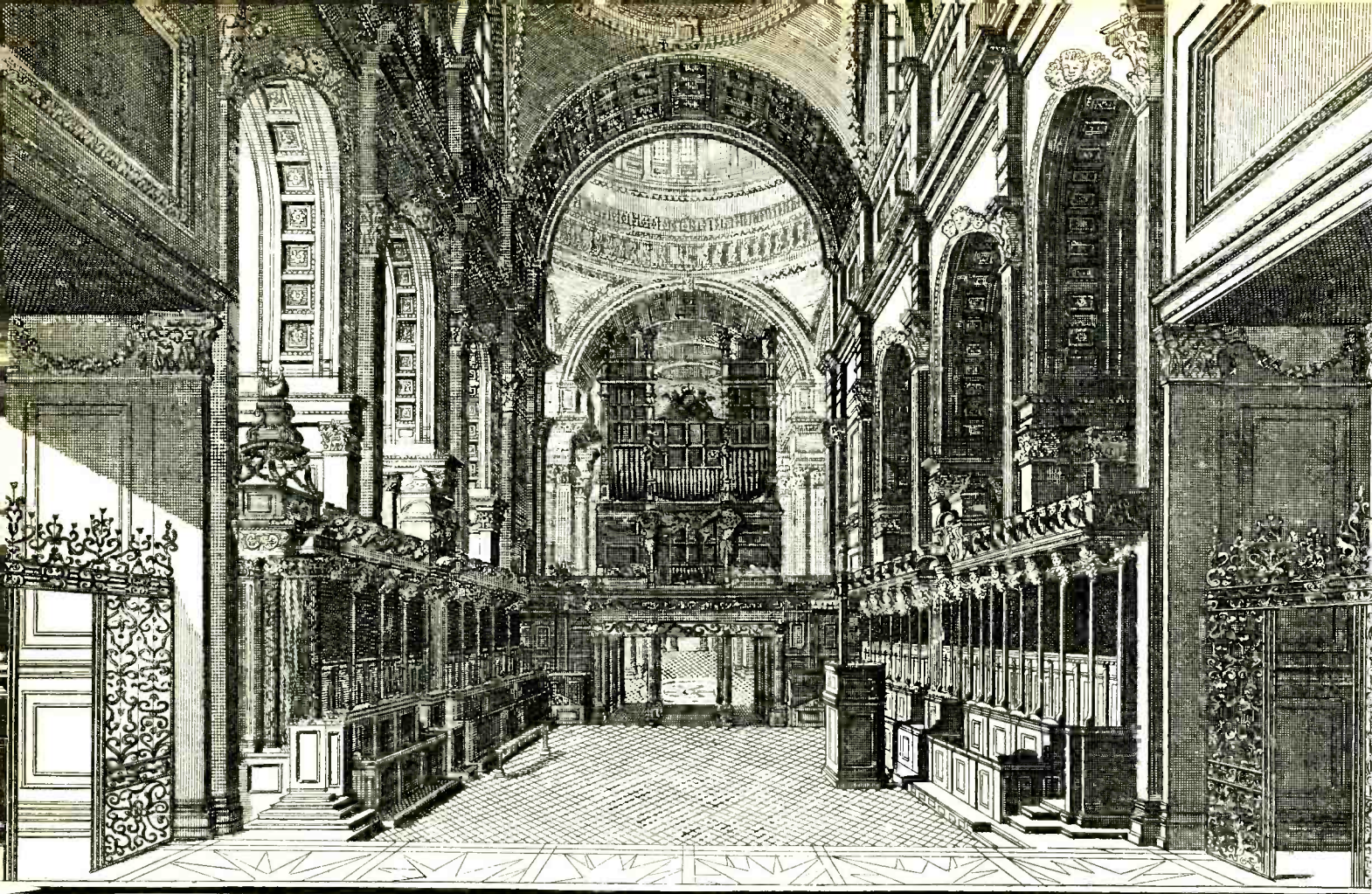
These two collections are valuable as far as they go, but neither of them goes far enough. Even the Library of Congress, with its 100,000 recordings, possesses only a fraction of the past seventy years' output. And both collections are sadly deficient in that *sine qua non* of all good libraries: easy accessibility. Something better is needed.

Perhaps a new approach is called for. Just as microfilm has enabled libraries to make rare books and newspapers available to all who want to consult them, so magnetic tape can allow the legacy of recorded sound to be heard by all who want to listen. A Shakespeare First Folio and a Caruso Zonophone are wonderful objects to own, but a microfilm of the one and a transcription of the other are just as useful, and they are certainly better adapted to the rough-and-tumble of public use day in and day out.

In our dreams we have conjured up an American Institute of Recorded Sound, headquartered in New York City, whose sole purpose would be to collect, on tape, recordings of the past, to house them in its own building, and to make them available to the public. Scattered throughout the world are fabulous private collections that should be transferred to tape with the least possible delay while they still exist intact. There are great collections of vocal recordings such as those of Roberto Bauer in Milan, Michel de Bry in Paris, W. R. Moran and George T. Keating in California. There is Jim Walsh's unique collection of American and British music-hall entertainers, Harold Schonberg's of pianists, Joseph Szigeti's of violinists. Walter Toscanini has an unparalleled collection of recordings made by his father. The list could go on and on.

We would like to see this rich legacy of recorded sound gathered together in one place. And we would like to see it made every bit as accessible as is the legacy of printed books in our reference libraries. Enthusiasm, knowledge, and money are needed to accomplish this program. Especially money—and lots of it. Are you listening, Mr. Ford Foundation? The American Institute of Recorded Sound needs your help.

R.G.



BETTMANN ARCHIVE

Music in England – 1851

by HECTOR BERLIOZ

TRANSLATED BY JACQUES BARZUN

Berlioz, journalist and satirist as well as composer, assembled various of his writings into a book called Evenings with the Orchestra, purporting to be a series of chats with bored members of a provincial opera orchestra, during performances. This is an excerpt, more serious than most of the book, adapted from an actual news report. Alfred A. Knopf will publish Mr. Barzun's new translation of the Evenings next month.

I WAS IN LONDON during the early part of June last year, when a scrap of newspaper that came accidentally into my hands informed me that the *Anniversary Meeting of the Charity Children* was about to take place in St. Paul's. I went at once in search of a ticket, which, after many applications and letters, I ended by securing through the courtesy of Mr. Goss,* chief organist of that cathedral. By ten o'clock in the morning the crowd had blocked the approach to the church. I managed, with some little trouble, to force my way through it. On reaching the organ loft reserved for the regular choir of seventy men and boys, I was given a bass part, which I was requested to sing with them, and a surplice, which I had to put on in order not to destroy, with my black frock-coat, the

harmony of the other choristers' white garb.

Thus disguised as a churchman, I awaited what I was to hear with a certain vague emotion brought on by what I saw. Nine very steep stands, each numbering sixteen rows of benches, had been erected for the children in the center of the building, under the dome and under the eastern vaulting in front of the choir stalls. The six stands under the dome formed together a sort of six-sided enclosure, with openings to the east and west only. From the latter opening rose a broad ramp of seats extending to the top of the principal entrance door, and already occupied by a huge crowd, which could thus, even from the most distant benches, hear and see everything perfectly.

To the left of the gallery where we stood in front of the organ, a platform was in readiness for seven or eight

*Later Sir John (1800-80). The meetings of the Charity Children began in 1704, and first took place in St. Paul's in 1789.

trumpeters and kettledrummers. On this platform a large mirror had been placed, so as to show the musicians the movements of the precentor beating time far away in his corner, under the dome but over the entire choral mass. This mirror also served the organist, whose back was turned to the choir. Banners affixed all round the vast amphitheater, whose sixteenth and last row almost touched the capitals of the columns, marked the places to be occupied by the various schools, and bore the names of the parishes or districts of London to which these schools belonged.

As the groups of children filed in, the compartments filling up successively from top to bottom presented an unusual spectacle which suggested what occurs in the microscopic world during the phenomenon of crystallization. The shafts of this crystal, made up of human molecules that continually proceeded from the circumference to the center, were of two colors: the dark-blue coats of the small boys on the upper tiers, and the white gowns and caps of the little girls in the lower rows. Moreover, as the boys wore on their jackets, some a plaque of polished copper, others a silver medal, their motions made the light reflected from these metallic ornaments glitter in such a way as to produce the effect of a thousand sparks flashing and blotted out every moment on the dark background of the picture. The appearance of the stands occupied by the girls was still more strange; the green and pink ribbons adorning the head and neck of these little maids in white made that part of the amphitheater look like a mountain covered with snow, but streaked with blades of grass and flowers here and there.

Add to this the variegated tints melting in the distant chiaroscuro of the sloping platform on which the audience sat, the red-hung pulpit of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the richly ornamented benches of the Lord Mayor and the British peerage on the floor below the dome, then at the farther end, high up, the gilded pipes of the great organ — imagine this magnificent church of St. Paul's, the largest in the world after St. Peter's, framing the entire scene, and you will still have but a poor idea of this incomparable spectacle. And everywhere perfect order, quiet, and calm, which enhanced still farther the magic of the scene. The most wonderful stage-setting imaginable could never approach this reality which, as it now seems to me, I must have seen in a dream.

As the children, dressed in their new clothes, gradually took their seats with a sober joy devoid of any turbulence, but in which, rather, some little pride was discernible, I could hear my English neighbors say among themselves: "What a sight! What a sight!" And deep was my emotion when the six thousand five hundred little singers were at last seated and the ceremony began. After a chord on the organ, there arose in a gigantic unison the first psalm sung by this incredible choir:

*All people that on earth do dwell,
Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice.*

It would be useless for me to try to give you an idea of the musical effect; the strength and beauty were to those of the best choirs you have ever heard as St. Paul's itself

is to a village church, and then a hundred times more. I must add that this broad and grand hymn is set to superb harmonies, with which the organ flooded it without ever succeeding in drowning it out. I was agreeably surprised to learn that the melody, long attributed to Luther, is by Claude Goudimel, a choirmaster at Lyon in the sixteenth century.*

In spite of the feeling of oppression and the tremor I was experiencing, I managed to control them sufficiently to be able to take a part in the "reading psalms," which the regular St. Paul's choir had to perform next. Boyce's *Te Deum*, written in 1760, a featureless work also sung by the choir, finally restored my equanimity. In the Coronation Anthem the children joined the small organ choir from time to time, but only with solemn ejaculations such as "God save the King!" "Long live the King!" "May the King live for ever!" "Amen, hallelujah!" and again I was electrified. I had to count many rests, in spite of the kind attentions of my neighbor, who kept pointing out to me in his part the bar we had reached, in the belief that I had lost my place. But when we came to the psalm in triple time by Joseph Ganthony, an old English master (1774), sung by all the voices to the accompaniment of trumpets, kettledrums, and organ — nature, under the shattering effect of this inspired and glowing hymn, so grand in its harmony and of an expression as noble as it is touching — nature reasserted her right to be weak, and I had to make use of my vocal score as Agamemnon did of his toga, to veil my face.

Following this sublime piece, and while the Archbishop of Canterbury was delivering his sermon — which the distance prevented me from hearing — one of the masters of ceremonies sought me out and led me, my face wet with

*The "Old Hundred" (or "Hundredth") is a tune from the Genevan Psalter, and its authorship has long been in dispute. Goudimel's claims now seem finally disallowed.



BETTMANN ARCHIVE

Street musician of the 1850s: the visitor was impressed.

tears, to various places of the church, so that I might gaze upon all aspects of a scene which the eye could not take in from any single point of vantage nor appreciate in all its grandeur. He then left me alone below, near the pulpit, among the fashionable world—that is to say, at the bottom of the crater of the vocal volcano; so that when the eruption began again for the final psalm, I had to admit that here its power was twice as great as in any other part of the church. In going out I met old Cramer,† who in his enthusiasm forgot that he knows French to perfection and began shouting at me in Italian: "*Cosa stupenda! stupenda! la gloria dell'Inghilterra!*"

And then Duprez, (Gilbert Duprez (1806-96), a famous French tenor), the great artist who in the course of his brilliant career has moved the hearts of so many, found many outstanding debts paid back to him that day—debts owed him by France and paid him by these English children.* I have never seen Duprez in such a state; he stammered, wept, and rambled, the while the Turkish Ambassador and a handsome young Hindu passed close by us, cold and sad, as if they had just heard their dancing dervishes howling in a mosque. O sons of the East, you lack one of the senses of man. Will you ever acquire it? . . .

Now for a few technical particulars. This institution of the Charity Children was founded by George III in 1764. It is supported by the voluntary donations or subscriptions of the rich or even ordinary well-to-do classes of the capital. The profits derived from the Anniversary Meeting in St. Paul's, tickets for which are sold at half a crown and half a guinea, belong to it also. Although all the seats reserved to the public on this occasion are sold out a long time ahead, the space taken up by so many children means that a large part of the church has to be sacrificed to the admirable arrangements I have described, and this naturally cuts into the financial returns of the ceremony. The expenses, moreover, are quite high: the erection of the nine amphitheatres and of the ramp alone costs £450 (\$2,250). The receipts generally amount to £800 (\$4,000). Hence there remain at most but £350 (\$1,750) for the 6,500 poor youngsters who give such a festival to their mother city. The voluntary donations, however, always amount to a considerable sum.

The children have no knowledge of music; they have never seen a note in their lives. Every year they are made to parrot, by ceaseless repetition on the violin for three whole months, the hymns and anthems they are to sing at the Meeting. They thus learn them by heart, and consequently bring to the church no notes or anything else to guide their singing, which is why they sing only in unison. Their voices are beautiful, but of narrow range. Hence they are generally given only phrases that lie within the

interval of an eleventh, from the lower B to the E on the fourth space (G clef). All these notes, which are virtually common to the soprano, mezzo-soprano, and contralto, and are consequently to be found in all the children, have a marvelous sonority. It is doubtful whether the children could be made to sing in several parts. In spite of the extreme simplicity and breadth of the melodies there is, to the musical ear, nothing like a faultless ensemble in the attacks after the pauses. This is due to the fact that the children do not know the meaning of beats in a bar and do not dream of counting them. Besides, their sole conductor stands high above the choir, where he can readily be seen only by the higher ranks of the three tiers facing him; he does hardly more than indicate the beginning of each piece, the majority of the singers being unable to see him, and the rest seldom deigning to look at him.

The amazing effect of the unison is due, in my opinion, to two causes: to the enormous number and good quality of the voices in the first instance, and secondly to the disposition of the singers in very high tiers. The reflectors and producers of sound are thus nicely balanced. The air within the church is struck from so many points at once, in surface and in depth, that it vibrates as a whole and its disturbance develops a power and majesty of action on the human nervous system which the most learned efforts of musical art under ordinary conditions have so far not given us any notion of. I may add, as a mere conjecture, that under exceptional circumstances such as these there must occur a good many as yet uncharted phenomena having to do with the mysterious laws of electricity.

I wonder also whether the cause of the notable difference between the voices of the children reared by charity in London and those of our poor children in Paris may not be due to the good and plentiful food given to the former, while the food the latter get is insufficient and of low quality. This seems very likely. These English children are strong, with solid muscle, and not in the least like the sickly and debilitated young of the working classes in Paris, who are themselves run down by malnutrition, hard work, and privations. It is quite natural that the vocal organs of our children should reflect the weakness of the rest of the organism, and that even their intelligence is affected by it.

At any rate it is not the voices alone that would be lacking today to reveal to Paris, with the same amazing effect, the sublimity of *monumental* music. What would be lacking in the first place is the cathedral of gigantic proportions (the Church of Notre Dame itself would not be suitable); next, alas, would be the artistic faith, a direct and passionate drive toward art; then the patience and calm discipline of pupils and artists; the conscious will, if not of the government, at least of the wealthy classes, to attain the goal after having perceived the beauty of it; and as a consequence, finally, the money would not be forthcoming and the undertaking would totter on its base. We need only recall—to compare small things with great—the sad end of Choron, who with his slender resources had already obtained *Continued on page 118*

†J. B. Cramer (1771-1858), the famous pianist admired by Beethoven, and senior partner in the music-publishing firm of Cramer and Beale, who strongly supported all Berlioz's musical activities in London. Cramer's words below read: "A stupendous thing! stupendous! the glory of England!"

*In the recently published letters of George Eliot, one hears a delayed echo of this event, a year later: "On Thursday morning I went to St. Paul's to see the Charity Children assembled and hear their singing. Berlioz says it is the finest thing he has heard in England and this opinion of his induced me to go. I was not disappointed—it is worth doing once, especially as we got out before the sermon." — To Mr. and Mrs. Charles Bray, June 5, 1852.



BETTMANN ARCHIVE

Whistle (Vivaldi) While You Work

by WILLIAM WEAVER

ARZIGNANO is a small town of about fifteen thousand inhabitants in Northern Italy, between Vicenza and Verona, at the foot of the Dolomites. It is also a prosperous town, owing to the flourishing Pellizzari factory (manufacturers of industrial machines) which is located there. The visitor to Arzignano senses this prosperity at once, as he looks at the neat houses or as he watches the workers, bicycling home from the plant and whistling on their way. But if the visitor listens closely to what they're whistling, he may receive a shock; chances are the tune will not be the latest popular song, but rather the second tenor part of the Vivaldi *Gloria* or a few bars of the Bach *Magnificat*.

This does not mean that all Italy whistles Bach and Vivaldi—but Arzignano does. Thanks to the musical inclinations of Antonio Pellizzari, son of the company's founder and its present general manager, the town has become a landmark on Italy's musical map. The young industrialist-conductor founded a music school there in 1951, and this institution, in what had been a cultural hinterland, had an immediate and revolutionary effect on the community. In less than a year after the school was founded, its chamber orchestra and chorus were performing Handel, Bach, and Vivaldi to packed houses. Since then, the organization has grown; they have given concerts in other cities (this winter they will visit Rome), and some of their recordings have recently been released (in Italy).

Arzignano is an exceptional town, even in a musical country like Italy. However, its repertory and its musical interests are not exceptional: they are typical of Italy's musical life today. To the average American music-lover, the

phrase "Italian music" is apt to mean simply nineteenth century opera. And, until a few decades ago, the Italians themselves seldom bothered about anything before Rossini or after Cilea. In American symphony concert programs, the only Italian music ever played was an occasional Rossini overture, the Paganini concerto, a Respighi tone poem, or—rarely—some kind of "suite" cooked up from odd morsels of Boccherini or some very liberal "arrangement" from Tartini or Viotti. These "suites" and "arrangements" still flourish on both sides of the Atlantic; but in Italy since the war, and in America for the last few seasons, the concert-going public has been gradually introduced to a vast and various archive of Italian instrumental music, discovered and copied out by a small group of scholars, and performed by chamber groups whose number increases with every season.

Respighi himself was interested in ancient music, but his interest was more that of a grave-robber than that of an archeologist. His souped-up version of Monteverdi's *Orfeo* is still performed in Italy once in a while, and he also raided the past for his *Uccelli* and his suites of ancient airs and dances. But it was another composer of the period who, with a more respectful attitude towards his illustrious predecessors, took the lead in restoring Italy's eighteenth-century music to its proper high position. This was Alfredo Casella. Though few of his own compositions have remained in the repertory, Casella is fondly remembered in Italy (he died in 1947) both as a musician and a scholar. He was particularly interested in the work of Antonio Vivaldi, whose music he edited, performed, and propagated.

To talk of chamber music in Italy these days is, in fact, to talk of Vivaldi. No chamber music program is complete without at least one work of this Venetian priest. In the last twenty years or so, catalogues of his enormous output have been issued, facsimile editions of his scores have appeared, and more works of his than of the most prolific contemporary composers have been given "premières."

Associated with Casella in the spreading of Vivaldi's fame was another significant Italian musical personality — Count Guido Chigi Saracini of Siena. Count Chigi is a composer too; but he is more important as a patron of music and the founder (in 1932) of Siena's Accademia Chigiana, where Casella was one of the original teachers. The Accademia functions primarily as an international summer school for advanced musicians, but it also specializes in the discovery and performance of rare works from the past. Since 1939 these performances have been organized into a special festival week at the end of the school's semester, the "settimana sense," which usually occurs in early September. Such composers as the Scarlattis, Galuppi, Rinaldo da Capua, Pergolesi, and, of course, Vivaldi have been amply performed in these brief festivals, which even offer performances of operas. Another outgrowth of the Accademia is the Center of Vivaldian Studies, founded in 1949, which has published a number of scholarly works.

But from the average music-lover's point of view, the Accademia's most valuable immediate contribution has been the Quintetto Chigiano, organized in 1939, now one of Italy's oldest functioning chamber groups. Taking the name of the Accademia's founder, it has also followed his tastes, and in the last fifteen years has been a great agent in stirring up interest in old music in Italy. At the same time, it has introduced a number of contemporary works. This group is well known abroad (it has toured a great deal), and has made some recordings for the London label.

Since this quintet was formed, a series of other small groups have been established and have managed to make a more or less permanent place for themselves in Italy's musical world: the Trio di Trieste, the Quartetto Italiano, the Quintetto Boccherini (especially devoted to the works of the musician whose name it takes), and the Trio Redditi (the youngest group, and a promising one), as well as various other trios and duos, which assemble and break up as their seasonal engagements require.

Italy's eighteenth-century composers did not write only trios and quartets, however; they also wrote symphonies and concertos, and to perform these works a number of larger chamber groups have been formed. Like the smaller ensembles, these chamber orchestras have had an enviable success.

The largest and most stable of these organizations is the Orchestra Alessandro Scarlatti of Naples. This city had barely

begun the agonizing task of rebuilding after the war's destruction when some of its leading musicians and amateurs formed the Orchestra da camera napoletana; in 1949 this group was taken over by the Associazione Scarlatti, which re-baptized it. The Association, which also sponsors a series of concerts, has built the orchestra into one of the best in Italy, and supplements its activity with a general cultural program, including lectures, competitions, and so on. Though they perform a wide variety of works (including some contemporary composers like Chavez and Valen, rarely heard in Italy), they specialize in eighteenth-century music and are responsible for the first modern performances of works by Albinoni, Reali, Leo, Sacchini, and others. They are planning their first American tour for the 1956-57 season; but they are already known in the United States through their Angel recordings.

Like Vienna, Naples is a musical city with a large and enthusiastic public and taxi-drivers who can tell you who's singing at the opera, which rivals La Scala. The other great musical city in Italy is, of course, Milan. There the orchestra of the Angelicum performs a function similar to the Scarlattis'. Founded in 1942 by the Franciscan order of *frati minori*, the Angelicum is managed by Father Enrico Zucca, with the musical advice of the composer G. F. Ghedini and of the permanent conductor Aladar Janes. As might be expected, the Angelicum (frequently assisted by various choral groups) leans towards religious music. This year, for example, in honor of the 350th anniversary of the birth of Carissimi, they will perform seven of his oratorios, including the best-known, *Jephthé*. They will also perform the *Juditha Triumphans* and the *Gloria* of Vivaldi, Bach's *Magnificat*, and Mozart's *Requiem*. But their interests are not exclusive: they have also revived many eighteenth-century secular works and have given first modern performances of Bonporti, Rolla, Zavatari, and Vivaldi (whose mandolin concerto in C was given its first Italian performance by the Angelicum in 1953). The Angelicum also sponsors, like the Scarlattis, a cultural program with lectures, record concerts, free courses, exhibitions, and publications on a number of subjects, not all of them musical ones.

Though it is far from being Italy's musical capital, Rome has given birth to several of the country's most important and most active chamber groups. The Virtuosi di Roma, as they are known abroad (in Italy they are called the Collegium Musicum Romanum), are a local body, but they are on tour most of the time and are heard, at most, once or twice in the city that gave them their name. The Corelli string orchestra also calls Rome its home, but it too is more often away than not. And the same is true of the more recent, smaller group I Musici, formed in 1951 by twelve young graduates

Continued on page 124



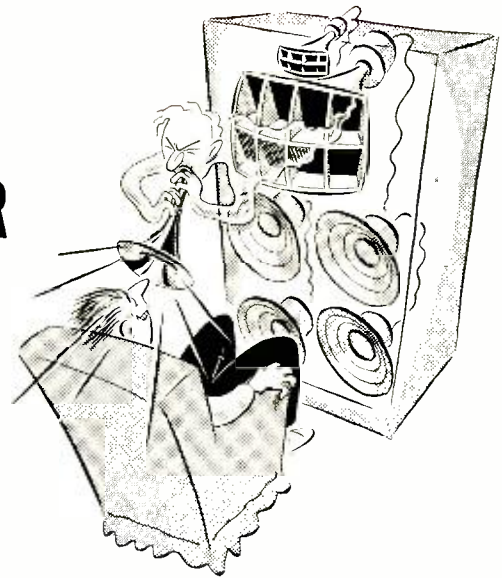
The Red Priest leads a bit parade.

Is there an uninvited "presence" in your listening room?

THE *haunted* LOUDSPEAKER

by J. Gordon Holt

Illustration by the author



ONE OF THE THINGS that makes high fidelity such an attractive topic for Sunday supplement writers is that it lends itself so readily to neat — even if gaudy — definition.

Writers derive an irresistible thrill from being able to sit down at a typewriter and deftly define a complicated business like high fidelity sound reproduction with a short, gleaming phrase like "exact re-creation of the original sounds." Or "just like having the orchestra in your living room" (God forbid!). Or, merely the single, simple — and sinister — word "presence."

The implication is that any one with average hearing, armed with one of these deft definitions, can attend a couple of live concerts, walk into a hi-fi salon, and proceed infallibly to choose the system which most closely duplicates the sound of "the real thing," within the limitations of his budget. It's as basic as that. Just a matter of simple comparison . . . there's only one real thing, so all we have to do is get a system that sounds like it.

At the outset, it does seem simple. From pickup through amplifier, the prices of components reflect their merit with fair accuracy. It is when he starts loudspeaker-shopping that the neophyte enters pitfall territory. For loudspeakers speak for themselves, and in voices too varied for comfort.

The shopper's confidence begins to flag. If he is typical, he may not have prepared himself adequately for his quest. Probably he omitted the preliminary concert-going, perhaps necessarily — though he can still vaguely remember how the Cleveland Orchestra sounded when it came to town last year. And he forgot to consider the readiness of the human ear, including his own, to adjust to what it is hearing *now*. Comparative listening begins to confuse him, and he falls back on advice. His troubles are compounded. One friend, an audio hobbyist, recommends a speaker with powerful, piercing treble. A violinist friend suggests another, with a clean, mellow middle range and nothing much in the way of treble or bass. A lifelong concertgoer with a strong Bruckner-Mahler bent puts forward *his* favorite system, which is strong at both ends of the spectrum but oddly tenuous in the middle. All are being sincerely helpful, but the shopper's problem has not been simplified.

At this point he is likely to hear from the "personal preference" school of thought, which argues that since all people hear things differently, he should buy that speaker

which "suits his ear." In some respects this is a pretty good statement of the problem, but its real significance has little to do with the aural acuity of the listener.

If two people with widely different hearing characteristics could sit in the same seat at the same orchestra concert, they would be subjected to the same pattern of air vibrations, even though they might perceive different things when the orchestra played a certain chord. If both of these people were seated in a living room and were having their ears stimulated by precisely the same air vibrations as were present in the concert hall, they would still perceive different things, but could nonetheless identify the sound as being exactly like that of the live orchestra.

On the other hand, what a person hears in a concert hall depends not only on his hearing acuity but also on where he happens to be seated. If he sits very close to the orchestra, he hears tremendous power from the brasses and woodwind instruments, a hard, gleaming edge from the violins, and very little echo from the auditorium. Put *him* in the living room beside someone who heard the same concert from the balcony, where the orchestra sounded well-blended and smooth, and the same set of air vibrations will *not* sound like the real thing to both of them.

The one who remembers the original sound as bright and hard will be adjudged an imbecile by the balcony listener, and they will vigorously accuse each other of never having heard a live orchestra. If we are defining high fidelity, then, as "faithfulness to the original sound," it becomes obvious that what is fidelity to one listener may not be fidelity to another, which will not come as a surprise to anybody.

But this isn't a very helpful conclusion. Neither Mr. Up Front nor Mr. Second Balcony really wants to argue the high fidelity industry out of setting loudspeaker standards. All either wants to insure is that the system he buys will be able to make music sound more or less (depending on how it was microphoned) the way he is used to hearing it. Presumably, neither will care particularly how this is done. Presumably, indeed, either will prefer that it be done in such a way that it can be *undone* for people whose tastes differ from his.

Essentially, that last sentence marks the point at which Mr. U.F. and Mr. S.B. can unite, and it is high time they did. For it is, in part, their disagreement that has turned the setting and acceptance of loudspeaker standards over to people whose judgment has no such basis as either of theirs, people who have never sat down front or up yonder, or in a concert hall at all. Recently I heard one of these, after listening to a major orchestra from the first row, complain that it lacked "impact." He didn't quite dare use the word he uses at home. That word is, of course, "presence," and it has come to represent, in hi-fi parlance, a concept quite independent of its dictionary meaning.

Apparently it had its roots in the early days of high fidelity, when the best loudspeakers were units designed for movie theaters and auditoriums. For public-address applications, of course, intelligibility of reproduced speech is the primary requisite, and it was found long ago that a broad peak introduced into what we now call the "vital presence range" would achieve this result. When these speakers were brought into hi-fi homes, this middle-high-frequency peak was found to have the remarkable ability to make sounds seem as if they were coming from *in front of* the speaker, and the concept of "the performer in your living room" was born. Naturally, most subsequent speakers that were made to compete with these theater units for strictly home hi-fi use had to embody this same characteristic for them to receive any attention at all, and the "bright sound" came to be a world-wide identifying feature of American high fidelity speakers.

The high fidelity industry grew by leaps and bounds because it could bring musical enjoyment to people who seldom or never had the opportunity to hear orchestra concerts, and it was a logical development that many of these people should come to consider this "brightness" as an integral part of a musical performance. This may explain, in part, the fact that, statistically, more speakers with "bright" high ends than smooth ones are sold today.

IT IS simply a physical impossibility for the majority of concertgoers to sit close to the orchestra. Conventional placement of concert-hall seats dictates that most listeners will be farther away than, say, row "L." So it does not make sense to assume that regular concertgoers are the backbone of the buying force which chooses bright-sounding speakers as being the most realistic. Aural conditioning would seem to be one explanation; another may be the initial impact, on the untutored ear, of sound (as one writer has described it) "shot from guns."

There is no doubt but that many first-time visitors to hi-fi salons are immensely impressed by their initial exposure to presence. A speaker with considerable contribution in the presence range can throw triangles and tambourines at the listener as he has never heard them before. And while this should be a warning to him that it may not be utterly lifelike in the literal sense of the word, he is still likely to conclude that it *is* high fidelity. It bristles with highs, and, after all, hi-fi is supposed to bring him all the high tones, isn't it?

The most unfortunate part about all this is that it seems almost impossible to elevate the presence range in most loudspeakers appreciably without introducing at least a few jagged peaks into that range, and any manufacturer who tries to go overboard in this respect runs a great risk of arousing quite serious distortion—and in just that part of the sound-spectrum where distortion is most audible. In fact, it is probably this high-frequency distortion, more than the mid-treble boost, that bothers musicians when they shudder at the sound of some of the more drastically "brightened" loudspeakers. The fundamentals and related harmonics they are most intimately acquainted with are being mangled out of recognition.

QUITE PLAINLY, when someone finds that a live orchestra, heard from the first row, is not as enjoyable as his hi-fi system, he is not interested in reproducing music as it originally sounded, but is seeking something else. What he is seeking may come to be considered a new art form, but it bears little relevance to high fidelity. His system is a *producer* of sound with a musical basis, but it is not a *reproducer* of musical sounds.

There are implications in all this confusion that may not be immediately evident.

Without some accepted yardstick by which sound reproduction can be judged, record companies may find it almost impossible to know how the records they are producing will sound on home hi-fi systems, and they may even be tempted to try and reproduce in their studios the "average" home hi-fi system, so they can get a better idea of what they are accomplishing, as far as the "average" consumer is concerned. In just what direction this might lead the high fidelity and record business is hard to guess, but it would probably *not* be toward steady improvement of the audio art.

It is the writer's contention that every high fidelity reproducing system, from the cheapest to the most elaborate, should be *capable of* producing an essentially flat frequency response over its useful range, from the equalized record into the room. Fidelity to the original still stands as the guide post, but the only valid comparison that can be made is with the *recording* as the original, rather than the concert-hall sound.

The recording is the only stable, unchanging thing, once it is committed to disk, so with this as the meeting point between the producer and the consumer we have a means of definitely evaluating the *quality* of a system, and the record manufacturers have a means of accurately judging their own efforts.

A truly flat, low-distortion reproducing system, without any "character" of its own, allows the listener to hear a recording precisely as it is.

If it was recorded close-to, he hears it that way. A recording miked from further away sounds more distant. And they both sound the same way to the record manufacturer as they do to the consumers, so if he wants to get a certain type of sound into his products he can go ahead and do so without worrying about what the consumer's playback system will do to them.

But possibly one of the greatest advantages of the ideal *linear* system is that evaluations of its performance can be divorced from preferences and prejudices, and can be measured on impartial instruments with the assurance that if it tests out well its fidelity is truly high, so far as fidelity to the recording is concerned.

This ideal system, fed by a signal of constant intensity all over its frequency range, will deliver an *acoustically* flat response into the room, and the only tonal correction desired would be that needed to correct for inadequacies in the speaker or the room acoustics. Any additional correction would be introducing something that was not present in the original signal, and, as such, would constitute distortion.

The only way in which the overall linearity of a system can be checked is with a microphone and a decibel meter. Listening tests conducted with test records or signal generators are inadequate as indications of smoothness, since it takes a really massive peak or dip in the response to be audible under these conditions. A much more dependable audible spot-check of a system's linearity is by means of a worn, scratched LP record.

One of the most harmful myths that has grown out of overemphasis on "presence" is that a truly top-quality system will show up record blemishes better than a mediocre one. The truth of the matter is that the annoyance value of clicks and fuzziness from records *decreases* as the smoothness and distortion characteristics of the system are improved. The energy generated by a click or pop is initially distributed evenly all over the audible range, and is reproduced by a linear system as a mild plop, having no particular pitch and no great annoyance value.

But a sharp peak in the system's response greatly increases the output at that particular frequency, so the click becomes more audible and hence more annoying.

This then is probably the best test for smoothness that a non-technical high fidelity enthusiast has on hand. If he

finds surface blemishes to be very noticeable and rather hard on his nerves, the chances are that his system is peaky, and he would do well to investigate his speaker.

Since the linear system, however, makes a recording sound close-to only if it was originally miked that way, listeners with strong seating preferences would be obliged to limit their record purchases to those that "suit their taste" in distance, and this would obviously narrow their range of choice. Close-miked recordings would sound violent to the balcony dweller, and more distant recordings would be pallid to the row-A ear.

SO WHAT is needed, then, is some provision by which the user can vary the apparent distance between him and the reproduced orchestra. This effect can be approximated by varying the presence range, but as we have seen, it is poor practice to carry out this "correction" in the loudspeaker.

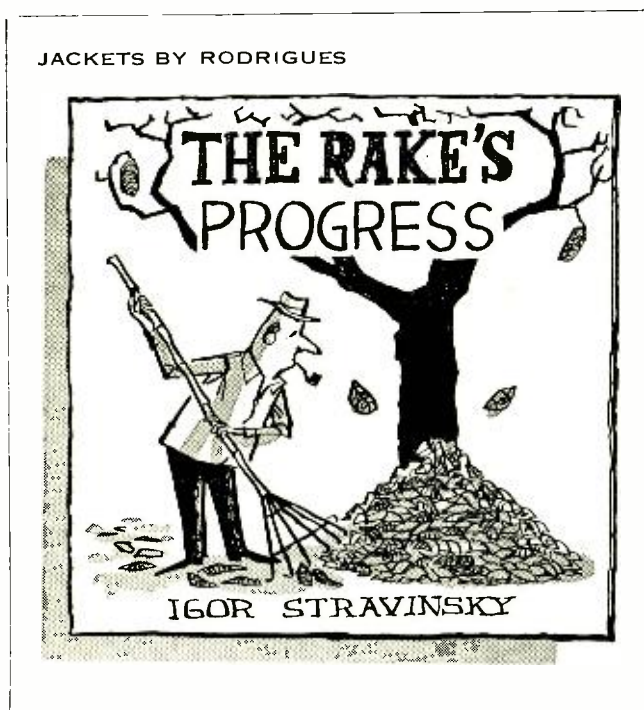
The answer is a presence control, built into the system's control unit.

A presence control is a form of resonant filter which allows the presence range, from about 2,000 to 5,000 cycles, to be broadly peaked or depressed without affecting the rest of the audible spectrum. Its most attractive feature is that, in its mid-setting, it produces a flat response, providing a basis from which the listener can work one way or the other to move the apparent distance of the orchestra to his familiar "vantage point."

The writer does not claim for a moment that modification of the response in the presence range can completely compensate for a recording that is too close or too far away from the listener. Changing the response in the presence range tends to reorganize the harmonics of musical sounds, changing the sounds of the instruments to the extent that most critical listeners would rather hear the reproduced orchestra from an unfamiliar "distance" than accept the distortion caused by presence range manipulation. The job of putting an orchestra close to or farther away from the listener is really that of the recording engineer, who can achieve the effect without losing the characteristic timbre of the instruments. But for those record buyers who might be bothered by the vantage point of certain recordings, the presence control would enable them to put the orchestra where they want it.

The major advantage of such a control, of course, is that it achieves whatever coloration of sound the user may want, without introducing peaks and distortion into the critical high-frequency range. A secondary advantage is that, while it provides the added presence needed to make a distant recording sound close-to, it also permits the balcony listener to back off the apparent distance of a close-miked recording.

The reproducing system, then, could be evaluated on a very definite quality basis, with its presence control set for flat response, yet it would also be capable of producing sound that has some illusion of reality for any listener, regardless of his customary seat in the concert hall, and regardless of the original recording technique used by the record company.



Poor Richard's Soundtrack

by ERIC BENTLEY

Some comments from a noted drama critic on the hazards of recording Shakespeare, occasioned by a hearing of RCA Victor's new Richard III, adapted from the soundtrack of the film produced by Sir Laurence Olivier, soon to be released here.

IT IS OBVIOUS that, as entertainment, mere recordings from poetic drama cannot begin to compete with the stage, the screen, or even TV. The short excerpt is too short to satisfy, and the long excerpt is too long to stay with. The value of dramatic recordings is not to the general public but to the student, the connoisseur, the expert. And it can be a high value, largely, I believe, as evidence of what leading performers did with a given text. What would any student of theater not give to know what Burbage, Betterton, Garrick, and Kean did with "To be or not to be"? Not only were there no phonographs in those times; to this day there exists no satisfactory notation by which vocal performance (tone, tempo, volume, phrasing, cadence, timbre, etc.) can be represented and preserved on paper. But, now that we have the

a noise known as music has been invented to fill the interstices between words and to present humankind with the anxious alternative: be inaudible or shout. By way of a corrective, I proffer this statement: *silence, not music, is the proper background of speech and, second to speech itself, is the finest of dramatic effects*, and I use italics so that the FBI won't miss it; for it is subversive; carried into effect it would entail the overthrow of the American way of life, perhaps by violence. For on the day when all the cables have been cut to all the juke boxes in all the bars, luncheonettes, and restaurants, the streets will be found littered with the corpses of men who for the first time have heard the sound of their own voices; and the notion that they have committed suicide will be discounted as communist propaganda.

Actually, except for purposes of argument, I do not deny to film or TV the use of incidental music (though I should be happy to point out many abuses of it). I have in mind, rather, the unfortunate spread of movie methods to the stage (how unnecessary was the harpsichord in Orson Welles's *Lear* at City Center!), and, more particularly, the spoiling of dramatic phonograph records by such nondramatic, nonphonographic elements. The instance before me — *Richard III* (RCA Victor, LM 6126, three 12-inch LPs) — is an extreme case. This is not a recording "influenced by the movies." It is nothing more nor less than the sound track of a movie, unedited and uncut. Which is to say that, as a work offered as phonography alone, it is highly unacceptable — to every sort of listener and for every sort of reason.

Those who can see the film instead will obviously do so. Those who wish to be reminded of the film will see the film again. In any case, a recording could be no vivid reminder, as movies are primarily a visual medium. As for the those who, for reasons personal or geographical, cannot get to the film, they either know Shakespeare's *Richard III* or they do not. If they do not, they will find this recording impossible to follow. There are so many characters, it will be impossible for them to know who is speaking. There are so many incidents, it will be impossible to know what is happening. Small comfort to reflect, during one of the interminable stretches of William Walton music: on the screen such interesting things must be going on now! RCA Victor has, unfortunately, done nothing to guide the helpless listener through this maze; the booklet accompanying the album contains only a list of the cast and some chatty remarks on the play by a



Bloom and Olivier: . . . "something less than compelling."

phonograph, we can say with precision and certitude of Gielgud, Evans, Olivier: this is how they said it.

It follows that music, in recordings of drama, is simply a nuisance. No doubt, the record makers think that by adding music they are taking the curse of "educationality" off the thing. They are wrong; they are only appealing to a fallacy, succumbing to a fad, and perpetuating a pest. I refer to the assumption that silence is a bad thing, that mere human speech is not enough to break silence, and that

critic (Walter Kerr, of *The New York Herald Tribune*) who evidently hadn't seen the film or heard the sound track. You might think that the listener who knows the text has better luck. Actually, he is kept so busy tracing the cuts, interpolations, and splicings-together that he hasn't time to follow the story in its own terms; he is just confused.

I feel I know what I'm talking about because I played these six sides, and did my best to listen to them, before I saw the film. Only misanthropy could prompt me to advise any fellow man to do likewise. Even now that I have seen the film, I can only advise RCA Victor to withdraw the album and substitute two sides of excerpts with a minimum of music. [Actually, Victor has produced a "highlights" LP of *Richard III*. It is LM 1940. ED.] For my readers should be warned that the music is not confined to the background. Quite often there are no words at all, but just the kind of music that is not interesting enough to listen to blaring symphonically away. Later, when you see the film, this music falls into proper insignificance behind the spectacle and pantomime which it was composed to accompany.

Anyone interested in the relation of sound track to film might also be interested in the fact that, after hearing these records, I expected very little of the film; and yet, when I saw the film, I found it to be an extraordinarily beautiful work, perhaps the best achievement of Sir Laurence Olivier in any field. The general principle involved has already been implied: good sounds might make a bad sound track, whereas a good sound track does not constitute in itself a good work of art. It is also a matter of Olivier's particular talent, which is not for radio and phonography but for acting and film-directing. There is a good deal to be said against Olivier's voice. It is not grand, it is not rich, it is not warm. It fails, therefore, in most cases, to meet the demands of tragic drama and/or of a large auditorium, as anyone can vouch who saw Olivier as Antony at the Ziegfeld. For a long time Olivier was learning by trial and error what effects can be got with a voice that by its very thinness is extremely incisive and clear. I recall how, before the war, he would seem to be conducting an assault on blank verse in order to exploit the possibilities of rubato and staccato. While John Gielgud swept his incomparably graceful scythe, Olivier jabbed away, as it were, with a sharp and finely pointed dagger. As late as 1946, Stark Young was complaining of jerkiness and a discontinuity of tone. But today Olivier can play any part except that of a tragic hero like Antony or a mellow, full-blooded soldier like Caesar. As Richard III he is superb. Even vocally the performance is first-rate in the movie theater; but not being principally a vocal performance, on the phonograph it is something less than compelling; our attention is called to the extreme lightness of the voice, and the solutions to the various problems assigned seem too special. Only as convinced by Olivier's appearance and acting can we agree to Richard's having so delicate a vocal organ; the records often give the impression of a feeble falsetto and hence of a character who is not wicked enough.

Do not be dazzled by the list of names in the cast. Pamela Brown, though often on view in the film, con-

tributes less than half a dozen words to its sound track. Aside from Olivier, only three actors make their presence felt when heard and not seen. They are Alec Clunes, Ralph Richardson, and John Gielgud. Gielgud's reading of "Clarence's dream" is the one gem of the album and should undoubtedly be distributed on a separate record as a model of Shakespearean speaking. The assignment was a very hard one: to tell the story of a dream, keeping all the values of the story itself, as told with every grace and flourish of Elizabethan rhetoric, though the teller of it is a man distraught and near death. Perhaps none of our actors but Sir John could realize both sets of values so fully: he gives us all the elegance of the rhetoric plus all the poignancy of the drama, all the flamboyance of the narrative plus all the inwardness of the character. Here is a great actor who has much that Olivier has and all that Olivier has not, including warmth, richness, and grandeur of utterance.

Further comments on *Richard III* had best be left to critics of the film; I'll rest content with the remark that the editing and cutting that on disks are merely confusing (to those who know their Shakespeare) seemed to me largely justified in the film. One thing still mystifies me, though. While the intention of many small changes in the text (like "chop off his head" for "raze his helm") is obvious enough, I jotted down in my copy many others that seemed pointless—such as "dabbled with blood" for "dabbled in blood" and "will not appease thee" for "cannot appease thee." The movie makers give themselves



On disks, drama suffers from doubt as to who's talking.

an alibi by stating that they have drawn on the texts of "Colley Cibber, Garrick, etcetera," though what "etcetera" means I don't know. Ninety-nine percent of the script is Shakespeare, with a clever editor (Alan Dent) jumping adroitly between the folio and the various quartos. One scene and one speech from *Henry VI, Part Three*, are also included; the latter being Richard's "Ay, Edward will use women honourably," *Continued on page 126*

In Defense of a Voice

by GEORGE JELLINEK

More and more credible characterization marks today's operatic performances, and ever closer hewing to the musical line marked out by the composer. But, at the same time, there has been a loss of something dear to some listeners.

ONCE UPON A TIME there was a "golden age" of singing. Or was there? When was it? What was it?

No absolute answer is possible. Today, we claim perfection for the era of our grandfathers, because it is conveniently recent and we can profess some familiarity with it. We say that the age of Caruso was golden enough for us.

I have singled out Caruso's name from those of his illustrious contemporaries because it has become emblematic of his age, and is one to command unbounded awe and admiration. In our own times, that is. Back in 1903, in his first year at the Metropolitan, Caruso was severely criticized for his "tiresome Italian mannerisms." And some time later, the noted critic W. J. Henderson had this to say: "Singers like Caruso cultivate the 'big tone' quite as industriously as the Germans. The Italians are following the downward path that leads to mere noise."

As he penned this article, the venerable Mr. Henderson's thoughts probably lingered on the immortal greats of an earlier generation: Patti, Maurel, and the De Reszkes. But is it not curious that Lamperti, one of the foremost vocal authorities of *that* age, the teacher of Sembrich, Schumann-Heink, Bispham, and other stars, declared in 1893 that this same period "reveals the deterioration of this divine art and the almost complete disappearance of genuine singers"?

One could go on citing similar opinions on the perennial perils of vocal art. In a remarkable book entitled *Observations on the Florid Song*, we read: "Italy hears no more such exquisite voices as in times past, and to the shame of the guilty I'll tell you the reason" And so the author does, in a highly engaging manner, too. Among other things, he says, "I do not know if a perfect singer can at the same time be a perfect actor; for the mind being at once divided by two different operations, he will probably incline more to one than the other." The name of the author is Pier Francesco Tosi; the date of the book is 1723. Thus a student of vocal art, if he reads enough books on his chosen subject, will sooner or later reach the inescapable conclusion that the decline of the art of singing began with the development of opera—some time in the

seventeenth century! And this is not intended to be funny, for he will also discover that the elusive "golden age" was far from being a myth: it flourished in the time of Handel, in the period of the great Italian singing masters who established the foundations of singing art for all time to come, in the era of fabulous vocalists who, by their happily dazzled public, were expected to do nothing but sing.

