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stravinsky 75th birthday issue

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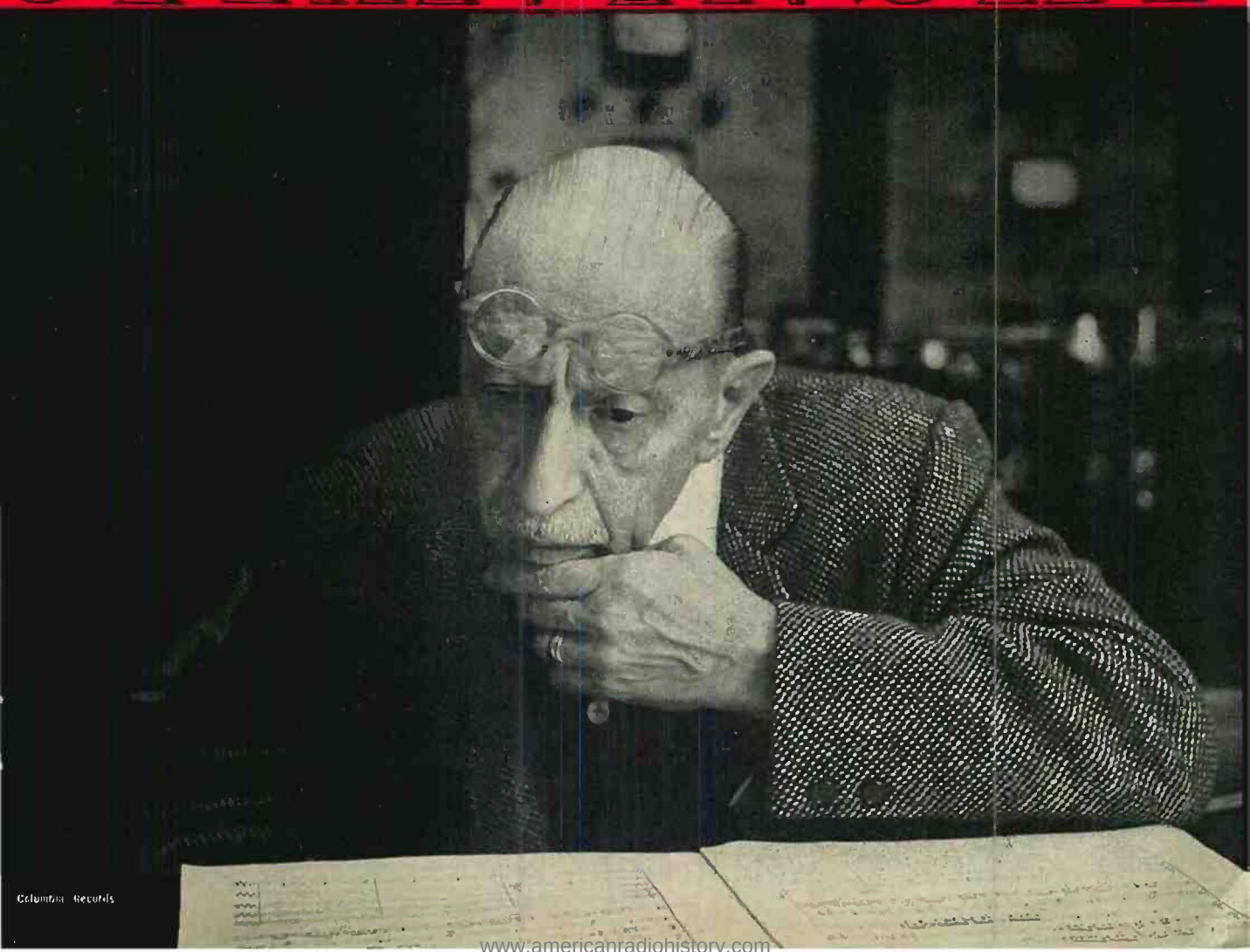
High Fidelity

the magazine for music listeners

STRAVINSKY



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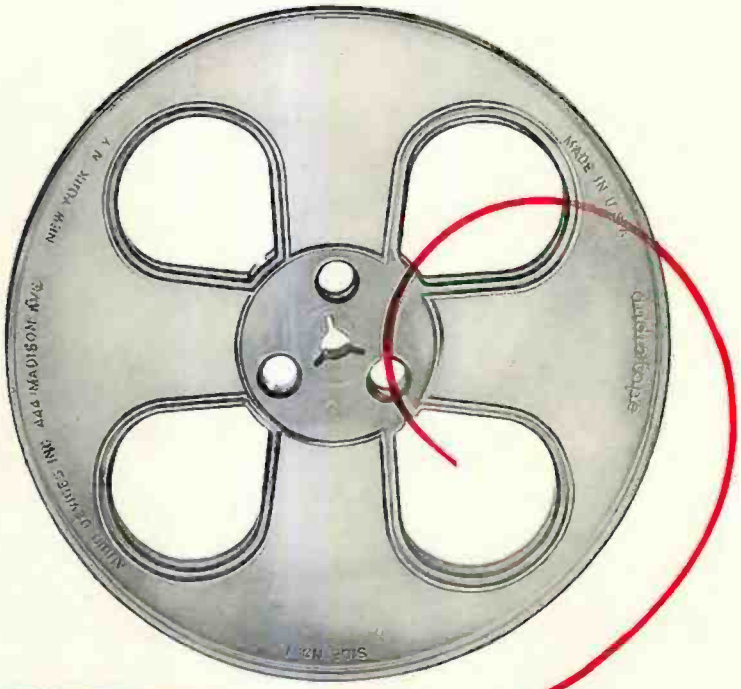

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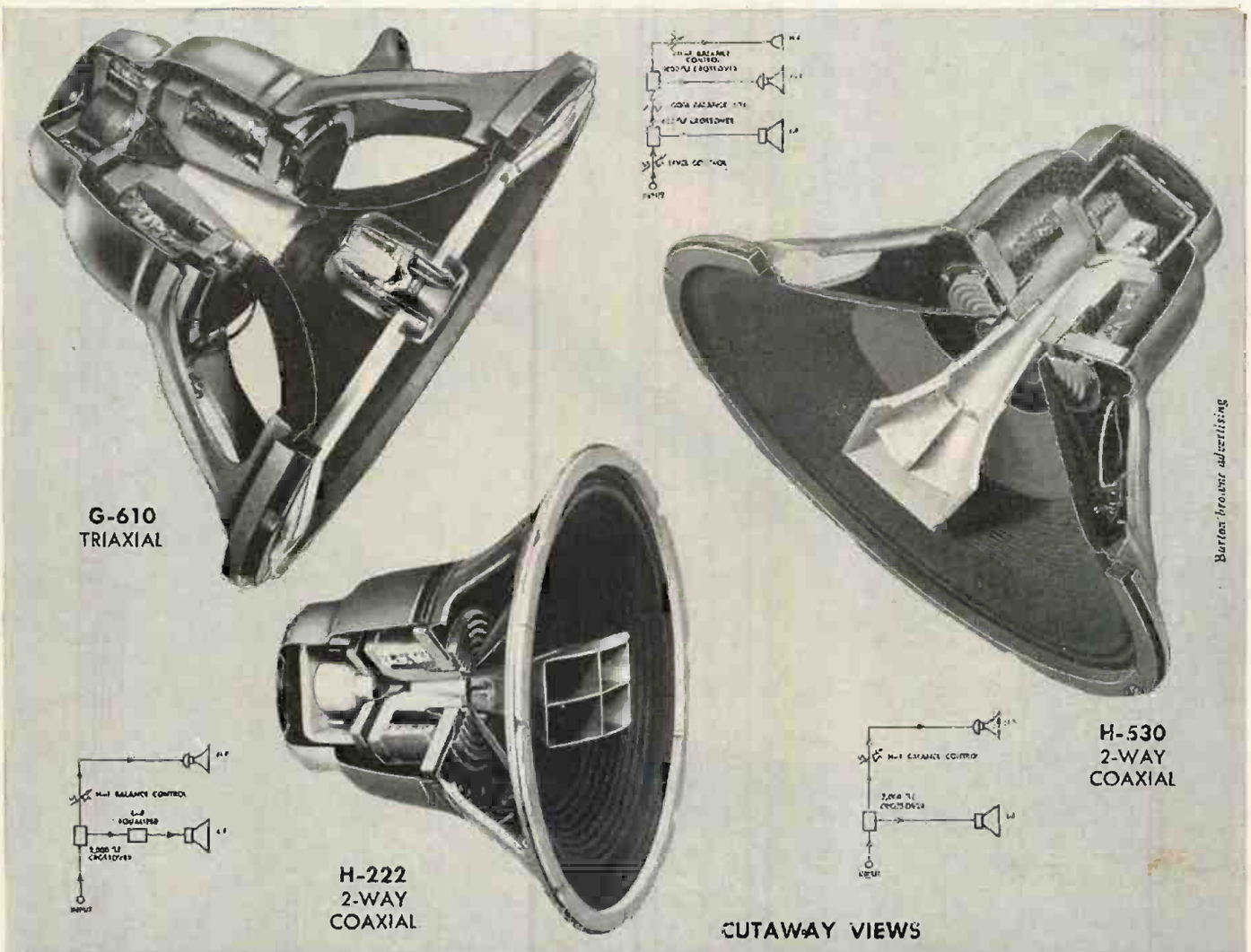

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volume 7 *number 6*

The cover illustrates a special seventy-fifth birthday report on Igor Stravinsky, to which our first four features this month are devoted.

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JUNE 1957

AUTHORitatively Speaking

Nicolas Nabokov, who contributes our guest editorial on Stravinsky at seventy-five, is a composer and a chronicler of our times' musical doings who was once described to me as being austere in a gay sort of way. This may be accurate: there is some such flavor in his editorial, and certainly there is in Nabokov's ballet music. He is reverent toward his topics but vivacious in his treatment of them, somewhat as Haydn was when he wrote Masses. Perhaps this quality peculiarly fits him to evaluate Stravinsky, who is often the opposite: jovial in a solemn sort of way. Nabokov, Russian-born, has been an American for many years. During and after World War II he worked in Europe for the War Department, latterly being concerned with the cultural aspect of the American occupation of Germany. Now he lives in Paris, where he serves as executive secretary of the Congress for Cultural Liberty.

Robert Craft's "The Composer and the Phonograph" is — so far as we know — the nearest thing to an interview with Stravinsky that will come forth during his seventy-fifth year. Craft is a close associate of Stravinsky, and, indeed, has served as a very worthwhile factotum to numerous contemporary composers, alive and dead — introducing, explaining, and recording their works tirelessly. (His latest endeavor in this line was recording the entire works of Anton Webern, in one stint, for Columbia.) It may be worth noting that he prepared himself for this kind of work (or precipitated himself into it) by studying philosophy and music education, at Columbia and the Juilliard School respectively. He is well known to modern music enthusiasts in New York and Los Angeles as conductor of the Chamber Art Society and the Ojai Festival concerts. Record-jacket-text readers will recognize his literary style: he has written most of the notes for recent Stravinsky-conducted Stravinsky recordings.

Every American interested in ballet knows who Lincoln Kirstein is. What not everyone knows about him is that he was a purely literary, nonballetic, nonopetatic magazine editor before he gained recognition as an authority on musico-choreographic matters. For seven years he edited *Hound and Horn*, one of the liveliest of the pre-Depression "little" magazines, which he helped found when he was twenty. He also was instrumental in starting the Harvard Society of Contemporary Art. He is best known, of course, for his efforts to promote ballet in America, through such means as the School of American Ballet and the Ballet Caravan. In recent years most of his energies were absorbed by activities at City Center in New York. As impresario and patron of the ballet, he naturally crossed paths often with Stravinsky, which fitted him peculiarly to write the text of "Pictures from an Album" beginning on page 36.

In effect, Alfred Frankenstein's "The Record of a Self-Interpreter" is an elaboration of his Stravinsky discography, which appeared in these pages in November 1954. Therein he concluded, to no one's surprise, that the important Stravinsky recordings were those conducted by the composer.

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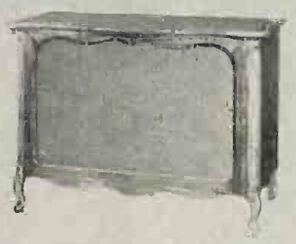

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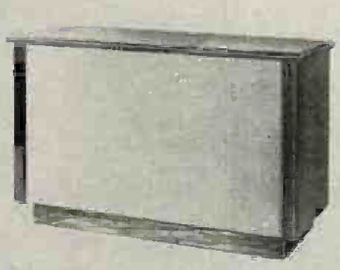

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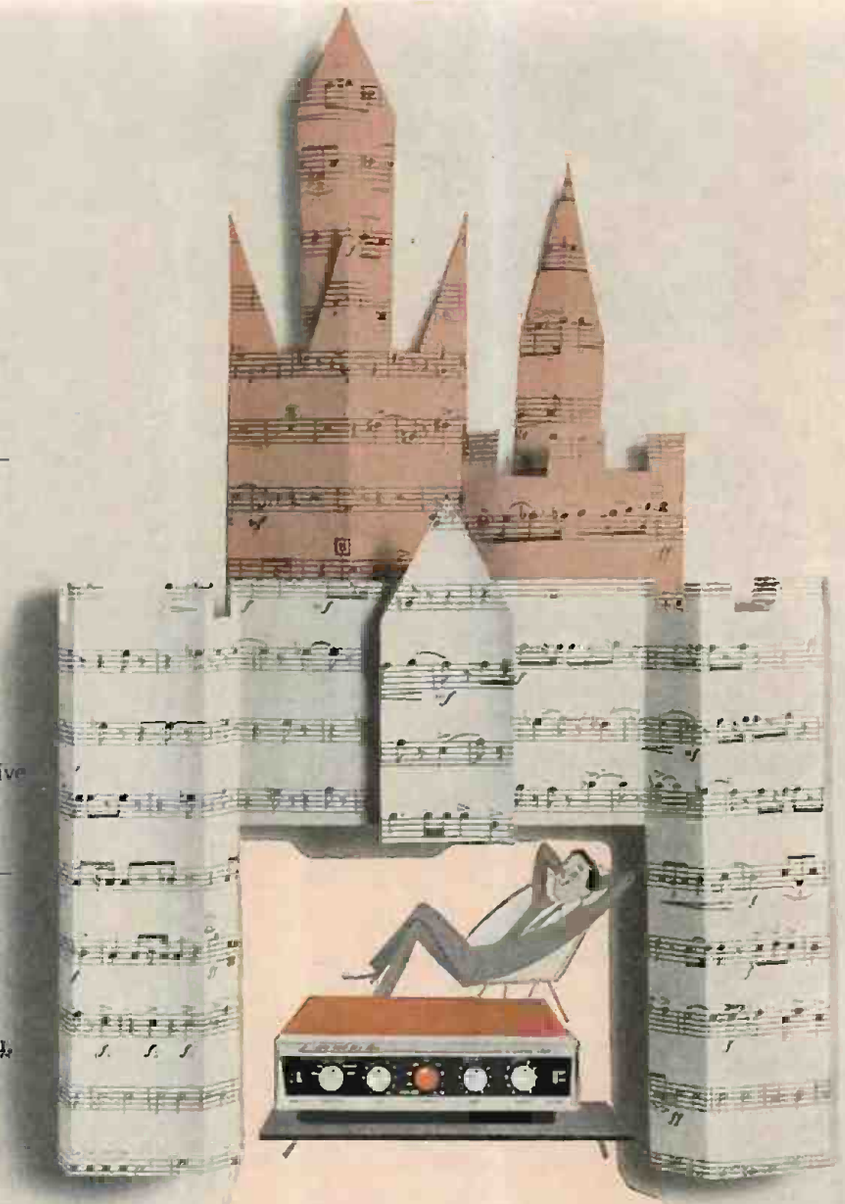

Lucky you! Now you can hear all the wonderful music on your records with a Bell High Fidelity Amplifier. You'll think you're sitting front row center in your favorite concert hall — yet the slippers on your feet will tell you — you're at home in your living room.

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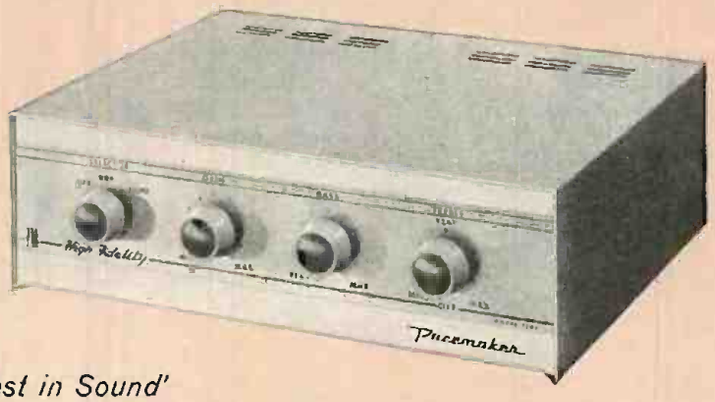

Bell *'World Renowned For the Best in Sound'*

LETTERS

Does *Così's* Chambermaid Qualify?

SIR:

I enjoyed Dr. Sol London's article "Is Opera Fair to Doctors?" immensely, and I admire his wide knowledge in the operatic field, which enables him not only distinctly to characterize the various types of physicians and quacks appearing in operas, but even to qualify them statistically.

I wonder, however, whether he has overlooked or intentionally omitted the quack in Mozart's *Così fan tutte*, who saves the lives of two poisoned suicides by mesmerism. Strictly speaking, this mesmerist is not a real physician, but a disguised chambermaid. Likewise, his patients have not swallowed a drop of poison, but simulate an attempted double suicide; and only two ladies on the stage — not the audience — believe in the suicides and the doctor. For this reason Dr. London may have excluded that would-be physician from his show.

On the other hand, for the audience the role played by the chambermaid in the plot is an amusing, good-humored caricature of a quack, who in view of two dying men and all the excitement around them boasts of his polyglot learning and then with his "mesmeric magnetic stone" successfully performs his miraculous cure.

Dr. London will know better than I do whether the famous Dr. Mesmer was still at the height of his career when *Così fan tutte* was written. Mozart himself, while composing this scene, may have remembered the performance of his singspiel *Bastien und Bastienne* in Dr. Mesmer's house in Vienna when he was a boy of twelve.

Ludwig Misch
New York, N. Y.

Love Letter to a Love Letter

SIR:

Again I am writing to express my pleasure with each issue of HIGH FIDELITY. . . . This time I am referring to the article "Love Letter to an Old Speed" by John Ball, Jr. which ap-

Ellington Photo by Aram Avakian

The Duke was made for High Fidelity

Ferde Grofe, who went on to write for Toscanini, used to sit all night in the old Cotton Club, moved and mystified by the music of Ellington. He finally confessed that the Duke's magic could not be set down as so many notes on a piece of paper. The phonograph records of those days in the late twenties, treasures though they are, give us little more than the shadows of what Ferde Grofe heard.

The elegance which is Ellington's now was there 30 years ago when he and his five Washingtonians sat down to make their first records before a solitary horn pick-up in a New York loft. It is still there in muffled echo for those lucky enough to have the old recordings. For the essence of jazz is the impulse of the man who plays it; and the essence of the Duke is not one instrument—but 15—because he alone among jazz composers has made the whole orchestra his instrument.

Today, for the first time, we are as rich as he, for the records we play at home over high fidelity, or the performances we listen to over FM, have all the sumptuous texture that taunted Ferde Grofe because it seemed to him then beyond recapture.

High fidelity has come of age and many excellent instruments are available today. The distinction that is Harman-Kardon's comes, perhaps, from the sensitivity and understanding its people have for the work their products do. There is more here than simple devotion to perfection in curves and percentages. That surely exists at Harman-Kardon; but a genuine feeling for the "bursting white lights" and the limitless shadings of the music is also there. Inescapably, this special sensitivity to the music—whether Ellington's or Mozart's—is expressed in the way operating controls are organized, in the emphasis placed on one function over another and in the way the product looks.

Perhaps the finest expression of this marriage of engineering skill and feeling for the art is the Harman-Kardon Festival II, Model TA-1040, shown above. Here in a graceful compact unit is a complete and powerful high fidelity electronic center. Simply connect it to an equally fine record player and speaker, and a high fidelity system of incomparable performance is yours.

The Festival combines a highly sensitive AM-FM tuner, a complete preamplifier and a 40 watt hum-free, distortion-free power amplifier. It features: magnificent Armstrong FM with Automatic Frequency Control to insure accurate tuning *automatically;* Automatic Noise Gate to eliminate noise between stations when tuning; sensitive AM with 10KC whistle filter; Dynamic Loudness Contour Control to provide precise balance for your own hearing characteristics; enormously effective treble and bass controls to adjust for the acoustics of your room; selectable record equalization; remote speaker selector switch; illuminated tuning meter and rumble filter. All this expressed in six easy to operate controls.

The cage and control panel are finished in brushed copper; the knobs and escutcheon frame in matte black. The Festival stands 4-5/16″ high, 16-1/8″ wide and 14″ deep.

The Festival price is $225.00

We have little regard for the typical commercial testimonial, but happily, our admiration for Edward Kennedy Ellington is reciprocated by the Duke. Long before this advertisement was contemplated, he had chosen Harman-Kardon tuners and amplifiers for his personal and professional use. The Festival, he tells us, is his favorite for listening at home.

FREE: beautiful, new, fully illustrated catalog. Describes complete Harman-Kardon line and includes guides on how and where to buy high fidelity. Send for your copy now. Write: Harman-Kardon, Inc. Department H-06, 520 Main Street, Westbury, New York.

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ON THE COUNTER

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Tech Labs is marketing a TAPE EDITING kit which includes, for $8.95, a splicing block, marker pencil, cutting blades, splicing tape, and instruction book.

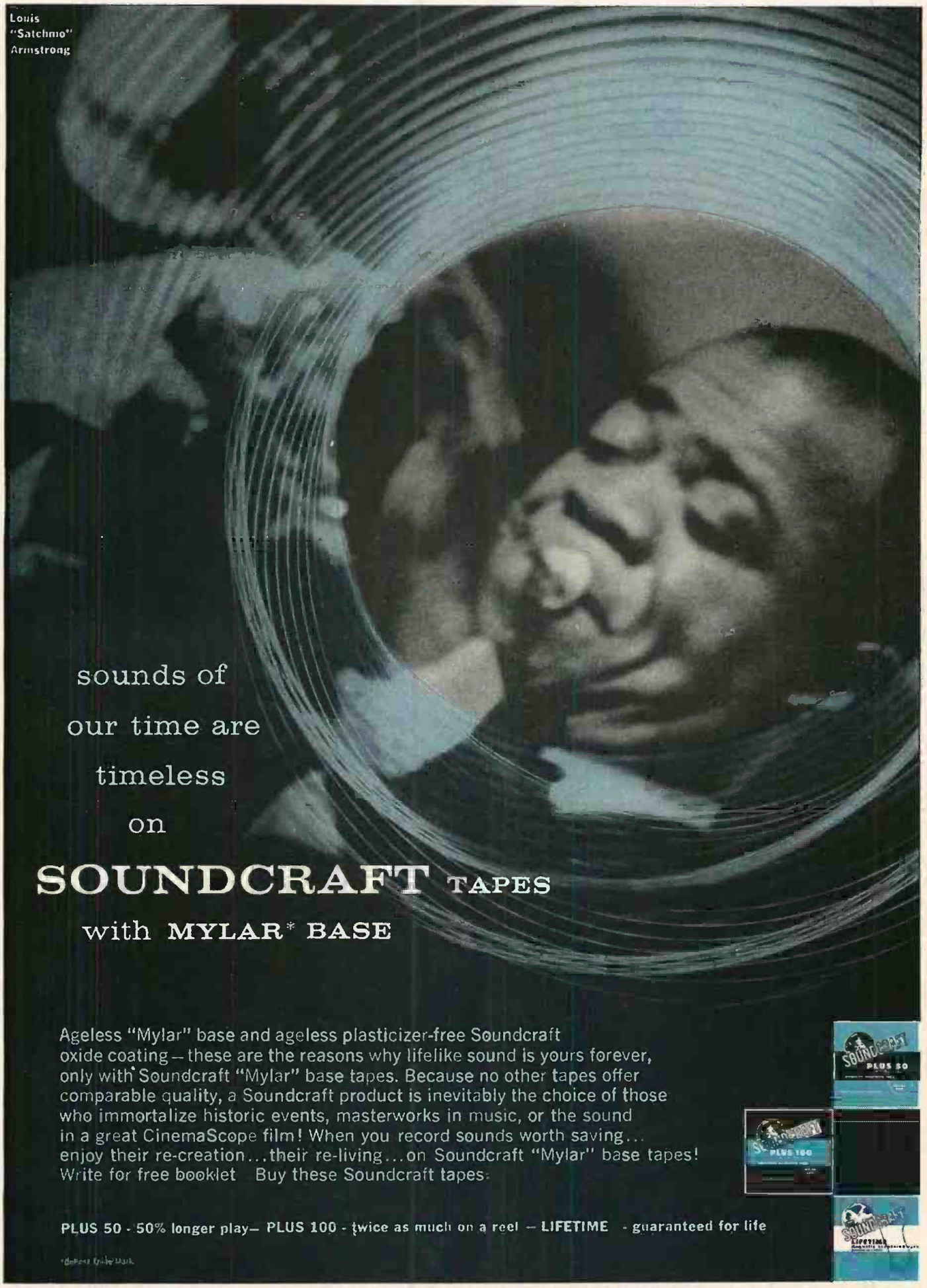
If you are interested in PUBLIC ADDRESS equipment, be sure to get Bogen's new catalogue; they have done a complete redesign job.

Two new AMPLIFIERS have been announced by H. H. Scott: the models 240 and 280, rated at 40 and 80 watts output, respectively. The 280 features the Dynamic Power Monitor Circuit, said to prevent speaker damage on sudden overloads. The power level at which the monitor circuit will go into operation is continuously adjustable. Both amplifiers use 6CA7 tubes in the output circuit and have variable damping controls. Prices not stated.

British Industries has introduced the Genalex KT88 TUBE, essentially a higher powered yet more compact version of the famous British KT66. With fixed bias, an output of 100 watts may be obtained from a pair of KT88 tubes with a plate supply of 560 volts.

"Quik-Craft" is the designation of a series of SPEAKER ENCLOSURE kits introduced by Allied Radio, in their Knight line. All are of the Klipsch type, for corner placement. All parts are precision cut, and there is said to be no need for sawing, sanding, gluing, or drilling. Prefinished models in blonde or mahogany are priced at $46.75 for 12-in. models and $54.75 for 15-in. models. Prefinished assembled, the prices are $62.50 and $77.50 respectively; unfinished and unassembled, prices are $34.95 and $39.95, also respectively.

Audio-Master has a battery-operated TAPE RECORDER, called "Butoba," which weighs only 20 pounds complete. It may be operated on house current as well.



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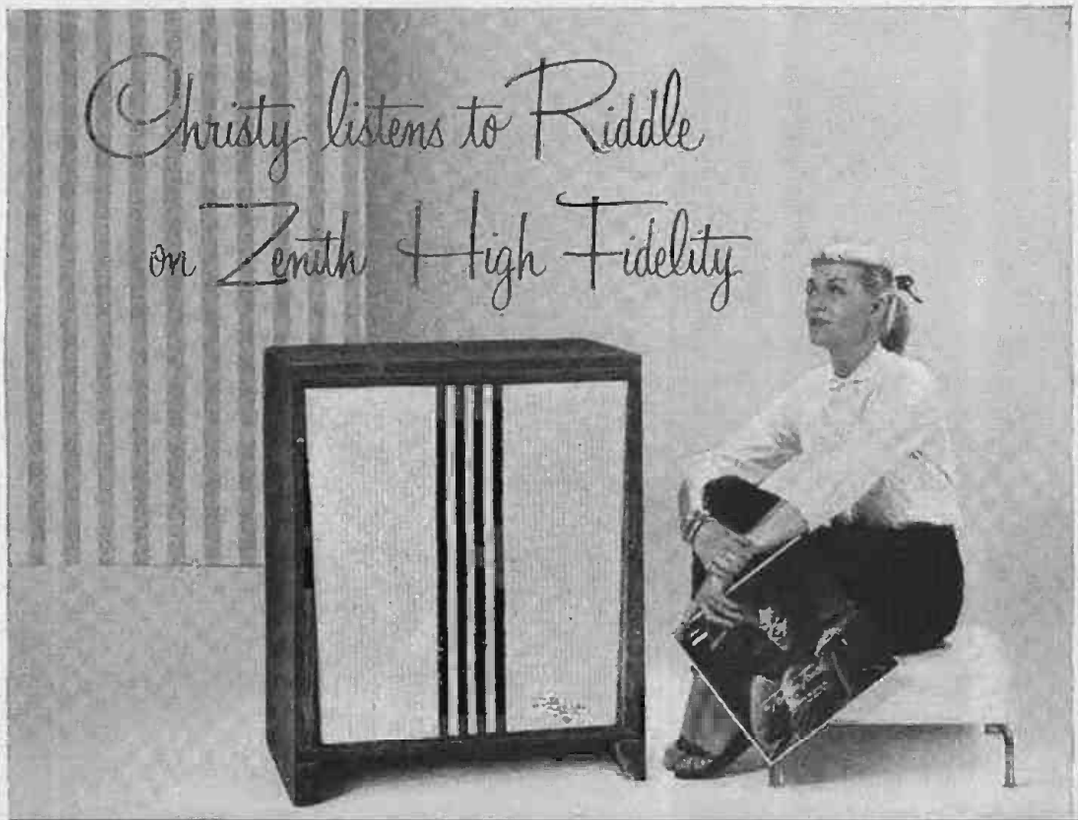

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- Automatically shuts off changer when last record finishes.