In the gradual development of opera from its almost purely musical beginnings, through its musico-dramatic stages to its present-day guise as a chiefly dramatic art form, the art of singing underwent enormous changes. The great singers of the early nineteenth century, Malibran, Rubini, Lablache, who reigned supreme in the exquisite melodies and florid passages of Bellini and Rossini, would hardly have enchanted the discriminating ears of Maestro Tosi. But to succeeding generations they represented unattainable heights of vocal artistry. In purely vocal prowess such later artists as Melba, Sembrich, Caruso, and Plançon did not measure up to them. But the latter were able to combine artistic singing with an advanced form of dramatic expression unknown to earlier generations, and succeeded in doing fuller justice to the new concept of opera as music-drama.

Fifty years ago a superlative singer like Mattia Battistini was able to hold audiences spellbound with the miraculous purity of his tones and the supreme surety of his vocal technique, in spite of his wholly unconvincing dramatic impersonations. But, at the same time, it was already possible for Feodor Chaliapin, a totally unorthodox and in many ways imperfect vocalist, to stir the blood of the same audience with the magnetism of his stage personality and the gripping conviction of his portrayals.

In our own times we have progressed even further. Operatic performances today have reached a higher musical level. Conductors are no longer figureheads—they have assumed the dominant role (the good ones, at least) that befits them. Singers have, on the whole, improved as musicians and their audience appears to have advanced with them. For all the glory of Battistini's voice, he could not get away with his kind of Mozart-singing today. And a singer like Fernando



Beniamino Gigli

de Lucia, with an almost equally glorious vocal organ, simply would not be allowed now to take the artistic liberties his old audience was so happy to overlook. Aesthetic ideals, tastes and opinions have changed a great deal in this operatic age of broader outlooks and narrower waistlines.

What has happened to the art of singing? It has followed the path predicted two centuries ago. This is not because of a shortage of great voices, for every age has an abundance of them. Good teachers are also plentiful. No, the reasons are found in the yellowed pages of Tosi's book, which take on a prophetic significance when applied to our own times. Our singers, having been taught the importance of dramatic values, now sacrifice the refinements of vocalism to the demands of dramatic characterization. They move with laudable ease through the mighty musical complexities of Mussorgsky and Strauss. But an occasional staging of *Norma*, with its simple, transparent orchestral framework but fiercely exacting vocal demands, is likely these days to be less effective as a work of art than as an exposé of an inadequate foundation in the craft of singing *per se*.

The swing of the vocal-to-dramatic pendulum has brought about a corresponding change in critical opinion. We had our generations of vocal purists who firmly believed that opera was primarily a form of singing art, and upheld the banner of *bel canto* as its proper musical standard. Now we are in the presence of a different attitude which, in line with our modern concepts of opera, insists on complete integration of musical and dramatic values, criticizing shortcomings in each with equal fervor. And, fittingly in an age which considers over-all musicianship the prime requisite, it attacks "vocal excesses" with a special vigor. It is hard to disagree with the view that an opera performance should be a thoroughly satisfying experience from vocal, dramatic, and over-all musical standpoints. But the rigid, uncompromising application of musical scholarship can be overdone. I cannot help feeling that some of our earnest, scholarly observers, in their search for artistic immaculacy, sometimes fail to recognize a commodity that has become very rare in our generation: vocal artistry of genuine greatness.

A good voice is a gift of nature. But the production of a musical tone, free of harshness, breathiness, and forcing, can only be the result of unique talent and study. One who has possessed these rare attributes of vocal art — which are made up of part inspiration and part respiration — is a man of sixty-five, who now has said his final *addio* to the world's stages after an uninterrupted career of forty-one years: Beniamino Gigli. Last April he sang three farewell concerts in New York, and Carnegie Hall was sold out three times in a single week. I attended the final concert, and confess having enjoyed the veteran singer's performance far beyond my anticipation. If nostalgia momentarily interfered with my musical judgment, I found it rather reassuring that the old magic had held other observers — critics Irving Kolodin of *Saturday Review* and Louis Biancolli of the *World-Telegram and Sun* among them — under a similar spell.

But the musical necromancy that held us spellbound

had no effect whatever on the critics of the two great New York dailies. The reviews in the *Times* and *Herald Tribune* conveyed the image of an audience consisting mainly of hot-headed lowbrows, ready to fly into ecstasy at the drop of a high note. The singer, it was sternly stated, might

Thirteen Ways of Listening to a Record
(with, of course, apologies to
Wallace Stevens)

I

Listen to this: Nellie Melba,
They say she was
The most perfect singer within living
memory.

II

What a voice! Clear as a bird's,
And all of a piece, from top to bottom.
What bird ever had a range like that?

III

Too bad they couldn't record adequately in
those days!

IV

She isn't a patch on Lily Pons.

V

Wherever did she find that high note?
It isn't in the score.

VI

What a trill!
Who can do *that* nowadays?

VII

The wheezy old orchestra!
Positively funny.

VIII

In those days they learned to sing.
Pure *bel canto* —
Here you have the finest example
Of the great Marchesi's method.

IX

They *did* always sing
The same old worn-out arias.
What would you give to hear
Such a voice in some real music?

X

She almost ended her career
When she tried to sing Brünnhilde.

XI

They say her career
Was a succession of intrigues.

XII

I don't care what she does,
So long as she does it this way.

XIII

I guess the reason
Composers wrote such music
Was that they had
Singers who could make it sound like this.

PHILIP MILLER

have reached a venerable age, but he had not managed to mend his artistic ways: he was as tasteless and vulgar as he ever had been. In a subsequent article in the *Times*, Howard Taubman acknowledged that his comments had unleashed "... an outpouring of letters and phone calls. Some of the reactions have been abusive and some were phrased more in sorrow than anger, but nearly all rose to the defense of the tenor and his singing."

Opera singers are probably accused of poor musicianship more frequently than any other performing musicians, and Gigli has shouldered a considerable load of such charges in his long career. It has become fashionable in the Anglo-American critical attitude to refer to the style he represents as "Italianate"—as if an artist of his background, schooling, and temperament could have been anything else. And next after "Italianate" comes "tasteless," an arbitrary and dangerous term to toss about, particularly in opera. There *is* great emphasis on dramatic expression in the Italian style. There is the attendant hazard of exaggeration. But these need not frighten us out of sensing an ultimate rightness of interpretation when it occurs, nor deprive us of the pleasure it can give.

Let us consider Gigli interpretations in various complete operatic recordings, where presumably his intentions were to contribute his best efforts to the roles he sang.

Comparison is almost pointless in *Andrea Chénier* (RCA Victor LCT 6014) where he faces bush-league competition from singers who sound hardly as if they were singing the same opera. But even more formidable opponents—Peerce and Tagliavini—must yield to the tonal richness, assurance, and virtuoso nuances of Gigli's performance in *Ballo in Maschera* (RCA Victor LCT 6007) and *Bohème* (available only on HMV). And in *Madama Butterfly* (RCA Victor LCT 6006) his interpretation reveals to the listener what other tenors long have concealed: that Pinkerton, too, can be a capital part.

I know of no vocal critic who has not rated Gigli's performance in *Pagliacci* (RCA Victor LCT 6010) above all recorded Canios. His delineation of the earthy, passionate clown is dramatically accurate—there are explosive moments, which make a great deal of sense in context, and there is a sensuous beauty of tone and a flowing cantilena whenever needed. Turiddu was one of his happiest parts and his contribution in *Cavalleria Rusticana* (RCA Victor LCT 6000) would have been more noteworthy had it not

been handicapped by the lethargic leadership of the septuagenarian composer.

Does Gigli measure up faultlessly to the rules of musicianship in these performances? Of course not. He is guilty of many lapses. First he displays his remarkable skill at expressing grief, then he proceeds to spoil the effect by overdoing it. He also uses unnecessary, exaggerated accents to underscore a line's emotional content. And, from a singer capable of a pure and accurate attack, the intrusive aspirates before his vowels are needless and annoying. But should these mannerisms be allowed to lead us into a sweeping condemnation on grounds of musicianship? Hardly. They ought to be easier to overlook than the many instances of flagrant off-key singing by other famous artists that frequently go without comment. Pure intonation is a *basic* requirement, and here Gigli was unflinching. His notes were firmly focused, reached not by painfully cautious scooping, but hit with utmost security, always on the button. And pure intonation was but one of the many pleasures to be found in his singing. In his prime—and that covered twenty years—he possessed a voice of rare beauty, warmth, and color. His production of the difficult lower tones was always remarkably effortless (and so it remained to his retirement), and he had a ringing, healthy top. Throughout the entire range, in full voice or *mezza-voce*, the voice retained its sensuous qualities. Anyone who attended his New York concerts can remember his rendition of "*Le Rêve*" from *Manon*—an instance of exquisite singing, with imperceptible transitions from full voice to *mezza-voce* to headtone, the like of which is not heard today in opera.

It may be some time before we hear this kind of vocalism again, so let us remember it charitably. A few lapses of judgment should not be too high a price to pay for its felicities. In other musical fields, kindred deviations are common.

Opera is a strange art of many compromises. Let us, who criticize it, learn to make a few compromises of our own. The human voice may frequently be compared to an instrument, but it is, remember, a *human* instrument. Let us not insist on mechanical precision, nor be frightened by a little theatricalism in a performance that must be dramatic to be effective. Perhaps critics would discover the gold of their own age more easily if they would remember the extraordinary effect some artists—Chaliapin, Ruffo, and Tauber, in recent memory—had on their audiences, with or without the proper critical blessing. What *is* the magic quality in a voice that evokes such a response from so many listeners—a thrill of communication that many commendable, musicianly, but uninspiring singers can never hope to arouse?

It is a secret hard to explain, but the eloquent Tosi, the savant of the 1700's, made a valiant effort: "... How great a master is the heart! Confess it, my beloved singers, that you would not have arrived at the highest rank of the profession if you had not been its scholars! The heart corrects the defects of nature, since it softens the voice that is harsh, betters an indifferent one, and perfects a good one. From the heart alone you have learned that pleasing charm that subtly passes from vein to vein, and makes its way to the very soul."



Battistini



Chaliapin

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music makers

by ROLAND GELATT

SIR THOMAS BEECHAM, whose career as a recording artist is the longest of any conductor alive or dead, recently allowed his contract with Columbia Records (U.S.A.) to lapse; he has renewed his old association with the British-owned EMI company. The first post-Columbia recording by Sir Thomas and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (Schubert's Sixth Symphony and some short works by Grieg) will be issued here in May on the Angel label.

Apparently, it was American Columbia's new affiliation with Philips in Europe that prompted Beecham to make the change of allegiance. Philips is a Dutch firm with no permanent studios or technical staff in England; whenever Beecham wanted to record, elaborate preparations had to be made for sending engineers and equipment from Holland. The complications grew increasingly burdensome and irksome to Sir Thomas, and eventually he determined to return to the roster of EMI, with whom he can make recordings in the Abbey Road Studio, London, at his own convenience.

Already he has finished taping the major portion of Handel's oratorio *Solomon*. He conducted this work in London last fall and planned to record it immediately afterward with the same performing forces. Unfortunately, he discovered that the soprano was under contract to English Decca, which company showed no willingness whatever to release her for an EMI-Angel production. "Well," Sir Thomas told me when I saw him in mid-February, "I have learned during my forty-six-year career in the business of making records not to knock my head against a wall. We went ahead and made *Solomon* without the soprano. When we came to the Queen of Sheba's arias, we recorded only the orchestral accompaniments." His intention was to find a suitable soprano in America and dub in her voice. He found his soprano in the person of Lois Marshall (whom Toscanini had also "dis-

covered" when he recorded the *Missa Solemnis*); but inasmuch as Miss Marshall plans to be in England this spring, Beecham has decided to scrap the previously made accompaniments and instead will do the soprano arias again with singer and orchestra together. *Solomon* can be expected in the record stores next fall.

What else Sir Thomas plans to do in the immediate future is hard to predict. He was not in a very confiding mood when I talked to him. But he did admit, after some prodding, that a recording of Mozart's *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* was "in the air — and pretty high in the air too." It all depends on finding singers who can cope with the music. "Take the part of Constanze," he said. "It requires a soprano who must be equally comfortable in lyric, coloratura, and dra-



Beecham: "I call it baloney."

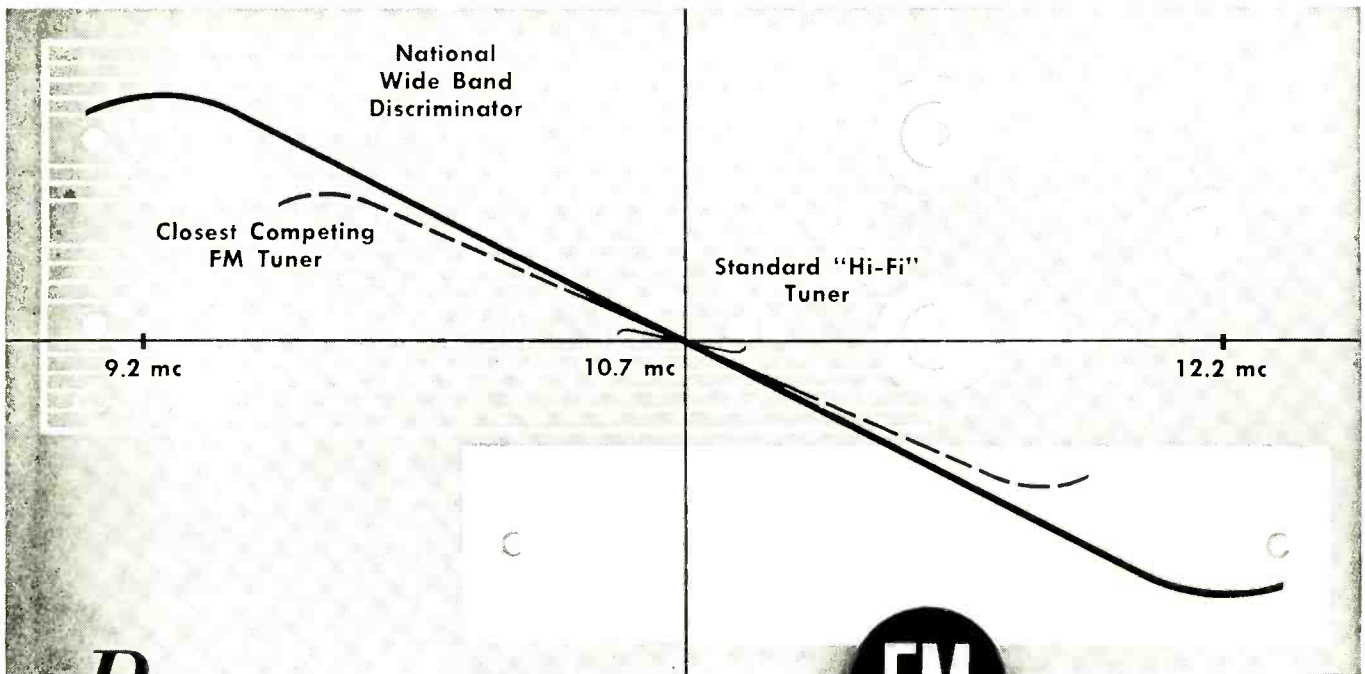
matic arias. Now who is there in this age of specialization who can do that?" Sir Thomas does not seem to be greatly impressed with the quality of vocal talent available today. "I know of only one truly great soprano singer now before the public, and her name I refuse to mention for fear of incurring the wrath of other sopranos." From

what I have gathered, it would seem reasonable to assume that this unmentioned paragon is Victoria de los Angeles.

Despite Beecham's reservations about contemporary singers, he will "in all probability" make an attempt at *Die Entführung*. But he offers no promises that the attempt will result in an approved and published set of records. "You know, when I conducted *The Magic Flute* for HMV before the war, I had three different go's at it before I was content. I went to Berlin and recorded the whole of it. When I came home and heard the test pressings, I threw out at least half of them. Then I went to Berlin again, and again I threw out a great many records. Finally, by the end of the third attempt, I had a recording that satisfied me. But I had almost bankrupted HMV." People keep asking Beecham to make a new recording of *The Magic Flute*, but he has no intention of heeding these entreaties. "I have done it once. Why should I do it again?" he asks. "The recording as a whole still pleases me. I take exception to only two things. One of the singers, whose name I shall not mention, is somewhat inadequate. And there is one point at which the orchestra accents a phrase too heavily. Otherwise I have no complaints."

About his long-range recording plans he was more voluble. He wants to do more Handel choral music, perhaps the secular oratorio *Hercules*, and also more Delius, in particular the early operas *Irmelin* and *The Magic Fountain*, which he feels have been unjustly neglected. An opera by Richard Strauss would appeal to him too, maybe *Capriccio*.

But all this was off in the future, and we came back to the present with a jolt when somehow the subject of magnetic tape came up. "I don't want to be extreme in my utterances," Sir Thomas assured me, "but I must admit that I find a certain obstinate



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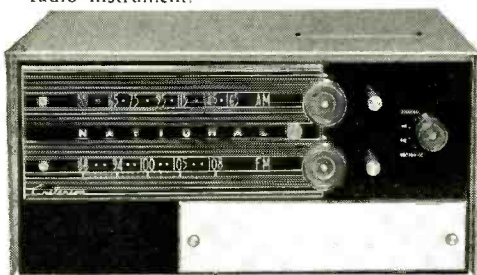
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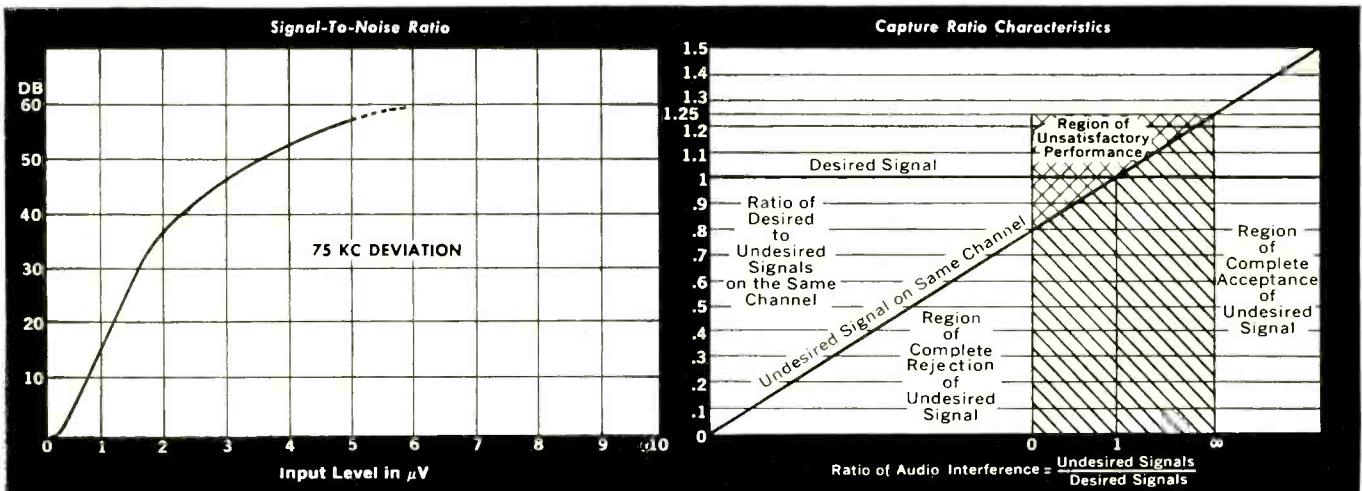
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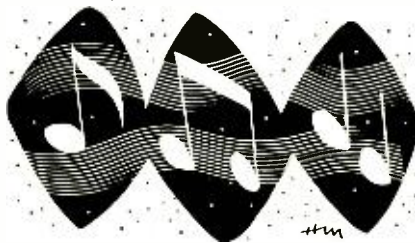
stupidity in the handling of tapes. Obstinate stupidity . . . be sure that you use those words. In the days of 78s I could put on a test pressing, listen to it, and change to the next one in fifteen seconds. But in the auditioning studios today it takes God knows how long for them to go from one tape to the next, with all their infernal winding and rewinding. It's a ridiculous and unnecessary waste of time. I call it baloney."

Having gotten this off his chest, Beecham admitted that tape and high-fidelity recording techniques had their virtues too, though on this point — as elsewhere — he was not given to unmitigated praise. Sir Thomas is obviously a very difficult man to please — and in a conductor that is an admirable quality, however vexing it may be to his co-workers.

IN HIS REFERENCE to a "forty-six-year career" as a recording artist, Beecham was making use of some just-acquired information. I had brought along, thinking it might amuse him, a copy of the December 1910 issue of *The Sound Wave*, in which the following item appeared: "On November 15 the Gramophone Company, Ltd., issued a series of six records by the Thomas Beecham Opera Company which includes four vocal numbers from Mr. Beecham's most successful production, Offenbach's 'Tales of Hoffmann,' Overture 'Die Fledermaus,' and selection from D'Albert's 'Tiefeland,' the last-mentioned being by the Beecham Symphony Orchestra, under the direction of Mr. Thomas Beecham in person." On another page of the same magazine the disks were reviewed with unreserved praise for the music's felicities and the brilliant fidelity of the recording. Sir Thomas read all of this aloud with the keenest relish. "But I must admit," he said as he put the old magazine down, "that I have no recollection whatsoever of making those records."

RENE DUMESNIL'S *Le Don Juan de Mozart*, recently published in Paris by Librairie Plon, does not contain much original or profound comment but does provide a great deal of fascinating information. I was particularly taken with Dumesnil's descriptions of *Don Giovanni* as it used to be given at the Paris Opéra. Castil-Blaze, a critic and composer, was responsible for the version that held the boards from 1834 to 1866. This gentleman

divided the opera into five acts and added various ballets and other spectacles in order to bring *Don Giovanni* up to a proper stage of magnificence. Much was made of the fact that in this version "only Mozart's music would be heard." But somehow



Mozart's puny two-act opera had to be expanded, so M. Castil-Blaze and company drew liberally from the symphonies, the Masses, *The Magic Flute*, and *La Clemenza di Tito* to pad the work into five-act amplitude.

The finale proceeded in this fashion. The scene took place on a somber night in the garden of Don Giovanni's castle, an immense park dotted with trees and lined with walks reaching to the horizon. At a sign the statue of the Commendatore summoned members of the damned, who gathered to form a chorus. Then skeletons appeared from all directions, some carrying torches, others with occult tomes under their arms. They formed a circle and chanted the *Dies irae* (from Mozart's Requiem) into Don Giovanni's ears. By this time a long procession of young women dressed in white had appeared at the edge of the park. The music took on a plaintive, religious air. The cortege came downstage slowly and made its way through the groups of the damned. The virgins set down a casket; and while they knelt in prayer, the shroud arose and allowed Don Giovanni to perceive the body of Donna Anna, who protruded from the bier with her black veil over her shoulders and a white wreath on her brow. She had somehow perished — unknown to Mozart or Da Ponte.

Don Giovanni at this point became frantic. To escape the terrible sight he ascended a great staircase, where he met the Commendatore face to face. The man of stone advanced while Don Giovanni retreated step by step until he finally fell back into a pit which the damned had dug for their brother.

Such was the *Don Giovanni* to which Parisians were exposed a century ago. *Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose.* Patrons of the Little Carnegie Theater

in New York are about to witness an Austrian color movie of the opera produced by Akkord Film and directed by H. S. Kolm-Veltee. The music (such of it as Herr K-V allowed to remain) is sung in German by well-known Viennese singers — Anny Felbermayer, Walter Berry, Alfred Poell, *et al.* They are on the sound track only. On screen are actors who play their parts as if they were bad opera singers and make only slightly successful attempts at synchronizing their lip movements to the music. The result is weird, not to say laughable. In addition, arias are cut, shuffled about, and sometimes given a significance quite different from what the composer and librettist intended. Much of the plot has been disposed of, but there are some intriguing additions of the scenarists' own invention — such as the scene between Don Giovanni and Elvira's amorous maid, which must constitute the fastest seduction ever filmed. For the finale there is (shades of Castil-Blaze!) a grand ballet, in which heavy-footed dancers regale Giovanni and a crowd of fellow revelers with symbolic representations of Desire and Pain.

The man who conducts the orchestra and has lent his name to this monstrosity is Bernhard Paumgartner, authority on Mozart, president of the Mozarteum, and director of the Philips-Epic Jubilee Edition.

To avoid possible confusion, I should explain that another film of *Don Giovanni* is also to be shown here at about the same time. It was made in Salzburg in 1954 by the director Paul Czinner and features such singers as Cesare Siepi, Lisa della Casa, and Erna Berger, with the late Wilhelm Furtwängler conducting. This had not been screened at press time, but I do not see how it can help but be better than the *Don Giovanni* produced by H. S. Kolm-Veltee.

THE BLACK DIAMONDS are out in profusion this month. I refer, of course, to the marks in Schwann which signify that a record is to be discontinued by its manufacturer. Mr. Schwann informs us that there are 1,166 deletions in the March catalogue, an all-time record. We tend to think of rare, out-of-print disks in terms of ancient 78s. At least I do. But a deleted LP can be just as rare, just as out-of-print, and just as desirable. Pay heed to those black diamonds. It is later than you think.

at the sign of the "Angel"

Pisces

March
R E L E A S E S



OPERA and VOCAL

VERDI: RIGOLETTO (La Scala recording)

Cast: Maria Meneghini Callas (Gilda), Giuseppe Di Stefano (Duke of Mantua), Tito Gobbi (title role).

Conductor: Tullio Serafin.

La Scala Orchestra and Chorus.

Illustrated Italian-English libretto. Notes by Francis Toye.

Three 12" records (5 sides) Angel Album 3537-5s/L
(35318-19-20)

Note: Other Verdi-Scala Opera albums—AIDA: Callas, Tucker, Barbieri, Gobbi, Serafin (Angel 3525 C/L); LA FORZA DEL DESTINO: Callas, Tucker, Tagliabue, Nicolai, Rossi-Lemeni, Serafin (Angel 3531 C/L).

CHINESE OPERA

Recorded in Paris by the Peking Opera of the Chinese People's Republic following the company's sensational appearances at the second International Theater Festival in the summer of 1955.

Contents: The Court of the Phoenix, The White Serpent, Moonlight on the Springtime River, The Farewell to the Favorite, The Return of the Fisherman, The Three Scourges, Song of the Yunnan, Drum Dance.

One 12" record Angel 35229/L

Illustrated booklet containing history of classic Chinese opera, pictures and descriptions of Chinese instruments, notes on music played, colorful design, costume photographs of artists.

SCHWARZKOPF-GIESEKING in MOZART SONGS

Rare opportunity to hear 16 songs of Mozart interpreted by two great artists, soprano Elisabeth Schwarzkopf with Walter Gieseeking at the piano.

Illustrated booklet with essay, original texts, translations.
One 12" record Angel 35270

PIANO

GIESEKING PLAYS MOZART PIANO SOLOS

8th of 11 records, devoted to Mozart's music for piano solo, previously available only in gala Limited Edition.

Album 8: 9 Variations in C on *Lison dormait*, K.264; Sonata No. 5 in G, K.283; Sonata No. 17 in D, K.576; 10 Variations in G on *Unser dummer Pöbel meint*, K.455.
One 12" record Angel 35075

Note for Mozart Year: Also available individually are the 1st 7 records of the series: Angel 35068, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74.

Ask your dealer for complete contents of each album.

VIOLIN

**JOHANNA MARTZY PLAYS BACH
SONATAS AND PARTITAS FOR VIOLIN SOLO**

Album 3: Sonata No. 3 in C major, Partita No. 3 in E major.
One 12" record Angel 35282

Previously released: Album 1—Sonata No. 1 in G minor and Partita No. 1 in B minor; Album 2—Sonata No. 2 in A minor and Partita No. 2 in D minor.

"Johanna Martzy plays these unaccompanied works for violin in a fashion to indicate she may inherit the mantle of the late Ginette Neveu. A violinist to watch."

Rudolph Elie, *Boston Herald* (Jan. 1, 1956)

"Beautiful tone and poetry of style."

The Gramophone, London (Nov. 1955)

ORCHESTRAL

BALAKIREV: RUSSIA • ISLAMEY • THAMAR

The Gramophone, London wrote (Dec. 1955): "One of the best recorded discs I know, and very highly to be recommended. Splendidly vivid performances. The recording of the sort that one uses to show off fine equipment."

Conductor: Lovro von Matacic. Philharmonia.

One 12" record Angel 35291

BALLET MUSIC FROM THE OPERAS

The Karajan-Philharmonia combination in another treasure-disc of old favorites, nostalgically reborn. Contents include Dance of the Hours from "La Gioconda," Venusberg Music from "Tannhauser," Ballet Music from "Aida," Dance of the Persian Slaves from "Khovantchina," Polovtsian Dances from "Prince Igor."

Conductor: Herbert von Karajan. Philharmonia.

One 12" record Angel 35307

Companion Karajan-Philharmonia Albums:

OPERA INTERMEZZI incl. Barcarolle from "Tales of Hoffmann," Meditation from "Thais," intermezzi from "Cavalleria Rusticana," "Pagliacci," "Manon Lescaut," "Carmen," "Traviata," "L'Amico Fritz," "Goyescas," "Hary Janos," "Khovantchina" (Angel 35207).

PHILHARMONIA POP CONCERT incl. Skaters Waltz (Waldteufel), Light Cavalry (Suppé), Radetzky March (Johann Strauss, Father), Thunder and Lightning Polka and Tritsch-Tratsch Polka (Johann Strauss), Polka from "Schwanda" (Weinberger), "Orpheus in the Underworld" Overture (Offenbach), España and Joyeuse Marche (Chabrier) (Angel 35327).

IRISH THEATRE

JUNO AND THE PAYCOCK (SEAN O'CASEY)

A Tragi-Comedy of Dublin (recorded in Ireland).

Starring Siobhán McKenna, Cyril Cusack, Maire Kean, Seamus Kavanagh. Spoken Preamble by the author.

Booklet with history of Abbey Theatre, profile of O'Casey, photographs of original production, cast, etc.

Two 12" records Angel Album 3540 B (35275-6)

BLUE LABEL SPECIAL

YURI KAZAKOV PLAYS THE BAYAN

Famous young Russian accordion player in album of popular Russian melodies including Caucasian Mountain Tune, Variations on a Ukrainian Theme, Old Russian Waltz, Melodies from Archangel, Dance of the Little Swans from "Swan Lake," Little Birch Tree, etc.

One 12" record Angel Blue Label 65020

Angel Records

ANGEL RECORDS, ELECTRIC & MUSICAL INDUSTRIES (U.S.) LIMITED, 38 WEST 48 ST., NEW YORK CITY
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Records in Review



Reviewed by PAUL AFFELDER NATHAN BRODER C. G. BURKE JOHN M. CONLY
 RAY ERICSON ALFRED FRANKENSTEIN ROLAND GELATT JAMES HINTON, JR.
 ROY H. HOOPES, JR. JOHN F. INDCOX ROBERT KOTLOWITZ HOWARD LAFAY
 PHILIP L. MILLER H. S. WALLACE JOHN S. WILSON

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CLASSICAL

BACH
Organ Works, Vol. 1
Orgelbüchlein (complete).
 Carl Weinrich, organ.
 WESTMINSTER WN 2203. Two 12-in. \$9.96.

This is the first of a series of twenty-two volumes planned by Westminster to present all the organ works of Bach as recorded by Carl Weinrich. The two disks are encased in a handsome album complete with Westminster's excellent built-in polyethylene bags, the best protection for records I know of that has thus far been offered us. Also included is an illustrated pamphlet containing an account, by Kurt List, of the problems involved in recording the organ used here—that of the Church of Our Lady at Skänninge in Sweden—, specifications of the instrument, notes on the music by Karl Geiringer, and a list of contents of the *Little Organ Book*, with the registrations used by Weinrich for each of the chorale preludes that make up that wonderful collection. All of this is fine, and Westminster is to be congratulated for having got off to a good start.

Weinrich plays, as usual, sensitively and with rhythmic vitality. Some listeners might question the slow shake he sometimes uses, as in *Wenn wir in höchsten Nöten sein*. He employs a large variety of registrations, some of which are more effective than others. I find the Sesquialtera in *O Mensch, beweine dein' Sünde gross*, for example, rather

disturbing, and in some of the pieces, such as *Gelobet seist du, Jesu Christ* or the second verse of *Christ ist erstanden*, the pedal is too faint. As for the Skänninge organ in general, it seems to have many fine qualities, though it does not erase from memory the lovely sound of baroque music played on such organs as the Schnitger in Cappel or the Holtkamp at Yale. N. B.

BEETHOVEN
Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 4, in G, Op. 58

Claudio Arrau, piano; Philharmonia Orchestra, Alceo Galliera, cond.
 ANGEL 35300. 12-in. \$4.98 (or \$3.48).

The swinging principal theme of the *allegro moderato* first movement transpires a cheerful urgency in its most usual representation. It is a sensitive theme: played fast it has the frivolity of a ball caught and returned, and played slowly its to-and-fro is that of a cradle. A cradle is for sleeping, and the conductor tends the health-giving motion from the first measure to the last, with the pianist's acquiescence in the pace. No doubt both are convinced that this is the way to express that *moderato*, and we all profit from sleep, but music-lovers may prefer repose on other occasions. The pity of this independence of concept is its waste of distinguished patterns of finely controlled pianism. Furthermore, the dynamic variety of tone and force is admirable, and the Philharmonia Orchestra is in no obvious way constrained by the sober tempo, which extends through the rondo.

There will be no dispute on the merits of the sound. The piano is as strongly distinct as Angel has ever presented it, top and bottom vibrantly clean, and the orchestra has

the more-apparent depth and finer discrimination of the newer records from this company. Persons without a primary objection to the gait of the performance will find every other feature commendable. C. G. B.

BEETHOVEN
Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 5, in E-flat ("Emperor"), Op. 73

Wilhelm Kempff, piano; Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Paul van Kempen, cond.
 DECCA DL 9741. 12-in. \$3.98.

The performance is the same as that in Decca's edition of the five (numbered) concertos of Beethoven, in Album DX 125, reviewed here about two years ago with praise for the playing and many reservations about the sonic quality. In that album the *Emperor* occupies the last two of six sides, its first movement separated by a stripe of blank grooves from the rondo of the Fourth Concerto. The second transfer from a good tape impels one to hope that Decca will reissue the Third Concerto in the superb Kempff playing with an equivalent improvement in reproduction. The phonograph, blessed with a number of good *Emperors*, can show no entirely adequate Third.

The sonic improvement is obvious and large. Volume has been increased comfortably, with a clarification and strengthening of the orchestral fabric noticeable at once. The piano is free of the explosiveness that used to parody so many LPs of the instrument. The bass strings have a new prominence that will require diminution on some reproducers. Worthy sound in sum, spacious and strong, not sensational, but excellent in its dynamic scope and especially in the fine equilibrium of soft exchanges between piano and orchestra.

remarkably akin to the much-admired performance recorded in the mid-1930s by the Boston Symphony under Koussevitzky — which means to say that the emphasis is more on sharply etched dramatic statement than on delicate chiaroscuro. This is certainly an effective and valid approach, and it is carried out here with the virtuosity that can be expected of the Boston instrumentalists. RCA's engineers have done their job well too, but we shall have to wait for binaural recording to experience the full concert-hall values of this score. For the present, this is as good a reproduction and interpretation of *La Mer* as the phonograph offers. The *Nocturnes*, easier to play and record, are also excellent. R. G.

DONIZETTI *La Favorita* (excerpts)

Vittoria Garofalo (ms), Leonora; Dino Formichini (t), Fernando; Otello Borgonovo (b), Alfonso XI; Paolo Washington (bs), Baldassare; Angelo Mercuriali (t), Don Gasparo; Silvana Zanolli (s), Ines. Chorus and Orchestra, Glauco Curiel, cond. ANGEL 35322. 12-in. \$4.98.

Angel's latest release, an unexpected one, impresses as being both experimental and educational — experimental in that it makes use of a cast of young unknowns, singers who have yet to invade the consciousness of the general public; educational because it allows a generation brought up on LP and high-fidelity techniques to hear a portion of one of the most neglected of operas. The only other current listing for Donizetti's *La Favorita* in Schwann is a collection of excerpts originally recorded during the very early part of the present century and now reissued by Eterna. Angel's is thus the first sizable portion (47 minutes) of *La Favorita* honored by modern recording methods.

La Favorita, an opera which had a fantastic success in its day, has not only been neglected by recording companies (who think nothing of issuing three complete *Pearl Fishers*), but also by opera companies. Despite the fact that Toscanini and others have placed themselves on record, insisting that this is one of Donizetti's finest operas, impresarios generally give the melodious score a wide berth. The Metropolitan last presented *La Favorita* on December 29, 1905, with Edyth Walker, Caruso, Scotti, and Plancon in the cast; it has not been heard there since. Philadelphia is the only American city, to my knowledge, that has enjoyed big-scale performances of the opera in modern times. The Philadelphia-La Scala Opera Company offered it in 1945, and again in 1946, with Bruna Castagna, Franco Perulli, Alexander Sved, and Nino Ruisi in leading roles. Europe has been equally inattentive, though Bergamo (Donizetti's birthplace) revived the opera in 1948 with Giulietta Simonato, Gianni Poggi, Gino Bechi, and Cesare Siepi — an impressive constellation.

La Favorita, written expressly for the Paris stage, was first heard there on December 2, 1840. It has a cumbersome libretto which outlines the consuming passion of Alfonso XI of Spain for his mistress, the beautiful Leonora di Gusmann. Complications arise when Fernando, a novice at the convent of St. James, enters the romantic picture. A Papal edict denouncing these frenetic happenings does not make matters any less



Rodzinski: *Grieg without fatigue.*

complicated. The opera, however, is replete with lovely arias, duets, and massive ensembles, such as the scene of the Papal curse. The Angel disk includes five arias, several duets, and one of the big concerted portions, thus giving the listener a good idea of Donizetti's melodramatic and melodic facility.

The young singers in this recording perform the music with youthful tone and obedience to precision and style. That nobody manages to come through with anything very personal or arresting is probably due to inexperience. But promise is surely present.

The strongest member of the cast is the tenor, Dino Formichini, who has a smooth delivery, phrases well, and does not shrink from the high C-sharp of the opening "*Una vergine*." His singing of the supremely difficult "*Spirto gentil*" in the original key is highly creditable. Vittoria Garofalo, the Leonora, has a voice overcharged with vibrato, but her mezzo possesses range and power and she sings clearly if without much expression. Baritone Otello Borgonovo has only one real moment, which is the suave aria "*Vien Leonora*," in which he startlingly recalls the young De Luca in manner and timbre, while Paolo Washington, featured in the ensemble, displays a voice of impressive sonority.

The orchestra and chorus (unnamed), respond with enthusiasm to the bidding of Glauco Curiel, presumably also youthful. Angel has not neglected to provide these interesting and hopeful young artists with its usual superfine recording.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE

FRANCK *Le Chasseur maudit; Rédemption — Symphonic Interlude; Psyché*

Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire, André Cluytens, cond. ANGEL 35232. 12-in. \$4.98 (or \$3.48).

Of the three works recorded here, only *Le Chasseur maudit* is complete in itself. *Rédemption* is a poem-symphony for soprano, chorus, and orchestra, of which only the symphonic interlude — sometimes called a symphonic poem — is represented on this disk. *Psyché* also has several choral sections that are omitted (as is almost always the case) in this purely orchestral suite. Cluytens gives spacious accounts of all three works, and as an orchestral Franck sampler the record is most satisfactory. P. A.

FRANZ *Lieder*

Lieber Schatz, sei wieder gut mir; Im Herbst; Ein Stündlein wohl vor Tag; Ein Friedhof; Auf dem Meere, Op. 36, No. 1; *Rosmarin; Nebel; Gute Nacht; Ach, wär' es nie geschehen; Stiller Abend; Mutter, o sing' mich zur Ruh'; Es hat die Rose sich beklagt; Er ist gekommen; Stille Sicherheit; Widmung; Aus meinen grossen Schmerzen; Vergessen; Ständchen; Abends: Denk' ich dein; Für Musik; Genesung; Auf dem Meere*, Op. 11, No. 5; *Da die Stunde kam; Um Mitternacht.*

Hilde Rössl-Majdan, contralto; Viktor Graef, piano.

WESTMINSTER WLE 104. 12-in. \$5.75.

When the first twelve songs of Franz were published, Robert Schumann wrote in his *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*: "Were I to dwell on all the exquisite details, I should never come to an end; true music lovers will discover them for themselves." But, he cautioned, "genuine singers, endowed with poetic taste, are required for their interpretation." Born in 1815, Robert Franz probably led the quietest, least eventful life of any composer of his stature. In his youth he had the usual struggle to make his parents accept the idea of a musician in the family. Then, after his student days in Dessau, practically his entire life was spent in his native Halle. In time he had a chorus to conduct, and he was able to live quietly until 1892, composing numerous songs.

Franz was extremely sensitive to poetry, and his Heine settings are among the finest composed in his time. Not only Schumann, but Mendelssohn and Liszt were among his admirers, the latter making his name widely known by playing transcriptions of his songs. Franz has ever since been conceded a place among the great *lieder* composers, though he is little sung in concert nowadays. This is not difficult to account for, as his *lieder* are mostly miniatures, short in duration, lacking what is known as "effectiveness."

An LP recital is the ideal way to come to know such music, and it will provide a pleasant surprise for many listeners. Though the songs are kept to a moderate dynamic level and are often strophic in form, there are many subtle changes in the vocal lines and endless variety in the consummately developed piano parts. Instead of finding this recital monotonous, I found myself getting more and more into the mood as I listened. Rössl-Majdan is on the whole a more than satisfying singer; her voice is rich and velvety, her phrasing generally excellent, her diction clear. All in all her performances are warm and ingratiating. P.L.M.

FAURE *Quartets for Piano and Strings: No. 1, in C minor, Op. 15; No. 2, in G minor, Op. 45*

Robert Masters Piano Quartet. WESTMINSTER 18093. 12-in. \$4.98 (or \$3.98).

For the first time on disks, Gabriel Fauré's lovely piano quartets have been issued back-to-back; in fact, this marks the first appearance here of the Second Quartet on LP. Both works are readily accessible, typical French late-romantic music, somewhat in the Franckish idiom. The Robert Masters Piano Quartet is an organization that is unfamiliar to me, and the jacket notes fail to impart any biographical information. It is

an admirably integrated ensemble, whose members play the music with ample enthusiasm and warmth without overdoing things. The reproduction is very faithful, even to the point of conveying an occasional string rasp. P. A.

GRIEG

Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, in A minor, Op. 16

Robert Rieffing, piano; Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra, Odd Gruner-Hegge, cond. ALLEGRO-ROYALE 1612. 12-in. \$5.95.

Although only Norwegian artists are involved in this recording, the performance adds nothing to our knowledge of the Grieg Piano Concerto. The forty-four-year-old Mr. Rieffing, who has played in this country briefly, gives a very direct, large-scale, forceful interpretation, but it is not in a class with those by Guiomar Novaes, Artur Schnabel, and other first-rank pianists. The well-conducted orchestra plays acceptably; the over-all tone is a little harsh. R. E.

GRIEG

Peer Gynt Suites Nos. 1 and 2

Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of London, Artur Rodzinski, cond. WESTMINSTER W-LAB 7014. 12-in. \$7.50.

Rodzinski does an exceptionally refined job with these two overworked suites, injecting new freshness and meaning into them. His are somewhat genteel readings, but the care that has gone into every phrase pays off. So does Westminster's high-quality recording. P. A.

GRIEG

Sonatas for Violin and Piano: No. 1, in F, Op. 8; No. 3, in C minor, Op. 45

Mischa Elman, violin; Joseph Seiger, piano. LONDON LL 1253. 12-in. \$3.98.

This pair of Grieg violin sonatas is a rare item on LP. The two have appeared together only once before, on a Decca disk by Joseph Fuchs and Frank Sheridan, which unfortunately is not at hand for purposes of comparison. There is also RCA Victor's reissue of the grand old Kreisler-Rachmaninoff collaboration in the Sonata No. 3. And that is all. The F major Sonata has always been somewhat of a rarity, both in concert and on records. It is a simple but most attractive work in the best classical tradition, complete with fugue in the last movement. The C minor Sonata, on the other hand, used to be a staple of the recital repertory, but is now heard very rarely. It is brimful of the rich, songful melodies for which Grieg was so famous. Elman and Seiger approach both sonatas with the utmost care and discretion. They allow the music to speak for itself, setting it forth in simple, sensitively phrased fashion. The engineers have maintained a fairly equitable balance between the two instruments, slightly favoring the justly famous pure violin tone of Elman. P. A.

HAYDN

Symphonies: No. 96, in D; No. 102, in B-flat

New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra, Bruno Walter, cond.

COLUMBIA ML 5059. 12-in. \$3.98.

First to be noted in these lively performances is the beautiful quality of the Philharmonic strings, including the violins. The long reverberation that causes some blurring of woodwind and drums is the obstacle shielding the sonics from the qualification "outstanding."

Inevitably any record of Haydn's symphonies composed for London must be compared with the corresponding version by Hermann Scherchen, the only conductor ever to have recorded all twelve. In No. 102, the greater work, the nervous litheness of Dr. Walter carries more conviction than the comparatively tentative (except in the finale) venture of the Westminster conductor; but No. 96 reverses the decision, here in favor of the immaculate carving of Dr. Scherchen's hearty oppositions of large to little. The durability of the sound, nearly five years old, supplied by Westminster to the Vienna orchestras used in these symphonies, induces admiration and respect. In discrimination of detail it far surpasses the new

Columbia, and although its masses are less finely etched than Columbia's and betray a degree more of distortion, the ensemble still passes as first class if not revelatory.

Some vexing problems intrude into an inconclusive summary. For if there is no doubt here that the Walter version of Symphony No. 102 easily leads the three others, and that the Scherchen record of Symphony No. 96 is less decidedly in the van of five editions, the opinions can be of little aid except to music-lovers undisturbed by cost. For No. 96 is on Westminster 5111 backed by No. 98; No. 102 is paired with No. 97 on Westminster 5062; and both are available in the Westminster album of the twelve London symphonies in couplings determined by numerical progression. The perfectionist is doomed to a double purchase if he can afford it, and to impotent repining if he cannot. C. G. B.

HAYDN

Trios for Piano, Violin, and Violoncello: No. 10, in E minor; No. 16, in G minor; No. 24, in A-flat

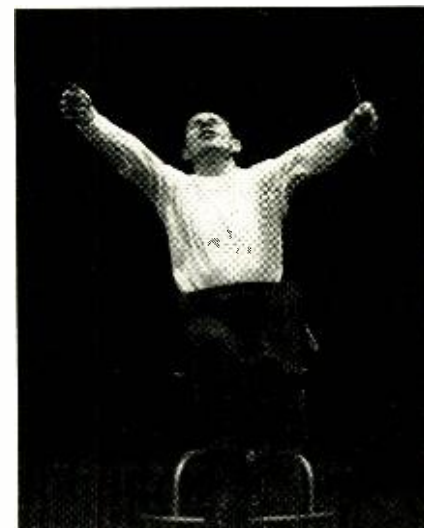
Mr. Holst Began as a Trombone Player

ONE OF THE MOST enjoyable records of this or any month has come forth from the continuing joint efforts of Mercury Records and the Eastman Symphonic Wind Ensemble (read "concert band") conducted by Frederick Fennell. It is the fourth product of this collaboration, and the best, which is saying a good deal. The main reason it is the best, I think, is the music, though Mr. Fennell says that the microphone was moved a little farther back in the Eastman Theater (Rochester, N. Y.) than had been customary in the earlier sessions, and that the session was one of those when everything went right from the start.