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the quality goes in before the Zenith name goes on ZENITH

Featured two of Capitol Record's latest . . . "The Misty Miss Christy" and Riddle's "The Yeoder Touch."

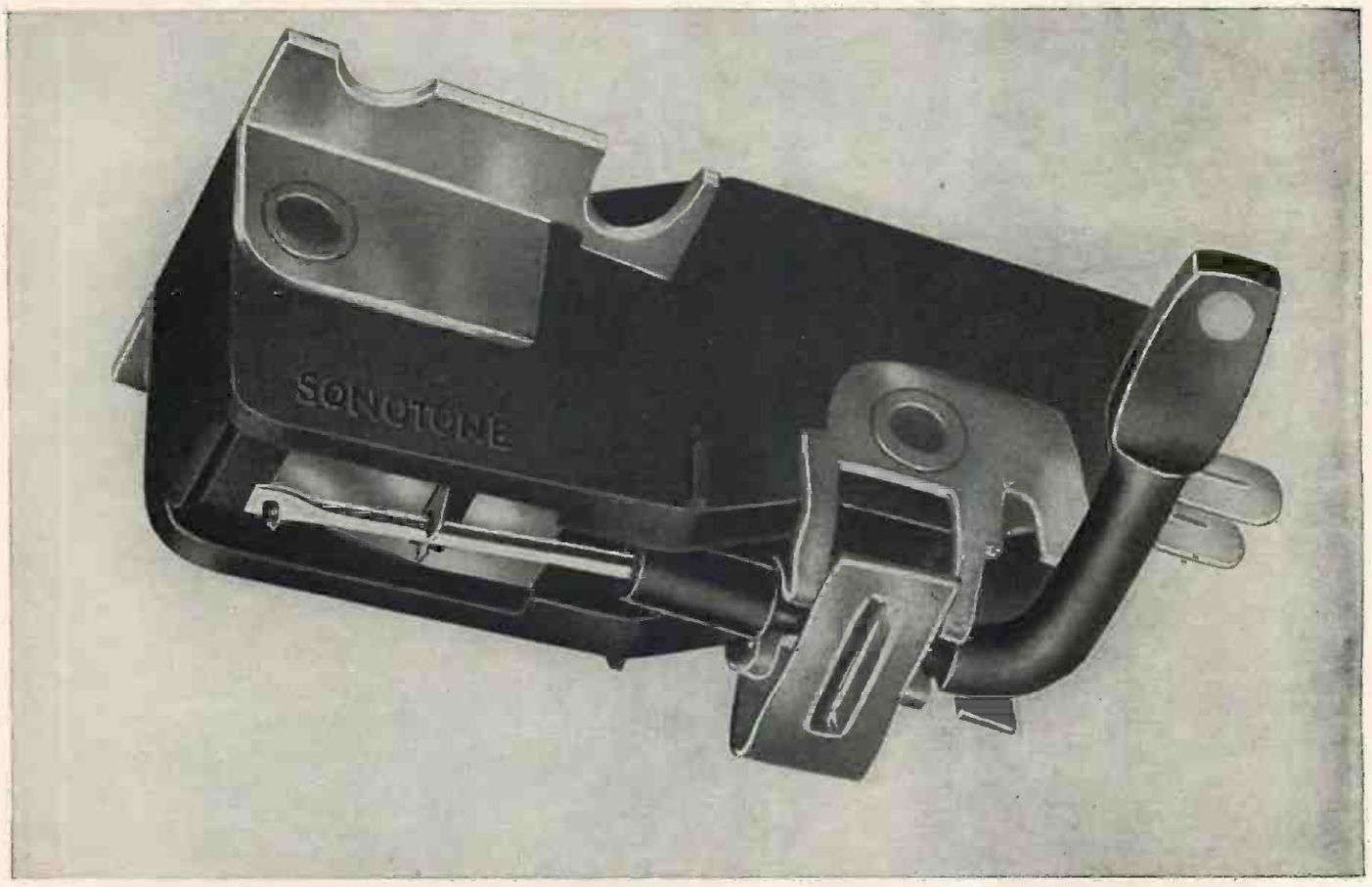
Notes FROM Abroad

LONDON — The most interesting disc issued here lately, to my way of thinking, is an HMV ten-inch of Robert Simpson's First Symphony. Like Peter Racine Fricker's Second Symphony, or the coupling of Matyas Seiber's Third and Michael Tippett's Second String Quartets, this is a recording sponsored by the British Council — a body devoted to disseminating British culture. But none of its recent output seems to have got into the American catalogues yet. The Simpson work, when it does reach abroad, will reveal an interesting new voice in British music. Like Tippett, Simpson (born 1921) is a contrapuntist; as author of *Carl Nielsen: Symphonist*, he knows all about tonal struggles, and in the Symphony he stages a tug-o'-war across the tritone between A (the home key) and E flat. What evades verbal description is his rare and poetic fancy, touched here and there with a naivety which, like that of Berlioz, has a certain charming quality. The scoring is clean and attractive, and the London Philharmonic under Boult handles the music with affection.

Old recordings, however, are more in the news than modern ones — though the news stems from Paris. Now that the long-debated divorce between His Master's Voice over here and RCA Victor has occurred, HMV might have been expected to go digging among the vaults at Hayes, mining raw material for magnificent microgroove collections of Battistini and early Caruso, of Chaliapin and Elisabeth Schumann, of Schnabel and Casals and the Budapest Quartet — while under the same roof Columbia (U.K.), long since separated from Columbia (U.S.), got to work on Claudia Muzio or the Lener Quartet or Eva Turner. But EMI seems to have little independent sense of his-

Continued on page 19

LISTENING QUALITY, SUPERB!



"...overall smoothness instantly apparent" says The Audio League, reporting on tests of the revolutionary new Sonotone Super-Fidelity Ceramic Cartridge.*

To the many other advantages of ceramic cartridges, now add response..."unusually smooth over its entire range". Those are the words of The Audio League —and there is no more respected authority for expert, impartial *listening* tests. Here are further authorized quotes from their April, 1956 report:

"...very substantial middle and bass performance. It gives the impression of a more substantial extreme bottom than one gets with a magnetic cartridge and any of the several moderately good commercial pre-amplifier-equalizer units..."

"...a most appealing sense of balance of the various portions of the spectrum..."

"...in view of its excellent listening quality, it must be considered an outstanding buy when used with an appropriate amplifier..."

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NOTES FROM ABROAD

Continued from page 17

tory. Under the series title "Golden Treasury of Immortal Performances," Hayes took over some sets from Camden: the Kolodin *Fifty Years* anthology, the poorly engineered Caruso three-disc set, some Rachmaninoff, some Horowitz, and a few others. These cost a few shillings more than ordinary celebrity-label LPs. But independent work has been limited to a couple of John McCormack reissues. The success of the Kolodin *Fifty Years*, or of Supervia's *Carmen* on Parlophone has so far not pointed the way.

Hayes have left their "subsidiary" in Paris, Pathé-Marconi, to make the running. In March, the Paris firm came out with a burst of "*Gravures Illustrés*," both HMV and Columbia. Among them: Schnabel's five Beethoven concertos (including a new version of the C minor, not previously released, with the Philharmonia under Dobrowen, recorded in 1947); Busch's six *Brandenburgs*; the Kreisler Beethoven Concerto; and the Cortot-Thibaud-Casals Haydn (Op. 73, No. 2) and Schubert (Op. 99) Trios. The magazine *Disques* splashed the event, and tucked into the March issue was a pocket with a little sample 45 that may become a collector's piece, in that it has one side HMV and one side Columbia. It includes snippets from Schnabel's *Emperor*, the Haydn Trio, Weingartner's *Choral* Symphony (the Scherzo), and Busch's Second *Brandenburg*. Future releases planned are the Kreisler-Rupp Beethoven sonatas, the Casals Bach suites, the Schnabel Beethoven Sonatas (not maddeningly divided across discs as they are in the U.S.), Fischer's Bach Concertos, and Weingartner's Beethoven Symphonies.

The live wire behind all this is the Franco-American Jacques Leiser, who hops over from Paris to Hayes and unearths the treasures — discovering unpublished Elisabeth Schumanns and suchlike in the process — takes his mothers and masters and acetates and tapes back to Paris, and there supervises the work of re-edition. EMI are plotting to make these discs available over here in an under-the-counter sort of way — as in an "international" (very hard to obtain) series with the title "Great Recordings of the Century," and rather squalid little English versions of the luxe leaflet material that

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NOTES FROM ABROAD

Continued from preceding page

goes with the French issues. Eventually many of them will reach America as Angels. The instrumental reissues will interest U.S. collectors less than they do us, who are starved for the famous 78 performances. But the vocals should be fine, since they are worked up from original material, and so will be in a different class from, say, Rococo's Patti and Caruso dubbings. Among the first to appear should be a Muzio operatic collection, an Elisabeth Schumann Wolf and Strauss coupling (including an unpublished Wolf pair, *Wie glänzt der helle Mond* and *Nimmersatte Liebe*), and a Chaliapin.

AMONG Angel recordings on the stocks, made in London, is the long-anticipated *Rosenkavalier* conducted by Karajan, with Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (Marschallin), Christa Ludwig (Octavian), Teresa Stich-Randall (Sophie), and Otto Edelmann (Ochs). A fascinating piece of casting is that of Ljuba Welitch as the Duenna. The Three Noble Orphans are sung by Schwarzkopf, Ludwig, and Kerstin Meyer—a new Scandinavian mezzo who has just had a sensational success in Manchester doing *Das Lied von der Erde* with the Hallé and Barbirolli.

Angel's next big undertaking was *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, which Maria Meneghini Callas did straight after her two enormously successful *Normas* in Covent Garden. She had a triumph in these, and by all accounts from those who had heard both, was singing about three times as well as she did in New York. A *Daily Express* photographer sneaked in to the *Barber* sessions and, with a telephoto lens, caught the bespectacled diva pulling some faces that the opera-house audience never sees. Published, the pictures not only caused amusement, but revealed that a Callas *Barber* was on the way, which didn't do any good to the freshly released Decca (London) version with Simionato as Rosina. The Angel cast includes Luigi Alva (Almaviva) and Tito Gobbi (Figaro). Conductor, Callas favorite Carlo Maria Giulini. The latest Angel opera to be recorded is Orff's *Der Mond*, with Elisabeth Schwarzkopf and Hans Hotter, and Wolfgang Sawallisch as conductor. The Philharmonia Orchestra is in all three.

ANDREW PORTER

Hat Doffing

We doff our hats, in admiration, to Bell Sound Systems for this complete specification on their data sheet on the recent Model 2300 amplifier: "Power Output, 20 watts at less than 0.3% harmonic distortion; intermodulation distortion, using 60 cycles and 7 KC mixed 4:1, less than 0.5% at 20 watts." That's the way an IM spec should read.

We do the same for Audiospeaker Laboratories, who almost made us fall out of our chair when we were preparing "On the Counter" with this specific about one of their loudspeaker systems: "Frequency range from 15 to 15,000 cycles, . . ." (so far, this is a more or less standard statement; it's what comes after the comma that startled us) ". . . with total variation of 24 db." Now *that* is something. It is rare indeed that such a statement is seen. We must admit, on behalf of speaker manufacturers who don't publish such information, that there are no standards of measurement, and different methods produce different results. But Audiospeaker deserves a pat on the back for saying something, anything. They went on, by the way, to another unusual statement: "Harmonic distortion at 30 cycles, with 6 watts input, less than 5%."

These figures, by the way, certainly throw the spotlight on one of the major areas of possible improvement in high-fidelity systems. No one, today, would think of buying a power amplifier or preamp-control unit which couldn't beat "response ± 12 db from 15 to 15,000 cycles; output 6 watts at 5% harmonic distortion." That's worse than the cheapest of public address amplifiers!

La Jolla Move

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NOTED WITH INTEREST

Continued from preceding page

quarters at 367 Bird Rock Ave., La Jolla. Thanks to Richard Entringer for a nice letter about his activities.

Marlboro Music Festival

Note on your calendars that the Marlboro, Vt. music festival dates are June 29 to August 26, under the direction of Rudolf Serkin. For further information, write Professor Harvey J. Olnick, Faculty of Music, University of Toronto, 135 College St., Toronto, Canada.

Demonstrating High Fidelity

One of the most fascinating books we have received in a long time is a spiral bound volume prepared by Robert Wagner of Bethlehem, Pa. It tells the story of what might be called the development of a high-fidelity demonstration program.

Once upon a time, Mr. Wagner started giving short talks and demonstrations to explain to people what hi-fi really was. As time went on — and his talks became more and more in demand — he expanded his equipment until now he has several thousand dollars tied up in a portable stereo setup which includes slide projectors so he can visualize for his audience, as well as verbalize. Over the years Mr. Wagner has brought the story, first of hi-fi and now of stereo, to more than 4,000 people!

His equipment is used for recording of local music groups and is frequently borrowed by radio stations for playback over FM and AM to provide true stereo.

Citroen and Tape

The new French car, the Citroen DS-19 has a good many unorthodox features, including a very deep dash, sweeping back, almost flat, from the windshield. Radio Monte Carlo has a DS-19. It also has an Ampex 601. So it built the Ampex into the dash; slick installation.

Record Filming

The problem of how to organize and catalogue a record collection is being tackled from many angles. Latest to come to our attention is a preprinted 5 by 7-in. card, the front side being

subdivided into spaces for three listings. Each space has separate, ruled lines for Work, Composer, Conductor, Artist(s), Orchestra, and Side(s). In addition, the front of the card has short lines for Index No., Position in Library, Speed, Date Acquired, Label, and Label No. The back of the card is blank. Cards are available from The Well-Tempered Collector, Erwinna, Bucks County, Pa., at $4.00 per hundred, postpaid, or samples for 25¢.

Honesty Is Best Policy

So thinks one of the big mail-order houses, which will furnish you with anything from kitchen sinks to attic ventilators . . . as well as fine high-fidelity radio-phonos, for which they honestly claim: "Hear each note just as it was played . . . bass notes boom, high notes soar."