Mercury has called the record *British Band Classics* and has decorated it with a color photo of the Royal Household Cavalry, but its content was written for sitting-down, not marching, band, and by two of the best composers who ever turned their pens to this — Gustav Holst and Ralph Vaughan Williams. The former is represented by his Suites No. 1 in E-flat and No. 2 in F, and the latter by his *Toccata Marziale* and *Folksong Suite*. The last is, of course, familiar in orchestral arrangements. But Vaughan Williams told Fennell last year in Ithaca that he had not heard *Toccata Marziale* since the year he wrote it (1924!). It has not been recorded before, and the two Holst suites have existed only on British 78s of no great distinction.

As anyone who hears the new disk will see, this was great and undeserved neglect, but probably no tragedy, since perhaps not until last year were recording techniques really *right* to make this music. The Holst Second and the Vaughan Williams Suite are based on folk tunes; but the idiom of the other two pieces is also recognizably British Isles. The scoring is much subtler and more sonorous than that commonly devoted to marching-band music — some of it sounds like organ writing, though vivacity is the rule throughout.

The finesse of the band is without precedent in my listening experience. For this,



Frederick Fennell evokes a crescendo.

of course, credit goes to Fennell, who organized it and who has been conducting a crusade to advance the prestige of concert bands in general, even to writing a book on the subject (*Time and the Winds*, Leblanc, Kenosha, 1954). His interpretative powers are impressive, too: his handling of the Vaughan Williams Suite stands up very well against that of Sir Adrian Boult for Westminster, and the latter is widely considered the world's leading V. W. interpreter. Finally, as has been implied above, Mercury has done a hair-raising job of putting the band on the disk. Indeed, the record has only one flaw. It has to be played *loud*.

JOHN M. CONLY

HOLST: *Suites: No. 1, in E-flat; No. 2, in F, for Concert Band*
†Vaughan Williams: *Toccata Marziale; Folksong Suite*

Eastman Symphonic Wind Ensemble, Frederick Fennell, cond.

MERCURY MG 40051. 12-in. \$3.98.

Paul Badura-Skoda, Jean Fournier, Antonio Janigro.

WESTMINSTER 18054. 12-in. \$4.98 (\$3.98).

This is the third record of one of those series in which Westminster meanders through the works of a given composer in a specific form. Presumably this gives the musicians time to study and practice the scores. Most of them show study, practice, and aptitude, as they do here. The ten trios so far recorded invite a monotony of favorable criticism: bland music, tasteful playing, and limpid reproduction. The three latest are not available elsewhere, and it seems safe to surmise that the record will not be challenged soon by another. In this music the piano is chief, with the violin embellishing and the cello corroborating, in part, what the piano says. High praise to Mr. B-S for making this eminently clear without overwhelming his fellows. C. G. B.

KABALEVSKY

Twenty-Four Preludes, Op. 38

Nadia Reisenberg, piano.

WESTMINSTER 18095. 12-in. \$4.98 (or \$3.98).

The Kabalevsky *Preludes*, composed in 1946, are attractive, easily accessible works. Breaking no creative paths, they might have been composed by Mussorgsky, with only a few more modern touches of harmony added, for they have considerable Russian flavor through folkish turns in the melodies and folk-dance rhythms. They follow the pattern of Chopin's *Preludes* in the matter of key sequence (C, A minor, G, etc.), and vary sharply in mood. Many are technically difficult and make good études, effective for recital purposes and worth pianists' attention. The set finds a wholly persuasive exponent in the expert Nadia Reisenberg.

R. E.

KHACHATURIAN

Concerto for Violin and Orchestra

David Oistrakh, violin; Philharmonia Orchestra, Aram Khachaturian, cond.

ANGEL 35244. 12-in. \$4.98 (or \$3.48).

The release of yet another Oistrakh recording of the Khachaturian Violin Concerto, which is dedicated to the renowned Soviet virtuoso, provides an opportunity for some interesting comparisons. Both Oistrakh and the composer have committed this colorful work to disks on several previous occasions, but surely not with the opulence of reproduced sound they are accorded here. What is so interesting is that the violinist's son, Igor, also recorded this concerto for Angel with the same orchestra, though the conductor was Eugene Goossens. Khachaturian whips up a little more fire in the accompaniment, especially in the middle movement; and surely no one plays the solo part with the brilliance and high polish given it by the elder Oistrakh. Still, there is nothing wrong with the virtuosity of young Igor, and the latter seems to invest the music with a wider variety of tone color, providing more delicate and subtle shading than does his father. For those who are interested, it is worth taking the time to compare these two disks; for those who are not, either is a more than satisfactory choice. P. A.

LISZT

Piano Miscellany

Hungarian Rhapsody, No. 12; Spinning Song (from Wagner's The Flying Dutchman); Les Jeux d'Eaux à la Villa d'Este; Ricordanza; Petrarch Sonnets, Nos. 74, 104, and 123.

Egon Petri, piano.

ALLEGRO-ROYALE 1618. 12-in. \$1.89.

Egon Petri, who will be seventy-five this March, has commanded special attention as a Busoni pupil and disciple. His recitals in this country before the last war were usually devoted to large-scale, complex scores, often of tremendous difficulty. His technical equipment was up to the hardest works, and he played everything with thorough intellectual grasp of the music, in a heavily serious manner and with something less than the most complete sensitivity to detail and nuance. Few of Mr. Petri's recordings have been available on LP, and it is good to have this and his Brahms disk added to the catalogue.

The Liszt works here are all quite long and full of clattering detail. Mr. Petri plows through them easily, shaping a page full of runs, trills, octave scales into a tangible phrase — making order out of what seems like chaos. He ignores many of the niceties and blandishments other pianists bring to the music; yet for all its heavy-handed moments and its impersonally omniscient view of the music, this treatment has an old-fashioned, sweeping grandeur that is worth study.

I do not know when these records were made — though I suspect them to be at least ten years old, for there is no diminution in Mr. Petri's technical prowess here, and the recorded sound is uneven and tonally shallow.

R. E.

MOHAUPT

Double Trouble

Richard Dales (t); Margaret Pulliam (s); Abby Beierfeld (c); William Pickett (b); and others. Chorus and members of the Louisville Orchestra, Moritz Bomhard, cond. LOUISVILLE LOU-545-12. 12-in. Available on subscription only.

A delightfully witty, adroit, and inventive comic opera, strongly influenced by Stravinsky's *Les Noces*, but in the right way. Unfortunately the pamphlet that comes with the record provides only the sketchiest outline of the complicated plot; and although the singers project the text fairly well, it is still next to impossible to figure out what is going on at any given moment. The interpretation is altogether convincing, and the recording is good.

A. F.

MOZART

Concertos for Violin and Orchestra: No. 4, in D, K. 218; No. 5, in A, ("Turkish"), K. 219

Mischa Elman; New Symphony Orchestra, Josef Krips, cond.

LONDON LL 1271. 12-in. \$3.98.

No one who can bring himself to listen to this record will deny Mr. Elman's ownership of a few seraphim, whom he keeps in his violin. Not to argue a cause already won, let it be admitted briefly that this fiddler has more sweet unction in his strings than

any other of our times. All his records are anointed with it, particularly this one, engineered to catch delicately every lambent hemi-demi-semi-quaver.

The stylization suggests a sure grounding in Coleridge-Taylor. It is the work of a free man, a little dazed. (Freedom sometimes cannot be borne.) The pace is languid, inclined to swoon, the phrase unshaped, as if stuck in molasses on the bow. In this independence of spirit Concerto No. 5 is a hymn to melting butter, an apotheosis of goo. This originality is not sustained during No. 4, which in many places sounds like Mozart. In both the orchestra is tame, we may guess from sheepishness. C. G. B.

MOZART

Mass in C ("Coronation"), K. 317

Symphony No. 38, in D ("Prague"), K. 504

Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Igor Markevitch, cond; with Maria Stader (s), Sieglinde Wagner (c), Helmut Krebs (t), Josef Greindl (bs), and the Choir of St. Hedwig's, Berlin, in the Mass.

DECCA DL 9805. 12-in. \$3.98.

In spite of the very apparent merits of the Symphony, the Mass is the more attractive element in an odd coupling. It is far in front of the other recorded editions, whereas the *Prague* must face the hot rivalry of several creditable and one remarkable (Solti on London LL 1034) versions.

Hard treatment awaits liturgical music that does not whimper. An extensive lexicon of invective has been pointed at the *Coronation* Mass for being spirited, elegant, and sensuous. This is to suppose that neither health nor manners can befit a church, a supposition that has endowed much of the literature on this Mass with a theological rigidity of categorical rejection unquestionably terrifying to devout music-lovers who have unthinkingly ventured to enjoy both Mozart and God.

Most of this kind of criticism comes not from theologians but from critics of music trying to imagine how a theologian would feel if he heard worship joyous. This kind of critic does not understand that theologians feel like other men, according to the prescriptions of their digestion. The observant critic in church sees that the customary Mass there induces sleep, and concludes from this that sleep is the desirable and admirable result expected from a Mass. No one sleeps during K. 317, and so it must be an unholy thing.

Theatrical as the church itself, bright as hope, tender as Jesus, clean as flame, this derided C major Mass has no other sin than Magdalen's of pleasing too much. No austerity in either: just a beauty too easy to condone.

In short, the most accessible, fluent, and spontaneous of Mozart's masses, to which Decca has given an exultant performance and juicy sound. The conductor Markevitch, not known in this country as a Mozart man, will not permit a tempo to droop or a stress to falter in his projection of the quick movements, paraded with the tight contours of a contemporaneous symphony. The slow movements are in appearance and in contrast left to breathe for themselves, their slowness unforced and intrinsic, productive of a sense of repose and tranquil adoration, unimpelled, natural and inevitable. A feat of no common prowess, so to lead from

brilliant display into prayer without shocking by the contrast.

Contrast of another kind, not necessarily invidious, has been made by the nature of the sound. This has deep substance, and its bulk is enlarged by a reverberation giving a strong, lingering prominence to the low strings and drums, while the well-drilled choir soars above with a cathedral-like expansiveness. The richness of the resultant fabric imbues what is essentially a flashing pageant with a solemnity of vastness. Given generous volume, this reproduction is imposing in its own right, but is more obviously compatible with Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*, to which Decca has accorded similar treatment.

The soloists, all well known, are in good form, and the recording presents the unusual virtue of making them seem integral and not an added dimension. Excellent orchestral playing, and first-class reproduction of the choir, the orchestra in full sonance as noted, with some slighting of timbre, lost in the auditorium.

A big orchestra has been used in the *Prague Symphony*, and again we hear a contrast between the nipping spray of the music and the heavy depth of the sound. This is strange but not unpleasant, especially if one likes the bass pervasive. Reverberation effects some clashing of

woodwind qualities in the finale. Good as a whole if not the best, and an agreeable bonus to the Mass. C. G. B.

MOZART

Quartets: No. 2, in D, K. 155; No. 3, in G, K. 156; No. 4, in C, K. 157; No. 5, in F, K. 158

Barylli Quartet.

WESTMINSTER 18053. 12-in. \$4.98 (or \$3.98).

It looks as if the Baryllis will complete an edition of the Mozart Quartets for Westminster and the Barchets will do the same for Vox. The latter have a disk (8510) containing the first four quartets, so that this Barylli record is in three-quarter competition with it. Presumably No. 1 will appear on a later Westminster, giving the advantage of sensible ordination to Vox. But Westminster's reproduction is smoother and more nicely blended, although the other has good bite and sharp detail and is creditable at low volume. It is impossible to prefer consistently one group of performances over the other. The music is bland and not demanding, and the players are expert. C. G. B.

MOZART

Quintet for Piano and Wind, in E-flat, K. 452

†Beethoven: *Quintet for Piano and Wind, in E-flat, Op. 16*

Walter Giesecking, piano; Sidney Sutcliffe, oboe; Bernard Walton, clarinet; Cecil James, bassoon; Dennis Brain, horn.

ANGEL 35303. 12-in. \$4.98 (or \$3.48).

There are several other versions of both works, and two other disks with the same logical pairing. Of the latter, Columbia ML 4834 (Serkin-Members of the Philadelphia Orchestra) is a record of rarely high quality, laudable in playing and sound. Nevertheless the new Angel compels preference, particularly in the Mozart, delivered with an elegance compounded of precision and amiability. The slower, looser play of the Columbia musicians seems a little over-fleshed after this. It is not a choice between the respective keyboards or reeds or bells, but of comparative fineness of temper. In the Beethoven, an easier and more exuberant work, the point of favor is Angel's sound.

Which in both pieces attains an altitude of transparent clearness not, according to memory, reached before on a record of similar instrumentation. And attained without tension, without imposing a consciousness of room tone. Feathered or malleted, the piano responds with equal naturalism, and the horn is throughout tractable. The Columbia, which as noted is an excellent

Every Day, in Every Way, Mozart is Served Better and Better

WITHOUT EVIL FOR CONTRAST good is unrecognizable. In an assembly where everyone is virtuous, virtue fatigues. Praise is meaningless when everything is praised. (Here the reader's attention is invited for one melancholy moment to television's lexicon, where "wunnerful" is the customary term for the most delapidated comedian and "fabulous" the faintest adjective fit for a master of ceremonies or a hunk of soap). An occasional poor record is required to prove the boon of good ones.

In the last two months an extraordinary procession of laudable records has passed through the reproducers here. Only one of every eight or nine of these was of truly low order. This is not a critic's taste: the preponderance of praise may strain the credulity of his readers, and it assuredly strains the resources of his vocabulary. He yearns for a monster or a gold brick to punctuate the sameness of high ability.

And then, this: one of those precious disks with a masterpiece in masterly fulfillment on either side. A few other pairings of Mozart concertos are of high realization in the three elements of pianist, orchestra, and sound, but not so high as this. One can divine a triple girding of the loins for this record, a determination to assert right to prestige. Utilization of the conductor Rosbaud, associated with the pianist in the making of some celebrated Columbia records in the late Thirties, tends to verify that the preparation was not commonplace.

Without the customary fussy speculation on the size of the orchestra Mozart would have used for these concertos, and without the customary thrifty conclusion, Messrs. Angel have employed a large group for both works, quite in accordance with their capacity. The distribution of microphones *vis-à-vis* the players has obtained distinct audibility for each instrument even in the forceful and cohesive tutti. The conductor interprets *forte* liberally, providing a masculine strength in welcome contradiction of a tradition of miniaturism which has travestied the grander Mozart for a century.

The hearty orchestral billows are particularly effective when they introduce the pianist in the cameoed whisper that is his distinctive property—a caress with a pinch in it, a hard feather dropping, an etched quietness. It is hypnotically arresting, like a dictator's small voice; and, projected by crystalline sonics, penetrates deep. Later the same hands will make thunder, and



Giesecking



Rosbaud

the orchestra will subside to its own silkier whisper. Indeed it is in the dynamic audacity of the performance, in sound loyally precise for nearly sixty-three minutes, that the superiority of this record to its rivals is manifest. No one phrases the D minor Concerto badly nowadays, and in three preceding versions of No. 25, good in various degree with one excellent, the musical thought is not inferior to that of the Giesecking-Philharmonia disk here so warmly commended. (And in truth the best performances of the D minor have not been endowed with impressive reproduction.) The success is tripartite for the Angel record, in solo, ensemble, and sound, for the Philharmonia is at its best, and one would venture to say it was enthusiastic, proud of a triumph that could be sensed while still incomplete. C. G. BURKE

MOZART

Concertos for Piano and Orchestra: No. 20, in D minor, K. 466; No. 25, in C, K. 503.

Walter Giesecking, piano; Philharmonia Orchestra, Hans Rosbaud, cond.

ANGEL 35215. 12-in. \$4.98 (or \$3.48).

disk, is exposed with minute particles of sonic fuzz after submission to immediate comparison. Angel 35303 is an archangel. C. G. B.

MOZART

Serenade No. 13, in G ("Eine kleine Nachtmusik"), K. 525
Symphony No. 41, in C ("Jupiter"), K. 551
"Danube Symphony Orchestra."
RCA CAMDEN CAL 253. 12-in. \$1.98.

The Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra under Bruno Walter recorded these nearly twenty years ago. The conductor has since changed his concept, to everyone's satisfaction, for other records. The old *Eine k N* is slow and dull, while the *Jupiter* was a little fancy. The former in its LP transfer has pleasing, not notable sonics, understandably short of good articulation. The sonic quality of *Symphony No. 41* in this version may never be exactly fixed or estimated in this place: it is precisely elusive. For the side labeled *Jupiter* opens teasingly with some measures of festive Renaissance music, followed immediately by an experienced masculine voice:

"Welcome, gentlemen! ladies that have their toes
Unplagued with corns will have a bout with you."

Which puts us on the alert against a roguishness of special presentation perhaps celebrating the Mozart year. But no — old Capulet continues, and then comes Romeo, then Tybalt. *Romeo and Juliet*, Act I, Scene v, through Act II, Scene iii, with a Juliet sweet and hard to perfection. Not the *Romeo and Juliet* of Berlioz, or of Tchaikovsky, or Gounod, or Bellini, but Shakespeare's.

The record is probably Side 2 of the Old Vic production appropriately issued by Victor. It whets the appetite for the rest. The misreading of a code-letter caused this little *contretemps* for Camden, and the error may have been detected before many copies were at large, but readers lucky enough to find the Mozart-Shakespeare combination will not complain unless they already have the play in their collection. On the evidence of the 78s, the *Jupiter* Symphony destined for the disk will not be mourned. C. G. B.

MOZART

Sonatas for Piano: No. 11, in A, K. 331, No. 14, in C minor, K. 457, Fantasy for Piano, in C minor, K. 475

Paul Badura-Skoda, piano.
WESTMINSTER 18028. 12-in. \$4.98 (or \$3.98).

All are played on a reconstruction of a late-eighteenth-century piano. The Fantasy precedes the C minor Sonata on the record, so that they can be played in the juxtaposed sequence of tradition. Fifteen months ago a disk of the same music, played by the same pianist on a contemporary piano, was reviewed here favorably. This is a better record. Mr. B-S is more telling in a stricter economy of dynamics, and the piano — smaller in the bass, more obviously vibrant at the top, even a bit plangently vibrant, but not harpsichordish — is appealing and deadly at the same time: affinitive to the C minor music and decorative to the well-worn *alla Turca* Sonata. If the sound is not

a facsimile of the instrument, the instrument ought to be adapted to imitate the sound. C. G. B.

MOZART

Sonata for Two Pianos, in D, K. 448 Andante and Variations, for Piano four-hands, in G, K. 501

†Schubert: *Fantasy for Piano four-hands, in F minor, Op. 103; Divertissement for Piano four-hands, in E minor, Opp. 63 and 84 (2nd Movement, andantino varié, only)*

Robert and Gaby Casadesus.
COLUMBIA ML 5046. 12-in. \$3.98.

The Sonata and the Fantasy are long works. Only the *andantino varié* is new to records. Reproduction is eminently good in the four pieces. The pliable D major Sonata, agreeable to slapdash, is equally and otherwise agreeable to the well-groomed brilliance of the comparatively temperate exhibition in the newest version. The lyricism of the second movement is salted with a tongue-in-cheek prim exactitude of strong attraction, and the teamwork throughout is for every husband and wife to emulate. The Fantasy, brooding less than it might, is nice in poise and integration, and the smaller pieces are captivating. An excellent record without any large blemish except that of hodge-podge, in which it is in extensive and exalted company. C. G. B.

MOZART

Symphonies: No. 29, in A, K. 201; No. 41, in C, "Jupiter," K. 551

Philharmonia Orchestra, Otto Klemperer, cond.
ANGEL 35209. 12-in. \$4.98 (or \$3.48).

The violins are muted in the andantes of both Symphonies, an assurance of more or less denaturing to come in the reproduction. There is still no absolutely first-class record of either work, and in the case of No. 29 we are not likely to have one until some constructive editing is done in advance of recording. The charm of this music is delicate except in the finale, and that delicacy has not yet been put upon disks without distension. The trouble is in the scoring, which is for strings with pairs of oboes and horns. On records what we hear are violins, the bane of records, subduing everything else. Supervisors are urged to use six each of oboes and horns, to double the violas, and to have played down a full force of violins. Then we may have a sensation of glide in place of scratch. — Finesse is not apparent in the direction of the newest version, nor is it in most of the older ones; but in justice to the conductor it must be conceded that the full, hard sound is a barrier to any impression of nicety.

The *Jupiter*, with its fatter scoring, is a robust good one as records go. The conductor's contribution is honest and forceful and the men play well, but there is no tonal mellowness and there are enough *Jupiters* already for us to expect obvious technical improvements in a new one by such an orchestra as the Philharmonia under such auspices as Angel's.

No. 29 benefits from diminished, and No. 41 from expanded, volume. C. G. B.

PERGOLESI

Six Concertinos for Strings; Sonata in the

Style of a Concerto; Sinfonia for Cello and Strings

I Musici.
ANGEL 3538B. Two 12-in. \$9.98.

The actual composer of the six concertinos is unknown. They have been attributed at various times to Handel and to one Carlo Ricciotti as well as to Pergolesi. Whoever wrote them, they are delightful examples of the late concerto grosso, having the formal layout of the baroque concertos and melodic and harmonic touches that foreshadow the coming rococo. Their composer was a man with ideas and considerable skill. In some of the slow sections — notably those of No. 1 — he reaches a surprising depth of searching introspection, and the fast movements are always lively and often gay. The "sonata" is really a violin concerto, and an attractive one, while the "sinfonia" is really a sonata for cello and continuo. The amusing finale of this "sinfonia," incidentally, was among the things that Stravinsky borrowed for his *Pulcinella*. All of these works are performed without continuo and, except for the sonata, in "revisions" by Barbara Giuranna. They are very well played by the Musici in their customary expressive, singing style. N. B.

PERGOLESI

La Serva Padrona

Rosanna Carteri, soprano; Nicola Rossi-Lemeni, basso; La Scala Orchestra, Carlo Maria Giulini, cond.
ANGEL 35279L. 12-in. \$5.98 (or \$3.48).

La Serva Padrona is one of the milestones in musical history, not so much because of its natural and melodious charm as because its production in Paris in 1752 set off the so-called "*Guerre des Bouffons*," a deadly battle between the native French style of music represented by Rameau and the imported Italian. All the intellectuals of Paris were implicated, and the royal household split in two, with the Queen supporting the Italians, the King and Mme. de Pompadour the French. The important result of all this was the establishment of a new kind of comic opera in France, described as *comédie mêlée d'ariettes*. Thus the youthful Pergolesi, who died at twenty-six, may be said to have set the styles for both Italy and France, and to have achieved a very special kind of immortality with his innocent little intermezzo.

If *La Serva Padrona* is rarely heard nowadays, this new recording provides adequate reasons. Made up of charming, graceful arias set among long stretches of recitative, this is music that demands its own style of singing. Unfortunately neither Carteri nor Rossi-Lemeni (both of whom have shown us often enough what they can do in more modern schools of opera) is trained in this particular tradition. There is a good deal of spread tone, doubtful intonation, and plain monotony in their performance. The older Cetra recording conducted by Simonetto is less well engineered — I must concede the beautiful sound of the orchestra and the harpsichord in this one — but far better sung by Angelina Tuccari and Sesto Bruscantini. In both sets the older tradition of *appoggiaturas* is disregarded; if the recitatives seem long, this may well be one reason. P. L. M.

PERGOLESI

Stabat Mater

Teresa Stich-Randall, soprano; Elisabeth Höngen, alto; Vienna Akademie Kammerchor and Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Mario Rossi, cond.

VANGUARD BG 549. 12-in. \$4.98.

A reverent and restrained performance of Pergolesi's last and perhaps finest work. The flowing melodies are beautifully sung by Stich-Randall; and even Höngen is often free here from the unsteadiness that usually characterizes her work elsewhere. Both singers use a soft, pure tone with little shading or change of color. This is one possible approach to the work. But a good case could be made out, it seems to me, for a more full-blooded conception, with greater intensity and contrast. This is not, after all, Gregorian Chant or even Palestrina. It is the work of an eighteenth-century Italian who spent a good portion of his pitifully brief creative career in the world of opera, and the music, as Abraham Veinus remarks in his notes, has points of resemblance with that of *La Serva Padrona*. Pergolesi was obviously deeply moved by the text, but there are degrees of sadness in his music, and not all of the poem or its setting is mournful. It is only in the two choral movements that Rossi displays real animation. For those who prefer the relatively disembodied, "churchly" approach, this disk should prove satisfactory. N. B.

PUCCINI

Turandot

Inge Borkh (s), Turandot; Renata Tebaldi (s), Liu; Mario del Monaco (t), Calaf; Nicola Zaccaria (bs), Timur; Fernando Corena (bs), Ping; Mario Carlin (t), Pang; Renato Ercolani (t), Pong; and others. Chorus and Orchestra of L'Accademia di Santa Cecilia (Rome), Alberto Erede, cond. LONDON XLLA 36. Three 12-in. \$14.94.

Though performances of *Turandot* in America are as scarce as hens' teeth, Puccini's last opera seems to enjoy a secret life and growth of its own among followers of the lyric drama. Despite neglect, interest has not flagged for those who have memories of *Turandot* or own recordings. Cherishing an attitude which seems to be ever ensconced in an aura of hope and expectancy, enthusiasts blithely figure out casts in hopes that a revival is imminent. With such things in mind, it seems to me more than fortunate that this recording of *Turandot* has appeared. A new one was badly needed. For although the Cetra set (which dates from 1937) was an exciting recording for its day sonically, it emerges very dated to ears attuned to modern techniques. And the Remington album, a good bargain when it first appeared in 1954, can hardly be called definitive with its spotty casting, thinnish orchestra, and rather strident sound.

London has now given us, on the whole, a very fine account of *Turandot*. The sound is really sumptuous. This music with its oriental exoticisms responds to such treatment, as instrumental touches, lost in the other sets, now reach the surface. There is sumptuous singing, too. Most people would put down Mario del Monaco as their ideal choice among contemporary tenors for the role of Calaf, and here he

arises in all his brazen splendor. Surely, he is the most plausible entry since Lauri-Volpi. His is a brilliant, enthusiastic performance, though some of us may miss the infinite longing in Francesco Merli's voice (Cetra), as Calaf first gazes on the icy beauty of the princess.



Inge Borkh: praiseworthy new *Turandot*.

One of the features of the new set lies in the surprise casting of Renata Tebaldi for the role of Liu. Here we come upon the unusual situation of a Liu with a far more dominating voice than the voice of Turandot herself. The latter part should be sung by a lady who probably uses a mixture of steel and cement for a gargle. Inge Borkh, the new Turandot, hardly answers this description, though her singing of this cruelly taxing music is praiseworthy and generally pleasing. Her voice, not solid enough throughout its middle register, isn't really commanding, which, of course, it should be. Gina Cigna (Cetra), even at the end of her career, gives us a glimpse of the steely authority that should invest this music, and Maria Callas' recent recording of *In questa reggia* shows us how Turandot must sound. To return to Tebaldi, her voice is big and beautiful; there remains little doubt that Liu's poignant arias have never been so handsomely sung.

The use of Fernando Corena, an excellent artist, in the role of Ping, seems like miscasting to me. His voice, in reality a bass, is far too solid and covered for the open, floating *mezza-voce* I so well remember from the throat of Giuseppe De Luca, the Metropolitan's first Ping. As a matter of fact, the Ping, Pang, Pong of the Cetra set have not been equaled here. Nicola Zaccaria sings an admirable Timur.

This is a glamorous recording, make no mistake, and *Turandot* should be glamorous. The voices of Del Monaco and Tebaldi see to that, and so does the glorious sound which points up Alberto Erede's knowing direction of the Santa Cecilia chorus and orchestra. How well this performance will stand up against the competition of the Callas *Turandot*, which Angel plans to record this summer, remains to be seen. Right now, London's is the first choice.

Incidentally, a cut often made in the final duet (written by Alfano on sketches made

by the dying Puccini), has been opened for the first time in a complete recording.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE

RESPIGHI

Feste romane

Philharmonic Promenade Orchestra, Sir Adrian Boult, cond.

WESTMINSTER W-LAB 7012. 12-in. \$7.50.

If a gorgeous recording of Respighi's lush piece is worth \$7.50 of your money, this issue is highly recommended. A. F.

SAINT-SAENS

Danse macabre, Op. 40 — See Bloch: *Schelomo*.

SCHUBERT

Fantasy for Piano four-hands, in F minor, Op. 103 — See Mozart: *Sonata for Two Pianos*, in D, K. 448.

SCHUBERT

Quartet No. 13, in A minor, Op. 29

†Brahms: *Quartet No. 2*, in A minor, Op. 51, No. 2

Amadeus Quartet.

RCA VICTOR LHMV 27. 12-in. \$4.98.

These are so good that a month has been wasted in a barren effort to discover just where the record should be placed. The Amadeus play with the clear intention of extracting the essential juices from a score without in any degree putting it out of shape. Full phrasing, tonal warmth, decided rhythm; but no violence, no eccentricity: a sinuous but virtuous path among the sirens of decadence. There is enough flexibility in this ideal to permit its application to both classic and romantic music. It is hard to argue that in music for string quartet, almost always preserving remnants of classicism, there is a way better designed to unite decency and eloquence. (The trouble is, of course, that many great things are low in decency, and an immense host of decent things are devoid of eloquence.)

In Brahms, a prudent composer of romantic music parsimonious with profligacies, the Amadeus are at home with the shadowy sentiments, the cautious sorties, and the resourceful obscurities that fit so snug in a more-or-less classical mold. In their unstriving and undistended playing, the A minor Quartet emits an indefinite impression of direction impossible to looser effusions, and another impression, of animate humanity, denied to simple literalism. To the writer this edition is the most attractive, but readers are cautioned that standards in Brahms have always floated.

The sublime distress of Schubert's A minor is projected without fault and without the twisted mystery more pliant interpretations can give it. The choice here remains the tenuously writhing version of the Italian Quartet on London LL 668, wonderful in its mannered but exquisite pain.

Strong and pretty natural sound for the pair, after the compensator has taken the extra shimmer away from the violins. C.G.B.

SCHUBERT

Sonatas for Piano: No. 3, in A minor, Op. 164; *No. 20*, in A, Op. Posth.

Friedrich Wührer, piano.

VOX PL 9130. 12-in. \$4.98.

This is the first LP of the cosy and in part skittish A minor Sonata, notable in that it proclaims, both tentatively and boisterously, much of the Schubert manner and substance to be exalted in the later sonatas. The A major work, twice as long, next to last in creation and abounding in ideas, has been favored with only one other edition, perhaps because of a paucity of display, perhaps because it imparts some small discomfort with its formal distention.

This is the preferred edition, primarily because of the satisfying deep substance of the piano as recorded, but also because of the pianist's talent for keeping an unclouded and certain line. Vox has chosen this man to record all twenty-one of the Schubert sonatas — twenty-two if the 1816 work in E, usually divided into five *Klavierstücke*, is included. Ten have so far been issued, in consistently laudable sonics and performances ranging from tidy narrative to revealing disquisition. The pianist can hit like a brute but does not flaunt strength, and one will note after listening an apparent deprecation of technique as an end, a healthy spiritual state for the piano music of Schubert. His complete edition will not uniformly surpass in every sonata every other version (nor will any other complete edition), but it will not libel Schubert. C. G. B.

SHOSTAKOVICH

Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 99

David Oistrakh, violin; New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra, Dimitri Mitropoulos, cond.

COLUMBIA ML 5077. 12-in. \$3.98.

Shostakovich's most important innovation is the *moderato* slow movement, which combines the lyricism of slow tempos with the strength and dramatic, climactic build one expects in the first section of a large-scale symphonic work. When the burden of that opening *Moderato* is carried, as it is here, by a solo violin, with that instrument's natural genius for long singing lines subtly and plastically varied, the results are all the more individual.

The second slow movement is also remarkable because it suggests that there has been a shift in the Communist party line so far as music is concerned. It is a passacaglia on a theme of decidedly ecclesiastical character. Such are very rare in Soviet music, but this one is heavily emphasized by being made the subject of the concerto's long cadenza. Between the slow movements is a brief, grotesque scherzo of the kind Shostakovich writes every day before breakfast, and the finale is an optimistic folk-dance affair likewise adhering strictly to formula.

The work was tailor-made for Oistrakh — for his rich, suave tone and his vital Russian style, like that which Heifetz commanded as a young man — and of course he takes full advantage of it. The recording is of the kind from which the sound of the instruments seems fairly to leap into one's living room. A. F.

SIBELIUS

Concerto for Violin and Orchestra in D minor, Op. 47 — See Bruch: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 1.*

STRAUSS, JOHANN, JR.

Graduation Ball (arr. Antal Dorati) — see Chopin: *Les Sylphides.*

STRAUSS, RICHARD

Salome: Dance of the Seven Veils — See Bloch: *Schelomo.*

TALLIS

The Lamentations of Jeremiah the Prophet; Five Hymns for Alternating Plainsong and Polyphony

Deller Consort, Alfred Deller, dir.
VANGUARD BG 551. 12-in. \$4.98.

The Lamentations of Jeremiah were set by many sixteenth-century composers, including Lassus and Palestrina. Surely one of the noblest of these settings is this grave and lovely music by Thomas Tallis, one of England's great composers. It sounds especially rich here in a performance by five male voices, among which the limpid counter-tenor of Alfred Deller stands out strikingly. A minor oddity is the pronunciation of the Hebrew word *ghimel*, here rendered as "djimel."

Of the hymns on the other side, four are sung in alternation — that is, the odd-numbered verses are done in plainsong and the even-numbered ones are set polyphonically. Both verses of the fifth hymn (*O nata lux*) are performed polyphonically. Despite the absence of instrumental support, the voices are almost always squarely on pitch, especially in the Lamentations — a difficult thing to do in this flexible part-music. Highly recommended for the Lamentations, although the hymns are not without some fine moments. N. B.

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS

Toccata Marziale; Folksong Suite — See Holst: *Suites.*

VERDI

La Forza del Destino

Renata Tebaldi (s), Donna Leonora; Mario del Monaco (t), Don Alvaro; Ettore Bastianini (b), Don Carlo; Giulietta Simionato (ms), Preziosilla; Cesare Siepi (bs), Padre Guardiano; Fernando Corena (bs), Melitone; and others. Chorus and Orchestra of L'Accademia di Santa Cecilia (Rome), Francesco Molinari Pradelli, cond.

LONDON XLL 1353. Four 12-in. \$19.92.

A cast of singers with really important voices and a conductor who has both fiery authority and reverence for the music are what a successful performance of Verdi's *La Forza del Destino* requires. And that is what London has provided for its latest contribution to recorded opera — the fourth LP offering of this grand old music drama.

La Forza del Destino, based on the famous play by Don Angel de Saavedra, Duque de Rivas, stems from Verdi's middle period. The première occurred in St. Petersburg, Russia, in 1862. It was revised by the librettist, Ghislanzoni, at Verdi's request, in 1868, and this second version was first heard at Milan's La Scala, on February 20, 1869. It is the version that is in use today. Some may deplore the multiplicity of scenes and characters that seem extraneous; but there is no doubt that, given without cuts, the opera — like *Boris Godunov* — presents a fascinating cross-section of life and customs with a characteristic flavor quite its own. None of Verdi's other operas sounds in the least like this one.

Excepting a traditional cut of sixteen bars

in a repeated passage at the end of Don Carlo's great Act II, Scene 3 *scena*, London presents the opera complete. Because of this, eight sides have been employed rather than the six used by Cetra, Urania, and Angel. However, the energetic authority of conductor Molinari Pradelli sees to it that even without deletions his performance is only some twenty minutes longer than those of the rival sets. Keeping things moving is all to the good; such a huge, variegated musical canvas could otherwise easily weary the listener. The conductor's firm hold over the excellent orchestra and chorus of Rome's Santa Cecilia is evident throughout.

The original Metropolitan cast, which was first assembled at so late a date as November 15, 1918, included Caruso, Ponselle, De Luca, Mardones, Alice Gentle, and Thomas Chalmers. This was a formidable array, and those first performances — which I was fortunate enough to have heard — were as fine as anything given in New York during two decades. London has also assembled a very fine cast, which on paper would seem to correspond to what was considered gilt-edged in 1918 — Del Monaco, Tebaldi, Bastianini, Siepi, Simionato, and Corena. However, talk of an "ideal cast" must be qualified here in a discussion of its component parts.

Renata Tebaldi's Donna Leonora is the set's bright, particular glory. Hers becomes the definitive performance on recordings of the complete opera, surpassing both Maria Caniglia and Maria Callas, up to now the accepted phonographic measuring rods for the role. Miss Tebaldi's voice seems ideal for this music — its warmth, firmness, bloom, and brilliant high notes recalling Rosa Ponselle's memorable singing. Tebaldi's Convent Scene is perhaps the high spot of this London version, though her "*Pace, mio Dio*" is wonderfully well sung. The lovely Tebaldi *pianissimo* is much in evidence, and if some find that she occasionally drives her voice, let them remember that the soprano is not singing Handel's *Messiah* but a score that demands *effluvia*.

Del Monaco's Alvaro is far harder to appraise properly. Much of it is splendid and challenging, but it is on the whole not nearly so successful as his recent Calaf in Puccini's *Turandot*. While no one expects this "strong-armed" tenor to emit dulcet *sfumature* like a Schipa or a McCormack, one does hope for some passages sung at less than a constant heroic *forte*. Del Monaco sings with unflagging power throughout his middle register; for this reason I suspect some of the easy brilliance has departed from his top tones. They are still impressive, but they no longer electrify — at least, not on these disks. The two high B naturals, at the end of his second scene with Don Carlo, are sounds others could achieve, and perhaps better at that.

In reading this, you must remember that Del Monaco is considered by many to be the successor of such high-note specialists as Tamagno and Zenatello. Nevertheless, he makes a dignified figure of the hapless Alvaro and improves as the opera progresses.

There is an important debut here on disks: Ettore Bastianini in the role of Don Carlo di Vargas. This young man has a baritone of real breadth and sonority, and he makes

Continued on page 72



HEIFETZ

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Leonora's vengeful brother a virile, imposing figure. A few added vocal subtleties, such as the *Buona Notte's* of the Inn Scene, which should really float, would not have come amiss.

The music of the gypsy, Preziosilla, demands a virtuoso style, and in this Giulietta Simionato is more successful than her rival mezzos — and that includes the rightly respected Ebe Stignani. For all her brilliant vocalization, Miss Simionato manages to infuse the character with the earthy quality that is its proper color. Cesare Siepi's Padre Guardiano is less impressive than I thought it would be. His is a fine voice, but he sounds like many others. Cetra's Tancredi Pasero is still the most distinctive Guardiano on records. At its best, Siepi's voice sounds beautiful, but it is sometimes marred by unsteadiness, and its volume is only moderate. Personal reminiscences are sometimes tiresome, but I cannot forget the voice of Jose Mardones simply rolling out with organlike richness and amplitude in this music; I cannot say that Siepi's does.

Fernando Corena is a superior Melitone (though the role is on the high side for him) in a cast that, despite some reservations, has produced, thus far, the best *Forza del Destino* on records.
 MAX DE SCHAUSENSEE

WIENIAWSKI
Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 2, in D minor, Op. 22 — See Bruch: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 2.*

MUSIC ON TAPE

BACH
Concerto for 3 Harpsichords, in C
 †Haydn: *Concerto for Horn, No. 1, in D: Concerto for Trumpet, in E-flat*
 †Vivaldi-Bach: *Concerto for 4 Harpsichords, in A minor*

Vienna Chamber Orchestra, Anton Heiller, cond.; with Christa Fuhrmann, Erna Heiller, Bruno Seidelhofer, and Kurt Rapf, harpsichords; Franz Koch, horn; Helmut Wobitsch, trumpet.
 BERKSHIRE BH 1003. 7-in. 7½ ips. 2 tracks.
 \$6.95.

These performances may be found on two Haydn Society disks of short measure but pretty good quality in spite of fairly advanced age. As a disk the Trumpet Concerto, a glitter of high spirits, captured a large success, and on the tape the sound is delivered with a somewhat smoother brilliance. The Horn Concerto, music that improves with hearing, and played by a soloist with plush tone, enjoys notably rounder reproduction from the tape.

The Bach and the Bach transcription of a Vivaldi Concerto for Four Violins are in performances of sober rigidity which in managing to convey the irresistibility of the Bach current stir but little froth in the process. A certain dullness of color reflects the playing and the distribution of the players rather than a fault of the sonics, which are easy in a reproduction not notably different from that of the discal version. C. G. B.

BOCCHERINI
Quintet for Guitar and Strings, No. 1, in D
 †Paganini: *Quartet in E*

Stuyvesant String Quartet, with Rey de la Torre, guitar.
 PHONOTAPES PM 105. 7-in. 7½ ips. 2 tracks.
 \$8.95.

The Quintet, fresh as novelty and always entertaining in the confident mobility of its lucid patterns, must be irresistible to everyone susceptible to the resourcefully contrived but ostensibly spontaneous music of the great minor masters of music's most logical period. On disk (Philharmonia 101) or tape it is well served by players and engineers, especially on tape, which at its best gives out chamber music without duress. This one is mellow, spacious without exaggeration and distinct in tonal qualities. The wispy Paganini Quartet is no more harmful than a painted feather. C. G. B.

MOZART
Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 20, in D minor, K. 466

Sondra Bianca; Pro Musica Chamber Orchestra, Hamburg, Hans Jurgen-Walther, cond.
 PHONOTAPES PM 5003. 5-in. 7½ ips. 2 tracks.
 \$6.95.

A number of the Mozart concertos need a large orchestra, not least the D minor here played by reduced forces. There is skill in the playing, and hard point from a conductor usually very bland is an agreeable surprise. Miss Bianca is a respectable workman who would have impressed more with a little less order. As usual on tape the piano is registered with convincing clearness, and the orchestra will not cause complaint except at the revelation of a complement sparse for this big music.
 C. G. B.

MOZART
Quartets: No. 20, in D, K. 499; No. 21, in D, K. 575

Stuyvesant String Quartet.
 PHONOTAPES PM 104. 7-in. 7½ ips. 2 tracks.
 \$8.95.

None of the dozen examples of one or both of these Quartets on disks has a sound of equal smooth accuracy. The original tape is not new — there is a Philharmonia record (105) in a 1951 transfer from it. This is a good record, but comparison with a copy of its prototypical form is sure to expose an acerbity in the violin treble, to some degree still present in the great majority of disks. (In the comparisons made here the same equipment is used for tape and disk, with the necessary exception of a change from magnetic head to magnetic pickup.) These taped strings are mellow without sting, gently reverberant but not to the defeat of articulation. The viola is regularly identifiable.

The performances — which have been reviewed here in their discal manifestation — are of the warm, honorable classicism that causes no eye to bat, no marrow to boil. There are no indiscretions leading either to magnificent finality of expression or to shuddering bathos. They are excellent performances which might have been better with a softer piano, and they emerge from this tape with a surety of reproduction not evident for other performances. C. G. B.



building your record library

number twenty-nine



JOHN S. WILSON SELECTS TEN SAMPLES
OF TOP JAZZ SOLOISTS AT WORK

THE SOLOIST in jazz—the individual soloist, that is, as distinguished from a member of a band or small group who may happen to take a solo—is apt to be either a singer or a pianist. In rare instances, he may be both.

Jelly Roll Morton, one of these rare instances, was actually a triple-threat man for he was also a skilful band leader as we have noted in the section on Dixieland groups. As a pianist, he had strong ties to ragtime, one of the antecedents of jazz piano, but his playing was so personal—his fondness for certain chord structures so persistent, his beat so emphatic—as to be instantly recognizable. So was his singing, despite obvious vocal limitations. *New Orleans Memories* (Commodore FL 30,000) contains some of his most affecting blues singing—his classic “*Mamie’s Blues*” among others—as well as the best recorded of all his piano solos.

Morton’s only peer in the dual role of pianist and singer was Fats Waller, whose brash qualities as a popular entertainer often obscured the fact that he was a superb jazz pianist when he wanted to be, and like Morton, could use a negligible voice to great effect. Waller’s piano playing was an important link in one of the strongest strains in piano jazz—the striding style perfected by James P. Johnson, who taught Waller, who, in turn, was the idol and quondam teacher of Count Basie. The best over-all representation of Waller on LP is a two-disk set, “*Fats*” Waller (RCA Victor LPT 6001) which is erratically recorded but contains more of the spirit of Waller than any other LP.

When it comes to singers who simply sang and left the accompaniment to others—well, the starting point, needless to say, is Bessie Smith. Happily, there is a wealth of Bessie Smith on LP to choose from, thanks to Columbia’s four-disk *Bessie Smith Story*. If one record is to be selected from this series, my choice would be Volume 3, *Bessie Smith with Joe Smith and Fletcher Henderson’s Hot Six* (Columbia 4ML 4809) because it includes *Young Woman’s Blues* on which the two Smiths, blues-singing Bessie and trumpet-playing Joe, create an unusually moving and beautifully developed blues and because it shows Bessie in a variety of superb moods—jaunty on “*Cake Walking Babies*,” relaxed on “*Baby Doll*,” and raucous on “*There’ll Be a Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight*.”

The perfect complement to Bessie Smith is Mildred Bailey. Miss Bailey added a lyric quality to the jazz singer’s traditionally rough approach, combining a sweetness and purity of tone with a blues intonation in a manner which has proved completely inimitable. On *A Mildred Bailey Serenade* (Columbia CL 6094) she sings with her sure, clear charm in the happy company of Red Norvo, Alec Wilder, and Eddie Sauter.

Billie Holiday combines facets of both Bessie Smith and Mildred Bailey and, in her younger days, she so dominated the field that there is scarcely a girl singer working in jazz today who does not show traces of her influence. Miss Holiday established herself on the jazz scene with a series of recordings in the middle and late Thirties on which she was the vocalist with a marvelously potent studio band usually led by Teddy Wilson and including among its occasional sidemen a veritable jazz Who’s Who—Benny Goodman, Bunny Berigan, Lester Young, Artie Shaw, Johnny Hodges, Roy Eldridge, Chu Berry, and many others. A choice selection of these prime Holiday performances make up *Lady Day* (Columbia CL 637).

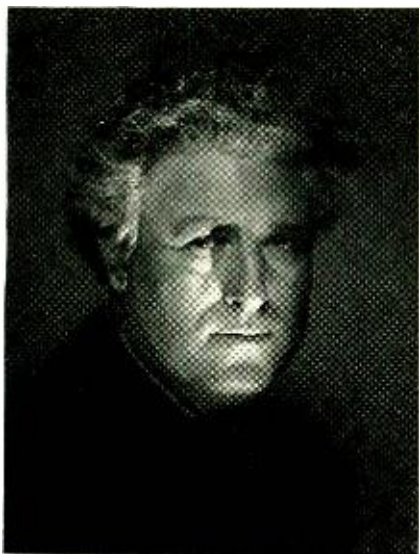
Nothing is quite so varied as individual tastes in piano soloists. There are specialists in such fringe areas as ragtime and boogie woogie who exert a strong appeal on some listeners, a stronger appeal, possibly, than some of the mainstream pianists to which this listing will adhere. With this word of warning, then, the piano soloists who merit space in a basic jazz library might start with Earl Hines, a colleague of Louis Armstrong’s in the Hot Seven recordings, an outstanding band leader of the Thirties and Forties but, basically, a master of the piano. Hines has a sharp, staccato manner of playing, reminiscent of a trumpeter’s attack, which, combined with a flashing dexterity, gives his work a strutting brilliance. A group of his own compositions, originally recorded in 1928 and now reissued on LP as *Piano Solos* (Atlantic ALS 120), offers a good display of his range and style despite some surface noise.