Record Jackets

A certain reader, name of Tom Bowie, who lives at Seven Oaks, St. Charles, Ill., obviously blew his top some time ago. The cause of the blow up was limp record jackets, limper record jacket interliners, and so on. After a space of time, Mr. Bowie became sufficiently infuriated to do something about it: he designed and has had made a fine inner jacket, of white kraft paper, which he says is dustproof, lintproof, staticproof, and limpproof. It holds the record, and slips inside the regular jacket, taking the place of the plastic crumble-upper.

Record inner jackets are not Mr. Bowie's regular business, but those who have seen the jackets have asked for more, so he is making them available, commercially, at $5.00 a hundred, postpaid. If you want your name printed in the corner, or a motto, or something, add another $5.00 per hundred.

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SP12B *Radax 12" Coaxial speaker.* Frequency response, 30 — 13,000 cps. 20 watts program material, 40 watts peak. Net,.....$33.00.

SP15B *Radax 15" Coaxial speaker.* Frequency response, 30 — 13,000 cps. 20 watts program material, 40 watts peak. Net,.....$43.00.

SP15 *Radax Super-Fifteen 15" Coaxial speaker.* Frequency response, 30 — 13,000 cps. 30 watts program material, 60 watts peak. Net,.....$85.00.

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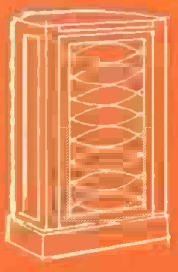

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A Word from Avery Fisher

Founder and President, Fisher Radio Corporation

One of the most gratifying aspects of my career as a creator of high fidelity equipment is the correspondence received over the years from our patrons throughout the world. And I have had the pleasure of meeting many of these people personally at high fidelity shows. It recently occurred to me that the questions asked by our patrons are frequently of such universal interest that I decided to devote this corner to personal comments that may be of interest to high fidelity enthusiasts everywhere.

WHY IT IS BEST TO BUY QUALITY AT THE OUTSET

When you consider it, there is perhaps no investment you can make that will give you so much pleasure for so many years, at so little cost per year—for equipment and upkeep—as a good high fidelity system. That is why my earnest advice to those who are considering a high fidelity system for their home is that they buy the best *first*. If you consider that good equipment can be expected to last twenty years or longer, the additional cost per annum (between such a system and a mediocre one) is very little indeed. Of course, budget limitations may prevent the larger investment at the outset. If that is the case, it is then wise to start with the best electronic equipment you can afford coupled with an *inexpensive* speaker system. The reason is that the latter can be built up as desired, without obsoleting any part of it. Several speaker manufacturers have excellent build-as-you-go plans you can follow.

Within the limits of the available space I will try to cover those subjects in which there appears to be the greatest interest. So that this little column may achieve the universal appeal I seek for it, I will greatly appreciate hearing from you on any suggestions you may have.

Avery Fisher

BOOKSHELF

Continued from page 26

still to be found not in these murky and sentimentalized verbalizations but in his own matchless performances and the inspiring historical record of his personal incorruptibility — a record which all of us are now fervently praying may not be prematurely concluded by Casals' recent heart attack. As I write, the news holds out welcome hope both for his own complete recovery and the continuation of his incomparable services to music in the new series of festivals which were inaugurated last spring in his Puerto Rico birthplace.

Alban Berg was perhaps more a martyr (to constant illness, as well as to the incomprehension of most of his contemporaries) than a saint, but his peculiar genius also is far more readily apparent through direct experience of *Wozzeck*, *Lulu*, and the Violin Concerto than it ever can be through words. Nevertheless, in this case, there has been so little available in English on his life and work (the promised translation of Willi Reich's 1937 German biography has never appeared, as far as I know) that H. F. Redlich's **Alban Berg: The Man and His Music** (Abelard Schuman, $5.00) would be welcome solely for its documentary value.

Happily it has that in abundance, for it includes a wealth of material never available in print before; but it also has much more. The short section on the man himself may leave him still remote, but by no means as completely enigmatic as he has been, while the chapters on the "New Viennese School" (of Schoenberg, Webern, and Berg), the "twelve-tone technique" in general, and Berg's own works in particular are richly illuminating as well as informative.

Redlich wisely eschews descriptive for rigorously technical analysis — which, for all its clarity and point, makes formidably difficult reading. Much of this book indeed hardly can be read in the normal way, but must be used as bar-by-bar annotations to a study of the music itself, either in recorded performances or printed scores. Yet at least some of the seemingly opaque mysteries of Berg's work become more translucent here, and we begin to realize far better the historical inevitability of their only superficially "revolutionary" idioms. At the very

Continued on page 30

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BOOKSHELF

Continued from page 28

least, Redlich — no less than Berg himself — proffers a valiant challenge to anyone as willing to think hard as he is to feel deeply.

GRACE NOTES

Festival of Opera. The latest opera-"story" collection, compiled by Henry Simon, probably is the most extensive to date, for it runs to over 700 pages and covers no less than 129 works, ranging alphabetically from *The Abduction from the Seraglio* to *Wozzeck*, and chronologically from Vecchi's *L'Amfiparnaso* of 1594 to Menotti's *The Saint of Bleeker Street* of 1954. And it certainly is the most informal and colloquial in style — as might be expected from its source in the popular "Festival of Opera" broadcast series conducted by Dario Soria, who provides the preface here. Indeed for opera *cognoscenti* it is apt to seem excessively popularized, if not flippant. But the delighted man in the street, to whom it is frankly directed, will find the complications of opera plots solved so deftly that he is hardly likely to worry overmuch when the author simply cuts, rather than trys to unravel, many of the Gordian knots. Yet even the man in the street may suspect that Fritz Kredel's some 51 full-page line drawings capture the magic of memorable operatic scenes with all the imaginative skill of a new graduate from an illustrators' correspondence school (Hanover House, $5.00).

Sopranos of Today. No opera fan, particularly one already familiar with Harold Rosenthal's sumptuous *Opera Annuals* (reviewed here Feb. 1956 and Mar. 1957), can afford to miss his slimmer but no less handsome or informative collection of "Studies of Twenty-Five Opera Singers." A few of the prima donnas discussed and photographed here are probably better known abroad than in this country, but most of them — from Victoria de los Angeles to Ljuba Welitch — are internationally famous; and all of them are of course represented on records, as documented here by brief discographies appended to each study (Greenberg, $3.95). R.D.D.

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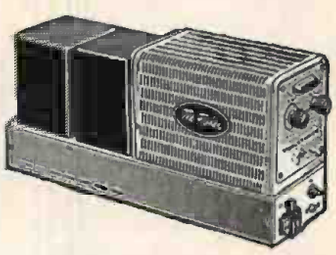

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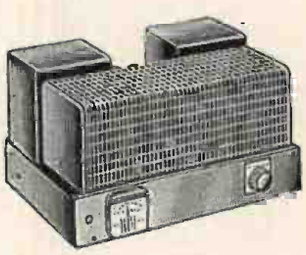

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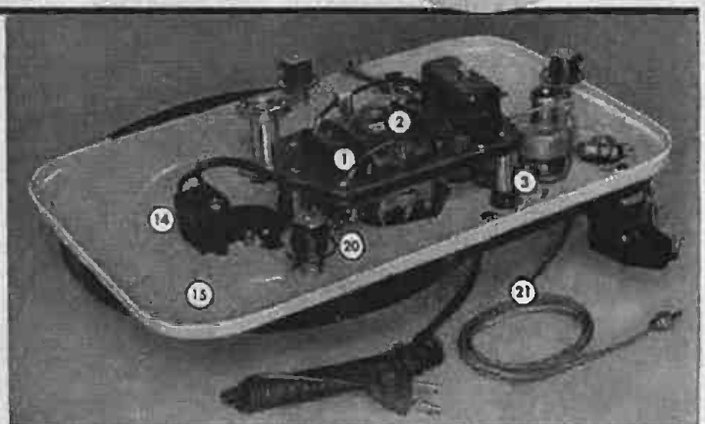

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A Guest Editorial

Stravinsky — Fifteen and Three-Score

by Nicolas Nabokov

NO ONE CAN TELL what future generations will think of Stravinsky's music. They may downgrade it as we in the Twenties downgraded the romanticists; they may look upon Stravinsky as the last and concluding link in a gentle and charming art long since replaced by electronics, or other science-fiction devices, for the production of sound structures; they may also consider him — the chameleon and the phoenix of the art of music — as a kind of freak and place him in the imaginary museum of *personae rare* next to Gesualdo, Pico, or Grimmelshausen. For us, his contemporaries, such speculations are, of course, aimless and futile. What counts for us is the extraordinary presence of Stravinsky's music accompanying our lives for more than fifty years; what counts is the concrete reality of his achievements.

We owe an immense debt of gratitude to Igor Stravinsky for having shaped, more than anyone else in his time, our musical consciousness and for *translating* (in the deepest sense of the word) precisely and conclusively into the language of music our ways of feeling and thinking, our modes of behavior — indeed all that Plato meant by "the states and motions of our soul." In that gift there is only one other artist comparable to him: Picasso. To be sure, many other articulate artists and poets contributed to the shaping of our epoch's character and the guiding of its vagrant moods and manners, yet none has left, I would venture to say, his imprint upon our time so audibly and visibly as did Stravinsky and Picasso. In most of our Ulyssean adventures they were our guides and companions, and our psyche trusted them more than anyone else.

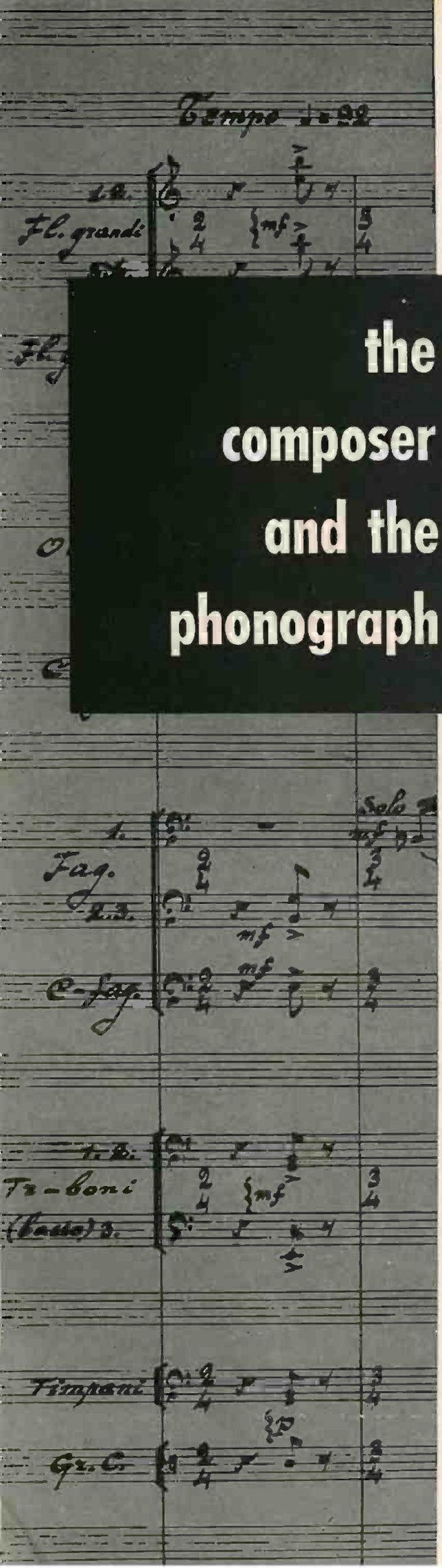
Even outwardly there is a striking parallel in both men's careers: the early recognition and the long, unbroken line of fame, the greedy, insatiable interest in techniques and materials, and the kind of miraculous stamp of "this is mine and nobody else's" on every one of their works. There is, however, one important difference between Picasso and Stravinsky; whereas the latter's productive capacity has been remarkably steady and free of duds, Picasso's turbulently prolific career has been strewn with works of uneven quality. From among all of the works Stravinsky has written in his seventy-five years of life, I feel that there are hardly any failures; but it is rather easy to trip over poor, if expensive, Picassos.

Perhaps one of the most fascinating and to me most significant aspects of Stravinsky's genius is his ability to explore the farthest horizons of our musical heritage and to assimilate his findings to his own art, making them the most intimate part of his own style and technique and even of his own idiosyncrasies. At the same time, in achieving this reinterpretation — or rather reincarnation — of past traditions, Stravinsky shows an extraordinarily lucid intuition in that he always reaches and exposes the very heart of the problem, the very essence of past tradition. As a result, his works, though always addressed to one or another aspect of our Western heritage, and hence profoundly *traditional* in character, are never academically boring. Quite on the contrary, they are loaded with new meaning and with an extraordinary youthful freshness. They are neither didactic and pedantic explications of the past, nor are they stylistic masquerades, as have been so many works of art in our time (from Prokofiev's charming, yet somewhat hollow *Classical* Symphony to Villa-Lobos' *Bachianas*).

Watching this masterful exploration of past tradition by Igor Stravinsky is like seeing doors open into forgotten rooms of an ancestral castle and, instead of finding musty relics of bygone days, discovering lovely and exciting objects set in the framework of beautiful modern furniture. I believe that this unique achievement of Stravinsky's is made possible only because of the lofty spirit of irony with which he approaches past tradition. And I do not mean the superficial understanding of what irony is, but rather the irony of Ulysses, of Prospero, and of Plato.

It may indeed be that this particular aspect of Stravinsky's genius is symbolic of an aging civilization (and Toynbeesque Cassandras as well as anti-intellectual vulgarians are a legion to tell us so). Yet it may also be that this desire to return and penetrate with a seeing eye the secrets of the archetypes of our civilization is symbolic of our burning and desperate desire to find a new synthesis and, in order to find it, to resume a secret and creative dialogue with *all* of our past.

After all, Stravinsky may well be performing a role similar to that of the authors of the Vedantas or of the Talmud, or even of the early Christian fathers, interpreting, expostulating, explaining, and thus helping to draw a new conclusion and a new basis upon which will rest the intellectual and artistic achievements of future generations.



The score of Symphonie de Psaumes *reproduced from an original manuscript written in the composer's own hand.*

the composer and the phonograph

by ROBERT CRAFT

THE PHONOGRAPH rose swiftly to popularity in St. Petersburg at the turn of the century. "Red Label" celebrity records, indeed, originated in that city in 1901 with Medea Mei-Figner's recorded performance of the Act III aria from *Pique Dame*. The vogue was imported, then, only insofar as the phonographs themselves were of English or American manufacture; and vogue it certainly was, with amateurs legion. We may suppose the discriminations of the latter to have been less concerned with equipment and low fidelity than with the new recording idols. Chaliapin was one such, and also Sobinoff, the Chaliapin of Russian tenors; the best-selling reputations of both were creations to a large extent of the new machine. By 1907 or so the megaphonic horn had even been introduced as a poetic image: Stravinsky remembers a line from a Russian poem of that era describing a pink apparatus.

Recording the Octet for French Columbia in the early Thirties.

Stravinsky foresaw from the first the new machine's value to himself as a composer; he also inherited a certain prejudice against it. Rimsky-Korsakov was the lion of St. Petersburg musical opinion, and Rimsky-Korsakov was antiphonograph. Though we now attribute to his influence a full share of the academicism in subsequent Russian music, in 1905 he was thought to be unacademically progressive. Therefore, Rimsky's attitude to a medium that promised the composer faithful, direct representation and wide communication is too inconsistent to be anything but personal. Stravinsky suggests as much. Rimsky-Korsakov disapproved of the repertory of *kitsch* and opera arias which was for some time the only music recorded. The fact that Tchaikovsky arias were more popular than Rimsky-

Korsakov arias did not help. Then, too, phonographs proliferated star performers. One notes that Rimsky-Korsakov's ill-tolerance of the interpreting species is a disposition that has stuck to his own star pupil. Stravinsky did not accord the phonograph serious attention until years later.

Recordings as communicating influences did not, in fact, enter Stravinsky's life until 1914. In that year, in Paris, he became a collector of records of American popular music. He did not possess his own machine, however, until the following year, by which time he had taken up residence in Switzerland, at Morges. In that same 1915, during a stay in Madrid while touring Spain with the Russian Ballet, he purchased a collection of *corrida* and *gitana* records; they were to afford him much pleasure and perhaps encouraged the *Española*, the *Madrid*, and the *Pasodoble* from *L'Histoire du soldat*, all composed in the next three years. In-

COLUMBIA RECORDS

Preparatory to recording the Octet anew, 1954.

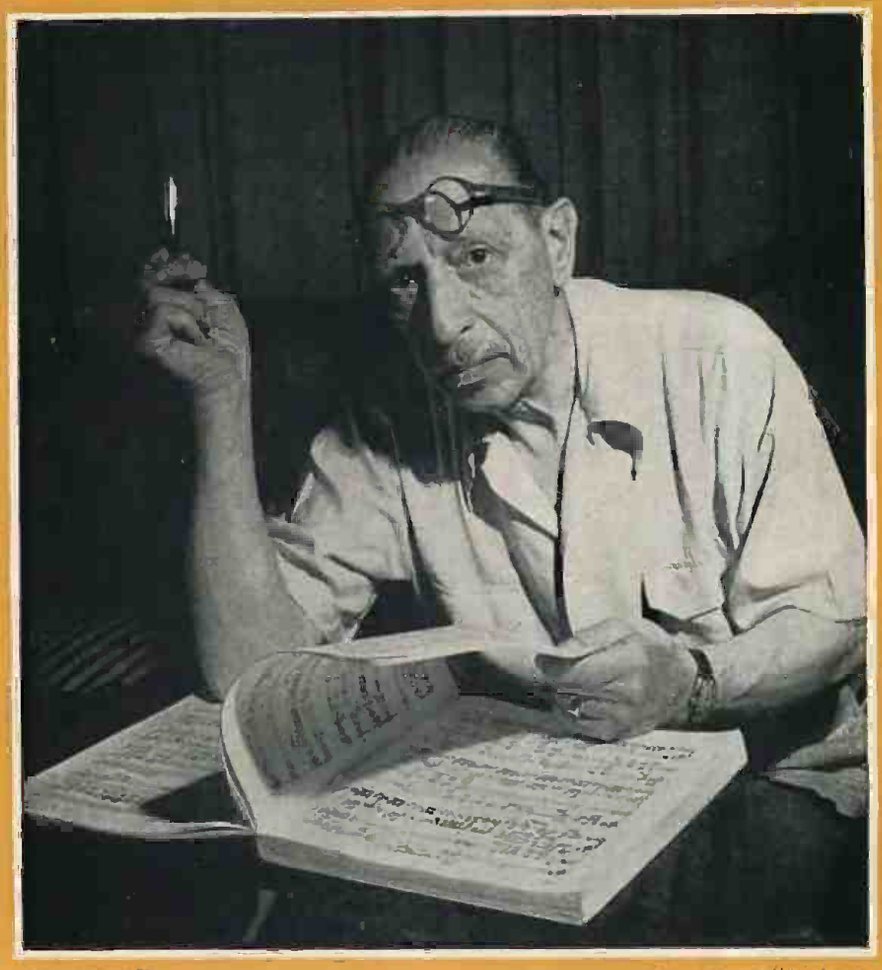
cidentally, the acquisition of these records is closely associated in Stravinsky's mind with another event. During this same stay in Spain, and in company with Diaghilev, he saw his first Chaplin film; the two Russians were speechless with delight and admiration.

Back in Switzerland, a fresh supply of ragtime records brought from the U.S.A. in 1916 by Ernest Ansermet became an actual source for *L'Histoire du soldat*, for the *Ragtime for Eleven Instruments* and the *Piano Rag-Music*. Though Ansermet also brought back printed music, his records — by coming before written music — created a precedent in the communication of a new musical style. Even today Stravinsky expresses delight in recollection of his first encounter with those new ragtime records.

Stravinsky's own first recordings do not properly come under my title at all. I refer to the pianola rolls that he made between 1917 and 1927, for Pleyel in Paris and later for Duo Art in London. I do not know all of Stravinsky's reasons for devoting so much labor over a period of so many years to a limited and defunctive solution. The pianola was the descendant of eighteenth-century musical toys, and must have been recognized as such at the time. One can understand Stravinsky's interest in preserving his piano music in perforated roll form: for one thing, pianola rolls played longer than discs; for another, they guaranteed perfect tonal fidelity. One also understands his interest in composing especially for pianola (the étude *Madrid* of 1917). But publishers' emoluments must have been very grand to have made him transcribe some dozen works, the bulk then of his music, for the odd, ghostly instrument (readers who have not watched a pianola play cannot imagine the spectral effect produced by the movement of the playerless keys).

One must see the manuscripts of the pianola transcriptions of *The Rite of Spring*, *Pétrouchka*, *Le Rossignol*, the *Concertino* to realize the immensity of the undertaking. Stravinsky also had to devote months of practice to the project; he performed all of the music, the four-hand parts by synchronization against himself. The transcriptions of *Les Noces*, of the complete *Pulcinella*, of the *Four Russian Peasant Songs*, and the *Three Songs for Children* are of curiosity interest as pure piano versions of vocal music; the piano realization of the choral part in *Les Noces* must have involved a new conception of the music. The Library of Congress possesses copies of all of these rolls. They are of value as interpretative documents of certain pieces at the time they were composed; they antedate any Stravinsky disc.

Stravinsky's first performance for the phonograph was as pianist. In New York in 1925 he played his *Les Cinq doigts* to a microphone — it was one of the earliest electric recordings — in the studio of Brunswick Records. Alas, the recording never appeared. At about the same time (early 1925) he composed his *Sérénade en la* for piano solo, perhaps the first piece of serious music written advertently to record length; its four movements are contained on four twelve-inch sides at the 78-rpm speed, each movement complete on a side. The *Sérénade* was not actually commissioned by a recording company, but Stravinsky testifies that he wrote it "with recording in view." Then, and during all the years of 78 speed, record length was a cramping thought to composers — just as the film code for adulteries and *Continued on page 99*



DOUGLAS GLASS COURTESY ANGEL RECORDS

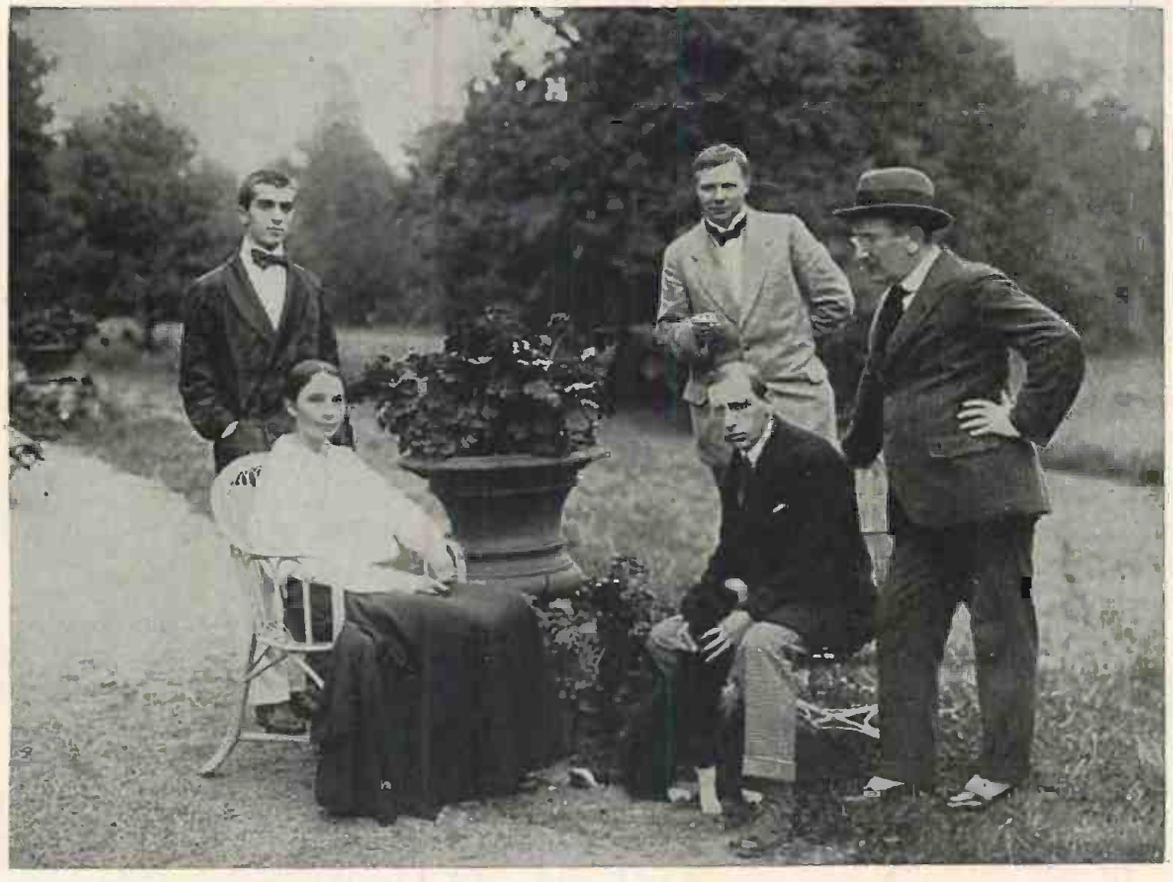
Pictures from an Album

by Lincoln Kirstein

INFORMAL SNAPSHOTS from an album, taken haphazardly over fifty years, look at first like those of everyone else, except that in Igor Stravinsky's album the faces belong to unusual people whose extraordinary association has made the history of an epoch in art and music. Stravinsky has had the genius in his ears to hear for us first; sounds he has found or invented, however strange or forbidding at the outset, have become domesticated in ours. The works he has composed now live a life independent of their original creation and of the circumstances of their first performance with famous orchestral conductors, ballet masters, designers. His repertory has become the usable furniture for our large musical and theatrical houses. We interpret his work today according to our circumstances of geography, economy, and imaginative capacity. But there was always the circumstance of a first performance, the excitement of revelation unveiled for which the first performers were responsible. The aura of historical authority makes that day unlike other days. So these snapshots, remarkable only for whom they portray at the moment portrayed, serve as a master key for the fat shelf of published scores, the long catalogue of recorded discs, the programs and designs dispersed in archives of museums or opera houses all over the Western world, Japan, Australia — everywhere, indeed, but in Russia today — and it is only from the Russian years, which closed for Stravinsky in 1914, that we found no snapshots. So we meet the artist as a grown man.

Stravinsky and children: Morges, 1915.

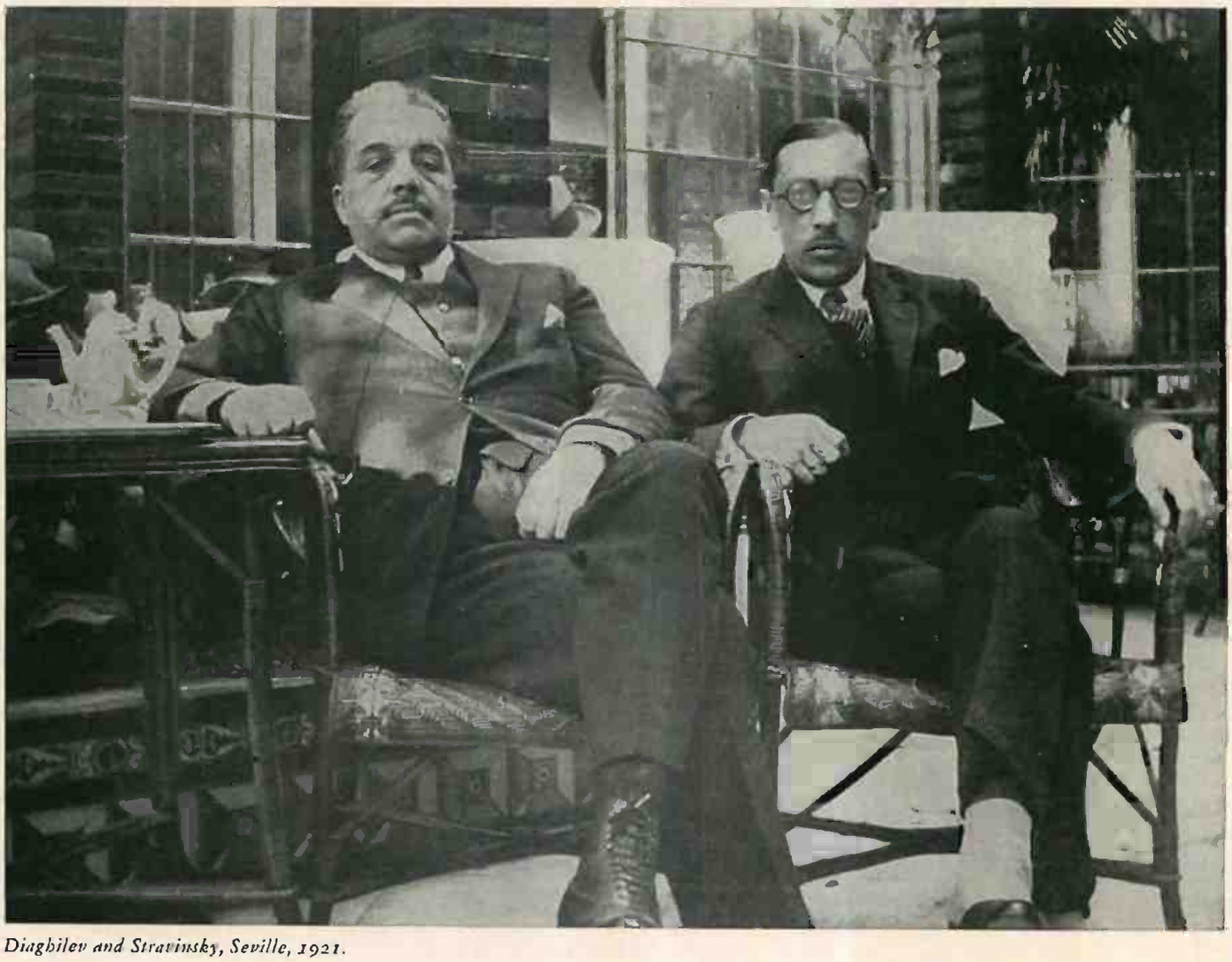
IN THE LITTLE Swiss town of Morges, Stravinsky composed *Les Noces*, in a huge attic atop an eighteenth-century house. The great Dionysian choral work compounded of Russian folk memories marked also the end of his service to the Slavic psyche. Stravinsky was wrapping up his origins preparatory to his long journeys into the revivification of the past, the exploration of the future. And Diaghilev, too, was discarding his early companions who had started with their pastiche of eighteenth-century Russo-French taste, the prime example being Leon Bakst. They were replaced by Natalie Goncharova and Michel Larionov, young folklorists whose first brilliant cloths in the style of peasant art later became the tea-room Russia of the 1917 *émigrés*. Nijinsky, the peak product of the Imperial Academy of St. Petersburg, was replaced by a beautiful young Muscovite, Leonide Massine. The orchestral score of *The Rite of Spring* survived its riotous première in 1913, just as *Les Noces* survived its debut in 1923, not in our theaters but in our concert halls. Some music seems to be able to dominate spectacle. Except for the revised and shortened *Fire Bird*, this proves true of most of Igor Stravinsky's "Russian" works.