One of the very few jazz musicians who might conceivably qualify for consideration as a genius is Art Tatum, a pianist of fantastic virtuosity and technique. Tatum has been amazing all comers for over twenty years with his kaleidoscopic use of varied tempos, changing keys and slyly twisted musical lines, his rapid simultaneous juggling of several figures and his underlying driving beat. His playing is notably clean, complex, and inventive. Tatum is the subject of a most unusual recording project: he has taped what, it is reported, will ultimately be fourteen twelve-inch LPs of piano solos. So far, ten have been issued under the general title *The Genius of Art Tatum* (Clef MG C 612-615, 618, 657-661). Far from being an overdose of one musician’s work, these disks maintain an extraordinarily high level of interest. Any one of them may be chosen at random as representative of the series as a whole and of Tatum.

Most jazz pianists, even the best, evolve a style that is recognizably their own and, having accomplished this, are content to work within these self-imposed limitations. Mary Lou Williams, a pianist who has had several styles of her own, is one of the very few who have never stopped moving in new directions. She is a most accomplished musician, highly versed in jazz techniques from the basic blues and boogie woogie to the most modern conceptions. A broad perspective of her varied ways as they were two years ago will be found on *Piano ’53* (Contemporary 2507).

For two decades, Teddy Wilson has represented the essence of well-considered, intelligently organized, and cleanly executed jazz piano delivered with that swinging beat which is an essential of the craft. His playing has a casual, effortless air, seemingly verging on cocktail piano were it not for his strength and perception. The most representative collection of his solo performances on LP is *The Creative Teddy Wilson* (Norgran MG N-1019).

Oscar Peterson is a pianist who is as noteworthy for his facility as he is for his versatility. He is one of the very few recently arrived pianists who can approach Tatum in technique and conception and he is wonderfully equipped physically to carry out some of his high-powered ideas. His versatility is, in a sense, unfortunate, for it leads him down many banal paths, particularly when he is working in his “pretty” style. But when he is thinking and feeling and really playing, he is nothing less than glorious. He is precisely that, in two contrasting tempos, on *The Oscar Peterson Quartet, No. 2* (Clef MG C-168).



Four Decades of Giovanni Martinelli

by Desmond Shawe-Taylor

IF GIOVANNI MARTINELLI'S art had to be defined in a single word, the word would surely be "noble." His voice, in its prime, was virile, heroic, always cleanly focused; it had a clarion quality; it suggested the temper of a Damascus blade. At times the upper notes developed a rather tight, pinched quality. Martinelli never had the easy opulence and warmth of Caruso; nor, it may be added, did his voice, at any time during his long career, assume a baritone color, as did Caruso's in his latter years. Perfect breath control allowed him to maintain the long, firm line which his artistic instinct demanded. His pure legato is one of many features which distinguished Martinelli's singing from that of his most eminent contemporary, Gigli. Of Gigli's ingratiating sweetness and popular charm he had almost nothing; but in the great heroic and dramatic roles he was always Gigli's superior: more scrupulous, more sensitive, more musical, more aristocratic.

To select the material for two LP recitals from Martinelli's hundred or more Victor 78 sides, almost half of them electric and most of them very good specimens of their period, must have been a difficult task. Probably for contractual reasons, the choice has been narrowed by the omission of all ensembles. This is certainly a loss, for much of the great tenor's finest studio work was done in company with his leading colleagues—with Geraldine Farrar in *Carmen*, with De Luca, Ponselle, and Pinza in *La Forza del Destino*, and with Ponselle and Pinza in *Aida*. Though some of these justly famous recordings are to be had in various LP or 45 collections, it is an undoubted blot on the present pair of Camden records that they contain no evidence whatever of Martinelli's Radames, probably his most famous and characteristic role, and the one which he sang more often than any other during his thirty consecutive years at the Metropolitan (1913-1943). It is indeed something of a mystery why neither his acoustic nor his electric "*Celeste Aida*" should have been included, for both are excellent.

The first of the two Camden disks, CAL 274, derives wholly from electrically recorded material. It opens superbly with the "*Improvviso*" from *Andrea Chénier*, an

eloquent and fiery interpretation, notable for the ardent energy of the verbal declamation (always a strong point with Martinelli) as well as for the ringing climactic B flats. There is nearly always a martial quality in Martinelli's voice, and this fits Giordano's heroic conception of the French poet, both in the "*Improvviso*" and to a lesser extent in the more lyrical aria from Act IV. Of the two extracts from *Cavalleria Rusticana*, the first leads into the "*Siciliana*" by way of a fairly extensive slice of the orchestral prelude, which doesn't—in the present context—strike the listener as particularly appropriate or valuable. The "*Siciliana*" itself is finely, if rather strenuously, sung; and the "*Addio alla madre*" is delivered with a manly restraint which will seem astounding to the devotees of some popular contemporary tenors. The first side ends with the two familiar *Pagliacci* numbers. In "*Vesti la giubba*" Martinelli can no more efface the memory of Caruso than can any other tenor at this crucial point, but his version is none the less very fine; even more notable is the outburst from Act II, in which the concluding cantabile passage is sung with a remarkable purity of line very different from the usual now customary succession of sobs, gulps, and vocal *sforzandi*.

So far, the transfer to microgroove has been well handled; but on Side 2, with one notable exception, the results are less successful. Especially in the *Trovatore* and *Fedora* excerpts, one is often conscious that the engineers have had a hard time getting the best tonal quality out of the original grooves without admitting a lot of extraneous noise as well; and the result is on the whole uncomfortable, as the original records were not. A certain amount of reverberation has evidently been added, as can be observed at the end of several excerpts (e.g., the scene from *Samson*), where the attentive listener can hear, first the cessation of the surface noise of the original disk, and thereafter a continuing reverberation of the final chord (which is not, as might be supposed, simply a microgroove "echo" from the preceding groove). Such technical devices have proved successful on other occasions; but they need to be handled with scrupulous care. With the *Trovatore* record I carried out a little experiment of my own, synchronizing the LP version with an HMV 78, and then switching backwards and forwards between the two with (of course) a different pickup, but the same amplifier and loudspeaker. The result was disconcerting: the original proved to have far more life and immediacy. It was clear that—in this instance, at any rate—the frequency-ceiling had first been drastically lowered in order to suppress surface noise; and that the consequently deadened sound had then been "pepped up" by means of added reverberation, until (by contrast

with the natural quality of the original) Martinelli seemed to be booming across the vast baronial halls of Citizen Kane.

I had hoped to make similar comparisons through most of the remaining matter on these two disks, and especially to check the pitch of each number (that of the *Andrea Chénier* "*Improvviso*" having proved to be nearly a semitone sharp), when a minor automobile accident confined me to bed and—doubtless to the relief of my friends and neighbors—put an end to all such investigations for the time being. But I know Martinelli's records pretty well and feel tolerably safe in reporting that one of the finest of all, "*O tu che in seno agli'angeli*" from *La Forza del Destino*, is a reasonably faithful transcription of the magnificently original, with its touching introductory recitative, the splendid, gloomy sweep of the opening phrase of the aria, and the beautiful change of vocal color at the modulation into the major key on the words "*Leonora mia, soccorrimi*." This record should be made compulsory listening for every budding Italian tenor. The *Trovatore* already mentioned is the curious excerpt which begins with some nobly delivered recitative (with Grace Anthony as Leonora), jumps the aria "*Abbi, ben mio*" (of which Martinelli had made a fine acoustic in 1915) and proceeds to a spirited "*Di quella pira*" transposed down a semitone (as is by no means unusual) to the key of B major. The rest of this side might have been better chosen. The brief *Fedora* pieces, well enough sung, do not come through very clearly; the *Bobème* aria, despite a beautiful climax, is hardly romantic enough in style; and the long stretch of *Samson et Dalila* (dull music, surely) takes us laboriously through an extended choral section before we hear a note from the protagonist.

The second Camden disk, CAL 283, opens even more splendidly than the first with a very clear transcription of the two great monologues from *Otello*, recorded in 1939 (whereas all the other electrics date from 1925 to 1928). By 1939 Martinelli was vocally past his best days, but his art was at its zenith. In these two scenes his declamation of the text alone is overwhelmingly beautiful and moving; like all great singers, he makes effective play with the rolled "r," using this device to give tremendous weight and force to such words as "*misericordia*," "*vergogna*," "*maceria*," and "*sorriso*"; and his treatment of the music is full of refinements of a kind rarely encountered in performances of Italian opera—to name only one, the intensely calm and sorrowful delivery, in a single long breath, and with suddenly altered vocal color, of the cantabile phrase to the words "*e rassegnato al volere del ciel*" in the middle of

Continued on page 76

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At a recent piano recital in Carnegie Hall there were, by casual count, some 23 "name" pianists—listening.

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MARTINELLI

Continued from page 74

the Act III Monologue. Such things can bring tears to the eyes.

Unfortunately, it cannot be claimed that the rest of the second disk is either equally well chosen or equally well engineered. The long Passover Scene from *La Juive* comes off satisfactorily, but the music, consisting for some time of liturgical exchanges between chorus and soloist, sounds wooden and featureless after *Otello*. There follows a sequence of seven acoustic recordings, interrupted only by the "Nina" of 1925 (a rather peremptory and military-sounding invitation to take a trip in a gondola!). One of the acoustics, the unhackneyed *Ernani* aria of 1915, was an excellent choice: here the youthful voice emerges clean, fresh, free, and lyrical, and the style (for instance, in the treatment of ornament) is already scrupulously pure and elegant. This aria ought to have been supplemented by the superb "O muto asil" from *William Tell* and by the above-mentioned "Ah sì, ben mio" from *Il Trovatore*. The famous pieces from *Carmen* and from *Faust* demonstrate Martinelli's eminence in the French repertory, but they sound tonally unsatisfactory in their present shape, although I seem to recall the originals as being pretty good specimens of their period.

The remaining four acoustics are trivial ditties by Mascagni, Bizet, Tosti, and Leoncavallo; and Martinelli has not (like McCormack) the sort of spellbinding personality that can make trivialities seem momentous. However, *L'ultima canzone* is sung with richly flowing tone, and *Mattinata* has the collectors' appeal of having

been previously, so far as I know, unissued (it is a goodish recording of 1916, to which the Victor single-sided number 64 485 was assigned but not used). Slight as may be the musical value of these songs, they are at any rate vastly preferable to the two concluding items, *Gesù Bambino* and *Hosanna* which are truly dreadful specimens of commercialized "Yuletide" religiosity complete with bells, female choirs, and all seasonal appurtenances. Though you would hardly guess it, Martinelli is here supposed to be singing in English, at any rate for part of the time. *Hosanna* makes a sad finish for a disk which opened on the mountain tops with *Otello*, and it is hard to visualize the listener who would be equally happy with Verdi's masterpiece and with the tasteless *bondieuserie* of Granier.

In short, the two Martinelli Camdens are technically variable, uncertainly pitched, and by no means ideally selected; but to the lover of great singing who does not possess a library of 78s they can fairly be called indispensable, if only for the "Improvviso" from *Andrea Chénier*, the arias from *Forza* and *Ernani*, and the two glorious monologues from *Otello*.

GIOVANNI MARTINELLI
Sings by Request

Giordano: *Andrea Chénier*: Act I, *Un di all'azzurro spazio*; Act IV, *Come un bel dì di Maggio*. Mascagni: *Cavalleria Rusticana*: *Siciliana*; *Addio alla madre*. Leoncavallo: *Pagliacci*: Act I, *Vesti la giubba*; Act II, *No, Pagliaccio non son!* Puccini: *La Bohème*: Act I, *Che gelida manina*. Verdi: *Il Trovatore*, Act III, *Di quella pira*. Giordano: *Fedora*: Act II, *Amor ti vieta*; *Mia madre*. Verdi: *La Forza del Destino*: Act III, *O tu che in seno agli'*

angeli. Saint-Saëns: *Samson et Dalila* Act I, *Arrêtez, o mes frères*.

RCA CAMDEN CAL 274. 12-in. \$1.98.

Giovanni Martinelli in Opera and Song

Verdi: *Otello*: Act III, *Dio! mi potevi scagliar*; Act IV, *Nium mi tema*. Halévy: *La Juive*: Act II, *O Dieu, Dieu de nos pères*. Bizet: *Carmen*, Act II: *Air de la fleur*.* Gounod: *Faust*: Act III, *Salut, demeure*.* Verdi: *Ernani*: Act I, *Come rugiada al cespite*.* Tanara: *Nina*. Mascagni: *Serenata*.* Bizet: *Ouvre ton coeur*.* Tosti: *L'Ultima canzone*.* Leoncavallo: *Mattinata*.* Yon: *Gesù Bambino*. Granier: *Hosanna*.

RCA CAMDEN CAL 283. 12-in. \$1.98.

*indicates an acoustic recording



As Eleazar in Halévy's La Juive.

RECITALS AND MISCELLANY

FELICJA BLUMENTAL

Spanish and Portugese Keyboard Music, Vol. 2.

Anglès: Adagietto in B-flat; Fugatto in B-flat. Soler: Sonata in G minor. Ferrer: Sonata in D. Freixanet: Sonata in A; Toccata in C. Seixas: Fugue in A minor; Sonatas in C and C minor; Minuets in A minor and F minor; Toccatas in D minor and G minor.

Felicja Blumental, piano.

LONDON LL 1194. 12-in. \$3.98.

Miss Blumental's sensitive and graceful style is again apparent in this follow-up disk to an earlier collection of similar music. Particularly valuable are the seven examples of the Portugese composer Carlos Seixas, who lived from 1704 to 1742, mostly in Lisbon, where he was for a time a young colleague of Domenico Scarlatti. His music does not have the wealth of ideas found in Scarlatti's, but its directness and simple expressiveness are unusually appealing. R.E.

AUGUSTANA CHOIR

Bach: *Blessing, Glory, and Wisdom*. Britten: Five excerpts from *A Ceremony of Carols*. Grieg: *The Great Angelic Host*. Kodály: *Jesus and the Traders*. Kountz: *Come to the Manger*. Rachmaninoff: *Blessed Is the Man*, Op. 37, No. 3. Sjöberg: *Tonerna (Music)*. German folk song, *Gute Nacht*.

Augustana Choir; Henry Veld, cond.

WORD W 4005. 12-in. \$5.75.

This second Augustana Choir disk is more expensive but also considerably superior in sound and in repertoire to the first, which was issued by RCA Victor on its Bluebird series. One might quarrel with some of Mr. Veld's tempos. Here they seem a little too fast, there a little too slow for the best interests of the music, but he makes the choir sing with crystal-clear diction and fine-spun line, and the massed tone of the choir is even all up and down the line.

The Bach is almost too smoothly sung; it seems dehumanized, but it has clarity of texture. In all other instances, the performances seem stylistically right. The Rachmaninoff is only the second excerpt from his Vesper Mass to be recorded, and the Kodály is an unusual and new addition to the recorded choral literature. No notes about the music. R. E.

THE KING OF INSTRUMENTS

Vol. VI: The Cathedral of St. John the Divine

Sweelinck: Variations on *My Young Life Hath an End*. Bach: Toccata in D minor (*Dorian*). John Stanley: Toccata for the Flutes. Leo Sowerby: Prelude on *Deus tuorum militum*. Percy Whitlock: Carol. Benjamin Britten: Prelude on a Theme by Victoria. Herbert Howells: Saraband (*In modo elegiaco*).

Alec Wyton, organ.

Vol. VII: Marilyn Mason in Recital

Johann Gottfried Walther: *Concerto del Signor Torelli*. Johann Kaspar Kerll: *Capriccio, Cucu*. Pachelbel-Partita on *Christus, Der ist mein Leben*. Bach: Prelude and Fugue in D. Robert Crandall: *Carnival Suite*. Copland: *Episode*. Searle Wright: Carol-Prelude on *Greensleeves*; Prelude on *Brother James' Air*.

Marilyn Mason, organ.

AEOLIAN-SKINNER. 12-in. \$5.95 each.

The different emphases in the titles of these two new Aeolian-Skinner disks are justified. With all due respect to Mr. Wyton, an unimpeachable musician, it is the large, complex organ at St. John's that is

Continued on page 78

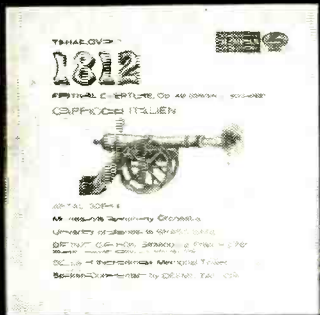


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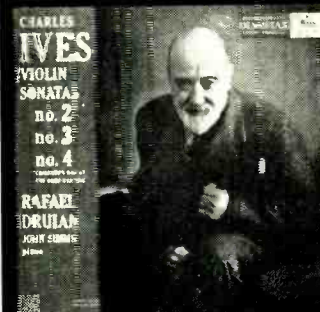
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Detroit Symphony Orchestra
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Rafael Druian, violin; John Simms, piano
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CHARLES IVES Violin Sonata No. 1
QUINCY PORTER Violin Sonata No. 2
Rafael Druian, violin; John Simms, piano
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Eastman-Rochester Orchestra, Hanson conducting.
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BRITISH BAND CLASSICS. HOLST First and Second Suites. VAUGHAN WILLIAMS Toccata Marziale; Folk Song Suite. Eastman Wind Ensemble, Fennell conducting.
MG40015

WAGNER The Flying Dutchman Overture; Parsifal Good Friday Spell; Tristan and Isolde Prelude and Love-Death; Siegfried Forest Murmurs. Detroit Orchestra, Paray conducting.
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Act III **MG50067**

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Acts II & IV **MG50069**
Act III **MG50070**

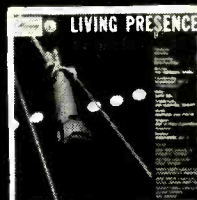
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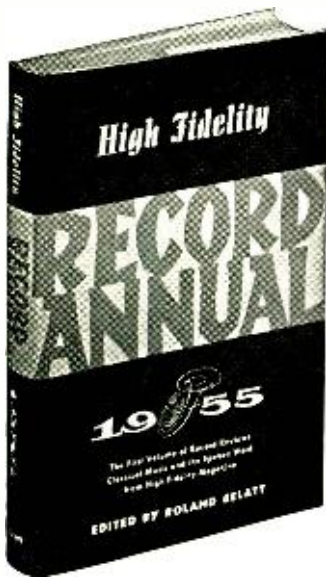


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of interest in Vol. VI; whereas the interest in Vol. VII is quite clearly focused on the remarkable performances of Miss Mason.

The Aeolian-Skinner organ at St. John's was completed in 1954—the same year that Mr. Wyton, an English-born and trained musician, now thirty-five, came to the cathedral as organist and choirmaster. The building is so vast that it presented special acoustical problems to the organ designers, which they solved very well, producing a useful, flexible organ that is, as they claim, "a composite of the early Classic instrument, the Romantic organ, and one which would be found in the Cathedrals of England." The Sowerby piece was written especially for the organ at St. John's and had its première only last year. It makes good use of the famous and formidable State Trumpet stop, which gives the final climax a truly shattering power. Turn up the volume of your high fidelity set on this and you will blow yourself right out of the room.

Like many good organists, Miss Mason plays with nimble fingers, clean articulation, and tidy phrasing, but she infuses these musical disciplines with a rare rhythmic vitality. This is not a question of just playing in more lively fashion with stronger accents, but of keeping the rhythms firm and flexible at the same time. Her style in baroque music is not so much imitative-baroque as a blend of modern simplicity and warmth, and her lyrical, winged performances remind me more of Dinu Lipatti's pianism than of anything else. The repertoire in which she is heard here is fresh and unusually attractive, even if of varying degrees of musical profundity. Of the contemporary works, the four-part Crandell suite shows some modern French influence but has its original touches. The 1941 Copland piece is brief and strong; the Wright preludes very ingratiating.

Miss Mason plays the Aeolian-Skinner organ designed by G. Donald Harrison in 1935 for St. John's Chapel, Groton School, Groton, Mass. In her hands anyway, it is a honey, giving an impression of unity whether the mood is intimate or proclamative, the tone multi-colored or coolly dry. R.E.

JONEL PERLEA

Smetana: *Die Moldau*. Enesco: *Rumanian Rhapsody* No. 1, Op. 11.
Kodály: *Dances of Galanta*. Dvorak: *Scherzo Capriccioso*, Op. 66.

Bamberg Symphony Orchestra, Jonel Perlea, cond.
VOX PL 9500. 12-in. \$4.98.

A most enjoyable recording of four Central European scores in which Perlea's broad and rhythmic direction shares honors with the excellent orchestral playing and Vox's very handsome sound. It is perhaps no accident that the Kodály and Enesco works, which lie closer to the conductor's musical heritage than their companions, are the most successfully realized. The *Galanta Dances*, in particular, benefit from the conductor's care in exposing every aspect of the composer's inner instrumental voicings and from the slight edginess in the orchestral tone, so appropriate to this Hungarian folk music. The Enesco, often

overdriven and ragged in performance, is permitted to generate its proper rhythmic excitement at a reasonable speed, with extremely effective results. *The Moldau* seems to be flowing a trifle leisurely here, but the Dvorak piece has plenty of lilt, even though the playing is not as polished as it might be. All told, the final tally is fifty-five minutes of excellent musical fare.

J.F.I.

LILY PONS

Lily Pons Gala

Delibes: *Lakmé: Bell Song*. Verdi: *Rigoletto: Tutte le feste al tempio*. Bellini: *I Puritani: Son vergin vezzosa*. Rossini: *Il Barbiere di Siviglia: Una voce poco fa*. Thomas: *Mignon: Je suis Titania*. Meyerbeer: *Dinorah: Ombre légère*. Delibes: *Les Filles de Cadiz*. Fauré: *Après un rêve*. Ponce: *Estrellita*. Rachmaninoff: *Oh cease thy singing, maiden fair*. Bachelet: *Chère nuit*. Strauss: *Blue Danube Waltz*.

Lily Pons, soprano; orchestra, Pietro Cimara, André Kostelanetz, and Maurice Ab-ravanel, cond.

COLUMBIA ML 5073. 12-in. \$3.98.

Lily Pons's twenty-fifth anniversary as a Metropolitan Opera *prima donna* furnished the occasion for one of the big turnouts of the New York season when it was celebrated on January 3. Columbia, in adding this recorded tribute, has gone back into her older repertoire; if I'm not mistaken, everything here has been with us before in one combination or another. Strangely, the least hackneyed of her coloratura numbers steals in unobserved, for the band assigned to *Tutte le feste* contains also *Son vergin vezzosa* from *I Puritani*, although nobody at Columbia seems to have been aware of this, as there is no mention of it on jacket or label. The singing throughout is characteristic: the tone quality is sweet and appealing, the *fioratura* deft if a bit fluttery. The songs are less impressive than the arias. She is not too successful in sustaining the lines of *Après un rêve*, and her style is not broad enough to make the most of *Chère nuit*. But Lily has her fans, and they are going to like this record P.L.M.

RICHARD PURVIS

A Richard Purvis Organ Recital in Grace Cathedral, Vol. I

Purcell: *Trumpet Tune*. Bach: *Arioso*. Elmore: *Pavane*. Shaw: *Processional*. Widor: *Toccata*, from Fifth Symphony. Purvis *Greensleeves: Supplication; Capriccio on the Notes of the Cuckoo*.

Vol. II

Bach: *Sheep May Safely Graze*. Franck: *Pièce Héroïque*. Dupré: *Cortège et Litanie: Adagissimo*. Purvis: *March Grotesque: Nocturne; Les Petites Cloches; Toccata Festiva*

Richard Purvis, organ.
HIFIRECORD R 703 (Vol. I) and R 704 (Vol. II). 12-in. \$4.95 each.

Richard Purvis is organist and choirmaster of Grace Cathedral in San Francisco, where he recorded these disks. The organ is an Aeolian-Skinner built in 1934 and added to in 1952. Instrument and player together produce eminently respectable performances. Mr. Purvis is skillful but ap-

proaches the music with a carefulness that makes his playing a shade stodgy, even in the fast and flashy toccatas. Very sensibly, he includes several of his own works, which are conventional but effective, whether they aim to be impressionistic (*Nocturne*), grandiose (*Toccata Festiva*), or cute (*Les Petites Cloches*). No notes on the music, but organ specifications are listed. First-rate engineering. R.E.

SCHWARZKOPF — SEEFRIED

Duets

Monteverdi: *Io son pur vezzosa pastorella*; *Ardo scoprire*; *Tornate, o cari baci*; *Bel pastor*. Carissimi: *Detesta la cativa sorte in amore*; *Lungi omai*; *Il mio core*; *A pic d'un verde alloro*. Dvorak: *Klänge aus Mähren*, Op. 32.

Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, soprano; Irmgard Seefried, soprano; Gerald Moore, piano. ANGEL 35290. 12-in. \$4.98 (or \$3.48).

Monteverdi, besides being the first great opera composer, was a prolific writer in other fields: to the literature of the madrigal he contributed no less than nine volumes, containing solos with continuo, duets, and trios, as well as works for larger combinations. The four two-voiced madrigals chosen by Schwarzkopf and Seefried have been to some extent adapted, for while the first is designated for two sopranos, the second and third call for two tenors, and the fourth for soprano and tenor. Not too surprisingly there is red-blooded drama in these brief pieces, and the two sopranos do not hesitate to bring it out. Carissimi, a younger contemporary of Monteverdi, and a follower of his innovations, is chiefly celebrated as the father of the oratorio. His four duets have a declamatory justness hardly inferior to Monteverdi's, but they are more lyrical in style. Tonally the singing of all these works is superb, but Italian diction is not these singers' strongest point.

Dvorak's *Klänge aus Mähren* (*Strains from Moravia*) have a special interest historically. In 1875, Dvorak applied for a grant from the Austrian government available to "young, poor, and talented artists." Among the judges who granted the petition were Brahms and the critic Hanslick, both of whom were greatly impressed with the young man's abilities. Sending the *Moravian* duets to his publisher, Simrock, Brahms wrote: "If you play them through, you will have the same pleasure from them that I do, and as a publisher you will be especially pleased with their piquant quality. Dvorak has written everything imaginable, operas, symphonies, quartets, piano pieces. He is decidedly a talented person. And besides that a poor man! I beg you to think it over." Simrock did; and in no time after he published the duets, Dvorak was receiving offers from all the rival houses.

Some years ago we had a Urania recording of twelve of the thirteen duets sung by Marta Fuchs and Margarete Klose. Theirs was a more spontaneous, less carefully polished performance than this, but the singers' voices were lovely and they blended well. In one sense they were better suited to the music, as Dvorak wrote for soprano and alto; the two S's are both

sopranos, and occasionally they find it convenient to transpose a duet for vocal comfort. Nevertheless, these are two of the finest voices extant today, and they are so well matched that at times it is impossible to tell them apart. P.L.M.

ANDRES SEGOVIA

The Art of Andrés Segovia

Six pieces for lute from a sixteenth-century Codex. Manuel Ponce: Sonata No. 3; Valse; Mazurka. Bach: Fugue from Sonata in G minor for solo violin. Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco: *Tonadilla for Guitar on the Name of Andrés Segovia*. J. Crespo: *Homage to Aguirre*. Lauro: Dance from Venezuela. Gaspar Cassadó: Sardana.

Andrés Segovia, guitar.

DECCA DL 9795. 12-in. \$3.98.

This is the seventh Decca Gold Label disk made by Segovia and as welcome and lovely as its predecessors. (Only the man who has to think up titles for the records must be tired of them). The unpretentious lute songs are wholly delightful, and the contemporary works are atmospheric and unproblematic, all written for Segovia and designed to show off his art at its most colorful and resplendent. R.E.

BARBARA TROXELL

Song Recital

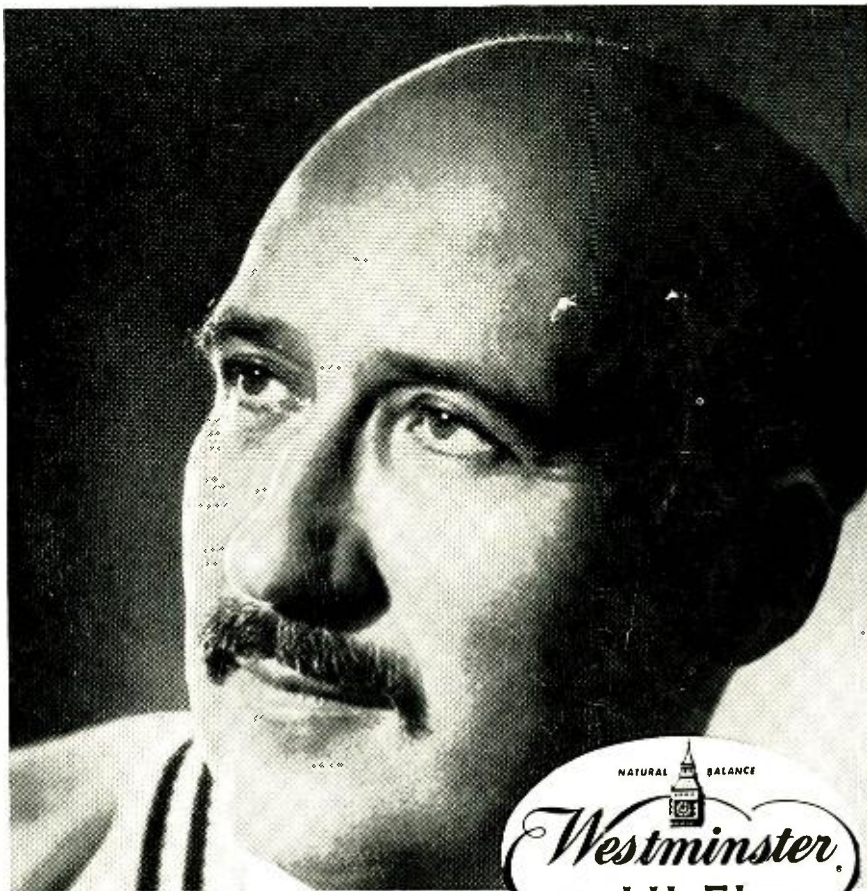
Britten: *On This Island* (*Song Cycle*); *Fish in the Unruffled Lakes*; *Mother Comfort*; *Underneath the Abject Willow*; Hindemith: *Nine English Songs* (1942).

Barbara Troxell, soprano; Tibor Kozma, piano.

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who but Westminster records it so!

This is an important recording, formerly issued under the WCFM label, now tidied up technically so that a sheen of extra brilliance is removed from the voice and the balance generally improved. The Britten side of the disk presents the composer as of 1937, aged twenty-four. According to Peter Pears, W. H. Auden was "so far Britten's poet for his adult songs": not only the five-song cycle but two of the three remaining pieces draw their inspiration from this poet. *Mother Comfort* is set to a text of Montagu Slater, librettist of *Peter Grimes*. There is a lot of variety in the songs, with perhaps some "feeling around" for the composer's authentic voice. Pears points out that at the time of their composition Britten knew few of the songs of Purcell (though he was later to "realize" a goodly number of them for modern performance), and he finds the strongest influence that of Stravinsky.

Most hearers, however, will be struck by the Englishness of the opening song, *Let the Florid Music Play*, and its Handelian trumpetings. It is some distance, stylistically, from this to the *Nocturne*, the most deeply impressive of the group, and again to the flip *As It Is, Plenty*, which ends the cycle. *Fish in the Untroubled Lakes* is a quiet setting of a lovely poem; the two remaining numbers are duets, sung here with Miss Troxell's voice on both parts. Mr. Pears's reference to Stravinsky

points the prevailing weakness of all these songs; for Britten, like his model, has taken delight in torturing some of the words so that more than excellent diction is needed to make them clear. The more's the pity that no texts are provided with the record!

In contrast to this we find scrupulous regard for the poetry chosen in the Hindemith set, a product of his sojourn at Yale. Here the expressive gamut is a wide one, the technical mastery, needless to say, consummate. The composer has made a moving thing of Charles Wolfe's *On Hearing "The Last Rose of Summer,"* and he has obviously enjoyed treating Thomas Moore's *Echo* in canon and pointing up the dialogue in Thomas Lover's *The Whistling Thief*. Perhaps the most beautiful of all is Walt Whitman's *Sing On There in the Swamp*. Miss Troxell's voice is lovely in quality, unusual in range and flexibility. She sings both groups of songs with confident mastery. P.L.M.

VRONSKY AND BABIN
Dances for Duo Pianos

Schubert: *German Dances and Ecossaises*, Op. 33. Richard Strauss: *Rosenkavalier Waltzes*. Rachmaninoff: *Italian Polka*. Poulenc: *L'Embarquement pour Cythère*. Dvorak: *Slavonic Dance No. 10*, in E minor, Op. 72. Borodin: *Polovtsian Dances from Prince Igor*.

Vitya Vronsky and Victor Babin, two pianos.
DECCA DL 9791. 12-in. \$3.98.

When they are at their best, as they are here, Vronsky and Babin are virtually incomparable as duo-pianists. The Schubert dances, unjustly neglected, have a wonderfully happy artlessness, and they are meltingly played. The Rachmaninoff and Poulenc items are amusing spoofs, the Dvorak full of deep sentiment. Mr. Babin's arrangements of the Strauss and Borodin are respectively tactful and exciting, and the pianissimo throughout is magically deft and sparkling. Recommended. R.E.

THE SPOKEN WORD

BURNS NIGHT
Songs and Poems of Robert Burns

The Saltire Music Group, with Ian Gilmour and Meta Forrest, speakers.
ANGEL 35256. 12-in. \$4.98 (or \$3.48).

The many Burns Societies in America, now dead or moribund or reticent, were alive and assertive until the war of 1914. They were of two kinds: those eager to disseminate the work of a gifted satirical poet; and those afflicted with the kind of maudlin nationalism that worships any sentiment couched in the *sae bonnie sang o' hame*.

Unless dialect can impart a natural sympathy, it is sickening to those who do not use it. Even the best palls when it is over-lavished. Perhaps the late Sir Harry Lauder, via the phonograph, contributed more than anyone else to make Scotch roguery distasteful by repetition. Perhaps the proportional decline of the Scotch membership in the American ancestry has discouraged demonstrations of a dialectal speech comprehensible now to fewer than one American in a hundred. Perhaps the surge of dialects from lands south and east of Caledonia has stifled the older voices.

At any rate, the poems and songs on this record, the majority once as familiar as the growler of beer, come now to instill a faint sense of anachronism and surprise at the recollection of something not forgotten but shelved. Perhaps the phonograph will be able to revive the interest which the phonograph through Lauder lulled.

Perhaps not, since with the loss of familiarity has come a new difficulty in plain comprehension, especially when a woman recites. Mr. Gilmour is easier to follow than Miss Forrest, who is, however, no bit less able than he. The speech is natural to these people, who spare us the archness of delivery, the little implied sniggers, and the pauses requiring sympathetic laughter that used to be so trying when the readers were not on the native heath. The songs too are in unforced folk-style, even "Scots wha hae" from a baritone of no vocal appeal. Two items from Burns's cantata *The Jolly Beggars*, set by Cedric Thorpe-Davey, have a music of highly apposite, sweaty swing and tease the appetite for more. In these a small chorus

Continued on page 82

The Controversial Voice of Mrs. Murphy

FOR THE INFORMATION of anyone who has spent the last few weeks snowbound in the Himalayas, Doubleday and Company published in February a book called *The Search for Bridey Murphy*, by a man named Morey Bernstein.

In essence it is an account of a series of experiments in hypnosis conducted by Mr. Bernstein, a businessman with a taste for the esoteric, and a Colorado housewife called in the book Ruth Simmons. Under hypnosis Mrs. Simmons practiced recall of various parts of her past, which is nothing unusual: even early childhood is commonly available to the memory under hypnosis. What was unusual was that when Mrs. S. had pretty well traversed her own past, she began "recalling" someone else's. This latter person was, as self-identified through Mrs. Simmons' voice, an Irishwoman named Bridey Murphy, who (she said) had lived and died in Ireland in the early 1800s. All the sessions were recorded on tape, and now an early one has been transferred to disk by Research Recordings, a company started for the purpose by Mr. Bernstein. Probably there will be others if the first one sells well.

The whole Bridey Murphy project became at once highly controversial. To some people it has seemed a glorious proof of the existence of the soul, and of transmigration. Others think the whole thing a hoax. At the time of this writing I had not read the book, nor heard what success, if any, has been claimed for attempts to verify Bridey Murphy historically, through research in Cork and Belfast. The opinion formed from listening to the record, however, is that the experiments constitute neither a revelation nor a hoax. Even as relayed by the creaky little home-style recorder they used, which

makes Mrs. Simmons seem to breathe like a grampus, the participants sound sincere. Indeed, they sound a little too sincere to be convincing. A difficulty that must be faced in all hypnotic experimentation is *overco-operation* on the part of the subject. He (or she) is responsive not only to the words of the hypnotist's commands, but to every inclination and wish expressed in the nuances of his voice and manner. In this *total* concentration (impossible to anyone fully conscious) on pleasing the mentor, quite extraordinary feats of memory and intellect can be performed — and these do include fabrication, often of great ingenuity.

Now, in the Bridey Murphy recording, Mr. Bernstein is far from scientifically detached. He is audibly very anxious to prove Mrs. Simmons' earlier incarnation, and the survival of her spirit between lives, so to speak. Following the hypothesis (and you needn't if you don't want to) that Mrs. Simmons was straining every faculty to give Mr. Bernstein what he hoped for, her evocation of Bridey Murphy can be accepted as a likely result — even to the fact that Bridey seems to have had an extremely dull and uneventful life (and afterlife, too!), easily described and undramatically plausible.

However, the record will stimulate many an imagination. And if Mr. Bernstein in the end has failed scientifically to establish the transmigration of souls, he probably will be consoled by making quite a lot of money. JOHN M. CONLY

THE SEARCH FOR BRIDEY MURPHY: Experiment No. 1

Morey Bernstein, Mrs. Ruth Simmons; hypnosis session.
RESEARCH RECORDINGS RR 101. 12-in. \$5.95.

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JOHN COLLIER

Reading From His Works

Mary; De Mortuis; Back For Christmas.

COLUMBIA ML 4754. 12-in. \$5.95.

This is the first we have received of the individual records in the Columbia Literary Series (released in the Fall of 1953), which Columbia is now beginning to release separately.

To tell the reader (listener) in full the story of one of John Collier's fancies would be like standing over the shoulder of a man reading O'Henry and telling him, as he finished the first page of the *Gift of the Magi*, how Jim sells his cherished grandfather's watch to buy his wife, Della, a set of combs and Della cuts and sells her beautiful golden hair to buy Jim a watchfob.

However, for those of you who have not come across Collier in your reading (those who have, of course, need no urging), perhaps a sampling will help get you in the mood:

Mary is a story about a man (Fred), his wife (Rosie) and the difficulties which beset Rosie in dealing with her chief rival for Fred's affections—a pet performing pig (Mary).

De Mortuis is about a doctor who is discovered by two friends just as he is smoothing over a large cemented hole in his basement. The two friends make much over the fact that the doctor's wife appears to be missing.

Back For Christmas also involves a doctor, his wife and a hole in the basement floor.

Collier's reading is very even and very, very British which is fine for *Mary* and *Back For Christmas*, which have English characters and settings, but not quite right for *De Mortuis*, which depicts Americans in up-state New York. R. H. H., Jr.

FEDERICO GARCIA LORCA

Lament on the Death of a Bullfighter and Other Poems

Translated and Read by Alan Wheatley
WESTMINSTER WN 18098. 12-in. \$4.98
(or \$3.98).

Elegy for Donna Juana The Mad; Ballad; Sleepwalking Song; With a Knife; The Faithless Wife; Romance of the Spanish Civil Guard; The Arrest of Antonito El Camborio; Escape; Lament on the Death of a Bullfighter.

Early one morning in July of 1936, in Falangist-occupied Granada, a thirty-eight year old man was wantonly executed and his body thrown into an unmarked grave. Thus, in an act of senseless brutality, died Spain's greatest modern poet—Fédérico García Lorca. In retrospect, it seems almost as if Lorca must have foreseen his end, for his poetry teems with hatred of the vicious police systems which have always cast their shadow across Spain, the Civil Guards who "command / silences of dark rubber / and fears like fine sand."

On this disk Alan Wheatley, a versatile and immensely talented English actor, reads

his own translations of nine Lorca poems, including the renowned *Llanto Por Ignacio Sanchez Méjías*, usually given the English title *Lament On the Death of a Bullfighter*. While one could justifiably cavil at the occasional freedom of Wheatley's translations—Lorca's poetry being unique in that almost none of its power is lost in literal translation—it is undeniable that he has captured the full essence of these sad, embittered lyrics. A kind of incandescence informs Wheatley's readings, communicating itself electrically to the listener. His voice possesses a remarkable flexibility—caressingly soft in *Elegy for Donna Juana the Mad*, bluffly coarse for the cruel eroticism of *The Faithless Wife*. And he scales dramatic heights in conveying the anguished, grandiose music of the title poem, *Lament on the Death of a Bullfighter*.

To my mind this release—haunting in its imagery, haunting in its emotional intensity—is without peer in the catalogue of recorded poetry. Despite the fact that Westminster's reproduction suffers from an almost unbelievably prominent echo in the *Lament*, this record is recommended absolutely without reservation. H. L.

THE MUSIC BETWEEN

FRED ASTAIRE

The Band Wagon; I Love Louisa; New Sun in the Sky; White Heat; Sweet Music; Hoops. The Gay Divorce; Night and Day; I've Got You on My Mind. Maybe I Love You Too Much. My Temptation. A Heart of Stone. The Gold Digger's Song.

Fred Astaire, Adele Astaire; Leo Reisman and his orchestra, Arthur Schwartz, piano. "X" LVA 1001. 12-in. \$3.98.

It is a great pleasure to report that "X" (or Vik, as this label has recently been renamed) has done most handsomely by these old Astaire sides, cut more than twenty years ago. The sound is remarkably good (though a good deal of jukebox bass is still there) and the surface noise is practically nil. The orchestral arrangements seem a trifle "old hat," but they certainly do not impair the freshness of the fine Schwartz and Porter songs. Of course, Astaire was (and is) no great shakes as a vocalist, but his winning personality and tremendous verve override his deficiencies as a singer. Few Broadway revues ever enjoyed a better score than the one Arthur Schwartz wrote for *The Band Wagon*, and the best of the songs are all here: the rollicking "I Love Louisa," "Hoops," and "Sweet Music" (the last records Fred and Adele Astaire made together) and the rhythmic "New Sun in the Sky." The two songs from Cole Porter's *Gay Divorce*, Astaire's last show before starting a new career in Hollywood, are given a typically breezy, debonair performance; and if the remaining four songs are hardly the equals of their companions, Astaire treats them with as much care and consideration. These recordings have long

since become collector's items and their reissue is especially pleasing. The last four songs from *The Band Wagon*, as listed above, appeared originally on one of Victor's early 33 1/3-rpm records. As equipment for reproducing them at that time was extremely rare, these are virtually unknown recordings to most listeners. J.F.I.

ROBERT CLARY

Meet Robert Clary

Fleur bleue; Have You Met Miss Jones; Le Feutre taube; The Chorale; Hoops; Out of This World; Un Rien me fait chanter; If I Only Had a Brain; Aimer comme je t'aime; I've Gotta Crow; Holding Hands; La Route enchantée.

Robert Clary.

EPIC LN 3171. 12-in. \$3.98.

French performers are not always noted for their exuberance; indeed, among the post-war generation world-weariness *à la Piaf* has been more in their line. Robert Clary, a fairly recent importation, has happily turned his back on the mournful style. He sings with gusto, as though tomorrow might never come. Most at ease in bouncing allegro moments, like the marathon *Fleur bleue* or *Hoops*, he can also make a touching and worthy try at a difficult song like *Out of This World*. Very bright, this introduction to records, and it's accompanied on the envelope by Steig-like drawings created by Mr. Clary for each of his songs. R. K.

LENA HORNE

It's Love

I'll Do Anything; You Do Something to Me; You're the One; Fun to be Fooled; Call Me Darling; It's All Right With Me; Frankie and Johnny; Let Me Love You; Love Is the Thing; Then I'll Be Tired of You; It's Love.

Lena Horne, with Lennie Hayton and his Orchestra.

RCA VICTOR LPM 1148. 12-in. \$3.98.

One of the great singing ladies of the day takes a big, fierce bite here out of eleven songs. Generally speaking, they stand up fine, even though the singer is almost always better than her material. An extremely welcome record from Miss Horne, who doesn't appear on LP quite enough to satisfy anybody's needs. R.K.

LURLEAN HUNTER

Lonesome Gal

Lonesome Gal; Alone Together; It's You or No One; You Don't Know What Love Is; You Make Me Feel So Young; My Heart and I Decided; It Never Entered My Mind; You'd Be So Nice to Come Home To; Brief Encounter; A Stranger in Town; But Not for Me; On Green Dolphin Street.

Lurlean Hunter, with Al Nevins and his Orchestra.

RCA VICTOR LPM 1151. 12-in. \$3.98.

Lurlean Hunter, who makes her debut on records with *Lonesome Gal*, seems never to have appeared professionally outside of Chicago. This is a lucky break for Chicagoans if not for Miss Hunter, but it

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seems almost a certain bet now that the Windy City is going to lose its girl to the outside world. She sings, first of all, with exceptional ease, producing a deep, well-set voice that is under sure control every minute of the time. She also sings about things, understanding naturally that lyricists, after all, have intentions and meanings when they set pen to paper. In all, a worthy debut by a new pop-jazz singer who squarely nails every note and word in place. R.K.

TEDDI KING

Bidin' My Time

Bidin' My Time; Once Too Often; That Old Feeling; The I'm Not Supposed to Be Blue Blues; Careless Love; For All We Know; When I Grow Too Old to Dream; I'm in Love with the Honorable Mr. So and So; I Can't Get Started; Love Walked In; I Poured My Heart Into a Song; Taking a Chance on Love.

Teddi King, with Al Cohn and his Orchestra.

RCA VICTOR LPM 1147. 12-in. \$3.98.

Teddi King, until now known mainly as a jazz singer, settles down here with a pleasant try at pop and jazz-pop vocals. She's chosen some tough problems to handle—*Careless Love* and *I'm In Love With the Honorable Mr. So And So*, among others—but, generally speaking, the genuine musicality of her transparent and altogether sweet voice meets all of her repertoire's demands. Miss King's accents, it should be added, are unusually polite for a pop-jazz singer. R.K.

LIANE

Songs of Cole Porter

Night and Day; Love For Sale; So in Love; Don't Fence Me In; Night and Day; Begin the Beguine; My Heart Belongs to Daddy; Magnifique; I've Got You Under My Skin; Rosalie; Wunderbar.

Liane, with the Boheme Bar Trio.

VANGUARD VRS 7029. 10-in. \$3.95.