Massine, Goncharova, Larionov, Stravinsky, Bakst: Lausanne, 1915

ERNEST ANSERMET, one of Stravinsky's most faithful interpreters over the years, wrote: "At the time Stravinsky started to compose, Russian music was a hundred years old. But it had begun to show a certain weakening of force. This was one reason impelling Stravinsky to leave his fatherland. He felt more free to fulfill his destiny in the climate of Debussy and Ravel than in a St. Petersburg haunted by Wagner. Though he chose to live, from then on, among foreign musicians, it was to create in a fashion unlike theirs." And it was Diaghilev, the greatest catalyst of the visual and musical arts of our century, who commissioned the first great procession of masterworks from Stravinsky — *Fire Bird*, *Rossignol*, the *Rite*, *Noces*, *Pulcinella*, *Renard*, *Apollon* — until his death in Venice in 1929.

Ansermet and Stravinsky, Monaco, 1923.



Diaghilev and Stravinsky, Seville, 1921.

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by Roland Gelatt

music makers

WHEN PABLO CASALS suffered a heart attack on Tuesday, April 16, six days before the opening of the Festival Casals in Puerto Rico, a large cloud of consternation descended on the city of San Juan. Much of it fell on a small group of engineers and executives from Columbia Records who had just that day arrived in Puerto Rico with a full set of recording paraphernalia. Months ago, Columbia had arranged to record the Festival Casals from beginning to end. All had proceeded according to plan until that day; then suddenly the very existence of the festival seemed threatened.

As everyone knows, it was decided to carry on the Festival Casals even though the chief celebrant was unable to participate. Columbia for its part also voted to go ahead with the original plan to take down everything on tape — but that decision, one suspects, was not reached without considerable trepidation. After all, except for Pablo Casals, the musicians connected with the festival were either residents of or regular visitors to New York City and hence readily available for sessions under ideal conditions in Columbia's own studio. The only reason for recording them under difficult circumstances so far afield was the hope of capturing a flush of interpretative excitement such as the festival atmosphere might conceivably arouse. According to reports from those who attended the Puerto Rico concerts, that kind of excitement is exactly what Columbia did get on its tapes.

The orchestra recruited for the Puerto Rico festival seems to have been the star of the occasion — and no wonder, when you consider that players like Milton Katims, Mischa Schneider, and Harry Shulman were among the first-desk men. Alexander Schneider, who doubled as concertmaster and conductor, used Casals' own scores, followed their markings implicitly, and in every way tried to make the performances breathe the spirit of the eighty-year-old musician who was prevented from conducting himself. In addition to this virtuoso orchestra, many familiar soloists were on hand — a galaxy of S's: Sanroma, Serkin, Souzay, Stader, Stern, Szigeti.

The concerts were held in the Teatro de la Universidad, an auditorium on the University of Puerto Rico campus. A temporary recording control room was constructed by walling up a box to the left of the stage. This cubicle served as headquarters for Columbia recording director David Oppenheim and engineer Fred Plaut. Other equipment and personnel were located elsewhere in the hall, out of sight of the stage. All twelve concerts were taken down on tape as well as most of the daily morning rehearsals, close to one hundred hours of music in total. How much of this will reach LP is not yet known, but it seems reasonably certain that an album of three or four recorded-in-Puerto Rico discs will be in the shops this fall.

Serkin and Schneider were among the S's.

It is very much to be hoped that this album may even contain some music conducted by Casals. The heart attack that prohibited his appearing at the festival occurred toward the end of his first rehearsal with the orchestra. Before he fell ill, he had rehearsed Mozart's A major Symphony (K. 201), Schubert's *Unfinished*, and part of the Schubert Fifth. This first rehearsal was recorded by a local engineer (Columbia's equipment had not yet been installed), and it is possible that some portions of this taping may be included in the forthcoming album.

LATIN AMERICA has heretofore been regarded by the record industry as a locale useful mainly for the provision of rhumbas, tangos, and other native wood-notes wild. In the pre-LP era Columbia and Victor went to Mexico to cut a few sides of music by Carlos Chavez under the composer's direction, but otherwise recording activity south of the border was restricted solely to the pop category. Columbia's recent Puerto Rican venture is one aspect of a new trend; another is the emergence of local Latin American companies whose sights are trained on the international market for serious music on records.

One of these is Pan Americana de Discos, Mexican representative of EMI, which has in the past year produced nine LPs of concert music for its Musart label. According to Otto Mayer-Serra, editor of *Revista 33⅓*, "this is the first time a Mexican company has broken away from cha-cha-cha and ranchero songs." Releases to date comprise several records by the Mexican pianist Miguel García Mora and one by the Orquesta Sinfonia Nacional under the direction of Luis Herrera de la Fuente. (One of the recordings by Mora, a collection of turn-of-the-century waltzes by Mexican composers, has been issued in the U.S.A. on Capitol P 18037.) Planned for the future are recordings of the five symphonies of Chavez, conducted by the composer.

In Venezuela a company called Sociedad Amigos de la Música is in business producing records by the Orquesta Sinfonica Venezuela. Its label: SAM. On the four discs sent to me there are works by several Venezuelan composers plus a few standard repertoire pieces (Khachaturian Violin Concerto, Franck *Variations symphoniques*, etc.). It would be stretching the Good Neighbor Policy too far to maintain that the Musart and SAM discs offer particularly high fi or quiet surfaces. They don't — but neither did the first LPs produced in this country. Meanwhile, for anyone curious about the state of music in Mexico and Venezuela there is plenty of recorded evidence at hand.

Gemini

June

Opera to The King's Taste

LE DEVIN DU VILLAGE (The Village Soothsayer)
One Act Opera by Jean-Jacques Rousseau

Time: October 18, 1752. *Place:* Palace of Fontainebleau. *Present:* Louis XV and Mme. de Pompadour in the Royal Box; Court in gala attire; seated opposite the King in the Stage Box, with uncombed powdered wig and careless dress, anti-Royalist Rousseau . . . famous philosopher and composer of the *bijou* of an opera which had its historic premiere that night . . . Louis XV whistled the delectable music all next day . . . 204 years later, a Royal Welcome awaits the 1st recording (appropriately on Angel, *'the aristocrats of sound'*).

Paris Opera Cast: Janine Micheau *(Colette, Shepherdess)*; Nicolai Gedda *(Colin)*; Michel Roux *(Village Soothsayer)*. Orchestre de Chambre Louis de Froment.

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Overture, Minuet, Fencing Master, Entrance and Dance of the Tailors, Menuet de Lully, Courante, Cleonte's Entrance, Intermezzo, The Dinner

Conductor: Igor Markevitch.
Orchestre National de la Radiodiffusion Française.
Angel 35447

News Note: Markevitch returns to this country to open three major summer festivals — New York's Stadium Concerts, June 24; Chicago's Ravinia Park, June 27; Ellenville, July 4.

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Reminder: Waldteufel Waltzes conducted by Krips (35426).

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Conductor: Franco Caracciolo. Scarlatti Orchestra of Naples.
Angel 35325

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GRIEG: Peer Gynt Suites 1 and 2
Four Norwegian Dances

Conductor: Walter Susskind — Philharmonia Orchestra. *(Note:* This record postponed from May '57 list) **Angel 35425**

Piano and Violin

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GYORGY CZIFFRA PLAYS LISZT
Piano Concerto No. 1 in E Flat • Hungarian Fantasy

Who is Cziffra?? Why buy this record??
Answer: Cziffra is a fantastic Hungarian virtuoso. He escaped last November, played in Vienna and Paris, made a sensation . . . Critics and public hailed him as a pianist out of the legendary past . . . His 1st Western record was recorded in Paris with the Conservatoire Orchestra.

After his Paris concert Gênet reported to *The New Yorker:* "He became for critics and music lovers here the new virtuoso of today, **as prodigious as the early Horowitz . . .** A Liszt specialist, his technique in octaves is flawless . . ."
Angel 35436

Friendly Advice: Be the first to say, "Yes, I KNOW" . . . Cziffra will play at Ravinia and Hollywood Bowl this summer; N. Y. Philharmonic-Symphony in autumn.

EUGENE MALININ plays
Beethoven: 'Waldstein' Sonata No. 21
Prokofiev: Sonata No. 4; Sarcasm, Op. 17, No. 3
Scriabin: Two Poems, Op. 32 **Angel 35402**

Note: This is the 3rd Angel recording of the brilliant young Russian pianist — made in London: others: Rachmaninoff Concerto No. 2 (35396); Pictures at an Exhibition (35317).

JOHANNA MARTZY plays
Mendelssohn Violin Concerto • Beethoven Romances

Conductor: Paul Kletzki. Philharmonia Orchestra.
Angel 35236

News Note: Famous abroad, this young Hungarian violinist makes her American debut with the Cincinnati Symphony Oct. 25 and 26 followed by the N. Y. Philharmonic-Symphony Nov. 9 and 10 . . . Other Angel Records: Brahms Violin Concerto (35137); Bach Solo Violin Sonatas (35280-1-2).

Library Series

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16th, 17th and 18th centuries. Gabrieli, *Due Canzoni per sonar a quattro;* Marini, *Balletto;* Neri, *Sonata a Quattro;* Vitali, *Capriccio;* A. Scarlatti, *Sonata a Quattro;* Vivaldi, *Sonata a Quattro, 'Al Santo Sepolcro'.*
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Irving Kolodin, Saturday Review

Wien, Wien, Nur Du Allein

SOUVENIR OF VIENNA
Jaro Schmied and His Schrammel Ensemble

Listening to this record, you can pretend you are in your favorite Vienna café, lingering and dreaming all day over a single cup of coffee *(mit or ohne Schlag)* . . . Jaro Schmied, Lehar's favorite fiddler, one-time Vienna Opera concertmaster, plays and conducts . . . *Alt Wiener Schmutzer Tänze,* waltzes, marches, mazurkas, serenades of Johann Strauss, Lehar, Schrammel, Lanner . . . **Angel Blue Label 65033**

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ERICH KUNZ, with Schrammel Orchestra

A glass of white wine . . . and you have a *'Home Heuriger'* . . . 12 songs* including *Wiener Fiakerlied, Es steht ein alter Nussbaum, Wenn der Herrgott net will, Wenn der Franzl* (Schubert), *Mei Mutterl war a Wienerin, In Grinzing gibt's a Himmelstrass'n, Ewiges Wien* . . . **Angel Blue Label 65034**
(*8 formerly released in 10-inch Angel record 64021)

Angel Records

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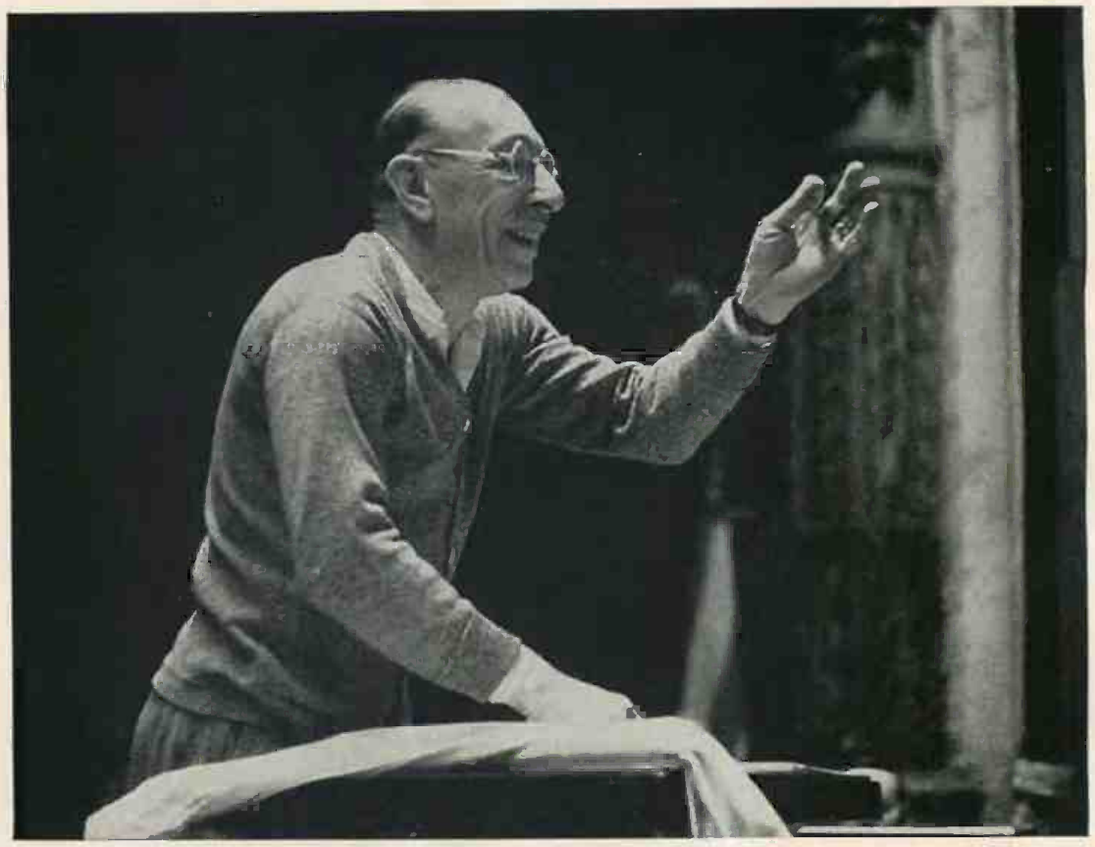
ANGEL RECORDS, ELECTRIC & MUSICAL INDUSTRIES (U.S.) LIMITED, 38 WEST 48 ST., NEW YORK CITY

Among the Koussevitzkys.

SERGE ALEXANDROVITCH KOUSSEVITZKY was born at Tver in 1874. He had been a member of the Imperial Moscow Orchestra, and became a virtuoso on the double bass. He played as early as 1907 in London and conducted his own orchestra in Russia. In 1908 he founded *Les Editions Russes de la Musique*, whose publications made the works of Stravinsky, as well as others, available to the world. For Koussevitzky, who had by then become one of the leading conductors of the world, his old friend wrote in 1930 the *Symphonie de Psaumes*, which bears the inscription; "Composed for the glory of God and dedicated to the Boston Symphony Orchestra on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of its existence." Stravinsky is shown here between the first Madame Koussevitzky and the conductor. Over his left shoulder is Olga Naumoff, who became the second Madame Koussevitzky. The man in horn-rimmed spectacles is Theodore, Stravinsky's painter son; at the extreme left, Stravinsky's daughter, Milena. Directly behind the composer is Paitchadze, general director of Koussevitzky's music publishing house. . . . The photo at the right of Stravinsky in his studio was taken in Paris in 1930.

PHOTO LIPNITZKI



Rehearsing the Philadelphia Orchestra in the 1940s. ADRIAN SIEGEL

AFTER TRAVELING on a Nansen passport since 1917, Stravinsky assumed French citizenship in 1934. In 1945 he became an American. His closest link with Diaghilev, George Balanchine, had emigrated to the United States in 1933; together in 1937 they had produced *Apollon, Baiser de la Fée*, and the commissioned *Card Party* at the Metropolitan Opera. In 1947 they produced *Orpheus*, and 1957 will mark the world première of *Agon* (*The Contest*), *written* for Balanchine's New York City Ballet Company. They are shown here inspecting a hippopotamus ballerina, a model for Disney's *Fantasia*, which employed the music for the *Rite* as a tone poem evocative of prehistoric nature. (The hippopotamus, of course, figured not in the *Rite* sequence, but in that built around Ponchielli's *Dance of the Hours*.) Stravinsky has lived quietly in Hollywood for a decade; Arnold Schoenberg, until his death, lived not far away. The work there continues still in its orderly progression, for production and recording all over the world.

COLUMBIA RECORDS

In his Hollywood garden, 1940.

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART AND WALT DISNEY PRODUCTIONS ©

Balanchine, Stravinsky.

LE BLANC

Rehearsing The Rake's Progress *at the Met.*

COLUMBIA RECORDS

In St. Mark's Cathedral.

IN 1947 STRAVINSKY began to collaborate with W. H. Auden on *The Rake's Progress*, following a suggestion by his neighbor, Aldous Huxley. Auden chose Chester Kallman as his collaborating librettist. In spite of an equivocal production at the Metropolitan, where much of the impact of this masterpiece was lost due to the vast scale of the hall, the opera has entered the international repertory, having been produced nearly three hundred times since its première in Venice. This port, significantly, marks the crossroads of Byzantine East and Roman West. El Greco once worshiped in the church from which Diaghilev was buried. Here in the Byzantine temple of San Marco, in 1955, the two-thousandth anniversary of its founding, was first performed Stravinsky's *Canticum Sacrum*, dedicated to the Republic's patron, Saint Mark the Evangelist. The rigors of this score, its serene beauty and relentless metric enforced a reception at once hostile and adulatory, the identical reception that has been Stravinsky's familiar accolade for fifty years. Ahead of a vanguard, he is modern music — as he has always been, for half a century. In him East and West have found their focus; his ordering has survived revolution and exile, war, loss, and discontinuity. Out of the tension and anxiety of his age he has imposed his personal, dispassionate, austere, ironic stamp. He has heard first for us all,

the record of a self-interpreter

EVERY MODERN COMPOSER is being recorded nowadays, and every composer welcomes recording as a means of spreading his work. For Igor Stravinsky, however, the disc has an important additional value. He regards it as part of the process of publication. It supplements the written score, and the two versions — the one printed and the other recorded under his direction — together establish the text which the composer regards as definitive.

All this, of course, is an expression of that concern for order and exactitude which dominates Stravinsky's intellectual system. He believes, as he tells us in *The Poetics of Music*, that musical execution involves "the strict putting into effect of an explicit will that contains nothing beyond what it specifically commands," and he rails at length against the interpreter who goes beyond the letter of the notes. He asserts that the composer's will is explicit in his own written music, but he adds "no matter how scrupulously a piece of music may be notated, no matter how carefully it may be insured against every possible ambiguity through the indications of tempo, shading, phrasing, accentuation, and so on, it always contains hidden elements that defy definition, because verbal dialectic is powerless to define musical dialectic in its totality."

Stravinsky therefore becomes his own interpreter. His records — here we quote his autobiography — "have the importance of documents which can serve as guides to all executants of my music." Their object is to "safeguard" his work "by establishing the manner in which it ought to be played . . . eliminating all chance elements." He goes on to complain, however, that his discs have failed to attain their objective in this regard, since other conductors ignore them; nevertheless "I do not for a moment regret the time and effort spent . . . It gives me the satisfaction of knowing that everyone who listens to my records hears my music free from any distortion of my thought, at least in its essential elements."

Immediately following the statement just quoted comes another of the highest interest for an understanding of Stravinsky's position:

"Moreover, the work of making records did a good deal to develop my technique

by ALFRED FRANKENSTEIN

as a conductor. The frequent repetition of a fragment or even of an entire piece, the sustained effort to allow not the slightest detail to escape attention, as may happen for lack of time at an ordinary rehearsal, the necessity of observing absolute precision of movement as strictly determined by the timing — all this is a hard school in which a musician obtains very valuable training and learns much that is extremely useful."

Characteristically, Stravinsky sees the limitations of recording as a discipline and not, like so many musicians, as a mere nuisance or impediment. At the same time, his remark about the development of conductorial technique is provocative. If a conductor's technique undergoes development, then clearly his performances of a given work will vary from stage to stage in his evolution; today's interpretation is likely to be different from tomorrow's even though both may bear the authority of the composer's name.

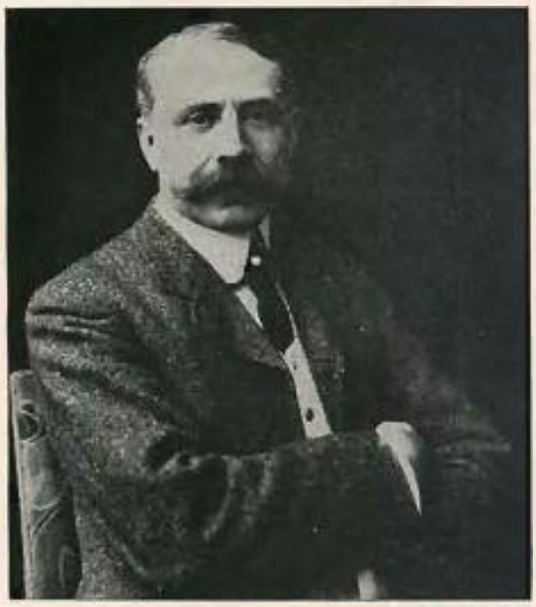
A detailed study of the development of Stravinsky the executant, as revealed through his records is, regrettably, impossible because of two extraneous factors. One is the complete revolution in the technique of recording which has taken place in the thirty years since he first stepped before a microphone. The machinery for capturing all the sounds in an immensely complex score like the *Rite of Spring* has yet to be invented; today's best is a reasonably satisfactory approximation, but yesterday's best was only a ghost. Furthermore, many of Stravinsky's early records were made with anonymous recording-studio orchestras whose proficiency was not such, compared with (say) that of the New York Philharmonic, as to permit a very certain evaluation of the conductor's contribution.

In one case, however, we can contrast early and late Stravinsky performances of a work that is not at all difficult to record and was made in each instance with players of the finest quality. I refer to the suite from *L'Histoire du soldat*, recorded in Paris about 1930 and again in New York in 1954. The main difference — and it is a very striking difference indeed — is one of tempo. The 1954 version is considerably faster than the one of 1930, and the phrasing is sharper, more clipped and pointed. The contrast, one suspects, is actually less a matter of growth in technique and more a matter of change in Stravinsky's personality. The composer's will commands something different at the age of seventy-two from what it commanded at forty-eight, even though the metronome markings and other signs through which that will was made "explicit" and "specific" at the time the score was published have remained unchanged.

Nearly all the recordings conducted by Stravinsky which are currently listed and available have been made in recent years and so represent his present interpretative thinking. Some of them are of works which no other conductor has recorded, but in a number of instances one may compare Stravinsky's disc performances with those of others. I found it most illuminating to make this comparison in the case of the *Rite of Spring* as done by Stravinsky with the New York Philharmonic (Columbia ML 4882) and by Pierre Monteux with the Paris Conservatoire Orchestra (RCA Victor LM 2085). Monteux conducted the first performances of the *Rite* both as a ballet and in concert, and Stravinsky has repeatedly expressed complete satisfaction with his way of playing it. If anyone has authority in this work comparable to that of Stravinsky himself, it is Monteux.

The first thing that strikes one in listening to the records in immediate succession is a thing of which Stravinsky takes no account at all. It is that different conductors may have a totally different sense of sonority. This is not a matter of phrasing, tempo, dynamics, accentuation, or anything else of which notes can take account. There is actually no way in which it can be

Continued on page 101



BETTMANN ARCHIVE

by Gerald Abraham

Pomp and Poetry

A look at Sir Edward Elgar across a century

SOME THIRTY YEARS AGO my esteemed senior colleague Edward Dent got into dreadful trouble for saying in a non-English publication that Elgar was not to every English musician's taste. Whatever private reservations one might wish to make about his art, it was considered unpatriotic to make them in public, almost treasonable to make them to foreigners. Times have changed — and we with them — and I think I could say exactly the same thing in these pages today without raising a storm at all. (And that not merely because I am a much less eminent critic than Professor Dent.) In fact Elgar is certainly not, in this centenary year of his birth, to every English musician's taste; if he were, he would still be "good box office" and he notoriously is not — though the centennial celebrations may alter things.

The most pertinent question is "Why?" and I must attempt to answer it partly on general grounds, partly by using the lens of the particular English musician who is (if I may be ungrammatical) me. It is also pertinent to inquire why the public attitude toward Elgar has changed during the last thirty years and whether it is likely to change again in the future. On this last point it is fairly safe to prophesy. It will change back to some extent. The reputations of most creative artists are at somewhere near their nadir a hundred years after they are born; the world that inspired and is reflected in their art usually is no longer sympathetic to their audience. Worse: it may be positively antipathetic; the time has not yet come when it can be seen objectively. And this is emphatically the case with the music of Sir Edward Elgar.

To take only one side of his work: there always were a great many people who disliked the element of swaggering jingoism, the element that not only inspired him to write military marches — in which swaggering jingoism is right and proper — but made him take the sensitively felt opening theme of the Symphony in A flat and roar it out on the full orchestra. Yet it reflected something in the spirit of England fifty or sixty years ago: the England of Kipling and Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, of Edward VII and his great battle fleet, the Britain that was not only the richest and most powerful country but very conscious of its power and wealth. The music was at least honest and virile. But today that element is antipathetic not merely to a fastidious minority but (I think) to the overwhelming majority of Englishmen. It is not merely that our bumptiousness has been deflated by the diminution of power and wealth; the experiences of the last half-century have made us a more mature nation; we have grown up emotionally and have no more use for heroic attitudes. Yet half-a-century of peaceful prosperity could easily alter all that: at least people might cease to be cynical about the splendid and heroic; they might even grow sentimental about it once more.

And of course there is very much more than swaggering jingoism in the specifically Edwardian qualities of Elgar's music that now are out of favor. There is the sheer lusciousness and sumptuousness of orchestral sound. There is the rhetoric, the too self-conscious nobility of thought and utterance, the sunset romanticism — though the last can still move us (all the more because we have lived through the dark night and perhaps now are experiencing the grey dawn that follows the sunset). It was all very real to Elgar, real and deeply felt.

When Benjamin Britten composed his superb setting of Tennyson's "The splendour falls on castle walls," he did so with some objectivity, with that detachment which is essential to classic art. But practically all Elgar's best music is not merely illuminated by sunset splendor; it is the direct emotional response of a man contemplating and experiencing the sunset. In that he is not specifically

English, but a European of his time. As Ernest Newman has pointed out, Delius, Mahler, the later Strauss share the sunset mood. But with Elgar the mood is given a peculiarly English flavor by its sense of regret for a long protracted past, for the dying of age-old traditions. You cannot go very far in the English countryside without seeing an ancient church or a medieval castle, and it was as natural for Elgar as for Tennyson to think of dying splendor falling on *castle* walls. The sense and the associations of chivalry were strongly developed in him. (Even the *Pomp and Circumstance* marches were originally conceived in the spirit of chivalry, though vulgarized into jingoism in the execution.) The early *Froissart* overture is a direct tribute to it, and Elgar gladly aided and abetted Longfellow in anachronistically turning King Olaf into a sort of medieval knight. The exuberant opening theme of the Second Symphony is a not-so-distant, though naturally more mature, relative of one of the personal themes of King Olaf ("Norway never yet had seen, One so beautiful of mien"); and it is this theme — drained of the exuberance characteristic of the opening — which supplies the dying fall at the end of the Symphony, a farewell which moves me even more deeply than Mahler's "*Abschied*" at the end of *Das Lied von der Erde*.

It moves me unfailingly — yet in a way that something in me resents. It is a long way from the death of King Lear to the death of Little Nell, and I have an uncomfortable feeling that the end of Elgar's Second Symphony lies about halfway between. Try it by the touchstone of the funeral march of the *Eroica*, or even that of Isolde's "*Liebestod*," and you realize how far Elgar falls short of "classic" mastery.