Paris After Midnight

Trois cloches; Avril au Portugal; Le Gamin de Paris; N'y touches pas; Mes mains; Que reste-t-il de nos amours?; Darling, je vous aime beaucoup; La Fille aux cheveux de lin; Pour un oui, pour un non; J'ai ta main dans ma main; Dansez avec moi; Mademoiselle de Paris; Un amour comme le notre; Bolero.

Liane, with the Boheme Bar Trio

VANGUARD VRS 2025. 10-in. \$3.95.

Since her first Vanguard release, several years ago, Liane has developed a highly respectable authority in such slippery matters as taste, projection, and linguistic ability. Most at home in German, she can also sing lyrics in their original French or English with an accent that is never eccentric for showmanship's sake and barely Viennese. Both of these new records, which show off all her amiable and attractive qualities at once, are recommended highly. R.K.

LILLIAN ROTH

I'll Cry Tomorrow

Love Thy Neighbor; Ain't She Sweet; Let's Fall in Love; When the Red, Red, Robbin Comes Bob, Bob, Bobbin' Along; If I Could Be with You (One Hour Tonight); Sing You Sinners; Don't Take Your Love from Me; Goody Goody; As Time Goes By; Honey; Happiness is a Thing Called Joe; I'd Climb the Highest Mountain (If I Knew I'd Find You).

Lillian Roth, with Orchestra under the direction of Don Costa.

EPIC LN 3206. 12-in. \$3.98.

Lillian Roth's singing style is straight from Broadway of the 1920's. It's a big voice, and it's belted out for the very last row, with every word heard clearly and every grace note and assorted curlicew there to linger loud and long. In short, not at all in contemporary fashion, but frequently fun to hear and always impossible not to. R.K.

ROGER WILLIAMS

Autumn Leaves; Wanting You; Hi Lili; Just One of Those Things; Singin' in the Rain; Beyond the Sea; Night Wind; Big Town; Summertime; Minute Waltz Variation; River Seine; My Dream Sonata.

Roger Williams, piano solos and duets, with strings and orchestra directed by Glenn Osser.

KAPP KL 1012. 12-in. \$3.98.

One of today's most popular middle brow pianists at work alone and together with himself in duet. In his meanderings through a dozen classics, semis, and pops, Williams never creates much genuine excitement except for a *Summertime* that unfortunately ends up by suffering from just a little too much agitation. R.K.

CHILDREN'S RECORDS

by H. S. Wallace

HARVEST TIME

YOUNG PEOPLE'S RECORDS YPR 9001. 78 rpm. \$1.25.

Here are authentic folk songs from France, England, Japan, South America, Bohemia, and the United States, nicely arranged by Carter Harman and sung by the Eugene Lowell Singers. Kindergarten and primary teachers, especially, will appreciate the possibilities of these charming rhythmic tunes. They serve to acquaint young pupils with the ways of other lands, and their content lends itself easily to "acting out"—various activities of the deep-voiced Bohemian father; the English Giles Scroggins and his turnip-hoe; peach-picking in Latin America; little Saki, the Japanese farmer, planting seeds, and black birds picking them up again, and, last, the Southern United States, in "Pick a bale o' cotton." It is easy to recommend this record for the six-to-ten group.

LET'S TAKE A TRIP

COLUMBIA J 259. 78 rpm. \$1.98.

From the CBS Television show of the same

name comes this lively and bright recording starring Sonny Fox, Ginger MacManus, and Pud Flanagan, with a children's chorus and the Ray Carter Orchestra. The children's enthusiastic singing about things to see and places to go in their own home town may well inspire other small people to open their eyes to interesting doings right around them. On the reverse is *Woopy-Do*, a rhythmic song full of gay silliness.

MR. BELL INVENTS THE TELEPHONE

GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER

Enrichment Records ERL 110 33 1/2 rpm.

In these days when the telephone is perfected and taken for granted, it is well to hear the dramatized story of its early beginnings, and an engaging story it is. Alexander Graham Bell's first work was to teach deaf people lip-reading so that he might earn money to experiment in his free hours for a new type of wireless, a frustrating endeavor. Then came his idea for transmitting speech across wires. There is an appealing, warm account of his wife's constant encouragement and of his progress up to the final accomplishment of telephones spanning the continent from New York to California. This is coupled with the story of George Washington Carver, the son of a Southern slave who worked and walked his way to college and became a great naturalist. Both are true and inspiring stories that should be in every child's record library.

SING A SONG WITH CHARITY BAILEY

DECCA K 155. 78 rpm. \$1.14.

This record is unusual in that the fifteen children who sing these charming many-nation songs are themselves from many different lands. Led by Charity's clear, happy voice, they sing *Sambalele*, a Brazilian song about the adventures of a lovable little show-off boy; an appealing Yiddish lullaby, *Sleep, my little Bird*, with auto-harp accompaniment, and *Same Train*, an American Negro folksong with rollicking, repetitive verses. Children—and grown-ups too—will find this record fun.

THERE'S GOLD IN CALIFORNIA

CHILDREN'S RECORD GUILD 9009-A. 45 rpm. \$1.19.

An Irish immigrant boy with his concertina sets out from the docks of New York for California in the days of '49. While on his long trek, other gold-seekers join him—a cow-hand from Texas who plays a guitar, a mule-skinner from Missouri and his banjo, a boy from an iron ore boat on the Great Lakes who brings a harmonica. They find no gold on the streets, but combining their instruments, they play gay hoe-downs for more fortunate gold seekers, who, in return, reward them richly. A good record for the six to ten group.

THE MUSIC OF AARON COPLAND

CHILDREN'S RECORD GUILD 408 A. 78 rpm. \$1.19.

Segments of some of Copland's best-known and best-loved music are excitingly presented here. A mother and child listen together, with just enough conversation to keep ex-

plaining the music. The sincere warmth and sturdy naturalness of the Great Emancipator are expressed in a wonderful way in *A Lincoln Portrait* excerpt. *Billy the Kid*, as the mother describes him, is a sort of cowboy Robin Hood. The feel of the country is in the fresh, beautiful melody from *Appalachian Spring*. *A Mexican Dance Hall* gives a musical picture of Latin American merriment. Copland weaves familiar folk tunes into his music in a friendly, intimate way. Walter Hendl conducts the orchestra. Highly recommended as a way of endearing one of America's greatest living composers to young Americans.

CARL MARIA VONWEBER:
Rondo for Bassoon and Orchestra

CHILDREN'S RECORD GUILD 4-RBO-B. 78 rpm \$1.19.

Here is the only extant recording of this bassoon piece, so some parents really will want to listen. The piece is happily well-chosen for young people. The bassoon, like the tuba, is a jolly, gruff instrument, and when it is well tamed, as by Eli Carmen here, it is as much fun as a trained elephant in a circus. This is a record for children of all ages to fall in love with.

THE BEST OF JAZZ
by John S. Wilson

RUBY BRAFF
The Ruby Braff Special

Romance in the Dark; When You Wish Upon a Star; Ghost of a Chance; Wishing; Where's Freddie?; I'm in the Market for You; Sweet Sue; Linger Awhile.

Ruby Braff, trumpet; Vic Dickenson, trombone; Samuel Margolis, tenor saxophone, clarinet; Nat Pierce, piano; Walter Page, bass; Jo Jones, drums.

VANGUARD VRS-8504. 12-in. 48 min. \$4.98

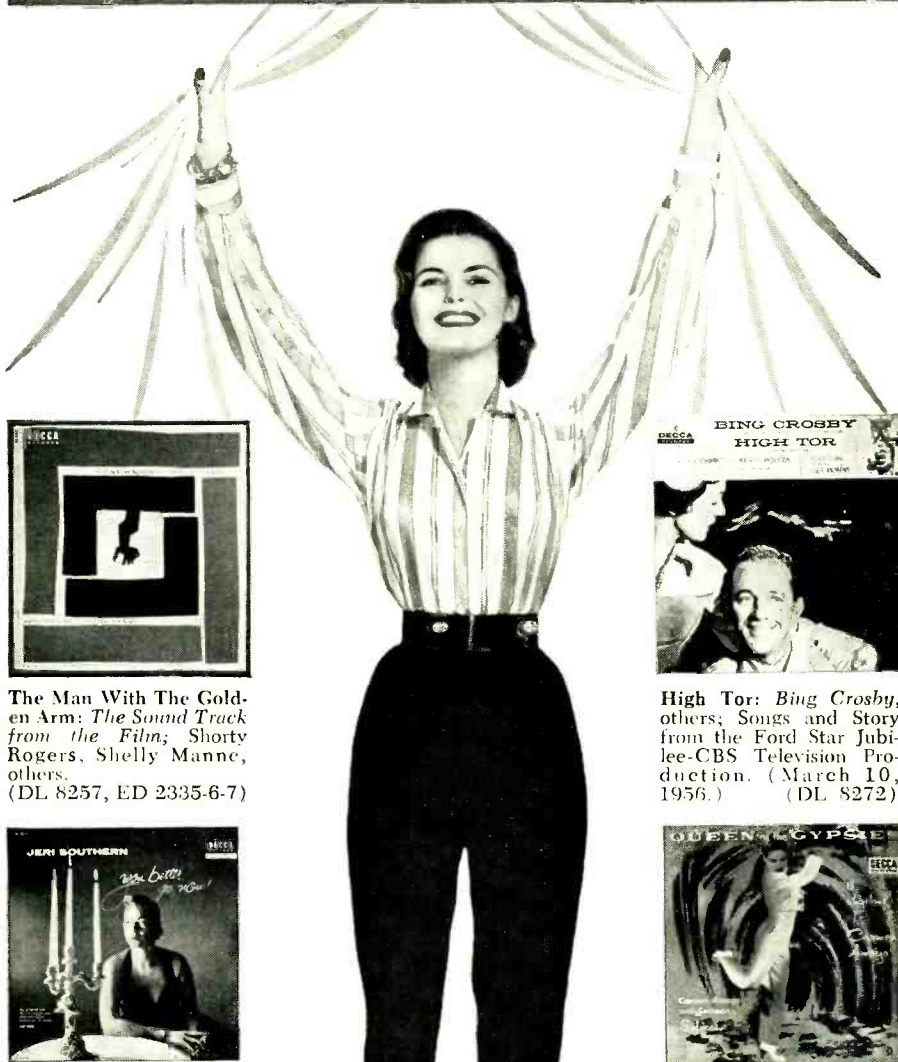
Despite the steady stream of Ruby Braff recordings pouring on the market, he manages to maintain a remarkably high level of interest. He has something of that easy, unforced brilliance which is such an important part of Louis Armstrong's playing and, fortunately, he doesn't sound quite like any other trumpet player currently recording. These are delightfully casual performances, based on an excellent rhythm section, punctuated by Vic Dickenson's brashly humorous trombone and driven by Braff's warm, soaring, jabbing horn. Samuel Margolis, a somewhat tentative saxophonist and clarinetist, occasionally works up to the level of the others in the group.

BARBARA CARROLL
Have You Met Miss Carroll?

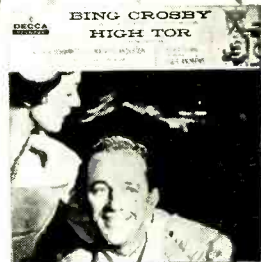
Everything I've Got Belongs to You; It's All Right with Me; Happiness Is a Thing Called Joe; Almost Like Being in Love.

Continued on page 88

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The Man With The Golden Arm: *The Sound Track from the Film;* Shorty Rogers, Shelly Manne, others. (DL 8257, ED 2335-6-7)



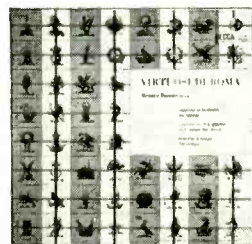
High Tor: Bing Crosby, others; Songs and Story from the Ford Star Jubilee-CBS Television Production. (March 10, 1956.) (DL 8272)



You Better Go Now: Jeri Southern; "Something I Dreamed Last Night," "When I Fall In Love," etc. (DL 8214, ED-774)



Queen Of The Gypsies: The Rhythms of Carmen Amaya; Sabicas, Guitarist. "Taranta," "Soleares," others. (DL 9816)



Virtuosi Di Roma: *Renato Fasano.* Director; Concerti by Durante, Galuppi, Paisiello. (DL 9730)



The Hi-Fi Nightingale: Caterina Valente; "The Breeze And I," "Jalousie," etc. (DL 8203, ED-771)

*Recorded in Europe by Deutsche Grammophon Gesellschaft-Polydor Series.
"DL" indicates 33 1/3 Long Play Recordings
"ED" indicates 45 Extended Play Records

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Forty-six Sides of the Benny Goodman Story

THE RELEASE of the film, *The Benny Goodman Story*, has loosed a flood of disks unparalleled in jazz recording. Twenty-two freshly minted Goodman and Goodman-derived LPs are at hand (twenty 12-inch and two 10s) and, as this is written, still another 12-incher is scheduled to be cut. Through reissues, new issues, and emulations, they trace Goodman and his bands from 1927 to the present, skipping only the middle and late Forties when Goodman was, first, bored and unhappy and, later, inactive.

Six of the disks cover almost identical terrain — Capitol S-706, Columbia CL 820, Coral CRL 57028, Decca DL 8252 and DL 8253, and RCA Victor LPM 1099. All of them feature tunes used in the film and — because of the subject of the film — it is not only the tunes which are repeated but, in large measure, the actual arrangements.

Both Columbia and Victor have gone to their files for performances of the Goodman classics by that early band with which he made his reputation. Since Goodman was under contract to Victor when almost all of these tunes were first recorded, the Victor disk is made up entirely of studio performances, while Columbia, which didn't become Goodman's recording outlet until 1939, has extracted the same tunes from the Goodman Carnegie Hall concert and from its set of 1937-38 Goodman air checks. In general, the recording quality of the Victor collection is better than the Columbia, but the Columbia performances have more vitality and drive. The Columbia disk includes Jess Stacy's lyrical and quite unexpected piano solo at the end of *Sing Sing Sing* at Carnegie Hall; an extended version of *Don't Be That Way* which builds to a tremendous rocker of a climax; and brilliantly precise, biting performances of *King Porter Stomp* and *Bugle Call Rag*. The Capitol, Coral, and Decca disks are recent re-creations of the old Goodman standards. Capitol has Goodman himself (billed as "Mr. Benny Goodman") and a band of top flight jazzmen, who plow into the familiar arrangements with authority and more than a suggestion of the old Goodman swing.

There is, in fact, a startling contrast between the small group numbers on the Capitol disk and those on the Deccas, which are taken from the soundtrack of the film. In the film, the trio and quartet performances suffer from Gene Krupa's leaden drumming — *Avalon*, which opens with a delightful chorus and a half of unaccompanied Hampton, turns into a complete disaster when Krupa gets going — and Goodman himself inexplicably encrusts his normally light, exhilarating style with stiff, inappropriate legitimate phrases. But there can be little complaint about the big band numbers from the soundtrack. For the most part they have force and body and much of the quality of the old Goodman performances.

Coral's entry is an oddity that turns out

rather well — Steve Allen, who plays Goodman in the film, leads a band studded with ex-Goodmanites through the basic core of Goodman classics in close approximations of the original arrangements but with one significant change: Goodman's clarinet solos are replaced by Allen's piano solos — able and unpretentious.

A slight variant on the re-creation idea is Atlantic's *Tribute to Benny Goodman*. Recorded more than a year ago, before plans for the film had materialized, this was originally thought of simply as a get-together of some Goodman sidemen, led by Jess Stacy, to play a few of the tunes from the old Goodman book in trimmed-down arrangements (the group used only one trumpeter and one trombone). As it happened, they chose several of the tunes which went into the film; and this disk is, in some ways, the most enjoyable of the latter-day Goodman revivals.



Beyond this, there is Ziggy Elman, apparently playing his heart out and somehow managing to make his lone trumpet sound like the powerhouse of the whole Goodman trumpet section. This disk might be Elman's swan song. Early in the session his lip began to bleed, but he insisted on continuing and blew some of his best work through bloody lips. Later, when the film soundtrack was being cut, Mannie Klein was called in to play Elman's creation and most famous speciality, *And the Angels Sing*. On Goodman's Capitol set Harry James takes this Elman solo, and on the Steve Allen disk Jimmy Maxwell plays it. If the Atlantic recording should mark the end of Elman's career, he couldn't go out more gloriously.

One final new Goodman item is Columbia's *Date with the King*, a miscellany of recent Goodman small group performances. On three of these Rosemary Clooney sings huskily, pleasantly, but in much too intimate a relationship with the microphone.

The reissues brought on by the Goodman film are headed by Victor's plush five-disk set, *The Golden Age of Swing*, which covers the band, trio, and quartet at the height of Goodman's success, from

1935 to 1939. Here we hear the Goodman band as it really was, not concentrating on the few specialties that emerge from the film but putting a swinging beat into everything that crossed its path — pop tunes, show tunes, jazz standards, originals, and such otherwise banal items as *Ti-Pi-Tin* and *Peter Piper*. This set is crammed with wonderful Goodmaniana that has long been unavailable.

An earlier, pre-acclaim Goodman is spotlighted on Columbia CL 821 and Brunswick 54010. Columbia's *Vintage Goodman* covers the years from 1931 to 1935 when Goodman led recording groups that usually featured Jack Teagarden (who sings *Beale Street Blues* and *Basin Street Blues* and does a superb trombone chorus on *Moonglow*). Billie Holiday's first breathless recording is included, along with a few of the very earliest sides by the big Goodman band.

"B.G." — 1927-1934, on Brunswick, goes even farther back although not quite as far as the title suggests. It picks Goodman up in 1928 when he was still very much a Chicago clarinetist and dredges up two almost forgotten samples of a very early Goodman trio (1928) which are totally unlike anything done by the later Goodman trios. It also shows Goodman as a developing stylist playing with Red Nichols, the Venuti-Lang band, and Adrian Rollini, with Jack Teagarden an ever present colleague. Fidelity on the early Chicago numbers is definitely low but the spirits are high.

Columbia has also repackaged some of its earlier Benny Goodman LP releases. *The Carnegie Hall Jazz Concert* (SL 160) and *1937-38 Jazz Concert No. 2* (SL 180), both originally made up of two 12-inch LPs, have each been rearranged so as to spread out over three 12-inch LPs. *The Carnegie Hall Jazz Concert* is now on CL 814, 815, and 816, while *1937-38 Jazz Concert No.2* has been retitled *The King of Swing* on CL 817, 818, and 819. No new material has been added to either set despite the extra records. *Sextet Session* (Columbia CL 6052), eight numbers by the Goodman Sextet, has also been repackaged as *The B. G. Six* (CL 2564) and trimmed down to six numbers to sell for \$1.98.

JOHN S. WILSON

STEVE ALLEN AND HIS ORCHESTRA *Let's Dance*

Let's Dance; Don't Be That Way; Memories of You; One O'Clock Jump; Moon-glow; Stompin' at the Savoy; Sometimes I'm Happy; King Porter Stomp; And the Angels Sing; Sing Sing Sing; Goodbye CORAL CRL 57028. 12-in. 41 min. \$3.98.

BENNY GOODMAN *The Benny Goodman Story*

Down South Camp Meetin'; King Porter Stomp; Sing Sing Sing; And the Angels Sing; One O'Clock Jump; Don't Be That Way; Bugle Call Rag; Stompin' at the Savoy; Good-bye.

Quartet: *Avalon; Moonglow.*
RCA VICTOR LPM 1099. 12-in 40 min. \$3.98.

BENNY GOODMAN
"B.G." — 1927-1934

Benny Goodman's Boys: *Blue; Muskrat Ramble; After Awhile; Wolverine Blues.*
Benny Goodman Trio: *Clarinetitis; That's A-Plenty.*

Red Nichols: *Indiana; Dinah; The Shiek of Araby.*
Venuti-Lang: *Someday Sweetheart; Farewell Blues.*

Adrian Rollini Orchestra: *Davenport Blues.*
BRUNSWICK BL 54010. 12-in. 34 min. \$3.98.

BENNY GOODMAN
The Golden Age of Swing

Always; Blue Skies; The Devil and the Deep Blue Sea; Good-Bye; Mad House; Eeny Meeny Miney Mo; Basin Street Blues; If I Could Be with You; When Buddha Smiles; It's Been So Long; Goody-Goody; Get Happy; You Can't Pull the Wool Over My Eyes; Walk, Jennie, Walk; Anything for You; House Hop; There's a Small Hotel; You Turned the Tables on Me; Organ Grinder's Swing; Peter Piper; Alexander's Ragtime Band; Somebody Loves Me; Tain't No Use; Jam Session; When You and I Were Young, Maggie; Smoke Dreams; This Year's Kisses; Good-night My Love; I Want To Be Happy; Rosetta; Peckin'; Can't We Be Friends; I Can't Give You Anything But Love, Baby; Minnie the Moocher's Wedding Day; Loch Lomond; If Dreams Come True; Ti-Pi-Tin; Lullaby In Rhythm; This Can't Be Love; Sing for Your Supper; Farewell Blues; Louise; I'll Always Be in Love with You; Sent for You Yesterday; Rose of Washington Square.

Trio: *More Than You Know; Too Good to Be True; Where or When; Silhouetted in the Moonlight; Sweet Lorraine; I Must Have That Man.*

Quartet: *Ida, Sweet As Apple Cider; Tea for Two; Liza; I'm a Ding Dong Daddy; Bei Mir Bist du Schoen; Sugar; 'S Wonderful; I Know That You Know; Opus 3/4.*
RCA VICTOR LPT 6703. Five 12-in. 172 min. \$24.95.

BENNY GOODMAN
The Great Benny Goodman

Let's Dance; King Porter Stomp; Down South Camp Meetin'; One O'Clock Jump; Bugle Call Rag; Don't Be That Way; Sing Sing Sing.

Quartet: *Moonglow; Avalon; Stompin' at the Savoy.*
Sextet: *Memories of You.*
COLUMBIA CL 820. 12-in. 50 min. \$3.95.

BENNY GOODMAN
The Vintage Goodman

Beale Street Blues; Basin Street Blues; Your Mother's Son-in-Law; Why Couldn't It Be Poor Little Me; Riffin' the Scotch; Love Me or Leave Me; Bugle Call Rag; Moonglow; Nitwit Serenade; Keep on Doin' What You're Doin'; The Dixieland Band; Music Hall Rag.

COLUMBIA CL 821. 12-in. 36 min. \$3.95.

BENNY GOODMAN AND ROSEMARY CLOONEY
Date with the King

A Fine Romance; Can't We Talk It Over.
Benny Goodman, clarinet; Buck Clayton, trumpet; Urbie Green, trombone; Claude Thornhill, piano; Aaron Bell, bass; Bobby Donaldson, drums.

That's A Plenty.
Dick Hyman, piano, in place of Thornhill.
It's Bad for Me; Goodbye.
Add Rosemary Clooney, vocals.
Memories of You.
Goodman; Hyman; Donaldson; Clooney.
COLUMBIA CL 2572. 10-in. 20 min. \$1.98.

MR. BENNY GOODMAN
The Benny Goodman Story

Let's Dance; Bugle Call Rag; One O'Clock Jump; Don't Be That Way; Down South Camp Meetin'; Stompin' At the Savoy; Sing Sing Sing; And the Angels Sing; It's Been So Long; Shine; Good-bye.

Quintet: *Avalon; Moonglow; Memories of You; China Boy.*
CAPITOL S-706. 12-in. 48 min. \$5.95.

MUSIC FROM THE SOUNDTRACK OF "THE BENNY GOODMAN STORY"

Vol. 1
Let's Dance; Down South Camp Meetin'; King Porter Stomp; It's Been So Long; Roll 'Em; Bugle Call Rag; Don't Be That Way; You Turned the Tables on Me; Goody Goody; Stompin' at the Savoy; One O'Clock Jump.
Octet: *Slipped Disk.*
DECCA DL 8252. 12-in. 37 min. \$3.98.

Vol. 2
And the Angels Sing; Jersey Bounce; Sometimes I'm Happy; Shine; Sing Sing Sing.
Trio: *Memories of You; China Boy.*
Quartet: *Moonglow; Avalon.*
DECCA DL 8253. 12-in. 38 min. \$3.98.

JESS STACY AND THE FAMOUS SIDEMEN
Tribute to Benny Goodman

Let's Dance; King Porter Stomp; Where or When; Roll 'Em; Sing Sing Sing; Goodbye.

Ziggy Elman, trumpeter; Murray McEachern, trombone; Heinie Beau, alto saxophone; Vido Musso, tenor saxophone; Chuck Gentry, baritone saxophone; Jess Stacy, piano; Allen Reuss, guitar; Artie Shapiro, bass; Nick Fatool, drums.

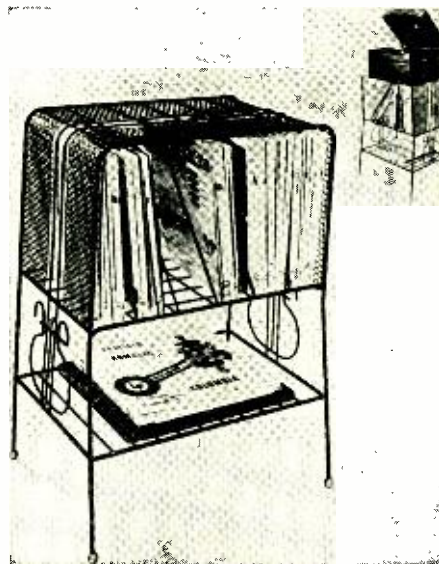
When Buddha Smiles; Don't Be That Way; Sometimes I'm Happy; Down South Camp Meetin'.

Ted Veseley, trombone, replaces McEachern; Babe Russin, tenor saxophone, replaces Musso; Joe Koch, baritone saxophone, replaces Gentry; Al Hendrickson, guitar, replaces Reuss; Morty Corb, bass, replaces Shapiro.

Gee Baby Ain't I Good to You; I Must Have That Man; Blues for Otis Ferguson; You Turned the Tables on Me.
Stacy; Shapiro; Fatool.
ATLANTIC 1225. 12-in. 40 min. \$4.85.

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RECORD LABEL	NEW		OLD
	Turnover	Rolloff	Record No. or Date: Turnover, Rolloff
Allied	500	16	
Amer. Rec. Soc.	400	12	
Angel	500R	13.7	
Arizona	500R	13.7	To 1955: 400, 12.7
†Atlantic	500R	13.7	
Audiophile	500	12	
Bach Guild	500R	13.7	No. 501-529: 500, 16
*Bartok	500R	13.7	No. 901-905, 308, 310, 311: 500R, 13.7 No. 906-920, 301-304, 309: 630, 16
Bethlehem	500R	13.7	
Blue Note Jazz	500R	13.7	To 1955: 400, 12
Boston	500C	16	
*Caedmon	500R	13.7	No. 1001-1022: 630, 16
Canyon	500R	13.7	To No. C6160: 400, 12
Capitol	500R	13.7	To 1955: 400, 12.7
Capitol-Cetra	500R	13.7	To 1955: 400, 12.7
Cetra-Soria	500C	16	
Classic Editions	500R	13.7	
Colosseum	500R	13.7	To January 1954: 500, 16
*Columbia	500R	13.7	To 1955: 500C, 16.
Concert Hall	500R	10.5	To 1954: 500C, 16.
*Contemporary	500R	13.7	No. 3501, 2501, 2502, 2505, 2507, 2001, 2002: 400, 12. No. 2504: 500, 16
†Cook (SOOT)	500	12-15	
Coral	500	16	
Decca	500R	13.7	To November 1955: 500, 16
Elektra	500R	13.7	No. 2-15, 18-20, 24-26: 630, 16. No. 17, 22: 400, 12. No. 16, 21, 23, 24: 500R, 13.7
EMS	500R	13.7	
Epic	500R	13.7	
Esoteric	500R	13.7	No. ES 500, 517, EST 5, 6: 400, 12
Folkways	500R	13.7	To 1955: 500C, 16
*Good-Time Jazz	500R	13.7	No. 1, 5-8: 500, 16. No. 3, 9-19: 400, 12
Haydn Society	500C	16	
HMV	500R	16	
Kapp	500R	13.7	No. 100-103, 1000-1001: 800, 16
Kendall	500	16	
*London, Lon. Int.	500R	13.7	To No. 846: 500C, 10.5
Lyrichord	500	16	
McIntosh	500R	13.7	
*Mercury	500R	13.7	To October 1954: 400, 12
MGM	500R	13.7	
Montilla	500R	13.7	
New Jazz	500R	13.7	
Nocturne	500R	13.7	No. LP 1-3, 5, XP1-10: 400, 12
Oceanic	500C	16	
*L'Oiseau-Lyre	500R	13.7	To 1954: 500C, 10.5
*Overtone	500R	13.7	No. 1-3: 500, 16
Oxford	500C	16	
Pacific Jazz	500R	13.7	No. 1-13: 400, 12
Philharmonia	400	12	
†Polymusic	500	16	
Prentige	500R	13.7	
RCA Victor	500R	13.7	To September 1952: 500 or 800, 12
Remington	500	16	
Riverside	500R	13.7	To 1955: 400, 12
Romany	500R	13.7	
Savoy	500R	13.7	
Tempo	500	16	
Transradio	500C	16	
Urania	500R	13.7	No. 7059, 224, 7066, 7063, 7065, 603, 7069: 400, 12. Others: 500C, 16
Vanguard	500R	13.7	No. 411-442, 6000-6018, 7001-7011, 8001-8004: 500, 16
Vox	500R	13.7	500, 16 unless otherwise specified.
Walden	500R	13.7	
*Westminster	500R	13.7	To October 1955: 500C, 16; or if AES specified: 400, 12

*Currently re-recording old masters for RIAA curve.
†Binaural records produced on this label have no treble boost on the inside band, which should be played without any rolloff.

MARCH ISSUE OF SCHWANN CATALOG LISTS 1,166 LP's THAT ARE BEING DISCONTINUED BY MANUFACTURERS

These 1,166 listings are appearing for the last time. So be sure to get this invaluable March Schwann Long Playing Catalog at your record store. Supply is limited.

Love is a Simple Thing; Get Happy; Two Ladies in de Shade of de Banana Tree; My Heart Belongs to Daddy; You're Mine You; Have You Met Miss Jones; I'm Glad There Is You; Barbara's Carol.

Barbara Carroll, piano; Joe Shulman, bass; Ralph Pollack, drums.
RCA-VICTOR LPM 1137. 12-in. 39 min \$3.98.

Miss Carroll's previous disks have been notable largely for a polished but lightly contrived filigree woven over an easy beat. Polish and lightness are still present in this set but there is also a new — and welcome — muscularity, a two-handed attack which may be less ladylike than her earlier work but which brings a vitality to her playing which was lacking before. This new punch turns up on *Love Is a Simple Thing*, on *Get Happy*, and on *Two Ladies in de Shade of de Banana Tree*. She also strikes a particularly happy note on *Happiness Is a Thing Called Joe*, taking it slowly but keeping it light, feathery, and not too sweet. There is, in fact, judicious balance throughout her playing as well as in the selection of material, making this the most effective collection she has produced yet.

TERRY GIBBS

Seven Come Eleven; Lonely Dreams. Dickie's Dream; Imagination; King City Stomp; Pretty Face; The Continental; Bless My Soles; Nutty Notes.

Terry Gibbs, vibes; Terry Pollard, Herman Wright, bass; Nils-Bertil Dahlander, drums.

EMARCY MG 36047. 12-in. 47 min. \$3.98.

This is a superb collection of driving, swinging small group jazz. Gibbs plays with delightful directness, with an imagination that bubbles without getting entangled in fripperies. Wright, a rich-toned bassist, and Dahlander, an exceptionally tasteful drummer, supply excellent support, lifting and prodding both ensembles and solos. But it is Miss Pollard who raises this disk to exceptional heights. She is an incisive, driving pianist who generates tremendous excitement as she builds her solos, whether it is in the vigorous, slashing style of *Seven Come Eleven* or the lighter but still vital manner of *Dickie's Dream*. Her playing—and that of Gibbs, as well—is in a distinctly modern vein; but it is projected with a great, riding strength that is lacking in the work of many jazz modernists. They combine, on this disk, to bring the essence of swing brilliantly up to the present.

LIONEL HAMPTON
Crazy Rhythm

Crazy Rhythm; Red Ribbon.

Bernard Hullin, Benny Bailey, Nat Adlerley, trumpets; Dave Amram, French horn; William Boucaya, baritone saxophone; Maurice Meunier, clarinet, tenor saxophone; Lionel Hampton, vibraphone; Sacha Distel, guitar; Rene Urtreger, piano; Guy Pederson, bass; MacKac, drums.

Night and Day: à la French.

Hampton; Distel; Urtreger; Pederson; MacKac.

EMARCY MG 36034. 12-in. 40 min. \$3.98.

The two big band selections can be readily dismissed. They are not as tasteless as the general output of Hampton's own band, but these French musicians show that they can be as dull as Hampton's men and can leave him just as uninspired. Alone with a rhythm section, however, Hampton once again summons up the imagination and talent on which his reputation is based. *A la French* starts unpromisingly with a mish-mash of derivations, but Hampton's creative instincts warm up as he goes along. *Night and Day* is one of his excellent, thoughtfully constructed performances. On both selections he is spelled by guitarist Sacha Distel, a youngster with an easy, flowing attack and a nice rhythmic feeling which are slightly hampered by an apparent lack of assurance.

JO JONES
The Jo Jones Special

Lover Man; Georgia Mae; Lincoln Heights; Embraceable You.

Emmett Berry, trumpet; Benny Green; trombone; Lucky Thompson, tenor saxophone; Nat Pierce, piano; Freddie Green, guitar; Walter Page, bass; Jo Jones, drums.

Shoe Shine Boy (two takes).

Count Basie, piano, replaces Pierce.

Caravan.

Lawrence Brown, trombone; Rudy Powell, clarinet; Berry; Green; Page; Jones.

VANGUARD VRS 8503. 12-in. 41 min. \$4.98.

As might be expected, considering the personnel, these selections have the light, loose, driving quality that is characteristic of Basie-based small groups. This is particularly true of the two takes of *Shoe Shine Boy* with the master himself present. Both are bright, crisp performances which ride along on a greased beat. The first take winds up with a delightfully infectious guffaw by trombonist Benny Green who, a few moments before, has taken a splendidly slippery break and who follows, on *Lover Man* and *Georgia Mae*, with ex-

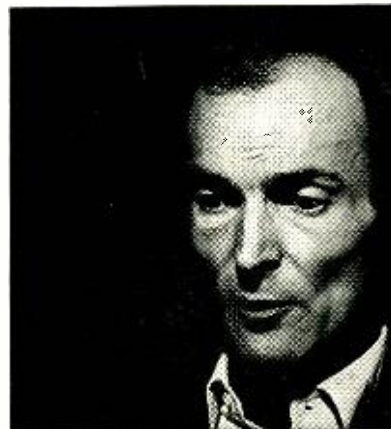
cellent examples of, respectively, his slow, brooding, and rollicking, clipped styles. But despite Green's excellence and the opportunities provided for Jo Jones to take off on his own, the disk is dominated by Lucky Thompson, a rich-voiced and soundly grounded saxophonist who got lost in the shuffle back in the Forties. This disk should help to regain for him the attention that his sturdy, cleanly conceived playing deserves.

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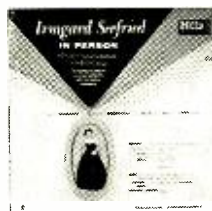
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Markevitch

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Irmgard Seefried Concert: Chosen by the *American Record Guide* as one of 100 Best Recordings of 1955. Miss Seefried sings Hindemith: Geistliche Motetten for Soprano and Piano. Mozart: From "Il Re Pastore," Non Temer, Amato Bene; Rondo for Soprano. Vienna Symphony Orch., Ferdinand Leitner, conductor. (DL 9768)

Hugo Wolf: Twenty-Two Songs From The *Italienisches Liederbuch*; **Brahms:** Lieder und Volkslieder, Erik Werba, piano. (DL 9743)



In Person: Songs by Schubert, Brahms, Mussorgsky, Bartók, Wolf and Richard Strauss. Erik Werba, piano. Recorded at Miss Seefried's actual concerts in Berlin, Munich, Hamburg, etc. (DL 9809)



Mozart: Symphony No. 34 in C Major, K. 338, and Schubert: Symphony No. 3 in D Major. Two superb performances, both glowingly played by the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. (DL 9810)

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Gunther Schuller, French horn; Janet Putnam, harp; Percy Heath, bass; Connie Kay, drums.

Sun Dance; Django; Little David's Fugue.

Lucky Thompson, tenor saxophone, replaces Getz; Aaron Sachs, clarinet, replaces Sciacca.

NORGRAN MG N-1040. 12-in. 30 min. \$3.98.

This is John Lewis in amplified form—amplified, that is, beyond the customary instrument for his works, the Modern Jazz Quartet. Three of the selections—*Sun Dance*, *Midsommer*, and *Little David's Fugue*—were commissioned for this recording.

Django and *The Queen's Fancy* are from the Quartet's repertoire, orchestrated for the present instrumentation by Gunther Schuller. The instrumental expansion of these two compositions has left them more static than they were originally, although the added instruments have made possible some interesting touches—the declaratory pomp introducing *The Queen's Fancy* and the softly breathed ending of *Django*.

Sun Dance and *Little David's Fugue* are bright, lyrical, and typically Lewis while *Midsommer* is a long, affecting and reflective bit of tonal painting. The tendency toward rigidity in this enlarged ensemble is occasionally lightened and broken by the soloists, particularly by Lucky Thompson, J. J. Johnson, and Tony Scott (masquerading as Anthony Sciacca). Stan Getz, who plays on two selections, proves to be less suited to the saxophone requirements of these works than the stronger voiced Lucky Thompson who plays on the remaining three. As a variant on Lewis' writing for the Modern Jazz Quartet, these performances are provocative. But they make one appreciate more than ever the clean, neat definitiveness of the Quartet's work.

JIMMY RUSHING

Listen to the Blues

See See Rider; It's Hard to Laugh a Smile; Every Day; Evenin'; Good Morning Blues; Roll 'Em, Pete; Don't Cry, Baby; Take Me Back, Baby; Rock and Roll.

Emmett Berry, trumpet; Lawrence Brown, trombone; Buddy Tate, tenor saxophone; Rudy Powell, alto saxophone, clarinet; Pete Johnson, piano; Freddie Greene, guitar; Walter Page, bass; Jo Jones, drums; Jimmy Rushing, vocals.

VANGUARD VRS 8505. 12-in. 44 min. \$4.98.

The return of Jimmy Rushing to the recording studios has been one of the happier events on the recent jazz scene. Although his voice can no longer be quite as venturesome as it once was, he is still in complete control of his very personal and stimulating style of blues singing. On this disk he is at latter-day perfection, driving his way through a delightful collection of blues and pop tunes which have either classic or nostalgic merit. Of equal importance, he works with an instrumental group which, for this purpose, could scarcely be improved upon. Dominating

the accompaniment is the joyous, rocking piano of Rushing's old Kansas City confrère, Pete Johnson. Spurring it is the original Basie rhythm section which played behind Rushing in his heyday. Punctuating it are two sturdy former Basie horns, Emmett Berry and Buddy Tate, along with a disparate and surprising pair of enlistees: Rudy Powell, a onetime Waller sideman whose rugged alto fits in perfectly, and the velvet-toned Ellington trombonist, Lawrence Brown, whose rough, expansive elegance is equally right. Their playing is as alert, relaxed and purposeful as Rushing's singing. Groove by groove, this disk is an unmitigated joy.

JOE SULLIVAN

New Solos by an Old Master

Gin Mill Blues; That's a Plenty; A Room with a View; Sweet Lorraine; Hangover Blues; Little Rock Getaway; Honeysuckle Rose; Summertime; Fido's Fantasy; My Little Pride and Joy; I Cover the Waterfront; Farewell to Riverside.

Joe Sullivan, piano; Dave Lario, bass; Smoky Stover, drums.

RIVERSIDE RLP 12-202. 12-in. 39 min. \$4.98.

No matter how many musicians are having their efforts preserved on recordings, there are bound to be some glaring oversights. For too long Joe Sullivan has stood as one of these oversights, a fact which makes this collection of his earthy hand-to-hand encounters with the piano a particularly welcome one. It contains some of the best playing this veteran Chicagoan has put on records. He is at the height of his slugging, punching style as he whales into such worthy matters as *That's a Plenty*, his own *Little Rock Getaway*, and *Farewell to Riverside*. He is philosophical and reflective—an attitude which seems to be a recent development—on the appealing *A Room with a View* (not the Coward tune) and *Summertime*. And he probes some wonderfully dark brown undertones on *Hangover Blues* and *Gin Mill Blues*. Sullivan has a starkly positive style, forceful and—when he takes off at a gallop—as heady and invigorating as the first warm breath of Spring. It's all here—a Sullivan collection which can supersede almost all the solo recordings he has made in the past.

THE ART TATUM-ROY ELDRIDGE-ALVIN STOLLER-JOHN SIMMONS QUARTET

Night and Day; The Moon Is Low; In a Sentimental Mood; This Can't Be Love; I Won't Dance; Moon Song; You Took Advantage of Me; I Surrender, Dear.

Roy Eldridge, trumpet; Art Tatum, piano; John Simmons, bass; Alvin Stoller, drums. CLEF MG C-679. 12-in. 38 min. \$3.98.

The combination of two such polished jazz professionals as Tatum and Eldridge would seem to be a practically surefire proposition. On these well chosen selections, their meeting is almost as good as one might hope. Almost, but not quite. Tatum plays

Continued on page 92

HERE IT IS . . .

BY REPLICAS

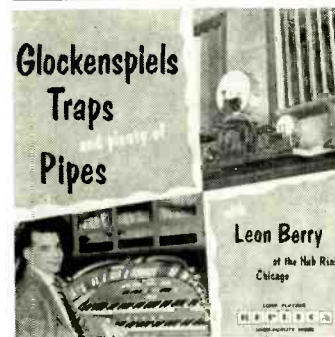
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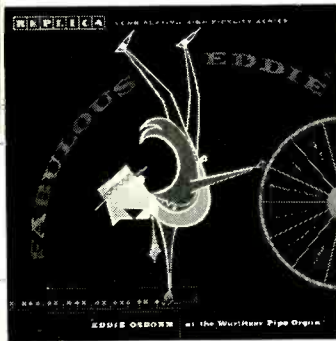


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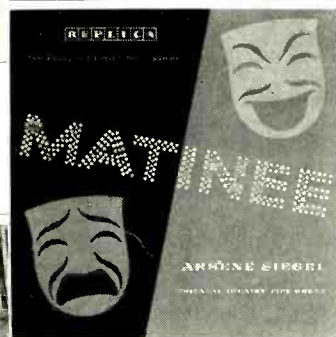


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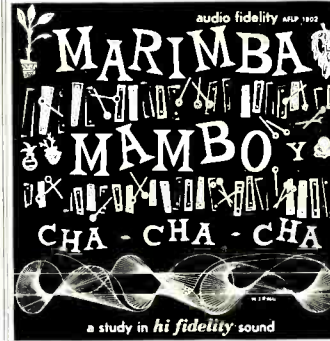
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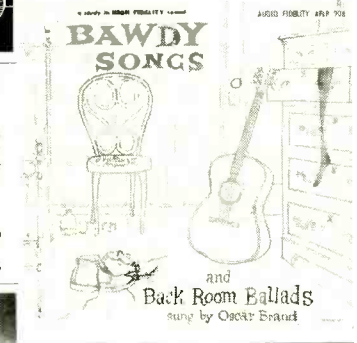
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with his customary rolling, darting brilliance; and Stoller and Simmons provide splendid support. Eldridge, however, shows only one facet of his work,—his tight, muted style—and this is a lesser side of this highly talented but erratic trumpet virtuoso. Despite this, however, these performances have life and a captivating swinging quality which is smack down the mainstream of jazz tradition.

FOLK MUSIC

by Howard LaFay

AFRICA
Music of the Princes of Dahomey
ESOTERIC ES-537. 12-in. \$4.98.
Grand Prix du Disque.

Like its predecessor, *Music of the Malinké and Baoulé Tribes* (ES-529) — likewise a Grand Prix du Disque winner — this record is intended for the initiate in ethnic folk music.

Under the sponsorship of *l'Institut Français d'Afrique Noire* and the *Musée de l'Homme*, in conjunction with UNESCO, Gilbert Rouget made this recording on location in the ancient African kingdom of Dahomey. His subject matter is the Festival of the Tohossou, a traditional politico-religious ceremony free of all white influence. With admirable skill, Rouget has pieced together a neatly-synthesized sequence of the songs, dances, rhythms, and rites that comprise the four day festival.

Handsome processing by the Esoteric engineers preserves a spacious sense of the African outdoors with no loss of essential sonic detail.

This record is recommended primarily for those interested in native African music or religious customs.

ALBUM TWO
The Irish Festival Singers

The Bold Fenian Men; The Battle Hymn; She is Far From the Land; Lullaby; Sea Wrack; The Wake Feast; Lane o'Thrushes; Ireland; A Soft Day; O! Breathe Not His Name; Father O'Flynn; Lough Scheelin; The Last Rose of Summer; The Meeting of the Waters; The Harp That Once Thro' Tara's Halls.

Kitty O'Callaghan, Director and Accompanist.
ANGEL 65205. 12-in. \$3.98.

The best thing on the Irish Festival Singers' second Angel album is Kitty O'Callaghan's moving, dirge-like arrangement of *The Bold Fenian Men*, featuring some effective singing by Dermot Troy. The same soloist also gives a sensitive rendition of Thomas Moore's *The Meeting of the Waters*.

For the rest, the group acquits itself satisfactorily in a repertoire overweighted with the well-Anglicized songs of two well-Anglicized Irish composers, Sir Hamilton Harty and C. V. Stanford. Perhaps because they are fettered by such

material, the Festival Singers fail to generate much excitement. Engineering: excellent.

AN EVENING OF FOLK SONGS WITH THE TRAPP FAMILY SINGERS

Dr. Franz Wasner, cond.
DECCA DL 9793. 12-in. \$4.98.

After 20 years of concertizing, the famed Trapp Family Singers have decided to call it an era; they are currently on their farewell tour and will disband at the end of the season. Never has their unique way with a song been better demonstrated than in this well-engineered album. Their repertory, as is the case in actual concert performance, ranges over an awesome spectrum of time and place — from the 17th to the 20th centuries, from Sweden to Argentina.

For the Trapps' multitude of admirers, Decca has contrived a superb memento.

BAND CONCERT

Salute to Allentown; National Spirit; Hands Across the Border; Hands Across the Sea; Game Preserve; Hampden Firemen; Entry of the Gladiators; Brooke's Chicago Marine Band March; Oneida; Finlandia; Cumana; Perpetuum Mobile; The Irish Washerwoman; The Angelus.

The Allentown Band. Albertus L. Meyers, cond.
WFB WH 1203 L. 12-in. \$4.98.

Under the sprightly baton of Albertus L. Meyers, America's oldest band (founded in 1828), offers an entertaining, brassy romp through some old standbys. Also included is a less successful — but not unqualifiedly so — foray into the more complex *Finlandia*. Although composed wholly of musicians by avocation, the Allentowners need defer to no competition in the matter of musical effectiveness: witness the skillful use of firebells and siren in Mr. Meyers' delightful reading of *The Hampden Firemen*. The Band's efforts are supported by bright, full range reproduction.

BROWNIE MCGHEE

Blues

Careless Love; Good Morning Blues; Sporting Life; Me and Sonny; Pawnshop Blues; Move to Kansas City; Betty and Dupree.

FOLKWAYS FP 30-2. 10 inch. \$4.25.

A brilliant run-down of traditional and original blues by an eminent exponent of the form. While Brownie McGhee vocalizes these songs in his usual inimitable fashion, the record's most arresting feature is his miraculous guitarwork in the accompaniments. Informative notes; top-notch reproduction.

ECHOES OF BUDAPEST

The Hungarian Gypsy Folk Orchestra of Budapest under Sandor Lakatos

COLOSSEUM CRLP 201. 12 inch. \$3.98.

Time was when Budapest — original home of the table-to-table Gypsy fiddler — was recommended by travel agents as one of Europe's "gayest" cities. Here, like an echo of yesterday, is a sampling of Budapest's typical café music — by turns gay, sad lilt-

ing or wallowing delightfully in Danubian schmaltz — played in the best Gypsy tradition.

However, the sound is marred by a high degree of distortion. Better listen before buying.

SHIVAREE!

Cripple Creek; A Farmer's Wife; The Good Peanuts; Bile Them Cabbage Down; Joe Clarke; Pretty Little Willow; Bury Me Beneath the Willow; Down the Old Plank Road; The Devil's Nine Questions; Shortnin' Bread; I Wish I Was Single Again; Roll on the Ground; The Blackest Crow; Devilish Mary; Ain't Gonna Work Tomorrow; Railroad Bill; My Boy Billy; The Arkansaw Traveller; Raise a Ruckus Tonight.

Jean Ritchie, The Bride; Oscar Brand, The Groom; Tom Paley, The Best Man; Harry and Jeanie West, The Married Couple. ESOTERIC ES-538. 12-in. \$4.98.

The Shivaree (derived from the French *chari-vari*) came to rural America by way of Louisiana. It is a kind of wedding night pandemonium, perpetrated by "friends" of the bride and groom, and dedicated to unmitigated and very earthly hell-raising at the newly-weds' expense. The Shivaree still exists, but its original vicious and somewhat lewd character has given way to singing, dancing, and harmless practical jokes.

Using this sadistic custom as a framework, Esoteric has festooned it with a well-chosen garland of American folksongs. Between selections, acted-out transitions are intended to foster the illusion of an actual Shivaree. Like most such artificialities, this one doesn't quite come off; but mercifully the acted interludes are brief.

The singing is of a high order and the quality of the reproduced sound is superb. Although occasionally a trifle shaky, Jean Ritchie's voice still possesses a full measure of Kentucky charm; Oscar Brand lends noble support, particularly in a fine duet of *The Devil's Nine Questions*. Tom Paley and Harry and Jeanie West round out a quintet of the most talented folk singers ever to grace a single disk.

Well worth an audition — if you can develop an immunity to the contrived continuity.

STEEL BAND CLASH

Brute Force Road March; Miss Jacob; Anna; In the Mood; Loretta; Boncilla; Steel Band Clash; Over the Waves; Bila El Mambo; Mambo No. 5; Anna; Kamaquit; Sunny Side of the Street; Quancito Meringue; La Veda ni Meringue.

Big Shell Steel Band, Brute Force Steel Band, Hell's Gate Band. COOK 1040. 12-in. \$3.49.

In every way a worthy successor to the popular *Brute Force Steel Band* (COOK 1042). For a real "new sound" try *In the Mood* hammered out on the 55 gallon oil drums of the Brute Force Band, or perhaps the Big Shell Steel Band's (playing under the corrugated tin roof of Antigua's *Bucket of Blood*) cool West Indian version of *Sunny Side of the Street*.

Made by the new microfusion process,

the record is free of pops, clicks, and other assorted vinylite gremlins. Against this velvety background, Emory Cook supplies suitably robust sound of exceptional clarity and delineation. If *Brute Force Steel Band* was down your musical alley, you'll like its sequel even more.

THREE RITUALS

Shango, the voodoo of Trinidad; *Tumba Francessa* from Cuba; Night Hymns of the Yemenites from Israel.

COOK SOUNDS OF OUR TIMES 1043. 12-in. \$3.98.

Of this tenuously related material, the voodoo *Shango* from Trinidad is the most melodic and, musically, the most enjoyable.

The songs of the Yemenite Jews betray a strong Arab influence, particularly manifest in the drummed accompaniment.

The most exciting of the rituals is the *Tumba Francessa*, Negro cult music out of Cuba by way of Africa and Haiti, with French overtones. Almost hypnotic in its unflagging, unchanging rhythmic backdrop, the *Tumba* is a hitherto little explored tributary of Caribbean music.

Sad to say, the album notes are inadequate. In each of the rituals, the subject matter of the songs remains a closed book. Although recorded in the field, the sound is realistic. In the *Tumba Francessa*, however, the chanters are somewhat distant relative to the drums. Made by the new microfusion process, the record possesses absolutely noise-free surfaces.



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Prokofiev on Microgroove

by ALFRED FRANKENSTEIN

SERGE PROKOFIEV is a popular composer by virtue of three works—the *Classical* Symphony, the Third Piano Concerto, and *Peter and the Wolf*—and is a widely accepted composer by virtue of perhaps half a dozen others. The great bulk of his output, however, is little known to the general public or even to the musical profession, and the representation of Prokofiev on records is correspondingly spotty.

The short piano pieces and the operas are the most seriously neglected, so far as records are concerned. Prokofiev composed well over a hundred short compositions for piano, but comparatively few of these are available on disks. None of his operas has been recorded complete; most of them, in fact, have not been touched upon in any form, and the record lists do not contain a single vocal excerpt from any of these works for the stage. Saddest of all the lacks in the current American discography of Prokofiev is the all but total absence of the composer himself as executant. In 1935 he recorded a group of his piano works which have recently been reissued on a French LP disk (*La Voix de son Maître* FJLP 5.048), but so far as the American lists are concerned, he is currently represented as a performer only as the conductor of the accompaniment—and accompaniment it unfortunately is—to his Violin Concerto No. 1 (on Colosseum).

The piano is peculiarly central to Prokofiev's work, especially in its earlier phases, as witness the nine sonatas and five concertos for that instrument. Prokofiev's way of writing for the piano arose from his own distinctive manner of playing it. He created not only an important corpus of literature for the piano but also a new school of pianistic technique. No one who had the privilege of hearing Prokofiev at the keyboard will ever forget the colossal, shattering impact of his style. Its clean-cut, steely perfection was equally distant from the coloristic niceties of the impressionists and the rhetorical thunder-punching of the romantics. It was one major expression of the overwhelming gusto, the spouting, infectious joy of life which speaks through almost every note Prokofiev set down during the first twenty years of his career and which frequently erupts in his later compositions as well.

In the 1920s, Leonid Sabaneyev said that Prokofiev was not a fledgling who would grow up into an eagle but a stabilized eagle who would remain such. Sabaneyev was wrong, of course. Prokofiev did mature, and that maturing is expressed in such serious-minded, monumental, and relatively "abstract" works as the Fifth Piano Concerto, the Fourth Symphony, and *The Prodigal Son*. These compositions may not be as violently iconoclastic as the contemporary efforts of Prokofiev's fellow-Russian Stravinsky, but they nevertheless display a pronounced reaching out toward new structures and a new tonal fabric. During the last twenty years of Prokofiev's life, however, the evolution of his creative style went into reverse.

Prokofiev began to experiment with a more conservative harmonic idiom at least as early as 1930, when he wrote his

first string quartet. He adopted it for good in 1934, the year in which he returned to Russia as a permanent resident. The return to Russia, to which he had been making repeated visits since 1927, may have been dictated by the new harmonic palette rather than the other way 'round; at all events he remained a vital and original composer, and the developments in his style manifested at this time were in keeping with a world-wide movement. The contrast between Prokofiev's "advanced" music of the Twenties as exemplified, say, in the Quintet, Opus 39, and his "conservative" music of the Thirties as displayed in a score like *Romeo and Juliet*, closely parallels the contrast between early- and middle-period works of Aaron Copland (the *Short Symphony* versus *Appalachian Spring*). Copland, Hindemith, and others in the West argued for the new approach on the ground of the necessity for climbing down from the ivory tower and establishing a healthy, functional relationship between the contemporary composer and his audience. Prokofiev obviously agreed—and the West has accepted the works of his early Soviet years quite as readily as did the Soviet Union.

Trouble was brewing nevertheless, and it boiled over in the famous Soviet musical purge of 1948. This was the time when, in response to official crackdowns, Prokofiev and Shostakovich took to the platform with breast-beating *mea culpa*s. In some of the statements of these men, however, one perceives less of repentance and more of a helpless bewilderment at the fact that the official Soviet esthetic, so loudly and demandingly proclaimed, was almost totally undefined. One feels that the composers might have been happy enough to toe the party line if they could only have found out what it was.

What is involved here is not a knuckling-under to bureaucratic demands but something infinitely more stultifying—the composition of music under the eyes of a censorship without tangible principles, a censorship whose praise or blame could not be related to any demonstrable facts of musical existence. The result, in Prokofiev's case, was a decision to play extremely safe in large-scale works for broad public consumption and to create a more personal, private world in smaller works not calculated for the general audience. It seems scarcely accidental that most of Prokofiev's chamber music dates from his last years, that it is strikingly superior in general quality to the cantatas, symphonies, and ballets of the same era and never exhibits the trite, cheap streak which often appears in the bigger scores. There are some exceptions to this generalization—the Fifth Symphony is a fine work and the Cello Sonata is a poor one—but it is offered here in a speculative way for what it may be worth.

The problems raised by Prokofiev's career await a full-length critical biography for their analysis if not for their solution. So far there has been only one book on this composer, at least in English—the study by Israel Nestyev, published by Knopf in 1946 and now out of print. Excerpts from Prokofiev's

autobiography were published in the *Musical Quarterly* for October 1944, and in the *Atlantic Monthly* for November 1946 and July 1947. The best short article on Prokofiev is the one by Nicolas Slonimsky in the appendix to the *International Cyclopaedia of Music and Musicians* (first published in the fourth edition, 1946), and the best critical evaluation the one by Nicolas Nabokov in his book *Old Friends and New Music*. The special Prokofiev number of the British magazine *Tempo* contains some good things. The extensive documentation of Soviet musical life given by Slonimsky in his *Music Since 1900* (third edition, 1949) is invaluable.

The present discography deals with all the works of Prokofiev in current catalogues of American long-playing records; records no longer being pressed are ignored. The date given after each opus number is that of its completion; suites from operas and ballets (which always have opus numbers of their own) were, of course, completed later than the works from which they were extracted, and in some cases much later. When there is more than one recorded edition of a given work, these editions are listed in order of preference. An entry in brackets signifies that the recording in question was not submitted for study.

PIANO SONATAS

No. 2, IN D MINOR, OPUS 14 (1912)
(3 Editions)

The prevailing mood of this four-movement sonata is lyrical and quiet, despite the *diablerie* of its short scherzo and the brilliance of its finale. The three different recorded editions involve only two different interpretations, since the one by Gilels appears under two labels. Both interpretations are quite good, though Gilels is a more incisive virtuoso than Cornman. The Concert Hall processing of Gilels is very much better than the Colosseum, but neither measures up to the sonic competition offered by London.

—Robert Cornman. LONDON LL 553. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Sonata No. 5).

—Emil Gilels. CONCERT HALL CHS 1311. 12-in. \$4.98 (with Glazunov: Piano Sonata No. 2; short pieces by Tchaikovsky).

—Emil Gilels. COLOSSEUM CRLP 186. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Piano Concerto No. 1; Kabalevsky: Piano Concerto No. 2).

No. 3, IN A MINOR, OPUS 28 (1917) (2 Editions)

The headlong, hell-bent Prokofiev here makes his debut, so far as the sonatas are concerned, in a splashy, exhilarating piece in one extended movement. Both recordings are excellent but the Weissenberg is the crisper, more powerful performance.

—Sigi Weissenberg. COLUMBIA ML 2069. 10-in. \$2.98 (with *Suggestion diabolique*: piano pieces by Scriabin).

—Robert Cornman. LONDON LL 748. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Sonatas Nos. 4 and 8).

No. 4, IN C MINOR, OPUS 29 (1917) (1 Edition)

Composed immediately after the scintillating Third Sonata, the mood of the Fourth is prevalingly lyrical and introspective. It is especially noteworthy for a gorgeous andante (second of the three movements) like a Chopin nocturne complete with nightingale trills. This is not the Prokofiev of the popular legend, but it nonetheless reveals an important aspect of his creative personality. Cornman is especially sympathetic to the romantic aspects of Prokofiev and plays the sonata superbly.

—Robert Cornman. LONDON LL 748. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Sonatas Nos. 3 and 8).

No. 5, IN C, OPUS 38 (1923) (2 Editions)

The first two movements are crisp, sharp-edged, and whimsical, recalling the *Classical* Symphony, though there is little obvious neo-classicism after the Mozartean C major of the first few bars. The finale is a vehement, rather enigmatic improvisation that scarcely

seems to belong with the other two movements. Graf's performance is more energetic and exciting than Cornman's, but his recording is distressingly tinny.

—Robert Cornman. LONDON LL 553. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Sonata No. 2).

—Hans Graf. PERIOD SPL 599. 12-in. \$4.98 (with Piano Concertos Nos. 1 and 5).

No. 6, IN A, OPUS 82 (1940) (2 Editions)

Seventeen years elapsed between the Fifth and Sixth Sonatas. Prokofiev called the Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth his "war sonatas," and war seems obviously to be reflected in the grim, epical first movement of the Sixth. The sonata as a whole is much larger in scale than those that preceded it, although it does not sustain the mood of its beginning; it goes on to a mordant march-scherzo, a rather curiously involved slow waltz, and a racy, slam-bang toccata of the kind said to be typical of Prokofiev because it is typical of his most popular works. Cornman's performance is more mature and broadly scaled than Pennario's and has been given a finer recording.

—Robert Cornman. LONDON LL 902. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Sonata No. 7).

—Leonard Pennario. CAPITOL P 8113. 12-in. \$3.98 (with *Visions fugitives*).

No. 7, IN B-FLAT, OPUS 83 (1941) (1 Edition)

This is the sonata with the devastatingly percussive first movement and finale and the grandly sonorous, almost Lisztian, slow movement which has long been a specialty of the house of Horowitz. It is odd that Horowitz's colossal recording of it has been withdrawn, though the finale alone may be found in that artist's *25th Anniversary Album* (RCA VICTOR LM 6014), an item that seems scarcely to call for listing as an edition of the sonata in a Prokofiev discography. Cornman does the whole thing magnificently, however, even if he is no Horowitz.

—Robert Cornman. LONDON LL 902. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Sonata No. 6).

No. 8, IN B-FLAT, OPUS 84 (1944) (2 Editions)

The Eighth does not sound like a "war sonata" at all. Its rondolike first movement is beholden to Schumann in its lyrical episodes and to Liszt in at least one of its flamboyant interludes. Its slow movement is surely a Mendelssohn *Song Without Words* edited by Prokofiev with just the right number of wrong notes. Its finale is a toccata of exceptional length and complexity; it is airy, vivacious, and brilliant, and quite devoid of the irony one expects of Prokofiev in a movement of this kind. Making a clear-cut choice between the two records is difficult. Both Cornman and

Di Bonaventura are extremely able and sensitive musicians. Di Bonaventura uses more rubato and more striking contrasts of tempo and nuance; Cornman's performance, by the same token, has a firmer line and a bigger structure. Cornman's recording is somewhat better in quality and has the advantage of being coupled with the Third and Fourth sonatas; Di Bonaventura uses both sides.

—Robert Cornman. LONDON LL 748. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Sonatas Nos. 3 and 4).

—Anthony di Bonaventura. CLASSIC CE 1032. 12-in. \$4.98.

No. 9, IN C, OPUS 103 (1947) (1 Edition)

This record bears the legend "The Complete Piano Sonatas of Sergei Prokofiev, Vol. IV," and the notes contain the statement that it is the last in the series, all of which have been done by the same artist; the first three volumes, however, had not appeared at the time of writing. The entire set should be very good, for Pressler is an admirable pianist and he has been admirably recorded on this disk. The Ninth Sonata exemplifies that marked return to a conservative harmonic style which is so characteristic of Prokofiev's last years, but in this instance harmonic conservatism does not imply a weakening of creative power or a cheapening of idiom. The sonata is quite large in feeling, more capricious and whimsical in its forms than many of those that preceded it, and typical of the eternal Prokofievian verities in its rhythmic vivacity, its tunefulness, and its bright palette of pianistic tone color.

—Menahe Pressler. M-G-M E 3192. 12-in. \$3.98 (with *Ten Piano Pieces from Cinderella*).

SHORT PIANO PIECES

SUGGESTION DIABOLIQUE, OPUS 4, NO. 4 (1912) (1 Edition)

The fabulous success of this mordant, tuneful piece proves what a clever title can do. Who has ever heard of the first three numbers of Opus 4 — *Réminiscences*, *Elan*, and *Désespoir* — but who could fail to sit up and take notice of a *Suggestion diabolique*? Weissenberg is a masterly devil's advocate.

—Sigi Weissenberg. COLUMBIA ML 2099. 10-in. \$2.98 (with Sonata No. 3; piano pieces by Scriabin).

TOCCATA IN D MINOR, OPUS 11 (1912) (1 Edition)

A hurtling, rocketing bombshell of a piece with which the composer liked to clear the hall by way of final encore. Excellent performance and recording.

—Samson Francois. ANGEL 35045. 12-in. \$4.98 (with Piano Concerto No. 3; *Visions fugitives*).

VISIONS FUGITIVES, OPUS 22 (1917) (2 Editions, 1 complete, 1 partial)

Prokofiev is scarcely an impressionistic composer, but he approaches the impressionistic in the general idea behind these twenty delightful miniatures, and he employs impressionistic methods in a few of them. They are sketches, aphorisms, and notebook jottings, relieved of the necessity of development or formal pretense, and they exemplify many different aspects of Prokofiev's personality — the whimsical, the satiric, the effervescent, the naïvely lyrical, and so on. Francois has the better recording but provides only six of the twenty pieces, scarcely more than a "vision fugitive" of what the suite contains. Pennario's performance is excellent and complete.

—Leonard Pennario. CAPITOL P 8113. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Sonata No. 6).

—Samson Francois. ANGEL 35045. 12-in. \$4.98 (with Piano Concerto No. 3; Toccata).

MUSIC FOR CHILDREN (SUMMER DAY SUITE), OPUS 65 (1935) (2 Editions)

One and the same composition, but the two recordings bear different titles; and it is just as well that they do, since the interpretations make them sound like two different works. As played by Pressler (*Music for Children*) these twelve little pieces constitute a masterpiece of subtlety and tunefulness, equal in stature to the children's piano music of Schumann and Bartok, though totally different in idiom from either. As played by Lev (*Summer Day Suite*) they conjure up a picture of little Serge Sergeevitch, in a Buster Brown collar, earnestly being a boy genius.

—Menahem Pressler. M-G-M E 3010. 12-in. \$3.98 (with children's piano pieces by Shostakovich, Bloch, Milhaud, and Starer).

—Ray Lev. CONCERT HALL CHC 26. 12-in. \$4.98 (with piano pieces by Tchaikovsky).

TEN PIANO PIECES FROM THE BALLET CINDERELLA, OPUS 97 (1943) (1 Edition)

Cinderella is a lush, imperial-style ballet fully adorned with the *divertissements*, set pieces, and side issues with which Russian choreographers commonly overload such productions. Prokofiev draws most of his ten piano pieces from these picturesque incidentals; and since he was a past master of transcription, the suite sparkles most delectably until its final movement. At the end Prokofiev made the mistake of arranging a grand balletic adagio; this sounds exactly like what it is and lets the whole thing down. Wonderfully realistic recording.

—Menahem Pressler. M-G-M E 3192. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Sonata No. 9).

PIANO CONCERTOS

NO. 1, IN D-FLAT, OPUS 10 (1911) (2 Editions)

The steely, kinetic, ceaselessly athletic Prokofiev in one of his most exhilarating and dramatic expressions. The concerto is one devastating movement. Richter's interpretation is identical in both recorded versions, but the one under the Period label has much the finer sound.

—Sviatoslav Richter, piano; Moscow Symphony Orchestra, Kiril Kondrashin, cond. PERIOD SPL 559. 12-in. \$4.98 (with Piano Concerto No. 5; Sonata No. 5).

—Sviatoslav Richter, piano; National Phil-

harmonic Orchestra, Kiril Kondrashin, cond. COLOSSEUM CRLP 186. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Sonata No. 2; Kabalevsky: Piano Concerto No. 2).

NO. 2, IN G MINOR, OPUS 16 (1923) (1 Edition)

Originally composed in 1913, this work was completely rewritten ten years later; hence the curious fact that Prokofiev's Second Piano Concerto is a more mature and in some ways a more important composition than his Third. It is less frequently performed, perhaps because it is more exacting in the matter of ensemble between soloist and orchestra. The piano part is brilliant enough, but the whole conception approaches the *sinfonia concertante*, it is actually a symphony of great breadth, power, and epic scope, and one that should be much better known than it is. Fortunately the performance and recording are ideally calculated to bring this neglected masterpiece into its own.

—Jorge Bolet, piano; Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Thor Johnson, cond. REMINGTON R-199-182. 12-in. \$1.95.

NO. 3, IN C, OPUS 26 (1921) (6 Editions) "How happy I could be with either were 'other dear charmer away!" Francois has the best of the six recordings of this famous piece, but his tempos are the slowest and his whole performance lacks sparkle by comparison with the others. Kapell lies at the opposite extreme; his breakneck tempos are astonishing, but often one suspects he was thinking of little but speed, and his recording shows its age. Mitropoulos lacks pianistic finesse, especially when compared to the five full-time men of the keyboard with whom he is competing here. Katchen is an admirable pianist, an excellent interpreter, has a great conductor behind him, and has been given an extremely good recording. Uninsky's interpretation is the wittiest and most varied of the six, and the recording has a chamberlike crispness and precision but is rather wiry in sound. Pennario's interpretation is also very lively, and his recording is good. The upshot is a close tie between Katchen and Uninsky, with Pennario a fair second and the others decently behind.

—Julius Katchen, piano; Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Ernest Ansermet, cond. LONDON LL 945. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Bartok: Piano Concerto No. 3).

—Alexander Uninsky, piano; Hague Philharmonic Orchestra, Willem van Otterloo, cond. EPIC LC 3042. 12-in. \$3.98 (with *Classical* Symphony; Suite from *The Love for Three Oranges*).

—Leonard Pennario, piano; St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, Vladimir Golschmann, cond. CAPITOL P 8253. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Bartok: Piano Concerto No. 3).

—William Kapell, piano; Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Antal Dorati, cond. RCA VICTOR LM 1058. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Liszt: *Mephisto Waltz*).

—Samson Francois, piano; Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire (Paris), André Cluytens, cond. ANGEL 35045. 12-in. \$4.98 (with *Toccata; Visions fugitives*).

—Dimitri Mitropoulos, pianist and conductor; Robin Hood Dell Orchestra of Philadelphia. COLUMBIA ML 4389. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Shostakovich: Piano Concerto).

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NO. 5, IN G, OPUS 55 (1932) (1 Edition)
The most profound of Prokofiev's concertos and a far cry from that debonair show piece, the Third. (The Fourth is for left hand alone, is seldom played, and has not been recorded.) The Fifth Concerto is strongly "abstract" in feeling, is quite experimental in structure (five movements, none in sonata form) and lays heavy emphasis on complex problems of rhythmic and harmonic tissue. The result is a certain reserve and austerity of character that stands about equally distant from the tuneful, racy style of the earlier works and the relatively traditional style Prokofiev was to develop during his last years. Splendid performance and recording. —Alfred Brendel, piano; Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Jonathan Sternberg, cond. PERIOD SPL 599. 12-in. \$4.98 (with Piano Concerto No. 1; Sonata No. 5).

VIOLIN CONCERTOS

NO. 1, IN D, OPUS 19 (1913) (7 Editions)
Making a clear-cut choice here is almost impossibly difficult. All the solo players involved are superlative violinists and most of the recordings are superlative too. Even the Russian disks are better than the Russian average, and the Colosseum has the added interest of being the only recording now available in this country in which Prokofiev himself participates. But when all is said and done, Szigeti, who was the first to fight for this concerto and introduced it all over the world, seems to have the clearest understanding of its lyricism, its piquancy, and its essentially classical line.

—Joseph Szigeti, violin; London Philharmonic Orchestra, Sir Thomas Beecham, cond. COLUMBIA ML 4533. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Mozart: Violin Concerto No. 4).

—David Oistrakh, violin; London Symphony Orchestra, Lovro von Matacic, cond. ANGEL 35243. 12-in. \$4.98 (with Bruch: Violin Concerto No. 1).

—David Oistrakh, violin; National Philharmonic Orchestra, Serge Prokofiev, cond. COLOSSEUM CRIP 123. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Kabalevsky: Violin Concerto).

—David Oistrakh, violin; Symphony Orchestra, Alexander Gauk, cond. PERIOD SPL 539. 12-in. \$4.98 (with Miaskovsky: Violin Concerto).

—Ricardo Odnoposoff, violin; Radio Zurich Orchestra, Heinrich Hollreiser, cond. CONCERT HALL CHS 1160. 12-in. \$4.98 (with Stravinsky: Piano Concerto).

—Nathan Milstein, violin; St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, Vladimir Golschmann, cond. CAPITOL P 8303. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Lalo: *Symphonie espagnole*).

[—Drescher, violin; Berlin Symphony Orchestra, Schreiber, cond. ROYALE 1483. \$1.89 (with Violin Concerto No. 2).]

NO. 2, IN G MINOR, OPUS 63 (1935) (3 Editions)

Prokofiev especially liked the singing quality of the violin, and all his works for that instrument are full of broad, long-spun, lyrical melodies. Since it is the nature of the solo instrument that dictates the style, both his violin concertos are very similar in manner, though they were written a quarter of a century apart. In the First Concerto, however, Prokofiev contrasts the prevailing lyricism with a sensationally grotesque and difficult-sounding scherzo, and it is for this rather superficial reason that the First is

the more popular work. Of the two recorded performances of the Second Concerto that were available for comparison, the Heifetz is a bit finer in texture, but the Francescatti is newer and technically superior.

—Jascha Heifetz, violin; Boston Symphony Orchestra, Serge Koussevitzky, cond. RCA VICTOR LCT 6. 10-in. \$2.98.



Jascha Heifetz

—Zino Francescatti, violin; New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra, Dimitri Mitropoulos, cond. COLUMBIA ML 4648. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Bach: Violin Concerto No. 2). [—Drescher, violin; Berlin Symphony Orchestra, Schreiber, cond. ROYALE 1483. 12-in. \$1.89 (with Violin Concerto No. 1.)]

SYMPHONIES

NO. 1, IN D ("CLASSICAL"), OPUS 25 (1917) (15 Editions)

"I do not predict a return to Mozart," wrote Carl Van Vechten in his still stimulating essay *Music After the Great War*, published in 1915. The phrase was written in a tone of extreme irony; for an era that believed in straight-line evolution and had just begun to absorb *The Rite of Spring*, a return to Mozart was indeed the farthest north of all unthinkable. Alas for critical prophecy! The Great War was not over before Prokofiev hoisted the banner "Back to Mozart!" in this symphony. Before long other banners were flying: "Back to Bach!" "Back to Gounod!" back to this and that. To mix metaphors slightly, the composer of *The Rite of Spring* then jumped aboard the bandwagon and ousted Prokofiev from the driver's seat, and it has been rolling along ever since without his aid.

It is impossible to give a bad performance of the *Classical* Symphony; at least it would be more difficult than to give a good one, and the experiment would not be worth the trouble. Of the thirteen recorded interpretations of the work submitted for this study, some are more fluent and flexible than others, and these are to be preferred, but all are at least passable. Three other criteria are important: the general quality of the recording, the manner in which the recording brings out specific details of the orchestration, and the way in which the first violins behave. In order to obtain the rococo

silver filigree he wants, Prokofiev writes high for the violins, with the result that they usually play out of tune; the final chord of the symphony is, in many cases, a most unclassical blurred shriek.

On the basis of all these factors, the Ansermet version comes out the best, followed very closely by those of Markevitch and Fricsay. Next is a group of excellent, fairly recent recordings (Horenstein, Celibidache, Steinberg, Martinon) which, largely because of the first-violin problem, are less desirable. Third is a group of performances by celebrated conductors (Koussevitzky, Toscanini, Ormandy, Munch, Mitropoulos) made early in the history of LP, or before, and now somewhat outmoded from the point of view of recording.

—Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire (Paris), Ernest Ansermet, cond. LONDON LL 864. 12-in. \$3.98 (with short works of Glinka, Borodin, and Mussorgsky). Same without couplings. LONDON LD 9114. 10-in. \$2.98.

—Philharmonia Orchestra, Igor Markevitch, cond. ANGEL 35008. 12-in. \$4.98 (with short works of Dukas, Falla, and Ravel).

—RIAS Symphony Orchestra (Berlin), Ferenc Fricsay, cond. DECCA DL 9737. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Tchaikovsky: Serenade for Strings).

—Concerts Colonne Orchestra (Paris), Jascha Horenstein, cond. VOX PL 9170. 12-in. \$4.98 (with Symphony No. 5).

—Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Sergiu Celibidache, cond. 12-in. RCA VICTOR LBC 1009. \$2.98 (with Ravel: *Mother Goose*).

—Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, William Steinberg, cond. CAPITOL P 8290. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Tchaikovsky: Serenade for Strings).

—Orchestre des Concerts Lamoureux (Paris), Jean Martinon, cond. EPIC LC 3042. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Piano Concerto No. 3; Suite from *The Love for Three Oranges*).

—Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra, Dimitri Mitropoulos, cond. COLUMBIA RL 3021. 12-in. \$1.98 (with short works of Dukas, Rimsky-Korsakov, and Glère).

—Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire (Paris), Charles Munch, cond. LONDON LL 169. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Tchaikovsky: *Francesca da Rimini*).

—Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond. COLUMBIA ML 2035. 10-in. \$2.98 (with Rimsky-Korsakov: *Russian Easter Overture*).

—NBC Symphony Orchestra, Arturo Toscanini, cond. RCA VICTOR LM 9020. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Gershwin: *An American in Paris*).

—Boston Symphony Orchestra, Serge Koussevitzky, cond. RCA VICTOR LM 1215. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Rachmaninoff: *Isle of the Dead*).

—"Schuyler Symphony Orchestra" (St. Louis Symphony, Vladimir Golschmann, cond.). CAMDEN CAL 215. 12-in. \$1.98 (with short works of Khachaturian, Rimsky-Korsakov, Franck, Chabrier, and Delius). [—Berlin Symphony Orchestra. ROYALE 1420. 12-in. \$1.89 (with Suite from *The Love for Three Oranges*).]

[—Symphony Orchestra, Alexander Stasevich, cond. KINGSWAY 251. \$2.98 (with Symphony No. 7).]

NO. 4, IN C, OPUS 47 (1930) (1 Edition)
Composed on a commission from Kousse-

vitzky as part of the Boston Symphony Orchestra's fiftieth anniversary observance, this is a big, abstract, serious symphony, with something of the same grandeur and reserve that characterize the Fifth Piano Concerto, completed two years later. I confess, however, to finding the symphony more respectable than interesting, especially in its last two movements. Perhaps another conductor might pull it together with greater tension toward the end, but Sebastian makes a convincing case for the opening allegro and the andante, and so one suspects the fault really lies with Prokofiev. Good but not spectacular recording.

—Colonne Orchestra, George Sebastian, cond. URANIA URLP 7139. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Suite from *The Prodigal Son*).

NO. 5, IN B-FLAT, OPUS 100 (1944) (3 Editions)

The Fifth Symphony of Prokofiev is one of Shostakovich's finest creations. It is a noble work, grand in scale and conception, better proportioned than the symphonies by Shostakovich himself, but suggesting the influence of the younger man on the older in several ways, notably the strongly Slavic feeling of its opening andante and its adagio, the gaminlike antics of its scherzo, and the enthusiastic, optimistic march of its finale. The Horenstein is the best of the three disks. It is the most dynamic and exciting of the three performances and the best in the range of nuance and color afforded by its recording. Tuxen's quieter approach is not without its virtues, however. The Koussevitzky is the work of a great master, but the registration is old.

—Concerts Colonne Orchestra (Paris), Jascha Horenstein, cond. VOX PL 9170. 12-in. \$4.98 (with *Classical Symphony*).

—Danish State Radio Symphony Orchestra, Erik Tuxen, cond. LONDON LL 672. 12-in. \$3.98.

—Boston Symphony Orchestra, Serge Koussevitzky, cond. RCA VICTOR LM 1045. 12-in. \$3.98.

NO. 6, IN E-FLAT MINOR, OPUS 111 (1949) (2 Editions)

A poor work, most of it in a lush, romantic-academic vein recalling Glière, Glazunov, and other dull Russian symphonists of 1910. The finale has some pleasant tunes, but is repetitive and structurally pointless. The Ormandy is decidedly the better of the two recordings.

—Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond. COLUMBIA ML 4328. 12-in. \$3.98.

—Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Ernest Ansermet, cond. LONDON LL 527. 12-in. \$3.98.

NO. 7, OPUS 131 (1952) (2 Editions)

If in the Sixth Symphony Prokofiev returns to Glière and Glazunov, in the Seventh he goes back still another generation to Brahms and Tchaikovsky. Brahms and Tchaikovsky, however, were much finer symphonists than their immediate successors, and by that same token Prokofiev's Seventh Symphony is a much finer work than his Sixth. It does not attain the stature and distinction of the Fifth, but it makes a very persuasive case for the conservatism of Prokofiev's later style. It was completed only a few months before the composer died and seems to be his last work. Only one of the two recordings was submitted for this study. The

Kingsway will have to be amazingly good to beat Columbia's superb offering.

—Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond. COLUMBIA ML 4683. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Suite from *Lieutenant Kije*).

[—Symphony Orchestra, Samuel Samosud, cond. KINGSWAY 251. 12-in. \$2.98 (with *Classical Symphony*).]

MISCELLANEOUS ORCHESTRAL WORKS

SCYTHIAN SUITE, OPUS 20 (1914) (4 Editions)

The *Scythian Suite* is Prokofiev's reply to Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*. Originally composed as a ballet for Diaghilev, rejected by him, and so rewritten as a concert piece, it is music of the utmost barbarity of which Prokofiev was capable, and he was no mean hand at polytonal clashes, frenetic rhythms, and fantastic orchestral effects. Still and all, it is no match for Stravinsky's masterpiece. Differences of interpretation are of no special importance in a work as unobtrusive as this, and it is difficult to tell the four recorded interpretations apart; the Scherchen, however, is less satisfactory in sound than the other three.

—Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Désiré Defauw, cond. RCA VICTOR LBC 1057. 12-in. \$2.98 (with Respighi: *Pines of Rome*).

—Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond. COLUMBIA ML 4142. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Respighi: *Roman Festivals*).

—Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin, Rolf Kleinert, cond. URANIA URLP 7138. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Kodály: *Concerto for Orchestra*).



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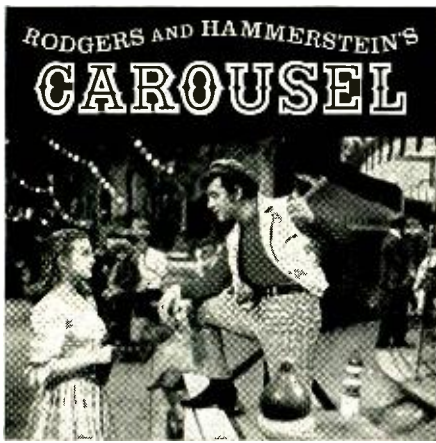
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—Vienna Symphony Orchestra, Hermann Scherchen, cond. WESTMINSTER WL 5091. 12-in. \$2.99 (with Suite from *Lieutenant Kije*).

DIVERTIMENTO, OPUS 43 (1929) (1 Edition)
The first and third of the four movements were rescued from the score of an unsuccessful ballet called *Trapeze*; they have a precise, *sec*, tick-tock quality not unlike that of certain ballet episodes by Stravinsky. The other movements are broader, more symphonic in style, though the total effect is of a chamber-orchestra piece rather than a full-dress symphonic effort. Swoboda's fine performance and perfect recording should do much to bring this little-known work to the broad audience it deserves.

—Vienna Symphony Orchestra, Henry Swoboda, cond. WESTMINSTER WN 18081. 12-in. \$4.98 (with *Sinfonietta*; *Winter Holiday*).

SINFONIETTA, OPUS 5/48 (1929) (1 Edition)
Originally composed in 1909 and rewritten twenty years later; hence the curious double opus number. The time-scale of the movements is small, but there are five of them, and so this *sinfonietta* actually adds up to a symphony of considerable size. It is also a most delectable symphony in its tunefulness, its rhythmic vitality, and the range of ideas it encloses; the slow movement is a remarkable study in the sinister and macabre, the scherzo an outstanding example of Prokofiev's unbuttoned humor, the first movement a bit of neo-classicism to rival the *Classical* Symphony itself. The performance is beautiful and the recording is one of the most nearly perfect in the entire Prokofiev discography.

—Vienna Symphony Orchestra, Henry Swoboda, cond. WESTMINSTER WN 18081. 12-in. \$4.98 (with *Divertimento*; *Winter Holiday*).

FOUR PORTRAITS FROM THE GAMBLER, OPUS 49 (1931) (1 Edition)

The Gambler is an opera after Dostoevski that Prokofiev completed in 1927 and published as Opus 24. Four years later he reworked material selected from many parts of the score into this series of *Portraits*. Opus 49, in other words, is not simply a set of orchestral selections from an opera, and it must be considered here rather than under the operatic heading.

The four characters limned in the music are the youthful, indecisive hero, Alexis; the stiff-necked, corrupt General; the haughty, imperious Grandmother; and the slender, sly, catlike Pauline. There is also a finale, called "*Dénouement*," in which themes from the preceding movements are re-woven. Prokofiev seldom interested himself in psychological subjects like this, but he handles the theme with great penetration and with marvelous touches of irony; the result is a genuine translation of Dostoevski into music. The recording is only fair, but it is the only one ever made of a unique, impressive, and important work.

—Philharmonia Orchestra, Wilhelm Schuechter, cond. M-G-M E 3112. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Kabalevsky: Suite from *Colas Breugnon*).

PETER AND THE WOLF, OPUS 67 (1936) (9 Editions)

One of the major surprises of compiling

this discography was to rediscover the fact that *Peter and the Wolf* is really a delightful piece of music, subtly and brilliantly made, and very well calculated to achieve its objective, which is to teach children something about the instruments of the orchestra. It is said in some quarters that children don't like it. Mine, however, were crazy about it ten years ago, and that is why I haven't listened to it since. Coming back to it after a decade, one can easily see why it has outlived the swarm of imitations, bearing titles like *Tubby the Tuba* and *Visbinsky the Violin*, which were at one time so widely marketed.

Of the seven recorded versions submitted for this study, the Guinness-Fiedler is by far the best. Except for De Wilde, whose little-boy voice sounds horrible, Guinness is the only narrator of them all who does not condescend to his child audience; and since he is the best actor of the seven, he acts the least. Fiedler plays the music with great respect and finesse, and the recording is good. Rathbone's narration is also good, but the recording is old. Godfrey, Pickles, and Hale make far too much of a production out of the text, and there is nothing in the musical performances with which they are associated to compensate for their bad taste. The Camden version is a poor reissue of the original Koussevitzky-Hale, with a pronounced echo added.

—Alec Guinness, narrator; Boston Pops Orchestra, Arthur Fiedler, cond. RCA VICTOR LM 1761. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Saint-Saëns: *Carnival of the Animals*).

—Basil Rathbone, narrator; All-American Orchestra, Leopold Stokowski, cond. COLUMBIA ML 4038. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Rose: *Treasure Island*).

—Wilfred Pickles, narrator; Philharmonia Orchestra, Igor Markevitch, cond. RCA VICTOR LBC 1015. 12-in. \$2.98 (with Tchaikovsky: *Nutcracker Suite*).

—Arthur Godfrey, narrator; Symphony Orchestra, André Kostelanetz, cond. COLUMBIA ML 4907. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Saint-Saëns: *Carnival of the Animals*). Same. COLUMBIA ML 4625. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Grofé: *Mississippi Suite*; Kern: *Mark Twain*).

—Brandon de Wilde, narrator; Pro Musica Symphony Orchestra, Hans Swarowsky, cond. VOX PL 9280. 12-in. \$4.98 (with Britten: *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*).

—Richard Hale, narrator; Boston Pops Orchestra, Arthur Fiedler, cond. RCA VICTOR LM 1803. 12-in. \$3.98 (with short works of Dukas, Saint-Saëns, and German).

—"Centennial Symphony Orchestra" (Richard Hale, narrator; Boston Symphony Orchestra, Serge Koussevitzky, cond.). CAMDEN CAL 101. 12-in. \$1.98 (with Strauss: *Till Eulenspiegel*).

[—Frank Philips, narrator; London Philharmonic Orchestra, Nicolai Malko, cond. LONDON LS 151. 10-in. \$2.98.]

[—Walker, narrator; Symphony Orchestra, Leopold, cond. ROYALE 1246. 12-in. \$1.89 (with Debussy: *Children's Corner*).]

WINTER HOLIDAY (1950) (1 Edition)

Another children's work, of undiscoverable opus number, the eight movements of which describe the experiences of a group of boys on a winter-sports excursion into the country. This is no *Peter and the Wolf*; the obviousness and conventionality of the music are incredible as coming from Prokofiev, and the contrast between this and his best-

known children's piece serves only too devastatingly to point up the failure of his creative powers toward the end of his life. The little passage wherein a boy choir sings a Russian version of *Reuben, Reuben, I've Been Thinking* is most delightful, however. —State Radio Orchestra of the U.S.S.R., Samuel Samosud, cond. WESTMINSTER WN 18081. 12-in. \$4.98 (with *Divertimento: Sinfonietta*).

BALLETS

SUITE FROM CHOUT, OPUS 21A (1920) (2 Editions)

Chout (*The Buffoon*, sometimes called *The Jester Who Fooled Seven Other Jesters*) is Prokofiev's finest ballet score and one of his greatest works in any form. The extravagant silliness of its folk-tale libretto has kept *Chout* from the stage in recent years, but the very madness of its fantasy helps to account for the nature and quality of the music. Here the satirical, grotesque, diabolical side of the composer's nature reaches its ultimate expression. Both interpretations on the disks are quite good; the Golschmann is slightly the better recording, but the Horenstein contains all twelve movements of the suite while the Golschmann contains only nine.

—Paris Philharmonia Orchestra, Jascha Horenstein, cond. VOX PL 9180. 12-in. \$4.98 (with Suite from *Lieutenant Kije*).

—St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, Vladimir Golschmann, cond. CAPITOL P 8257. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Falla: *Dances from The Three-Cornered Hat*).

LE PAS D'ACIER, OPUS 41 (1925) (1 Edition)
The "machine esthetic" of the 1920s is not very exciting any more, and Prokofiev's music for this *Dance of Steel* is one of its few surviving monuments. The square, rigid insistence of the rhythm in certain movements relates it to the subject (choreographic goings-on in a Soviet steel mill) but the composer's typical *joie de vivre* shines through every exhilarating bar. The recording is a beauty.

—Philharmonia Orchestra, Igor Markevitch, cond. ANGEL 35153. 12-in. \$4.98. (In boxed set, *Homage to Diaghilev*).

THE PRODIGAL SON, OPUS 46 (1929)
(2 editions, 1 complete, 1 partial)

The last ballet score commissioned by Diaghilev, and a work of great seriousness, power, and dignity, with a strenuous virtuoso emphasis in its orchestration that bespeaks a similar emphasis in the original Balanchine choreography. The Barzin version contains all ten movements, respectably played with an inadequate, thin-sounding orchestra. The Sebastian is considerably better in sound and warmer in performance, but omits half the score. —New York City Ballet Orchestra, Leon Barzin, cond. VOX PL 9310. 12-in. \$4.98. —Orchestre des Concerts Colonne (Paris), George Sebastian, cond. URANIA UURLP 7139. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Symphony No. 4).

ROMEO AND JULIET (5 Editions)

Romeo and Juliet, composed in 1935 and given the opus number 64, is the most elaborate ballet of Prokofiev's Soviet years. It fills an entire evening; consequently Prokofiev was able to extract three orchestral

suites from it, published as Opp. 64a, 64b, and 101. The Federer recording contains all seven movements of the second suite, and the Mravinsky and Koussevitzky each contain four movements from it. The Stasevitch provides the six movements of the third suite, while the Stokowski contains four movements drawn from all three suites.

The music is extremely sumptuous and elegant, with much emphasis on the youthful, wistful, nostalgic lyricism which this subject invariably calls forth; it is not for nothing that Stokowski's record is issued in the same set with the matchless "Love Scene" from the *Romeo and Juliet* of Berlioz, and Stokowski makes Prokofiev's music sound as great and moving.

From the mechanical point of view, the Stokowski is also incomparably the finest recording. It has that incandescent gorgeousness of tone which one had thought Stokowski no longer drew from his players; hearing it is like returning to the Stokowski of the great days in Philadelphia, and it is certainly the finest single orchestral recording listed in this discography. The Federer and the Stasevitch are not good recordings, but between them they contain a large part of an extremely attractive score; they supplement each other and the Stokowski as well. Mravinsky and Koussevitzky are both excellent as far as they go.

—Members of the NBC Symphony Orchestra, Leopold Stokowski, cond. RCA VICTOR LM 6028. 12-in. \$3.98 (with works of Berlioz and Tchaikovsky and readings from Shakespeare in boxed set, *Romeo and Juliet*).

—Rhineland Symphony Orchestra, Alfred Federer, cond. REGENT MG 5046. 12-in. \$5.45.

—Bolshoi Symphony Orchestra, Alexander Stasevitch, cond. CONCERT HALL CHS 1304. 12-in. \$4.98 (with *Cinderella Suite No. 2*).

—Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra, Eugene Mravinsky, cond. VANGUARD VRS 6004. 12-in. \$4.98 (with Shostakovich: *Ballet Suite No. 1*).

—Boston Symphony Orchestra, Serge Koussevitzky, cond. RCA VICTOR LCT 1144. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Suite from *Lieutenant Kije*: March and Scherzo from *The Love for Three Oranges*).

CINDERELLA SUITE NO. 2, OPUS 108 (1946)
(1 Edition)

Cinderella seems to have been an especially successful ballet, since it accounts for no less than six numbers in Prokofiev's opus list: the original score of 1941, Opus 87; the *Ten Piano Pieces from Cinderella*, Opus 97 (a recording of which is considered above among the short works for piano solo); a cello arrangement of one of the *Ten Pieces*, Opus 97a; and three orchestral suites, Opp. 107, 108, and 109. Only the second orchestral suite has been recorded. It places particular stress upon courtly dances, a little in the manner of the *Classical Symphony*: there is also a very Russian-ballet kind of waltz, but the whole thing has great charm and character, and it is easy to see why Sadler's Wells chose this score for its own choreographic treatment. The recording is only fair.

—Bolshoi Symphony Orchestra, Alexander Stasevitch, cond. CONCERT HALL CHS 1304. 12-in. \$4.98 (with *Romeo and Juliet Suite No. 3*).

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FIVE DANCES FROM CINDERELLA (1 Edition) Slight and rather trivial arrangements, by one Fichtenholz, for violin and piano. This would scarcely be worth noticing if it were not for Oistrakh's creamy playing and the superb recording thereof.

—David Oistrakh, violin; Vladimir Yampolsky, piano. VANGUARD VRS 6020. 12-in. \$4.98 (with short works of Brahms, Glazunov, Rachmaninoff, Tchaikovsky, and Khachaturian).

GYPSEY FANTASY FROM THE STONE FLOWER, OPUS 118 (1950) (1 Edition)

The Stone Flower is a ballet on a romantic folk-tale plot which is far too involved for discussion here. The *Gypsy Fantasy* is only a little excerpt from it; and despite the fine performance and recording, it sounds like little more than competent movie music.

—Bolshoi Symphony Orchestra, Samuel Samosud, cond. CLASSIC EDITIONS CE 3001. 12-in. \$4.98 (with Glière: Horn Concerto, and short works of Glinka and Amirov).

WEDDING SUITE FROM THE STONE FLOWER, OPUS 126 (c. 1950) (1 Edition)

The Stone Flower contains an elaborate wedding scene which Prokofiev published separately with an opus number of its own. Like the *Gypsy Fantasy* from the same ballet, it sounds like a reasonably tasteful Hollywood product, but it is appalling as a composition by the same hand as *Chout, The Love for Three Oranges, or Romeo and Juliet*. Along with the Sixth Symphony, *The Stone Flower* all too sadly sustains the charge that Prokofiev's creative ability fell far off during his last years.

—New York Philharmonic-Symphony, André Kostelanetz, cond. COLUMBIA CL 809. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Weber: *Invitation to the Dance*; and Enesco: *Rumanian Rhapsody No. 1*).

OPERAS

SUITE FROM THE LOVE FOR THREE ORANGES, OPUS 33A (1924) (5 Editions)

Old Carlo Gozzi's fabulous farrago of witches and demons, clowns, acrobats, and beautiful princesses provided Prokofiev with a libretto that suited his genius to perfection, and the result is perhaps the greatest opera of pure unreason in the entire literature. A complete recording of it is very much in order. Of the four recordings of the suite submitted for this discography, the Désormière is the most vivacious in interpretation and the most naturally orchestral in sound. The Martinon is very brilliant, however, and the Rother is a fine performance, only slightly less perfect in its reproduction than the other two. The Koussevitzky contains only the two shortest of the six movements.

—French National Symphony Orchestra, Roger Désormière, cond. CAPITOL P 8149. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Suite from *Lieutenant Kije*).

—Orchestre des Concerts Lamoureux, (Paris), Jean Martinon, cond. EPIC LC 3042. 12-in. \$3.98 (with *Classical Symphony*; Piano Concerto No. 3).

—Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin, Arthur Rother, cond. URANIA URLP 7146. 12-in. \$3.98 (with short works of Shostakovich, Kabalevsky, and Borodin).

—March and Scherzo only. Boston Sym-

phony Orchestra, Serge Koussevitzky, cond. RCA VICTOR LCT 1144. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Suite from *Lieutenant Kije; Romeo and Juliet Suite No. 2*).

[—Berlin Symphony Orchestra. ROYALE 1420. 12-in. \$1.89 (with *Classical Symphony*).]

SUITE FROM SEMYON KOTKO, OPUS 81A (1941) (1 Edition)

Very little information about this opera is available beyond the fact that it deals with the principal events in the life of a Ukrainian peasant who led a guerrilla uprising against the invading Germans during the First World War. The suite, in eight movements, is one of the longest works of Prokofiev on records. It is written generally in a noble, elevated, somewhat Mussorgskian style, employing Ukrainian folk material, but it has enough of the firing squad and the burning village to give it punch: the serious Prokofiev of the last years at his best. The recording is good, the performance first-rate.

—Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin, Rolf Kleinert, cond. URANIA URLP 7135. 12-in. \$3.98.

FILM MUSIC

SUITE FROM LIEUTENANT KIJE, OPUS 60 (1934) (6 Editions)

The first of Prokofiev's Soviet works and one of the most distinctive; this, in fact, is the only film score I can think of that has long outlived its film. (*Alexander Nevsky*) also began as music for a motion picture, but the picture is still decidedly and deservedly extant on the "art house" circuit.) The plot derives from an actual or imagined incident in the life of the notoriously dull-witted Czar Paul I, who misread an entry in a list of officers in such a way as to include the name of a nonexistent Lieutenant Kije. Since the Czar had said there was such a person, such a person there had to be, and his fellow officers set about to endow him with a personality and a career. The game in the music was to handle material of a blatantly vulgar and obvious kind with wit, subtlety, and character, and Prokofiev turned the trick to perfection. The performances by Koussevitzky, Scherchen, and Désormière are appropriately light-textured; Horenstein and Kurtz beat this froth with a heavier hand. When all is said and done, the Koussevitzky is the best version, even though it is the oldest.

—Boston Symphony Orchestra, Serge Koussevitzky, cond. RCA VICTOR LCT 1144. 12-in. \$3.98 (with *Romeo and Juliet Suite No. 2*; March and Scherzo from *The Love for Three Oranges*).

—Vienna Symphony Orchestra, Hermann Scherchen, cond. WESTMINSTER WL 5091. 12-in. \$2.99 (with *Scythian Suite*).

—French National Symphony Orchestra, Roger Désormière, cond. CAPITOL P 8149. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Suite from *The Love for Three Oranges*).

—Paris Philharmonia Orchestra, Jascha Horenstein, cond. VOX PL 9180. 12-in. \$4.98 (with Suite from *Chout*).

—Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Efreim Kurtz, cond. COLUMBIA ML 4683. 12-in. \$3.98 (with *Symphony No. 7*).

[—Berlin Symphony Orchestra, Rubahn, cond. ROYALE 1420. \$1.89 (with *Classical Symphony*).]

CHORAL WORKS

ALEXANDER NEVSKY, OPUS 78 (1939) (2 Editions)

Early in the year 1242 a group of unemployed Crusaders known as the Knights of the Teutonic Order invaded Russia and were defeated by Prince Alexander Nevsky in a famous battle on the ice of Lake Peipus, near Pskov. In 1938 this incident was made the basis of one of Serge Eisenstein's greatest movies, with score by Prokofiev; and in the following year, the composer transformed the music he had written for the picture into this monumental cantata. Of all his works, it is the one richest in tonal landscape painting, in medieval atmosphere, and in a sense of continuity with the historic past; furthermore its "Battle on the Ice" is as blood-curdling in the concert hall or on records as it is in the theater. Both the disks are extremely good, though the Vanguard has the edge so far as recording is concerned and is a little more vivid in its orchestral and choral performance. The Columbia provides the better interpretation of the one short but crucial vocal solo and has the advantage of being sung in English; the Vanguard is in Russian.

—Ana Maria Iriarte, mezzo-soprano; Chorus and Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera, Mario Rossi, cond. VANGUARD VRS 451. 12-in. \$4.98.

—Jennie Tourel, mezzo-soprano; Westminster Choir, Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond. COLUMBIA ML 4247. 12-in. \$3.98.

ON GUARD FOR PEACE, OPUS 124 (1951) (1 Edition)

An oratorio in ten movements that opens most impressively but soon descends to the level of empty, tedious rhetoric. Excellent performance and recording.

—N. Efron and A. Schwartz, narrators; Zara Dolokhanova, mezzo-soprano; E. Talanov, alto; combined choirs and orchestra of the U.S.S.R., Samuel Samosud, cond. VANGUARD VRS 6003. 12-in. \$4.98.

SONGS

FIVE POEMS BY ANNA AKHMATOVA, OPUS 27 (1916) (1 Edition)

Although he published nine sets of songs, Prokofiev's work as a lyricist for voice and piano is almost totally unknown, and this is the only one of the nine sets to be recorded. Its style is extremely subtle, recalling the declamation of a Mussorgsky or a Debussy, and with equally important and beautifully written piano parts. The songs of Prokofiev on this record stand up splendidly alongside the masterpiece by Mussorgsky himself on the other side, and both serve amusingly to emphasize the obviousness of the Gretchaninov songs with which they are associated. Perfect performance and superb recording.

—Maria Kurenko, soprano; Vsevolod Paskukhov, piano. CAPITOL P 8310. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Mussorgsky: *Sunless Cycle*; Gretchaninov: *Six Songs*).

CHAMBER MUSIC

OVERTURE ON HEBREW THEMES, OPUS 34 (1919) (2 Editions)

The title of this work is mistranslated on both the record labels. It should be called

Overture on Jewish Themes, since it is based on the secular folk song of the Yiddish-speaking people of Russia and has nothing whatever to do with the Bible or the synagogue. It is a short, sardonic, tuneful, and amusing sextet for clarinet, piano, and strings, written in New York in two days' time. Both recordings are excellent, but the Period provides the more penetrating interpretation.

—Paris Chamber Orchestra. PERIOD SPLP 512. 12-in. \$4.98 (with Quintet, Op. 39).

—New York Ensemble of Philharmonic Scholarship Winners, Dimitri Mitropoulos, cond. DECCA DL 8511. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Quintet, Op. 39; Swanson: *Night Music*).

QUINTET FOR OBOE, CLARINET, VIOLIN, VIOLA, AND DOUBLE BASS, OPUS 39 (1924) (2 Editions)

This music was originally sketched as a ballet on a circus subject; and though ballet is not even slightly suggested in its final form, it contains some entrancing jugglery with timbres, rhythms, and harmonic effects. It is one of Prokofiev's most dissonant scores and a remarkably colorful one, relying much less than usual on tunefulness and more on an intricate manipulation of materials. Another major work wherein Prokofiev approaches the idiom of Stravinsky. The better of the two recordings is the one that happens to be on the turntable at the moment; both are excellent in performance and superlative in sound.

—New York Ensemble of Philharmonic Scholarship Winners, Dimitri Mitropoulos, cond. DECCA DL 8511. 12-in. \$3.98 (with *Overture on Hebrew Themes*; Swanson: *Night Music*).

—Paris Chamber Ensemble. PERIOD SPLP 512. 12-in. \$4.98 (with *Overture on Hebrew Themes*).

STRING QUARTET NO. 1, OPUS 50 (1930) (1 Edition)

In reviewing the first performance of this work, one of the critics asserted that no string quartet since those of Brahms had opened with so bold and positive a sweep. The parallel is apt, but a parallel with Beethoven would have been even more to the point. This is Prokofiev's "classical" quartet, but its classicism is more mature and grandly scaled than that of his first symphony. This is the first work to manifest that simplification of harmonic idiom which was to be so pronounced a feature of Prokofiev's style throughout the rest of his career. The performance on the one available recording is quite good. Its registration is full-bodied but a bit harsh.

—Guilet String Quartet. M-G-M E 3113. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Shostakovich: Quartet No. 1).

SONATA FOR VIOLIN AND PIANO, NO. 1, IN F MINOR, OPUS 80 (1946) (5 Editions)

One of the most richly dramatic violin sonatas in the literature, opening with two movements recalling the dynamic "war sonatas" for piano. The third is a romantic slow movement oddly like parts of the fountain scene from Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov*: the finale is a big, dazzling toccata for both instruments. This sonata was written for David Oistrakh, of whose interpretation there are three recordings. By far the best of these is the RCA Victor,

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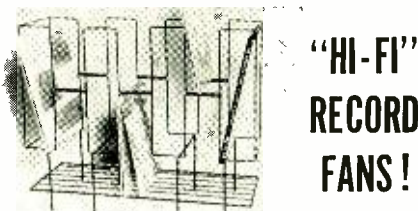
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made at the time of Oistrakh's American debut, last November. The Oistrakh-Vanguard is also very good, however, and the version by Isaac Stern is likewise highly distinguished.

—David Oistrakh, violin; Vladimir Yampolsky, piano. RCA VICTOR LM 1987. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Leclair: Sonata No. 3, and Locatelli: Sonata in F Minor).

—Isaac Stern, violin; Alexander Zakin, piano. COLUMBIA ML 4734. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Violin Sonata No. 2).

—David Oistrakh, violin; Lev Oborin, piano. VANGUARD VRS 6019. 12-in. \$4.98 (with Franck: Violin Sonata).

—Yehudi Menuhin, violin; Marcel Gazelle, piano. RCA VICTOR LM 1087. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Bartok: Sonata for Violin Solo).

—David Oistrakh, violin; Lev Oborin, piano. COLOSSEUM CRLP 152. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Beethoven: Spring Sonata).

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STRING QUARTET NO. 2, OPUS 92 (1941)
(4 Editions)

The Second Quartet bears the formidable subtitle "On Kabaldino-Balkarian Themes"; these, one gathers, are themes from the district in the Caucasus where Prokofiev was sent to escape the German air raids. It is a light, picturesque, tuneful piece, but not a very powerful one; folk-song quartets seldom are. Of the four interpretations, those by the Hollywood players and the Quartetto Italiano are the most gracious in style and the cleanest in recorded sound. The Fine Arts version is tubbier, but that is almost a virtue, since the more full-bodied registration lends an extra thrust to the thinnish score. The Gordon places delightful emphasis on the folkloric aspects of the music, but this recording shows its age.

—Quartetto Italiano. ANGEL 35296. 12-in. \$4.98 (with Malipiero: Quartet No. 4).

—Hollywood String Quartet. CAPITOL P 8151. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Hindemith: Quartet No. 3).

—Fine Arts Quartet. MERCURY MG 10045. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Shostakovich: Trio in E minor).

—Gordon String Quartet. CONCERT HALL CHC 8. 12-in. \$4.98.

SONATA FOR FLUTE AND PIANO, IN D,
OPUS 94 (1944) (1 Edition)

A work of wonderful elegance, clarity, and wit, and one of the few compositions of Prokofiev's last years whose stylistic integrity is unassailable. It is played to perfection here and beautifully recorded.

—Doriot Anthony Dwyer, flute; Jesus Maria Sanroma, piano. BOSTON B 208. 12-in. \$4.98 (with Roussel: Trio for Flute, Viola, and Cello).

SONATA FOR VIOLIN AND PIANO, NO. 2, IN D, OPUS 94A (1944) (3 Editions)

The second violin sonata is a transcription of the flute sonata. It is adorned with double stops, extra floridities, and all manner of other devices to make it sound violinistic, but their total effect is only to underline the cool superiority of the original version. Once again Stern's interpretation is the most interesting, and his recording is also the finest in tone quality.

—Isaac Stern, violin; Alexander Zakin, piano. COLUMBIA ML 4734. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Violin Sonata No. 1).

—Nathan Milstein, violin; Artur Balsam, piano. CAPITOL P 8315. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Handel: Violin Sonata No. 4; Vivaldi: Chaconne).

—Ruggiero Ricci, violin; Carlo Bussotti, piano. LONDON LL 770. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Strauss: Violin Sonata).

SONATA FOR CELLO AND PIANO, IN C,
OPUS 119 (1949) (2 Editions)

A dull, pointless composition which neither the huge, massive style of Piatigorsky nor the nimbler style of Kurtz manages to make interesting. Both versions are well recorded, but when it comes to evaluating them on a comparative basis, one wishes the subject had never been brought up.

—Gregor Piatigorsky, cello; Ralph Berkowitz, piano. RCA VICTOR LM 1792. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Bach: Cello Sonata No. 2).

—Edmund Kurtz, cello; Artur Balsam, piano. COLUMBIA ML 4867. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Kodaly: Sonata for Unaccompanied Cello).

TESTED IN THE HOME



Equipment reports appearing in this section are prepared by members of HIGH FIDELITY's staff, on the basis of actual use in conjunction with a home music system, and the resulting subjective evaluations of equipment are expressed as the opinions of the reviewer only. Reports are usually restricted to items of general interest, and no attempt is made to report on items that are obviously not designed primarily for high fidelity applications. Each report is sent to the manufacturer before publication; he is free to correct the specifications paragraph, to add a comment at the end of the report, or to request that it be deferred (pending changes in his product) or not be published. He may not, however, change the report. Failure of a new product to appear in TITH may mean either that it has not been submitted for review, or that it was submitted and was found to be unsatisfactory. These reports may not be quoted or reproduced, in part or in whole, for any purpose whatsoever, without written permission from the publisher.

Ampex Stereophonic System

DESCRIPTION: a complete stereophonic tape player system, consisting of the Model 612 7.5 ips tape player, and two Model 620 amplifier-speaker units. The 612 will play stacked stereo tapes or standard half-track or full-track pre-recorded tapes. Three units in identical tan Samsonite carrying cases. **Dimensions:** 612 and 620—16 inches long by 13 wide by 8 high. **Weight:** 612—28 lbs., 620—25 lbs. each. **Prices:** 612—\$395. 620—\$149.50 each. **MANUFACTURER:** Ampex Corporation, 934 Charter Street, Redwood City, Calif.

Stereophonic recordings have been around for quite a while in one form or another, and they have elicited much enthusiasm from those who have heard them at audio fairs and in store demonstrations. But the major deterrent for the hobbyist or music lover has always been the very high cost of assembling such a reproducing system, involving as it does duplication of the entire reproducing chain, from pickup to speaker.

Much of the stereophonic reproducing equipment has tended to be clumsy and too delicate for the average user, and certain necessary compromises in one field cut the uninterrupted playing time down to a fifteen minute maximum. So while many people were highly enthusiastic about the aural benefits to be gained by stereophonic reproduction, there were few who had the courage or the excess wealth to purchase a stereophonic system.

The Ampex stereophonic system may be the turning point as far as public acceptance of stereophony in the home is concerned.

The system, which consists of two model 620 amplifier-speaker systems and a 612 stereophonic-monaural tape player, simplifies installation almost to the point of absurdity, eliminates most of the complications and hazards of playing stereophonic recordings, and is priced well within the range of many serious music lovers. This isn't to say that the system is in the medium-priced category; for the \$694 that it costs, someone could assemble a pretty ambitious monaural (conventional-type) high fidelity system, but there are a number of other considerations that make the

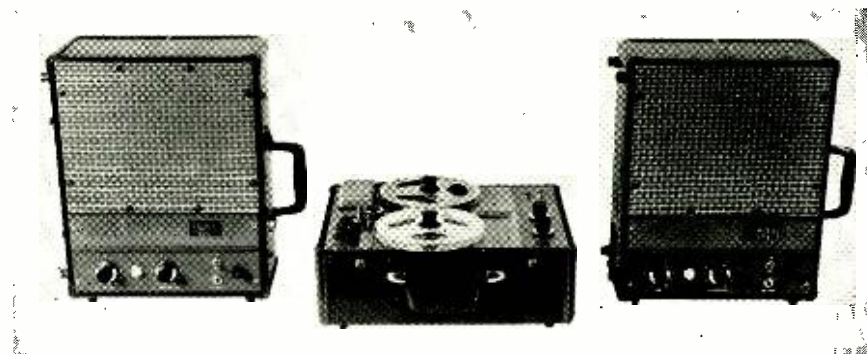
Ampex stereophonic system a very appealing item, even in view of its price.

Most important, of course, is the way it sounds. The system we received for testing was housed in the portable Samsonite luggage cases, and was accompanied by one sample pre-recorded tape. It was found that, even with the very small model 620 speaker units, the sound was almost unbelievably full-bodied and realistic. The sense of direction and individuality displayed by the different parts of the orchestra was something that I could hardly believe. There's no doubt about it; stereophony adds a degree of realism to the sound that is, by comparison, definitely lacking in even the most elaborate conventional systems. Another thing I immediately noticed was that the somewhat "hard," steely sound, which is audible from massed violin sections in many recordings and was evident in this tape when

and woodwind instruments, and was prepared to write a luke-warm report on the Ampex system.

At the New York audio fair, though, I changed my mind. At a private audition and at some of the public demonstrations of the system, I came to realize that the tape I had heard was not doing the system justice. Stereophonic recording is a fairly new field, and has not yet been developed to the refined state of standard recording techniques. Stereo tapes vary from one to another, but a good one played through the Ampex system creates the most amazing illusion of realism I have yet heard from reproduced sound, with none of the minor annoyances noted in the first tape I heard.

The system in use at the New York audio fair was the cabinet, non-portable system, which is slightly more bulky than the portable system I tested. Unless my



The Ampex stereophonic system in its three-piece Samsonite luggage carrying cases.

only one channel was used, was replaced by a lush, velvety sheen when the other channel was switched in.

With the tape that I listened to, however, the actual stereophonic effects of depth and direction seemed limited to middle and middle-low frequencies. Cellos and violas had it to a startling degree, but I was a little disappointed by the artificial disembodied quality of the trumpets

ears were deceiving me, the furniture system puts out about an octave of deeper bass than the portable system.

The units are very easy to set up, and require no more adjustment than the balancing of the volume controls on the two 620 amplifier-speaker systems, so as to properly divide the total sound output.

Continued on next page

TESTED IN THE HOME

Continued from preceding page

Physical spacing between the two speakers is not overly critical, and the stereophonic effect is remarkably independent of the listener's position in the room. This may vary somewhat with different room acoustics, but I noticed little difference between the rooms I heard it in.

The model 612 tape player, which is the basis of the Ampex system, resembles the model 600 recorder that was reported in this section in the August 1954 issue of HIGH FIDELITY. It uses the same mechanical system, suffers from the same harmless but slightly annoying rewind irregularities, and has the same excellent control and speed regulation characteristics. The amplifier, however, differs from that in the 600 in that it is a playback unit only. Besides the AC switch, the controls are for volume and to select stereophonic or conventional playback. In the conventional position, standard monaural tapes may be played through both of the speakers, which adds a great deal of dimension to the sound but is of course lacking in the directional and spatial qualities of stereophonic playback.

Really a remarkable little system in all respects, and one which, in terms of sheer realism, can make some of the finest monaural systems sound a little pallid. — J.G.H.

between low and high fidelity equipment. That this should be so is particularly remarkable in view of the Ensemble's size—only 25 3/4 in. wide by 28 1/4 high by 16 1/2 deep—within the size limitations of the smallest apartment.

The cabinet itself has a neat appearance, as can be seen in the photograph. The



The Ensemble: a complete phono system.

entire counterbalanced top opens on a piano hinge at the back. Slightly recessed in a well at the left is the changer, and the amplifier controls are in a row at the right, from front to back. Below, in a separate section in the base, is the speaker system. The entire cabinet is solidly built from material of 3/4 in. minimum thickness, and has a finish equivalent in quality to that of most commercial furniture. There are free-running casters hidden by the bottom trim, and this is a welcome convenience because the unit (despite its small size) weighs well over 100 pounds.

It isn't necessary to say much about the Garrard changer and GE cartridge; they are both well known and respected. One item of importance, though—we found the stylus force to be more than 12 grams, as the Ensemble was shipped. We found that it could be reduced easily to the recommended value (about 8 grams for 78s) by a simple screwdriver adjustment.

Specifications for the amplifier are, if anything, on the conservative side. Over most of the range it will produce 13 watts easily, and the distortion and stability characteristics are both very good. Individual bass and treble tone controls are supplied, as well as a five-position record equalizer.

The amplifier's output is fed through a selector switch to a set of terminals on the back of the cabinet (for an external speaker system), to the internal speaker system, or to both simultaneously. When using the external speaker terminals, the sound can be as good as that from a good-quality hi-fi system, depending on the quality of the external speaker. A tuner, TV sound, and tape recorder can all be plugged into the amplifier and played

through the internal or external speaker.

The built-in speaker system includes a 12-in. woofer, with two small cone tweeters mounted on the same frame in a totally-enclosed chamber of about 3 cubic feet. The entire inner surface of this enclosure is covered with acoustic padding material. In the same space, but sealed off separately, is a 6 1/2-in. mid-range speaker; this and the woofer have separate level controls located on the back panel. Maximum bass efficiency occurs at about 100 cycles. Response begins to drop audibly at 85 cycles, undoubtedly because of the small enclosure. The sound is smooth all the way up to 16,000 cycles except for accentuated response in the ranges from 3,000 to 5,000 and from 9,000 to 11,000 cycles (according to the ear). These slight bumps make the overall sound somewhat more hissy than usual, although otherwise it is of quite adequate quality. I should have preferred a level control on the tweeters rather than the woofer—but that is a matter of taste. And the built-in speaker system will do very well temporarily for those who plan on something more elaborate when the budget will permit.

If you want a basic high fidelity phonograph system in simplest form, or a compact system that can be profitably expanded later, the Ensemble is certainly a good buy. — R.A.

MANUFACTURER'S COMMENT: HIGH FIDELITY's reporter is to be complimented for detecting one of our engineering secrets. The acoustic response of model PT-1030 does indeed have slight peaks in the frequency ranges noted. They have been introduced deliberately to obtain the quality of "liveness" or "presence" in reproduced sound, especially at low volume, without sacrificing smooth reproduction at high volume. The mid-frequency speaker compartment is sealed off from the main enclosure to prevent the high pressure built up by the woofer from acting upon the rear of the mid-frequency speaker cone with resultant distortion. The reason for using a separate level control for the mid-frequency speaker is to permit emphasis or suppression of vocalists or brass sections without introducing imbalance to the other instrumental sections.

Pilot Hi-Fi Ensemble Phonograph

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): a high-quality record player, amplifier, and speaker system combined in one console. **Record Player:** Garrard model RC-80M changer, with GE triple-play magnetic cartridge installed. **Speaker system:** 12-in. woofer and two 3 1/2-in. tweeters (mounted on woofer frame) installed in totally-enclosed chamber in cabinet base; 6-in. mid-range speaker mounted in separate sealed chamber. Level controls supplied for bass and mid-range speakers. **AMPLIFIER—Inputs:** magnetic phono (used for record player); high-level inputs (jacks on back of cabinet) marked Radio, Aux 1, and Aux 2. **Controls:** combined AC on-off and volume; combined selector and equalization switch (For LP, NAB, AES, and RIAA phono positions, Radio, Aux 1, Aux 2, high-level input positions); treble (± 14 db, 10,000 cycles); bass (± 14 db, 50 cycles); speaker control switch (Internal, Both, External). **Outputs:** to internal or external speaker system or both. **Power output:** 10 watts. **Response:** ± 1 db, 15 to 40,000 cycles. **Distortion:** 0.1% harmonic at 1 watt output; 1% at 10 watts; 2% IM at 10 watts. **Noise:** on high-level inputs, 80 db below 10 watts; on phono channel, -70 db. **Output impedance:** 8 ohms. **Tubes:** 2-12AX7, 12AU7, 604, 2-6V6, 5Y3GT. **Price:** \$289.50 in cordovan mahogany; \$299.50 in blonde mahogany. **MANUFACTURER:** Pilot Radio Corporation, Long Island City 1, N. Y.

Readers of this magazine know full well that there have been marketed in the past few years many so-called "high fidelity" console phonographs, and that these have for the most part been travesties of true high fidelity systems. Readers can, therefore, be expected to look with suspicion on any packaged unit that comes along. Ordinarily this skepticism will be well-founded, but not in the case of the Pilot Hi-Fi Ensemble: this is the genuine article. In my opinion, it is well on the right side of the indistinct dividing line

Leak Dynamic Pickups

SPECIFICATIONS (supplied by manufacturer): moving-coil pickup cartridges for microgroove and standard records, which plug into a low-inertia, counter-weighted arm. **Stylus:** .001 inch diamond or .0025-inch diamond. **Stylus pressure:** 2 to 3 grams for microgrooves; 5 to 6 grams for standard grooves. **Frequency response:** ± 1 db, 40 to 20,000 cycles, including transformer supplied with pickup. **Output:** 11 millivolts from transformer into pre-amplifier. **Dimensions:** 9 1/4 in. from pivot to front of head; 2 in. from pivot to rear of arm. **Mounting centers:** 8 17/32 in. from pivot to turntable spindle. **Pivot height:** adjustable to suit any turntable. **Price:** \$59.00 for arm, transformer, microgroove cartridge; \$32.50 extra for 78 rpm head. **DISTRIBUTOR:** British Industries Corporation, 164 Duane Street, New York 13, N. Y.

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Continued on page 110



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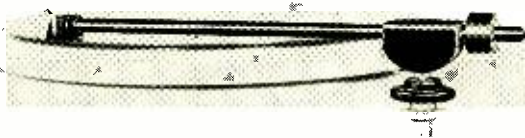
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TESTED IN THE HOME

Continued from page 108

from microgroove records, and takes high-level passages with a minimum of audible stress. On shellac records, the sound is surprisingly good also; better, in fact, than I might have believed was on the records.



Plug-in beads provide the correct tracking force for standard or microgroove records.

Groove distortion from rather worn shellac disks was much lower than it should have been, considering the mutilated condition of some of the disks. This was probably because the .0025-inch stylus radius dropped the tip of the stylus below that part of the groove walls that was chewed up by the .003-inch styli that most American pickups use. On English shellac pressings, which were initially cut for use with .0025-inch playback styli, the surface-noise was lower than I had come to expect from them, since in the past I had heard them played only on .003 styli.

But this is one pickup that should either be used in a cabinet with a closable lid or relegated to the next room. Using it uncovered, in the same room as the loudspeaker, the needle-talk from it is much too high for comfort. Even at high levels from the speaker, the sound of the Leak stylus tracing heavily-recorded passages is sufficiently prominent to be audible through the music. And the subjective effect is that of gross distortion from the record. My initial impression was that the pickup was "breaking up" on highly-modulated record grooves, but when the pickup was moved out of immediate ear-shot, the dirtiness disappeared.

I suspect that the Leak's comparative lack of vertical compliance accounts for a great deal of this needle-talk. At high recorded levels, particularly near the inner grooves, high frequencies are recorded as very sharp lateral undulations in the groove. Since the groove is cut with a needle that is triangular in cross-section, rather than being circular like a playback stylus, these grooves tend to become narrower as they sweep from one side to the other. A playback cartridge with high vertical compliance is free to ride up and down in the grooves as they change in width, but when vertical compliance is lacking, the stylus can only bang its way across the tops of the grooves instead of following them up and down.

With the pickup's radiation suppressed, the sound from it is very good, and response checks on our test bench show extreme smoothness over the rated range, with a large resonant peak at the arm resonance point, around 25 cycles. From music recordings, however, the extreme high end seemed to be accentuated, sounding as if the response were rising above

about 8,000 cycles. It was found necessary to terminate the pickup's input transformer with a resistor of 33,000 ohms in order to obtain what seemed to me a truly flat sound. This is a lower value than the manufacturer recommends, but to my ear, results were improved nonetheless.

The standard and microgroove cartridges are instantly interchangeable, simply by

unplugging one and plugging the other in its place. Adjustment of the needle pressure from 3 to 6 grams is taken care of automatically by an additional weight inside the standard-groove cartridge.

All in all, a very nice pickup, with clean, smooth sound and a handsome appearance. Its small size makes it ideal for use where space is at a premium; it can be readily installed in an equipment cabinet of modest dimensions which would not accommodate a longer transcription arm. Enclosed installation is, however, of paramount importance to reduce the effects of needle-talk. — J.G.H.

MANUFACTURER'S COMMENT: Why does this pickup "put out clean, smooth sound," "better, in fact, than I might have believed was on the records?" Why was "groove distortion from worn shellac disks much lower than it should have been?" Because the moving parts are designed to fulfill the most important function of a pickup; to convey a replica movement of the sinusoidities in the groove to the place in the pickup where electrical signals are generated. To do this one needs an infinitely stiff mechanical link from stylus tip to electrical generating point. This is impossible because no materials are infinitely stiff, but in the Leak pickup we approach the ideal, hence your comments. If we had a compliant stylus such as a fibre needle there would be no needle-talk; there would also be poor sound. If we had a compliant cantilever such as on many pickups there would be no needle talk and better sound than from the fibre. We use a very stiff stylus assembly, hence we get more needle talk and better sound still. We certainly recommend that everyone, whatever their pickup, mount it in a cabinet having a lid, for 25 minutes exposure to room dust will do no record any good.

Brociner Mark 10 Amplifier

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): a 10-watt amplifier-preamplifier-equalizer. Inputs: three at high-level high-impedance, for Tape, TV, and Radio. One at low-level high-impedance, for magnetic phono or constant-amplitude (crystal or FM) pickup. **Controls:** channel selector (Radio, TV, Tape, Phono — full range, Phono — rumble filter); equalizer (LP, RIAA-NARTB, AES, NOISY, 78 — domestic, 78 — foreign, HI-CUT filter for noisy records); bass (+16 to -20 db, 50 cycles); treble (+12 to -15 db, 10,000 cycles); loudness and AC power. Hum balance control on rear of chassis. **Outputs:** two, high impedance to recorder, 4, 8, 16 ohms to speaker. Switched AC convenience outlet. Frequency response: ± 1 db, 20 to 20,000 cycles. **Gain:** 10 db from high-level inputs to tape take-off jack; 42 db from phono input to tape take-off jack. 10 watts output from 8 millivolts into phono channel, 0.3 volts into high-level inputs. **Rated power:** 10 watts, 20 watts peak. **Distortion:** less than 1% harmonic at 10 watts, 1% IM at 5 watts. **Power response:** +0, -3 db, 40 to 20,000 cycles. **Damping factor:** 15. **Tubes:** 3-12AX7, 2-6AQ5, 6X4. **Dimensions:** 4 3/4 in. high by 10 7/8 long by 8 3/4 deep, overall. **Price:**

\$75.00. **MANUFACTURER:** Brociner Electronics Corporation, 344 East 32nd Street, New York 16, N. Y.

It is great consolation to any high fidelity equipment testing department to be able to believe quite firmly that shortcomings in the sound of an amplifier will show up as poor test bench results, and that, conversely, imperfect test results will be reflected in poor sound. But every once in a while something like the Mark 10 comes along and shakes my faith to its foundations.

This isn't to be misunderstood as meaning that the Mark 10 tests out poorly . . . nothing of the sort. But neither its specifications nor its closely-corresponding bench test results are what would be called ideal. Harmonic distortion of 1 per cent at full output is a rather modest distortion rating for a top-quality modern amplifier, and my initial reaction on seeing it was that here was a unit in which too many corners might have been cut. Its other measured characteristics, too, were very good but not outstanding.

I got a surprise, though, when I listened to it. This little amplifier is really good! It isn't any powerhouse, and it hasn't the smoothness and crispness of the best high-powered amplifiers, but its performance quite belies its modest price. And oddly enough, it did not seem to produce lis-



The Mark 10's performance belies its price.

tening fatigue, as I would have expected from an amplifier with the Mark 10's distortion ratings. As I said, it shook my faith in test readings.

The only thing I can suggest that might account for the Mark 10's surprising definition and smoothness is the fact that as far as I could determine, it is almost totally free of incipient instability; it exhibits no significant trace of either high or low frequency oscillation. It is also possible that the Mark 10 bears out my long-entertained suspicion that *front-end* distortion is usually the major contributing factor in listening fatigue. Indications are that most of the distortion in the Mark 10 originates in the power stage, which is a straight beam-power output circuit. This is all speculation, but the fact remains that the Mark 10 is considerably more listenable than some other units I have encountered that have lower over-all distortion.

Physically, the Mark 10 resembles many other medium-priced amplifiers. It is all contained in an attractively-styled, compact case, suitable either for installation on a

Continued on page 112

“Scotch” Magnetic Tape solos in “The Benny Goodman Story”



Star of the Universal-International Technicolor Film and the NBC-TV SHOW “TONIGHT”—Steve Allen in the role of Benny Goodman

IT'S STEVE ALLEN not Benny Goodman you'll see in the new Universal-International Technicolor Film, “The Benny Goodman Story”. But the music you'll hear is by the “King of Swing” himself—as originally recorded for this picture on “SCOTCH” Magnetic Recording Tape.

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The term “SCOTCH” and the plaid design are registered trademarks for Magnetic Tape made in U.S.A. by MINNESOTA MINING AND MFG. CO., St. Paul 6, Minn. Export Sales Office: 99 Park Avenue, New York 16, N.Y.

TESTED IN THE HOME

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table-top or bookshelf, or panel-mounted, in a cabinet.

The record equalization is about as basic as it can be, and was apparently designed with an eye to the long-time record collector. Three of the six equalizer positions provide playback characteristics for 78-rpm records, including an extremely effective high-frequency filter that removes every



trace of hiss from noisy records, along with most of the high frequencies. Actually, many 78 rpm records will play satisfactorily with the RIAA curve, or with the AES plus a little bass boost.

The last (clockwise) position of the selector control cuts a rumble filter into the phono circuit, very effectively suppressing all bass below about 30 cycles. The filter provides a fairly sharp cutoff (12 db per octave), so the effect on musical balance is insignificant on any but the finest speaker systems.

The Mark 10 does not, however, have any input level-set controls. Bench tests indicated a rather wide safety margin, but some of the input equipment available today could conceivably exceed this margin, with resulting overload of the early stages. Admittedly, most tuners and tape recorders have their own playback volume controls, that can be used to establish input level, but I'm a little dubious about the wisdom of completely eliminating input controls from the amplifier, particularly in view of the lack of provision for cutting out the loudness compensation in the volume control. A higher-than-average input signal would necessitate running the loudness control at a fairly low setting, well within its bass boost range, where it would provide boost even at full room volume. But then, we can't expect *everything* from a \$75 amplifier, either.

Summing up, my general reaction to the Mark 10 is that it is definitely better than most of its similarly priced competitors, and is capable of competing with some that are much more expensive, at least at low volume levels. It is not a deluxe amplifier in any sense of the word, but for someone who wants very clean, smooth sound at moderate cost, it represents an unusually good buy. — J. G. H.

MANUFACTURER'S COMMENT: You have stated the case with remarkable clarity . . . an amplifier is good only if it sounds good! Sound quality cannot be defined by specifications. Certain design factors are difficult to express in printed form, but we are building them into our amplifiers.

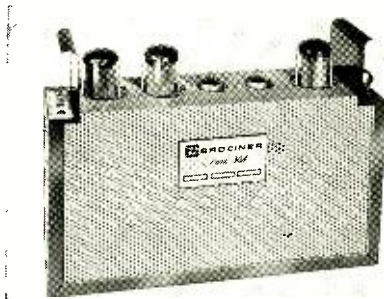
Brociner Mark 30A Power Amplifier

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): a compact single-chassis power amplifier. **Input:** high-level high-impedance. **Outputs:** 4, 8 and 16 ohms to speaker. **Power rating:** 30 watts. **Frequency response:** ± 0.5 db, 15 to 100,000 cycles. **Power response:** ± 1 db, 20 to 20,000 cycles. **IM Distortion:** 0.05% at 5 watts output; 0.25% at 20 watts; 1.0% at 30 watts. **Hum and noise:** 90 db below full output. **Sensitivity:** 0.8 volts required for full output. **Damping factor:** 24. **Tubes:** 2—12AX7, 2—5881, 5V4GA. **Dimensions:** 3½ in. wide by 12¼ long by 8¾ high. **Price:** \$98.25. **MANUFACTURER:** Brociner Electronics Corporation, 344 East 32nd Street, New York 16, N. Y.

This department see lots of power amplifiers from one year to the next, and is frequently hard put to find anything to say about one that hasn't already been said about countless others. But it isn't often that we come across a unit with the simplicity and excellent performance of the Mark 30A.

Appearance-wise, the Mark 30A is deceptively unimposing. A perforated metal shield covers all the components with the exception of the tubes, which protrude slightly from the top of the case. All input, output, and power connections are located on top of the case, under the overhanging metal flanges, which I have yet to figure out the function of. Definitely a neat looking amplifier, very cleverly designed for ease of installation in a cramped space.

The unit is fused and equipped with a convenience AC outlet (both also on



The Mark 30A: thirty watts of clean sound.

top of the case), but since it lacks an AC switch itself, it must be used with a control unit that has at least one switched AC outlet on it.

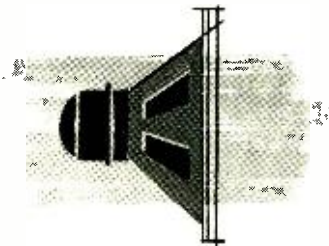
The Mark 30A that I tested performed admirably on test instruments, falling well within the manufacturer's specifications in all respects as far as I could determine. It sounded equally good.

Possibly the most appropriate observation I can make about its sound is that it is characterless. It seems to add or subtract nothing from the original sound, being neither brilliant nor subdued. It handles high-level passages with ease, and generally produces nice, smooth sound over its entire operating power range, which is appreciable. It can be listened to for prolonged periods without causing aural fatigue, and its definition over the audible spectrum is excellent at all levels.

One result of the high damping factor and excellent low-frequency stability of

the Mark 30A is that it makes the bass end from a mediocre speaker system sound thin and a little insipid. But used with a top-quality system, the bass is crisp and very well defined. A good test for cleanliness at the low end is the ease with which a bass drum may be distinguished from a plucked double-bass; the Mark 30A differentiates between them with unusual ease.

So there it is; one of many currently available 30-watt amplifiers, but one which gives every indication of being a few steps closer to perfection than most of its competitors. The quality in the Mark 30A is up in the realm of diminishing returns, and considering its price, it is much



better than anyone could reasonably expect it to be. Definitely a unit to be used with top-quality associated components, since it is well in that category itself. — J.G.H.

MANUFACTURER'S COMMENT: Just to resolve the mystery of the overhanging flanges; their primary function is to ensure that enough space is left above the tubes for ventilation when the amplifier is installed in a cabinet.

Thank you! — Ed.

Astatic 55-TJ Cartridge

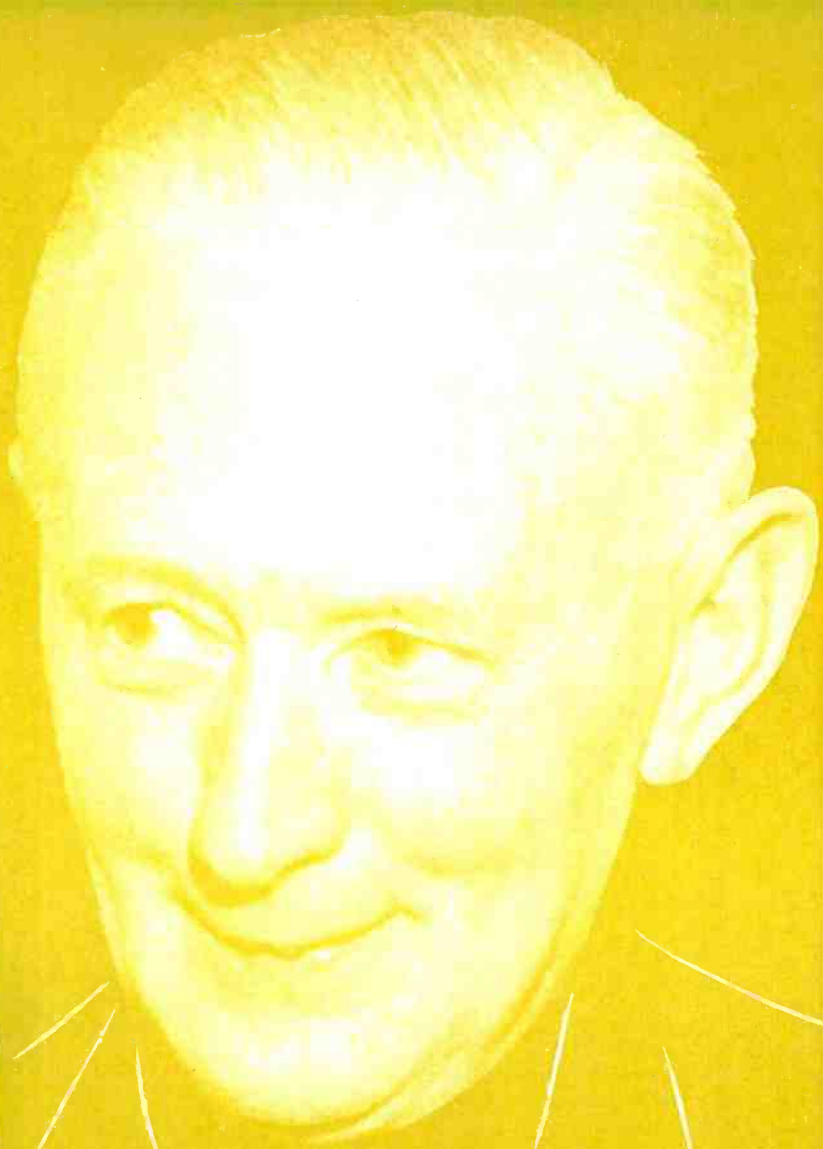
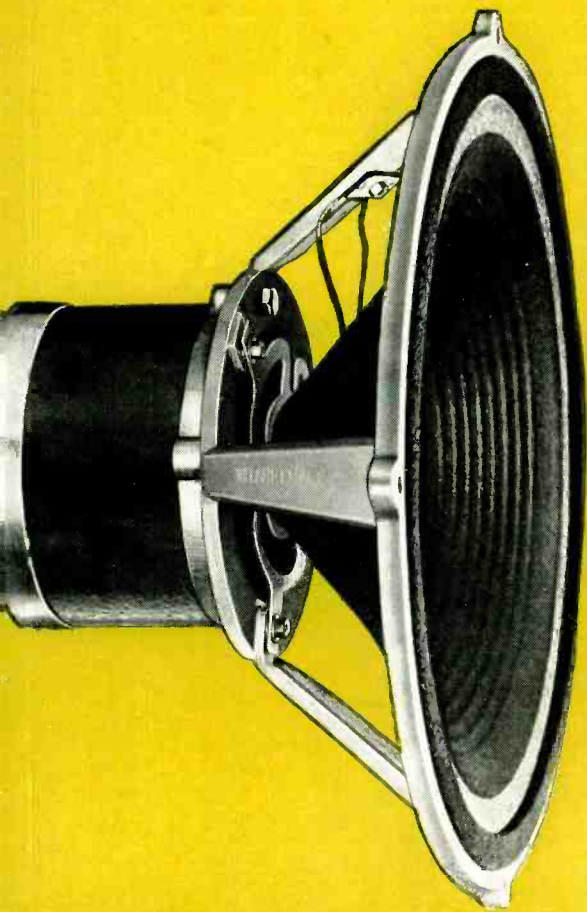
SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by the manufacturer): a turnover-stylus ceramic phono cartridge. **Compliance:** 0.8 x 10⁻⁶ centimeters per dyne. **Response:** 20 to 15,000 cycles. **Output:** 0.7 volt. **Tracking force:** 8 grams. **Price:** \$9.50 list. **Dual-stylus assembly** is replaceable. **Manufacturer:** The Astatic Corporation, Conneaut, Ohio.

By now, just about everyone knows that ceramic cartridges are capable of wide-range reproduction; that they are usually less expensive than magnetics; and that they are physically rugged and insensitive to hum pickup. Unless an adaptor is used, though, they can't ordinarily be plugged into a magnetic cartridge input circuit. Since most amplifiers' variable equalization controls are effective only on the magnetic input channel, and more record-playing flexibility can be obtained with a variable equalizer, ceramics still haven't achieved wide acceptance in hi-fi circles.

This is unfortunate, because some of the newer ceramic cartridges are really quite good; given more encouragement by the buying public, it is entirely possible that they would receive more intensive development and could be made to equal or surpass

Continued on page 114

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SUPER 8/CS/AL All purpose	A full range aluminum voice coil speaker. Provides quality tone over the entire audio spectrum. Excellent for general use in any type of enclosure; or combined with a 12" or 15" Wharfedale in a 2-way system.	CROSSOVER NETWORKS 1,000 cycle, 3,000 cycle 3-speaker crossover at 800 & 5,000 cycles.	Designed to permit the use of 2 or more loudspeakers in a single system, dividing and distributing the bass and treble at low impedance.

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TESTED IN THE HOME

Continued from page 112

the performance of the best (and most expensive) magnetics. At this time no one will claim seriously that they're *that* good. Still, some even now can give the lower-priced magnetics stiff competition; among them is the Astatic 55-TJ.

The 55-TJ has a replaceable dual-stylus assembly connected directly to the turnover lever. The shaft on which the styli are



The 55-TJ matches RIAA playback curve.

mounted directly opposing one another engages a longer drive lever that produces stress in the ceramic element; in this way, a double leverage is obtained and compliance is increased. Tracking force required

is 8 grams for 78s, probably less for LPs (although we tested the LP side at 8 grams). Vertical compliance was high also; the net result should be reasonably low record and stylus wear. The cartridge as supplied, incidentally, has two sapphire styli.

According to our workbench checks the response matched the RIAA playback curve quite closely, at the high end, out to beyond 12,000 cycles. At the low end some bass boost was required, about 5 db at 50 cycles. Termination was 1½ megohms; if a higher load were used, perhaps the bass would come up. Peaks and dips in the response curve were moderate and not sharp — this accounts for the complete absence of visible sine-wave distortion, and the smooth and well-balanced sound. Brilliance was lacking, compared to many cartridges. Personally, I like it that way, because it compensates for the accentuated lower-treble response of most speakers.

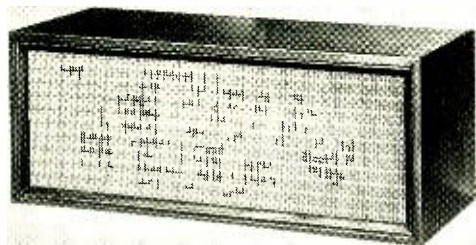
Until variable equalizers are more generally provided on amplifier high-level inputs, then, the 55-TJ can be highly recommended for replacement of low-fi cartridges in standard phonographs and for hi-fi systems in which simplicity is emphasized. — R. A.

GE 850 Speaker and A1-411 Enclosure

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): an 8-inch extended range speaker and small distributed-port enclosure. **MODEL 850 SPEAKER** — Frequency response: 50 to 12,000 cycles. Power rating: 15 watts integrated program material. Impedance: 8 ohms. Cone resonance: 90 cycles. Magnet weight: 6.8 oz. Diameter: 8 in. Price: \$9.93. **MODEL A1-411 ENCLOSURE** — Type: distributed-port bass reflex, cutout for 8-inch speaker. Lining: ½-inch thick glass wool. Dimensions: 10 in. high by 26 wide by 11 deep. Price: blonde \$34.79, cherry \$32.59, mahogany \$32.59, unfinished \$30.38. **MANUFACTURER:** General Electric Company, Electronics Park, Syracuse, N. Y.

As long as there are modest incomes and modest living-quarters there will continue to be moderate-sized-to-tiny speaker systems, and while this is possibly not the smallest enclosure I have seen, it is certainly one of the smaller ones. Proportioned with an eye to cramped space requirements, it is small enough to fit into a record storage shelf ten inches high.

The unit we received for testing came with a GE model 850 speaker, so the description to follow will be for both items. The 850



GE distributed port speaker enclosure and 850 speaker: "smooth highs, balanced sound."

speaker, according to the manufacturer, designed for use as an extension speaker for larger systems, and I have, frankly, heard some much larger speaker systems that I liked less than this one.

The 850 in its cabinet produced nicely-balanced sound that I'm not accustomed to

hearing from such small systems. The high end is quite smooth, and lacks the shrillness that is sometimes associated with "presence" in speakers. In a large room the bass tends to be quite boomy. In a smaller, bright-sounding room, though, the over-all balance is quite pleasant. The low end holds up to about 80 cycles, and further down, well below the range of the speaker, there is no trace of cone doubling. This may be responsible for the lack of muddiness in the sound it produces within its useful range. Just above its cutoff frequency there is a fairly large peak in the response, which probably accounts for the full sound from the system.

The speaker is rated at 15 watts, and I believe it. At high volume levels it stands up very well, and it can take a pretty fair amount of bass boost without going off into distortion.

Nothing spectacular here... it won't take the place of a full-sized high-priced speaker system. But used where space is at a premium, or as the remote speaker it was designed to be, it puts out sound that is easily

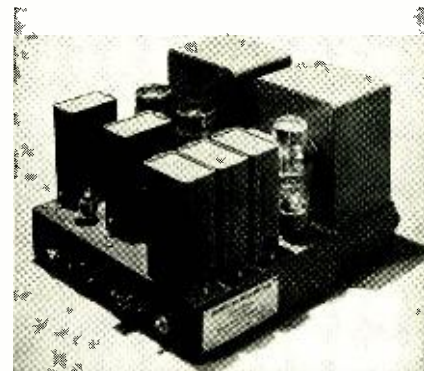
listenable and is at least as clean as that from some of the monsters.

Cabinet construction is remarkably solid, with little tendency to "drum," and the speaker is readily accessible from the back of the enclosure. Plenty of acoustic padding, and a neat, cozy appearance. — J. G. H.

Hallmark Amplifier Kit

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): a power amplifier kit employing the original Williamson circuit, special transformers, tropicalized components, and a pre-wired circuit board. **Tubes:** 2—KT-66, 2—12AU7, 53KU. **Frequency response:** ± 0.5 db from 10 to 50,000 cps. **Intermodulation distortion:** less than 0.7% at 15 watts, 2.5% at 20 watts. **Price:** \$102.00. **DISTRIBUTOR:** British Radio Electronics Ltd., 1833 Jefferson Place, N. W., Washington 6, D. C.

Some of the mail order houses, such as Sears, Roebuck and Montgomery-Ward, will loan do-it-yourselfers the necessary tools for plumbing, electrical, and other home projects. While most audio equipment builders have all the tools with which to construct the Hallmark amplifier, one special tool could well be loaned: a small derrick. I'm not joking (too much, anyway); once the transformers are installed,



Completed Hallmark power amplifier kit.

this amplifier seems to weigh the major part of a ton. Actually, it weighed 39 lb. on the bathroom scales!

Naturally, weight isn't necessarily a sign of performance, but this whole unit bespeaks battleship ruggedness and quality (it's even painted battleship gray!). Five oil-filled capacitors are used, not just ordinary electrolytics. The components are tropicalized, to withstand humidity and heat. The nuts and bolts glisten with chrome plating. High stability resistors are used and, when required, are matched to a tolerance of considerably better than the claimed 1%. And so on.

But I can hear you saying, "the power rating is maybe 15 to 18 watts. It's a kit, yet the cost is \$102.00. That's pretty steep, isn't it?" That's a tough one, and there isn't any black-and-white answer. It's rather this way: I think a 1956 Mercury, Dodge, or what have you, kicks up a lot more horsepower than a Rolls Royce, but people who have the money to buy either one often choose the Rolls. I don't think many will argue with me if I therefore say that the Hallmark certainly appears to be the Rolls Royce of power amplifier kits. Whether or not it is worth its price is something only you can decide.

I can tell you that the sound it gives off is beautiful. Under normal room listening conditions, the bass is remarkable; those who say "All anyone needs is ten clean watts" should try out this unit to uphold their end of the argument. I put 0.03 volts (by meter) of square wave at 40 cycles into the amplifier and got out, with

Continued on page 116

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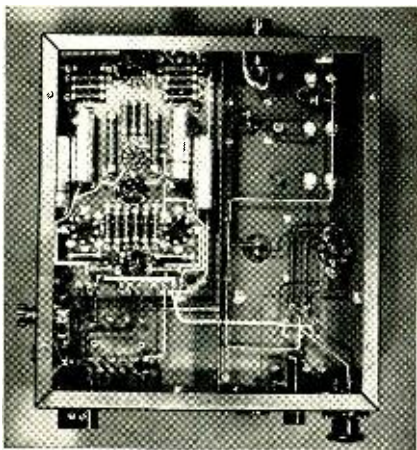
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TESTED IN THE HOME

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a speaker load, a square wave that was indistinguishable from the input. This was a cruel test; all too many amplifiers are tested with a resistive load—and you should see what happens to some of them when confronted with actual conditions; a speaker in an enclosure. Incidentally, the 0.03 volt was enough to give off ample sound; in some ways, a very low signal such as this is more difficult for an amplifier to handle than stronger ones which drive it into its normal operating zone. Further, I ran right up to 20,000 cycles with the same input; output did not vary half a decibel. That was another tough test; frequency response remained flat even at very low levels. The square wave at 20 kc was excellent; it showed a trace of



Bottom view shows pre-wired circuit board.

ringing, but that could be cured with a little fussing around.

In an A-B listening test with a jury of seven, in comparison with a kit having the same specs but twice the power rating and costing about half as much, the vote was five to two in favor of the Hallmark. In a second test, this time running against an assembled amplifier, the jury voted five to two in favor of the assembled amplifier—but it was rated at 70 watts and cost nearly \$300! These voting ratios held even when volume was pushed up to a point where peak powers were exceeding 20 watts. Of six amplifiers tested at this listening session only the \$300 unit and one experimental 30-watter out-rated the Hallmark; its bass was not as good but the extreme highs were a shade better.

So—to get on with the subject—the Hallmark is a splendid kit, and it is an expensive one. The performance may or may not be worth it—to you.

The kit is not hard to assemble, primarily because so much of the work has already been done on the pre-assembled and pre-wired circuit board. You can see the board in the illustration.

The instructions are not difficult to follow, and I commend British Radio Electronics for suggesting a series of tests to be run before plugging into the AC line. This made me feel a little safer when that great, final moment arrived. I went slowly,

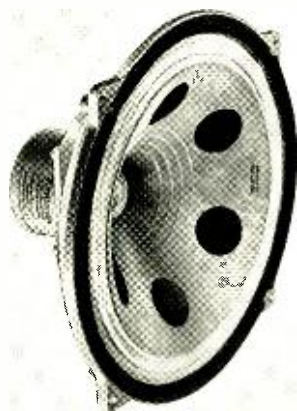
and tried to be extra neat with my wiring; it's been a long time since I've pushed spaghetti over bus bar and tried to do a right-angle job like this! Also, I took some short-cuts. I did not wire in the AC switch, nor the power outlet octal socket.

All in all, I like this kit! — C. F.

Beam Stentorian 12-inch Speakers

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): the 12-inch Duplex is a true coaxial speaker with phenolic tweeter horn and built-in crossover network. Flux density: woofer voice coil, 14,000 Gauss; high-frequency driver, 17,000 Gauss. Response: 20 to 20,000 cycles. Cambric cone with mid-range stabilizers. Bass resonance: 35 cycles. Impedance: 15 ohms. Power rating: 15 watts. Crossover: full-half-section LC, 3,000 cycles. Price: \$119.00. Model HF 1214 is a 12-inch extended range speaker with mid-range stabilizers and uncured cambric edge suspension. Flux density: 14,000 Gauss. Response: 25 to 14,000 cycles. Bass resonance: 39 cycles. Impedance: 15 ohms. Power rating: 15 watts. Price: \$49.50. Both units have non-resonant die-cast frames. DISTRIBUTOR: Beam Instruments Corporation, 350 Fifth Ave., New York 1, N. Y.

Here are two more Stentorian speakers, having the same bass performance characteristics which made my review of the HF 1012-U so favorable (TITH, September 1955). These, however, are both 12-inch models, much smoother in the middle range, and able to handle considerably more power comfortably. They are also more expensive, of course. Let's take the HF 12 Duplex first. This is a very heavy (16½ lb.) coaxial unit with individual voice coils for the low-frequency cone and high-frequency driver. The magnet accounts for 11½ pounds of the total weight. The tweeter horn is of phenolic plastic, heavy and non-resonant; the woofer cone is stiff and has a very pliant suspension of uncured cambric, which gives it a low natural resonance fre-

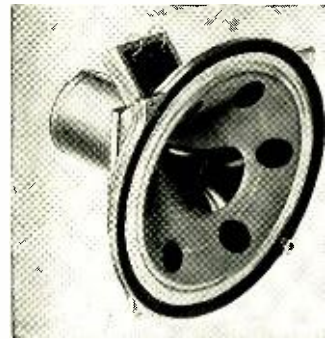


The HF-1214, showing stabilizing patches.

quency. In a properly-tuned bass-reflex enclosure, response at the low end is full and smooth to well below 40 cycles. Really deep bass passages, from organ, drum, or bass viol cause more of a tactile sensation than an audible one, as they should; very low bear-notes from the piano are reproduced and, although they cannot be heard

as such above the other sound, the difference is immediately noticeable when switching between the Duplex 12 and another speaker having less extended and smooth bass.

The dark patches visible on the cone are so-called mid-range stabilizers, presumably to control cone breakup and reflections in the range above 1,000 cycles. They seem to be quite effective, since the overall sound of the Duplex—although bright—is smoothly bright. The range from about 3,000 to 5,500 cycles is elevated a bit too much for me, although long-time readers will recall that I am perhaps overly critical of presence ranges. Still, the sound remains clean because this is a smooth and relatively wide peak. Above that the



Duplex model has deep bass, bright sound.

response goes out nicely level to 15,000 cycles, followed by a slow roll-off.

The HF 1214 seems to be basically the cone section only of the Duplex 12. It has the same stabilizing patches, and the same superb bass response. Perhaps surprisingly, it is not at all bright, but is well-balanced (to my ear) and smooth from 40 to 14,000 cycles. Although the extreme highs are quite directional, this is not a serious disadvantage with a corner location; there are highs aplenty if you're used to sitting in the center section or farther back at a concert, and they are clean and undistorted. Used by itself, the HF 1214 is very much better over-all than the HF 1012-U. If you like to sit in the first few rows, on the other hand, the Duplex 12 would be a better choice. I would choose the HF 1214, even if the prices were the same—actually, it costs less than half the price of the Duplex model.

Both models have die-cast frames with deep mounting holes that are standard for American-made 12-inch speakers. The Duplex 12, though, is supplied mounted on a board that has drilled holes spaced for a standard 15-inch speaker. Since it should be used in a cabinet large enough for an ordinary 15-inch speaker anyway, this ought to be a genuine convenience. It has a cloth cover also, to keep out bits of padding material and sawdust.—R.A.

MANUFACTURER'S COMMENT: Introduction of the mid-range stabilizers in our 12-inch cones is the logical development supplementing the wide success achieved with the Stentorian "uncured cambric" cones in the "Universal" 8, 9 and 10-inch models. It is to be noted that the unusually good low-frequency response also makes the HF-1214 a first-class inexpensive woofer, when used with a suitable dividing network and tweeter.



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ENGLAND — 1851

Continued from page 44

such important results in his school for choral music, and who died of grief when, for the sake of economy, the July Monarchy cut off his subsidy.

And yet by means of three or four institutions which could easily be established in France, nothing would prevent our giving in Paris after a certain number of years a parallel to the English music festival, on a small but perfected scale. We have no St. Paul's, true; but we have the Pantheon, which affords, if not the size, at least a similar internal structure. The number of performers and audience would be less huge; but the edifice being also less vast the effect might still be most unusual.

Supposing that the ramp from the top of the central door of the Pantheon could hold no more than five thousand, it would still make a respectable gathering, and would, as I think, suffice to seat all those in Paris who possess an understanding of, and a feeling for, art. Suppose next that instead of 6,500 ignorant children, we had in the amphitheater 1,500 young musicians, 500 musical women with real voices, and 2,000 men singers sufficiently equipped by nature and training. Suppose further that instead of allotting the central space of the hexagon under the dome to the public, we placed there a little orchestra of three or four hundred instrumentalists, and entrusted to that well-trained mass of 4,300 musicians the performance of a fine work, written in a style suited to such means, on a subject in which grandeur blends with nobility, and in which one is stirred by the expression of all the elevated thoughts that can move the heart of man: I believe that such a manifestation of the most powerful of arts, aided by the magic of poetry and architecture, would be truly worthy of a nation like ours and would leave far behind the vaunted festivals of antiquity.

With exclusively French resources such a festival would be possible within ten years; Paris has only to will it so. Meanwhile, relying solely on the first rudiments of music, the English do will it and do do it. A great people, which still has an instinct for what is great! The soul of Shakespeare survives in it!

* * * * *

Continued on page 122

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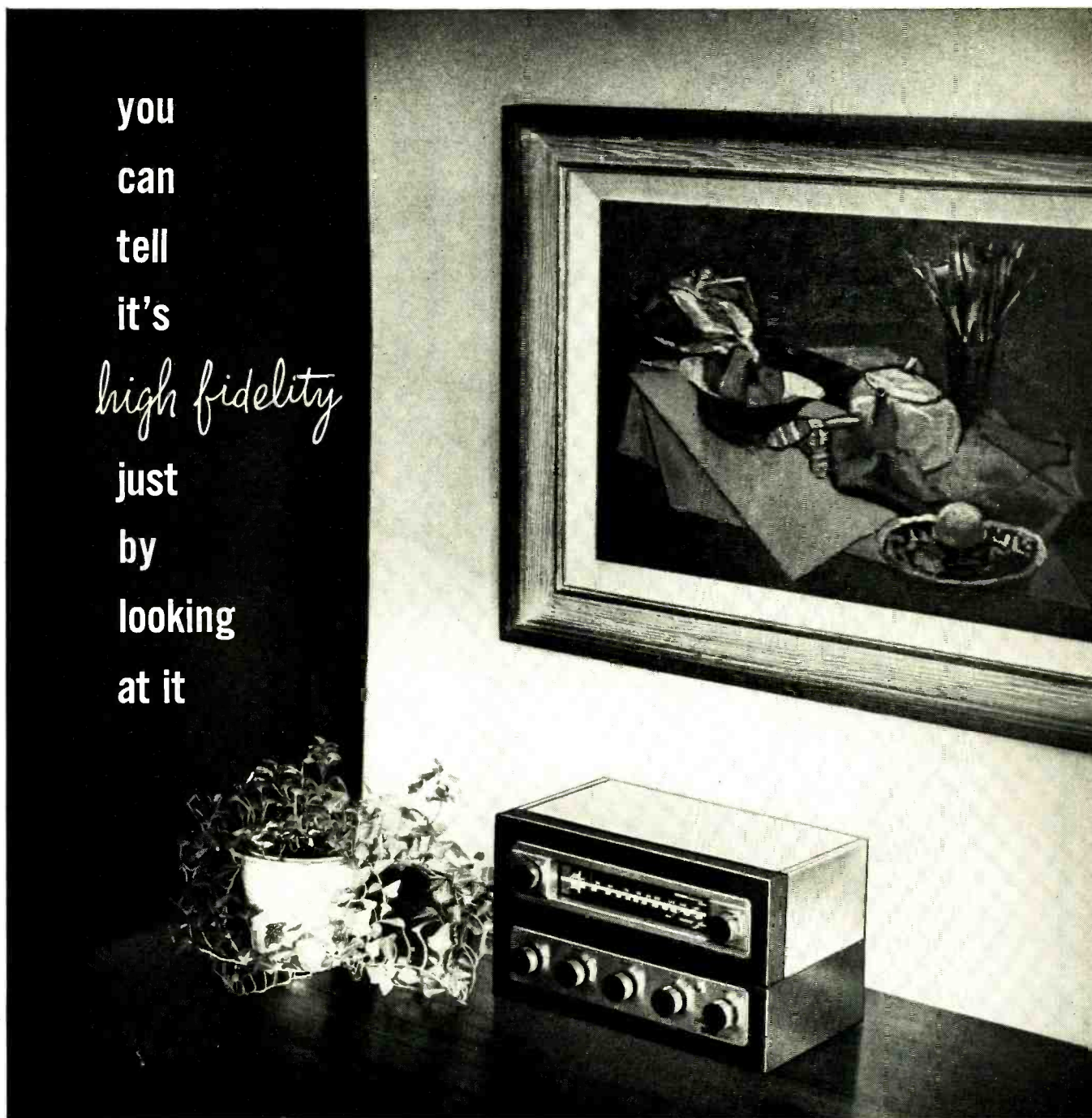


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ENGLAND—1851

Continued from page 118

THERE IS NO city in the world, I am sure, where so much music is consumed as in London. You are pursued by it into the very streets, and the music made there is by no means always the worst. For a number of talented artists have discovered that the profession of itinerant musician is infinitely less arduous and more lucrative than that of an orchestra player in any theater whatever. Playing in the street takes only two or three hours a day, as against eight or nine in the theaters. In the street you are out in the open, you breathe fresh air, you move about, and you only have to play a little piece from time to time. In the theater you stand a stifling atmosphere and the heat of the gas, you have to keep sitting and playing without interruption, sometimes even during the intermissions. In a theater, moreover, a second-class musician earns hardly more than six pounds a month (\$30). The same musician making a debut in the public squares is almost sure to take in twice that amount in a month, and often more. The result is that one can hear with actual pleasure in the streets of London small groups of good English musicians, who are as white as you and I, but who have deemed it advisable to attract attention by blackening their faces.

These sham Abyssinians accompany themselves on a violin, a guitar, a tambourine, a couple of kettledrums, and castanets. They sing little five-part airs, most agreeably harmonized, quite melodious, and sometimes original in rhythm. And the men, too, are lively and full of spirit, which shows that they like their work and are happy. Shillings and even half-crowns rain down around them after each of their pieces.


Besides these strolling bands of real musicians one will also stop and hear a fine Scot garbed in the curious costume of the Highlands and accompanied by his two children, also wearing the plaid and the checkered kilt. He plays on the bagpipes the favorite tune of the clan MacGregor. He too is excited by the sounds of his rustic instrument; and the more his pipes chirp, drone, squeal, and frisk, the more his gestures and those of his children become swift, proud, and menacing. One would think these

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Gaels were going to conquer England, just the three of them.

Next you see coming toward you, drowsy and melancholy, two poor Hindus from Calcutta with their once white turbans and once white robes. Their whole orchestra is made up of two small drums shaped like kegs, such as one saw by the dozen at the Exhibition. They hang the instrument in front of them by a string around the neck, and gently beat both sides of it with the extended fingers of each hand. The feeble noise produced has a rather peculiar rhythm, which in its continuity resembles the rapid click-clack of a windmill. One of them sings to it, in some dialect of India, a pretty little melody in E minor that stays within the compass of a sixth (from E to C). It is so sad in spite of its brisk movement, so full of pain, so exiled, so enslaved, so disheartened, so sunless, that as you listen to it you fall a prey to homesickness. Here again there are neither thirds of tones, quarters, nor half-quarters — and it is singing.

Judging from the instruments sent by India to the Universal Exhibition, the music of the East Indians must differ but slightly from that of the Chinese. I have examined among those childish machines, mandolins with three or four strings, and even with only one, whose fingerboards were divided by frets, as with the Chinese. Some are small, others of very great length. There were big drums and small drums, the sound of which differs little from that produced by tapping with your fingers on the crown of a top hat. There was a double-reed wind instrument akin to our oboe, whose tube, having no holes, produces only a single note. The leader of the musicians who came to Paris

Continued on next page

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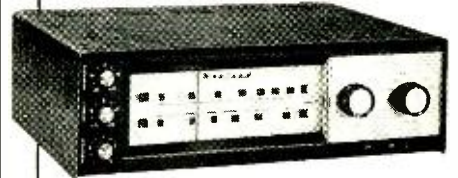
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ENGLAND—1851

Continued from preceding page

some years ago with the nautch-girls of Calcutta used this primitive oboe. He would make an A hum for whole hours, and those who love this particular note got their money's worth.

The Exhibition's collection of Oriental instruments also contained: traverse flutes, in all respects similar to that of the Small-footed Lady's music master; an enormous, crudely built trumpet of a pattern differing only slightly from that of European trumpets; several bowed instruments as clumsily worthless as the one used on the junk by the Chinese fiend I mentioned; a sort of dulcimer whose strings are stretched over a long sounding-board, and are apparently supposed to be struck with a stick; a ridiculous little harp with ten or twelve strings attached to the body of the instrument without pegs to stretch them, and which are as a result constantly discordant with each other; and lastly a great wheel fitted all around with small gongs, the din of which as the wheel moves is as delightful as the noise of the bells on the harness of a carter's horse. That's the battery: take off your hat to it!

To sum up, this is my conclusion the Chinese and Indians would have a music similar to ours if indeed they had one. But they are still plunged in the dark depths of barbarism, and in a childish ignorance where one can hardly detect some vague and impotent instincts. The Orientals moreover give the name of music to what we should call a din: for them, as for the witches in *Macbeth*, "foul is fair."

WHISTLE (VIVALDI)

Continued from page 46

of Rome's Santa Cecilia Conservatory.

The prime mover and guide of the Virtuosi is Renato Fasano, who in addition to being the conductor of this thirteen-man group is also its impresario, with a gift for organization that equals his musical talent. He has, in fact, built it into a world-famous ensemble. The Virtuosi have already been to America four times, touring the country from coast to coast, enchanting the critics (including even Chicago's hard-hearted Claudia Cassidy), and establishing the fact that in America, as in Italy, "there is"—to

6

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2. AVOID WORRY

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3. AVOID OVER-FATIGUE

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4. AVOID OVER-EXERTION

Exercise in moderation, particularly if over 40.



5. AVOID OVER-WEIGHT

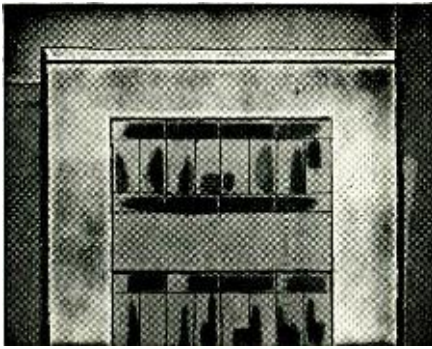
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quote the *Herald Tribune's* review of their concert — "a large and enthusiastic audience for music outside the standard repertory."

I Musici have also toured America once, and they are planning a return during 1956-57. Though the twelve musicians who now form the group are not all part of the original team, they have, if anything, improved and refined their playing. And they have, in their brief existence, won the praise of concertgoers everywhere — among them Toscanini, who called them a "perfect chamber orchestra" and said, even more eloquently, *bravi, bravissimi!* The Maestro is not aroused to enthusiasm by mere intentions.

The rosters of these organizations shift considerably. Some members of I Musici have left to do solo work. In other cases, musicians go from one organization to another (Aldo Redditi, of the Trio Redditi, is also first violin of the Piccola Accademia Musicale, a chamber orchestra). And this season, two former members of the Virtuosi, the pianist Ornella Puliti Santoliquido and the cellist Massimo Amfitreatroff, were instrumental in organizing a new chamber group of twelve players, the Complesso da Camera Antonio Vivaldi, which gave its initial concert last November in the Aula Magna of Rome University. Though some of the performers seemed a bit shaky in this first concert, Amfitreatroff played masterfully in the Boccherini cello concerto in D major, and Signora Santoliquido was brilliant in an unfamiliar piano concerto (that in C major) by Paisiello. These two soloists also play together as the Duo di Roma. The Vivaldi Complesso is already off on tour and is dickering with a record company. They may be expected in the United States probably within a year or two.

Florence — or rather, its beautiful suburb Fiesole — is the home of the Piccola Accademia Musicale mentioned above, a twenty-piece orchestra which, though its members are for the most part Italian, was organized and is conducted by the young American scholar and conductor, Newell Jenkins. Having studied at Yale with Hindemith and in Germany with Orff, Jenkins is particularly faithful in his transcriptions of eighteenth-century works; and the Piccola Accademia has uncovered a number of minor masterpieces from the period, among them the Brunetti G minor symphony, Locatelli concerto

Continued on next page



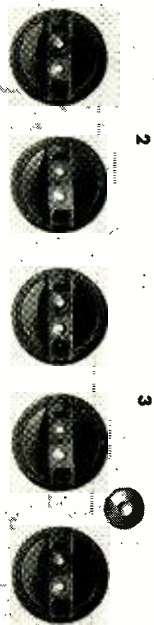
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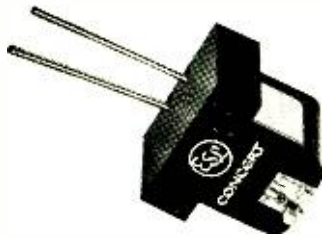




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WHISTLE (VIVALDI)

Continued from preceding page

Il pianto di Arianna, and the Viotti double concerto. Though they have not yet visited America, this orchestra is well known not only in Italy, but throughout Europe (since its organization in 1953, it has toured extensively every year). It has also made two series of recordings for the Haydn Society under the general heading "The Classical Italian Symphonists."

When one writes of musical activities in Italy, one must inevitably conclude with some mention of the Italian Radio, the RAI, which has been the greatest patron of all towards the composers of the past. Hardly a week goes by without some kind of performance of a formerly "neglected" author. In its May 1955 issue, HIGH FIDELITY spoke of the RAI's intense and intelligent activity, which covers every period and kind of music. This year, as a matter of fact, the Scarlatti Orchestra will become the permanent orchestra of the Naples Radio. With this as a start, it is hoped that some of the other cities will be able to support local chamber organizations. In any case, thanks to the enthusiasm of a few scholars twenty or thirty years ago and thanks to the growing, answering enthusiasm of the Italian public, the day may not be far off when, throughout the country, people will be whistling Vivaldi as commonly as they now whistle the best known airs of Puccini and Verdi, the veteran "Red Priest's" distinguished successors.

POOR RICHARD

Continued from page 51

the phonograph listener can compare Olivier's rendering with John Barrymore's (Audio Rarities 2203; the speech is wrongly described, at least in the Long Player catalogue, as being from *Richard III*.)

Olivier's excerpts from *Henry V* and *Hamlet* are currently available on one RCA Victor record (LM 1924). The presentation of both plays is open to most of the criticisms made of the new *Richard III* above. Though in neither case is a complete movie sound track inflicted upon us, even the *Henry V* passages, which are not excerpted from a sound track, have been fixed up to simulate one, with lots of fanfares and William Walton. When will Sir Laurence learn that we love him for himself alone?

AUDIO FORUM

SIR:

I must say that I disagree with your answer to Mr. Getchell's letter in the October issue. You state that it is not advisable to connect speakers in series, since it adversely affects the damping of the cones. I see no reason for this at all if the speakers are identical. I hope the following discussion will convince you that there is nothing wrong with this type of connection.

Let us assume that the nominal impedance of a speaker is 4 ohms, and that it is connected to the 4-ohm tap on an amplifier with a damping factor of 10. This makes the internal impedance of the amplifier 0.4 ohm. When the speaker is vibrating, it produces a voltage across its terminals which is a function of the cone velocity, gap flux density, and the number of turns on the voice coil. This voltage produces a current in the circuit which is equal to the voltage divided by the total circuit impedance. The current sets up a magnetic field around the voice coil which, according to Lenz's law, acts to oppose the direction of motion of the cone. This accounts for the damping action on the speaker.

With another identical 4-ohm speaker connected in series and in phase with the other, the two are now connected to the 8 ohm tap on the amplifier, and see a source impedance of .8 ohms. The total circuit impedance is now twice the value it would be if one speaker was used. The voltage applied to the circuit is also twice its original value, since we now have two generators whose voltage adds when in series and in phase. The current through the circuit is therefore the same as it was in the previous case and each speaker is damped exactly the same as it would be if used singly.

I hope this letter clears up any doubts your readers have about connecting speakers in series.

Charles Cimilluca
2011 Yates Ave.
Bronx 61, N. Y.

For an amplifier of given damping factor, the effectiveness of the control it imposes on the speaker cone is a function of the amount of DC resistance represented by the

total speaker circuit. As far as the speaker is concerned, an amplifier with infinite damping factor would present a complete short circuit to any back-EMF generated by the speaker, and would totally damp out the reverse voltage. Obviously, inserting additional voice coils into the circuit will increase the DC resistance seen by each voice coil, and will consequently reduce the total effectiveness of the damping on each speaker.

Referring to the specific case you mentioned, the effective impedance presented to each woofer would be 0.4 ohms plus the DC resistance of the other woofer, which would bring the total to about 2.8 ohms for each woofer.

Even regardless of the theoretical considerations, it is only necessary to try the series connection of two average speakers to prove just how detrimental it is to the results. Better-quality woofers mounted in a well-designed non-resonant baffle do not have to depend as much upon amplifier damping as do lesser-quality installations, so such systems may be series connected without sacrificing quality.

SIR:

Experts seem to agree that one of the decisive factors in the performance of an amplifier is the quality of the "front end," the preamplifier-equalizer.

There are many different makes and types of front ends on the market, some with and some without their own power supply. I noticed that some front ends have one tube, probably used exclusively for preamplification, while others have three or even more tubes, which are apparently also used for equalization.

The question arises as to whether a front end with only one tube is inferior to those using several tubes, or is the quality of performance not dependent on the number of tubes used?

Dr. Eric Bock
1716 Washington St.
Waukegan, Ill.

The number of tubes in a control unit (or front end) is no indication of its quality.

Better indications are the unit's intermodulation distortion (the lower

Continued on next page

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AUDIO FORUM

Continued from preceding page

the better), frequency range (the wider the better), smoothness (plus or minus the least number of decibels), and number of phono equalizer positions.

Look through some catalogues and compare units one with another.

SIR:

It has become increasingly apparent to me that most long-playing records begin to show wear in the form of high-frequency fuzziness after about ten playings. Since I have always taken special care to see that the stylus was positioned exactly perpendicular to the playing surface, that the stylus tip maintained its correct shape (by frequent microscope inspections), that the correct stylus pressure was maintained, that the transcription arm was perfectly free to function properly, and that all of the other necessary precautions designed to reduce record wear were attended to, I am absolutely astounded at the reduction in fidelity between the first few playings of a new recording and the tenth or twelfth spinning.

Since I also take particular care to guard against dust and grime reaching the record surface, by using a radium static-neutralizer and keeping my albums in plastic dust-covers, I absolutely cannot fathom this rapid decrease in fidelity through apparent surface wear. Is this a situation which one must face due to ownership of a speaker like mine which can produce such clean highs (and such clean record-wear frequencies), or do you have some other answer to this problem?

Frankly, I am becoming rapidly disgusted at sinking money into outstanding high-fidelity recordings only to have them lose their clean sound after a dozen or so playings! I should greatly appreciate any light which your staff may be able to throw upon this problem.

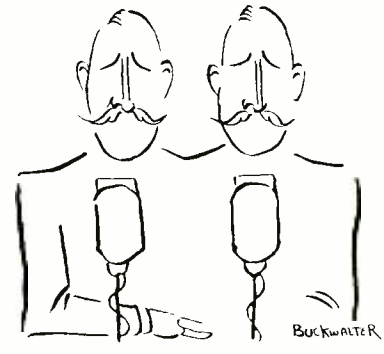
John R. Steven
5242 Edna Street
Los Angeles 32, Calif.

The apparently short life you are getting from records could be traceable to any or all of the components in your system.

Raggedness in the sound from records is initially caused by inability of the pickup stylus to follow the groove undulations, and the degree to which it is noticeable to the listener is determined by the over-all smoothness of

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the high frequency response of the system. High-frequency peaks of 2 db or higher in either the speaker or pickup will begin to add a dirty "edge" to the sound of even the cleanest record, and if a slightly non-compliant pickup is having trouble riding the groove undulation, the resulting groove distortion is accentuated by the peaks.

Further aggravation of this dirtiness is contributed by distortion in the amplifying equipment. The noise generated by groove distortion bears little or no harmonic relation to the music, but a distorting amplifier generates harmonics from the noise just as readily as from the program material, so the noise is emphasized out of proportion to its actual magnitude. Harmonics that are generated from musical sounds do bear a direct mathematical relationship to the original tones, so they do not become as prominent as do the noise components. This puts extreme demands upon the amplifying equipment; so much so, in fact, that it has been found that reducing the amplifier's total intermodulation distortion from 0.5 to 0.1 per cent can completely clean up a case of ragged sound.

In your case, the first thing to suspect would be the pickup cartridge. Many cartridges tend to suffer from hardening of damping materials after they have been in use for a while, resulting in greatly decreased compliance. This condition increases groove distortion and accelerates record wear, and the only place qualified to check compliance is the factory. So we would suggest you get your pickup off to the manufacturer for a thorough check.

Second, you might have your amplifier tested at a reputable audio service agency, for higher-than-normal distortion. If its distortion is higher than the manufacturer's intermodulation ratings, it should be repaired or replaced with one that will perform properly. For the utmost cleanliness of sound, you should contemplate ultimately replacing it anyway, with one whose intermodulation distortion at 1 watt is 0.1 per cent or less, and does not exceed 1.0 per cent at rated output.

Third, your pickup arm may be at fault. The bearing assembly in it is of a type that invariably rattles at certain frequencies, passing the resulting distortion along to the cartridge. Replacement with another type, perhaps a viscous-damped one, may clean up your sound considerably. For use with microgroove cartridges, a viscous-

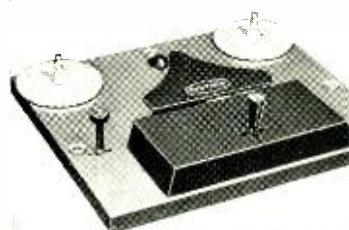
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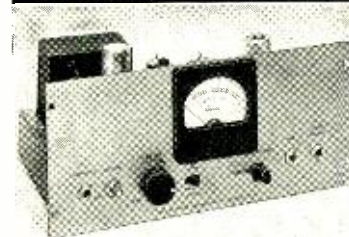
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AUDIO FORUM

Continued from preceding page

damped arm should be adjusted for the minimum damping that it will provide, and should be set up strictly according to the manufacturer's instructions.

If you still have this trouble after getting your pickup checked, and after having made sure your amplifier is in working order, you can be certain that the rough high end of your speaker is the major contributing factor. It should be replaced by something that is, above all else, smooth at the top, and as devoid of peaks as possible, even at the sacrifice of some of the extreme high end.

This matter of dirtiness from records is something that demands the very best equipment, in every respect, before it can be completely ironed out. If you are interested in the cleanest sound that it is possible to get, it would pay you to replace each one of the items suggested, in the order mentioned.

SIR:

If two speakers, each rated at 25 watts, are connected in parallel, how strong an amplifier can I connect to them? If they are connected in series, how many watts can I feed to them?

I have two woofers of 16 ohms each, and when they are connected in parallel I understand the impedance would be 8 ohms. The two tweeters are 8 ohms each, so their total impedance when paralleled is 4 ohms. Is it good practice to place an 8-ohm resistor in series with each tweeter to make them 16 ohms each, giving a total of 8 ohms?

D. L. Fowler
470 Carroll Street
Akron 4, Ohio

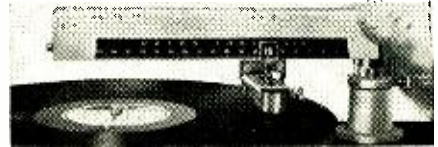
Two speakers of identical impedance ratings will have the power equally divided between them whether they are connected in series or in parallel. When they are paralleled, the impedance value is half that of each individual speaker. Series connection would give double the individual impedance rating.

Since your woofers are 16 ohms each, you could not match them to the amplifier if connected in series. Connected in parallel, they would require a source impedance of 8 ohms, and could handle 50 watts of power. We should, however, point out that there are few of us with the intestinal fortitude to stay in a room where a speaker is working with 25 watts going into it,

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let alone 50 watts! The average operating level of a high-fidelity system is less than 1 watt. Higher-powered equipment simply cleans up the sound and makes peak passages considerably more listenable.

So you will not need more than a 10-watt amplifier to get plenty of output from your speaker system, regardless of its maximum capabilities. Anything higher than that will depend upon how critical you become of cleanliness and ability to take peaks without audible stress. For most purposes, a 30-watt amplifier is recommended, to allow plenty of room for peaks. An improvement in sound might be effected by a good 50 watter, at considerably increased cost. But remember that the amplifier will be putting out less than 1 watt most of the time, and if the high-power amplifier isn't at least as distortion-free at 1 watt as the 10-watter, the sound is likely to be worse.

Since your tweeters are probably at least 3 db more efficient than your woofers, a resistor in series with them will probably be a necessity anyway, regardless of the fact that such a resistor will also improve your impedance match. The series resistor should, however, be 4 ohms rather than 8 ohms, as there is no need to use two separate resistors with one in each tweeter lead. Simply parallel the tweeters and put the resistor in one side of the line going to them. This will give you the required 8-ohm load to match the woofers.

Then, if the tweeter level is still too high, an 8 ohm T-pad should be inserted between the divider network or high-pass filter and the tweeters, to allow them to be balanced with the woofers. Remember, if you operate a divider network at a different impedance than that for which it was designed, you must change the values of the components. If it is to be operated at twice its original impedance, the capacitors must be halved in value and the inductors doubled. If it is to be operated at half its original impedance, capacitor values must be doubled and inductors halved.

If it is found that the tweeter level is too low with the series resistor inserted, it will be necessary to use a special divider network designed for use with speakers of different impedances.

SIR:

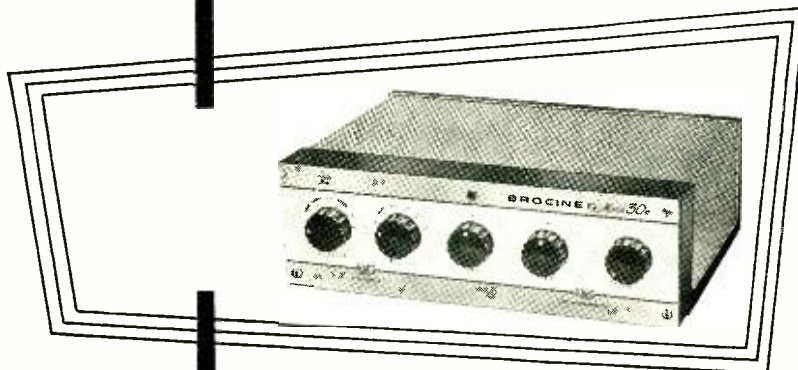
I believe you might be interested in the following surprising experience. As a layman, I cannot explain it technically or scientifically.

Recently, I purchased a 15-inch coaxial speaker and housed it in an enclosure of limited size (32 by 18 by

Continued on page 133

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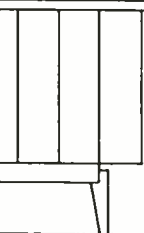
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AUDIO FORUM

Continued from page 131

12 in.), in a book shelf. It sounded awfully boomy, and the high notes were severely subdued. It was quite a disappointment; very unpleasant listening.

I tried lining the entire compartment with ozite but to no avail. Then I tried acoustic tile with no appreciable success. I wrote to the speaker manufacturer asking for advice on an infinite baffle and gave the dimensions. In return, I received an excellent resumé of loudspeaker enclosures and a letter inferring that it is hopeless when the cubic content is less than six cubic ft. About ten ft. would be better. This disillusioned me terribly.

Then I remembered Edgar Villchur's articles, and the advertisements for the AR-1 acoustic-suspension speaker system, which gives such good results in a small cabinet. I took the hint experimentally.

I bought a big bag of the thickest rock wool I could find. (Fiberglass was unavailable locally). Stripping away the sheaths of insulating paper backing the rockwool, I used these pads in two ways. First, I lined the sides of the compartment; then I packed the whole inner space very solidly. Finally, I wrapped a sheet of rock wool around the metal frame of the speaker. When I tried it, I got a most pleasant surprise!

The boominess had completely disappeared, the subdued high tones became clear and sharp, and the bass response was gratifying — nice com-

fortable listening in a very big living room. It still lacks the rich overtones and resonance of my other large speaker system, but this is an unfair and exceptional standard for comparison.

So I can recommend solidly packing the space in a small enclosure with this insulating material.

Alex E. Gold, M.D.
131 Hilton Ave.
Hempstead, N.Y.

This concept is fairly new in high fidelity circles, and the precise reason why it works as well as it does still seems to be somewhat of a mystery, but it does do a great deal to improve small-enclosure performance.

Your results would probably have been improved even further by the use of glass wool for the bulk of the lining, but the protective lining over the rear of the woofer is recommended regardless of what material you use in the enclosure. The padding should not, however, be "solidly" placed in the enclosure. Better results are obtained when it is used in fairly large pieces (averaging 6 inches square, with actual sizes varying from one piece to another) and packed very loosely.

Experiments with this kind of treatment also seem to indicate that it is very useful in reducing the boom that comes from inadequately-braced enclosures, although it is not recommended purely as a substitute for good cabinet construction. Used in an adequately large, well-constructed completely-enclosed cabinet, it does much to clean up the lower end response, particularly on speakers that do not need resonances to augment an inherently thin low end.

It should be noted that this is only part of the principle of the acoustic suspension speaker system. For a fuller explanation, see Tested in the Home for October, 1955.

SIR:

I would like your advice on the replacement of the diamond point stylus of my Pickering cartridge.

I need a change of needle anyway, as I have played this one heavily for a year. I am satisfied with the present cartridge, but I seem to get too much needle talk from it.

I'll appreciate your comment as to whether I might do better with a newer model cartridge, or whether a

Continued on next page

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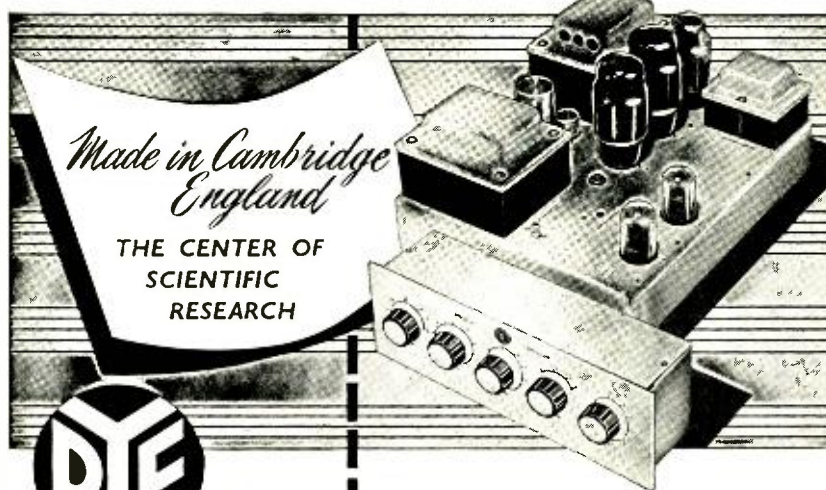
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AUDIO FORUM

Continued from preceding page

certain amount of tracking noise is inevitable.

*Charles F. Althaus
Hazel Green Hospital
Hazel Green, Wis.*

A certain amount of needle-talk must be expected from any pickup cartridge, no matter how good it is. Usually, though, the audible needle-talk is likely to be lower from a cartridge that has high compliance and operates at a low stylus pressure.

There is, however, so much audible difference in the coloration of sound from different pickups that if you are presently satisfied with your cartridge we would not recommend replacing it with a different type.

Some cartridges do have a tendency to become less compliant after a few months use, and when such stiffening takes place the only thing to do is return the cartridge to the factory for an overhaul. Since you are already contemplating replacement of your stylus, the general overhaul may be conveniently done at that time.

SIR:

I have read a number of references in your pages to methods of cleaning records; and I am so pleased with results from a simple procedure recommended to me that I thought I would pass the word along.

Most good photo supply stores carry a small (3 by 4 by 3/4 inch) close-grained cellulose sponge, made by DuPont for use in sponging off photo film during the finishing process.

Its size is ideal, and its texture perfectly suited for sponging dust and lint off records. In fact, since using mine, clicks and pops have virtually disappeared from my records.

*C. H. Sumner
760 University Ave.
Palo Alto, Calif.*

This sounds like a good idea. A damp sponge of this type would get most of the dust up, but watch out for water getting into the grooves.

If the sponge is too wet, and you have a "hard" water supply, it will leave a residue in the grooves that may show up as surface noise after awhile. It should be just dry enough that it doesn't leave water droplets as it goes across the disk.



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