Yet when one considers the biographical facts — the nature of the environment in which he grew up and lived so long, and the slowness of his creative development — it is astonishing that he came so near. Not that he spent his early life in an unmusical environment. Quite the contrary; he grew up living and breathing music. His father was a professional organist and violinist, and a music seller into the bargain, and at an early age he began to acquire practical experience that was of enormous value later. Yet it was the wrong sort of environment to foster the growth of a great composer. It is difficult to exaggerate the musical conservatism and uncertainty of musical taste of the average English provincial town in the Seventies and Eighties of the last century, even of a cathedral city such as Worcester. There were the glee clubs, the amateur choral and orchestral societies, performances of stillborn cantatas, a general atmosphere of stale Mendelssohnism or worse, and utter remoteness from the main stream of contemporary musical thought and activity. The models of good music that came to the lad's notice were mostly old, and the models of new music were mostly poor. All this would have mattered much less if he had not stayed in this milieu until he was over thirty; he did not even visit London till he was twenty-two. One is astounded not by the lateness of his acquaintance with Wagner and other contemporary masters but by the way he reacted to them when he once had met them, not by the talented mediocrity or downright triviality of so much of his early work but by its numerous indications of individuality.

I have spoken above of the *Froissart* overture as an "early" composition. It was written in 1890, when Elgar was thirty-three — the age at which Beethoven began to compose the *Eroica* and Wagner had *Tannhäuser* behind him, an age which Schubert never even reached — yet it is indeed one of Elgar's early works, the very earliest in which he showed anything that can be recognized as artistic personality, the earliest of any value. It would be difficult to find in the entire history of music a parallel to such late development. Even when Elgar had at last begun to find himself, the influence of environment still held him back. On the Continent, or even in London, he might have gone on trying his wings in the free air of orchestral music, which was his true element. But in the world of music as seen from Worcester the most worthwhile forms of composition were not symphony and concerto, in which no British composer had ever been successful, but oratorio and cantata.

Accordingly Elgar set to work on a series of such works. It is true that he originally called the earliest of them, the setting of Longfellow's *Black Knight*, a "symphony for chorus and orchestra," showing an awareness of Berlioz' *Roméo et Juliette* and its curious progeny, but it contained little or nothing to frighten the cantata-loving public. Then came the first oratorio, *The Light of Life*, and two more secular works, *King Olaf* and *Caractacus*: all attempts to infuse life into dying forms by the injection of Lisztian or Wagnerian harmony and orchestration, leitmotivs, and — above all, of course — sheer freshness of invention. All this made these pieces stand out sharply from the rest of the English cantata production of their day. But to say that is to say precious little. By local standards they were quite outstanding, by European standards of no interest at all.

Then in 1900 came the crown of the series, *The Dream of Gerontius*. That is different. Different in degree — Elgar had now belatedly matured — and different to some extent in kind. *Gerontius* is a more unified conception than its predecessors; the new methods and the new idiom, neither any longer very new by European standards, were here brought to a focus; the level of musical inspiration is maintained more consistently than ever before. One might put it that, *mutatis mutandis*, *Gerontius* stands to earlier oratorio almost as *Tristan* stands to earlier opera. The tragedy is that, whereas opera continued to flourish after *Tristan*, oratorio died — to be reborn in quite new forms in the 1920s — after *Gerontius*. Elgar himself failed to keep it alive in *The Apostles* (despite some beautiful pages) and *The Kingdom*, and recognized the fact by never laboring to finish yet another projected work in the form. As he used to say, "No one wants oratorio now."

But one still wants *Gerontius*, if only occasionally. It no longer seems the outstanding masterpiece it once did; on the other hand no one is bothered nowadays, as Church of England clergymen were half a century ago, by the circumstance that it "stinks of incense." One can judge it with some detachment and appreciate its passages of enduring beauty. The litany of the many of old rescued "by Thy gracious power" ("Noe from the waters in a

saving home" and the rest), the softly pulsing equal chords first heard towards the end of Part I when the Priest sings "Go in the name of God, the Omnipotent Father, who created thee!," the infinite peace of the muted sixths as the Soul is borne beyond time and space, the Alleluia of the Angel's first solo: there are so many of these moments that for their sake one gladly accepts the more luscious beauties, the strivings and the splendors which move us much less than they did our parents and grandparents but which, all the same, are deeply felt, stamped with musical personality, and may move our children and grandchildren in their time. Even in the early days of *Gerontius* the "softly pulsing equal chords" must have impressed the young English composers whose outlook was otherwise very different from Elgar's, for they remembered them whenever they needed to express utter tranquility — Vaughan Williams at the end of the *Sea Symphony* and Holst in *Venus* from *The Planets*.

The year before *Gerontius*, Elgar had produced a much more consistently individual work, the *Enigma* Variations. Trying to draw "my friends pictured within," he produced a superb self-portrait. It was only at the end, in the fourteenth variation, where he *deliberately* looked in the mirror, that bombast broke out; this is the man he wished to appear, perhaps to be — the cavalry colonel. But in the other pages he is content to be the gentle, tender, wistful, whimsically humorous poet. That is the man he was, or at any rate the best of him, and when he was content in this role his music was no longer Wagnerian or Lisztian or *Continued on page 103*

A Guide to Elgar on Records

by PAUL AFFELDER

Cockaigne Overture, Op. 40: Beecham (Columbia ML 5031) directs a rousing performance, a fine mixture of color, excitement, and lyrical warmth. Boult's interpretation (Westminster W-LAB 7056), clear, cautious, and almost too stiff and dignified, seems to be concerned more with counterpoint than Cockneys, but the sound is extremely realistic and somewhat more sharply defined than Columbia's.

Concerto for Cello and Orchestra, in E minor, Op. 85: An eloquent performance by Pini and Van Beinum (London LS 95) in a recording that is far from new yet highly satisfactory.

Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in B minor, Op. 61: Campoli and Boult (London LL 1168) offer an intense, vigorous, often deeply probing interpretation. The reproduction passes muster except for some sharp-edged orchestral highs. Most of these same characteristics are also to be found in the older, less spacious-sounding and occasionally slightly distorted, but still more than adequate recording by Heifetz and Sargent (RCA Victor LVT 1030). Heifetz's highly polished tone is purer than Campoli's, and the whole work moves along at a faster pace and often assumes a brighter, more exultant mood. Choice between the two versions will have to be a personal one, as each has something worth while to offer.

The Dream of Gerontius, Op. 38: A radiant unfolding of this mystical score by Sargent (Angel 3543 B, two 12-in.), who learned many of its interpretative secrets from the composer. The work of all three soloists — especially the fine-spun, admirably controlled tenor of Richard Lewis — is well-nigh ideal. Chorus and orchestra have a velvety texture which is most moving in the many hushed passages. Glowingly rounded sound, too.

Enigma Variations, Op. 36: Toscanini's (RCA Victor LM 1725) is a beautifully tempered, unhurried interpretation, not as dramatically fiery as Barbirolli's (Mercury MG 50125) expansive and forceful one, but more noble and possibly more lasting. RCA Victor's reproduction is very naturalistic without blasting the walls down, as Mercury's sometimes does with its extremely wide tonal and volume ranges. Beecham's (Columbia ML 5031) is a tenderer, more intimate conception than the others, very cleanly executed, often with slower tempos. The recording is good, though softer in texture than either RCA Victor's or Mercury's. Each of the foregoing is complete on one side, whereas Goehr's generally slower, rather analytical reading (Concert Hall CHS 1154) continues onto part of a second side.

Falstaff, Op. 68: Boult (Westminster W-LAB 7052) is more sympathetic in his approach here than in most of his other Elgar performances on discs. He makes the most of the complex of humorous, dramatic, idyllic, noble, and poignant qualities which comprise this musical portrait of the Fat Knight. Collins (London LL 1011) has a generally lighter, softer touch, yet he plays up the humorous passages for all they are worth and his climaxes are just as grand as Boult's. Superior reproduction on both discs, with Westminster's three-dimensional setup earning it a slight sonic edge. Both presentations are so fine that it would be impossible to go wrong with either.

Froissart Overture, Op. 19: Pflüger (Urania URLP 7136) conducts with warmth and virility; the orchestral playing is satisfactory, if not always polished, and the sound is fair, though marred in spots by distortion.

In the South Overture, Op. 50: Weldon (Capitol P 18017) does a great deal to bring out the many varied facets of the music, providing wide contrasts in tempo and mood. He has been accorded clear sound with an overlay of surface hiss. He faces no competition from Pflüger's hard, insensitive, uncomprehending reading (Urania URLP 7136) and the coarse orchestral tone and reproduction of like hardness.

Introduction and Allegro for Strings, Op. 47: Collins (London LL 583) offers an affectionate, easy-flowing reading that preserves the music's ingratiating manner. The string tone is resonantly reproduced, though the upper frequencies are somewhat limited.

Sea Pictures, Op. 37: Careful and restrained, yet warm and sensitive delineation of the broad, lyrical vocal line by Gladys Ripley (Capitol P 18017) with fine, though anonymous, orchestral collaboration. Sonically well balanced for concert-like perspective.

Serenade for Strings, in E minor, Op. 20: Set forth with loving care and perfectly restrained emotion in a movingly expressive, tonally rich performance by Beecham (Columbia ML 5031). Goehr's (Concert Hall CHS 1154) is a broad though quietly intimate exposition meticulously phrased. The recording is equitably balanced but not too wide in range. Whereas these two conductors treat the work seriously, Collins (London LL 583) is inclined to dismiss it with a bit of offhand flippancy. His fast tempos in the first two movements cause him to miss much of the tender poignancy in this simple but exquisite score, though he finally captures this quality in the more relaxed last movement. Rather limited highs in this otherwise satisfactory recording.

Symphony No. 2, in E flat, Op. 63: Boult (Westminster XWN 18373) is much more convincing in the last two movements than in the first two, where he sounds rather tentative in his approach. Fine sound.

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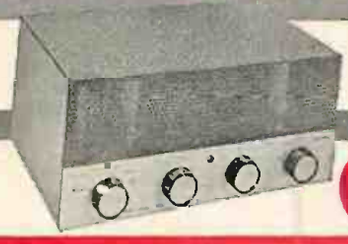

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CLASSICAL

BACH: *Cantatas*

No. 1, "*Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern;* No. 4, "*Christ lag in Todesbanden.*"

Gunthild Weber (s); Helmut Krebs (t); Herman Schey (bs); Berlin Motet Choir; Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra (in No. 1); Krebs (t); Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (b); Frankfurt State School Chorus: Göttingen Festival Orchestra (in No. 4); Fritz Lehmann, cond. Archive 3063.

No. 21, "*Ich hatte viel Bekümmernis.*"

Weber (s); Krebs (t); Schey (bs); Berlin Motet Choir; Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Lehmann, cond. Archive 3064.

No. 19, "*Es erhub sich ein Streit*"; No. 79, "*Gott, der Herr, ist Sonn und Schild.*"

Weber (s); Lore Fischer (c); Krebs (t); Schey (bs); Berlin Motet Choir; Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Lehmann, cond. Archive 3065.

No. 39, "*Brich dem Hungrigen dein Brot*"; No. 105, "*Herr, gehe nicht ins Gericht.*"

Weber (s); Fischer (c); Krebs (t); Schey (bs); Berlin Motet Choir; Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Lehmann, cond. Archive 3066.

No. 170, "*Vergnügte Ruh, beliebte Seelenlust*"; No. 189, "*Meine Seele rühmt und preist.*"

Elisabeth Höngen (c); Bavarian State Orchestra (in No. 170); Walther Ludwig (t); instrumentalists (in No. 189), Lehmann, cond. Archive 3067.

ARCHIVE 3063/3067. Five 12-in. $5.98 each.

All of these performances were issued, in different couplings, under the Decca label in this country and have been discussed in the discography of Bach's choral works (HIGH FIDELITY, Sept. 1955). The Archive surfaces are much smoother than the original versions; and the discs are free from the clicks and crackles that marred quite a few of the Decca records. Now, too, the original texts and English translations are supplied with all the cantatas. On the debit side is the absence of visible bands between movements in Cantatas Nos. 19, 21, and 105. N.B.

BARTOK: *Concerto for Orchestra*

Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Ernest Ansermet, cond.
LONDON LL 1632. 12-in. $3.98.

Last year, in preparing a Bartók discography for this magazine, I observed that none of the existing records of the *Concerto for Orchestra* could be unreservedly recommended. The search for a thoroughly satisfactory recorded edition of this masterpiece must, alas, continue. Ansermet handles the slow movements, especially the *Elegia*, beautifully, but lacks the humor, vivacity, and occasional touch of slapstick required for the allegros. A.F.

BEETHOVEN: *Sonatas for Piano: No. 14, in C sharp minor, Op. 27, No. 2 ("Moonlight"); No. 21, in C, Op. 53 ("Waldstein")*

Vladimir Horowitz, pianist.
RCA VICTOR LM 2009. 12-in. $3.98.

Horowitz's sabbatical years have produced increased artistic growth, with the result that this recording displays not merely the unbelievable virtuosity that has long been a Horowitz trademark, but a penetrating view of Beethoven in which the artist's own temperament and German tradition are combined in performances of stunning power.

The *Moonlight* is actually slower in every movement than the Serkin edition released this month. Moreover, it seems to capture the poetry of the first movement and the vitality of the last with greater effect. And certainly there is not a more exciting *Waldstein* on records, without any departure from Beethoven's intentions.

The recordings, I have been told, were made in the pianist's apartment. They have an agreeable living-room sized sound with excellent reproduction of the instrument. R.C.M.

BEETHOVEN: *Sonatas for Piano: No. 14, in C sharp minor, Op. 27, No. 2 ("Moonlight"); No. 8, in C minor, Op. 13 ("Pathétique"); No. 23, in F minor, Op. 57 ("Appassionata")*

Rudolf Serkin, piano.
COLUMBIA ML 5164. 12-in. $3.98.

By splitting the *Pathétique* between sides Columbia here offers a bargain package of three popular Beethoven sonatas, beautifully played and recorded.

All three performances are on the fast side. All have the sense of style, the bravura technique, and the grasp of tradition long associated with the artist. It is good to have Serkin recordings of these works in the catalogue, and they ought to win a large and well-deserved audience. R.C.M.

BOCCHERINI: *Quintets: Album I: in A, Op. 28; in F, Op. 41, No. 2; Allegretto, Op. 10, No. 5; Il Ballo Tedesco, Op. 29, No. 6. Album II: in D, Op. 11, No. 6; in A, Op. 40, No. 4; Grave in D minor, Op. 41; Largo in A minor, Op. 10, No. 1; Minuet in A, Op. 13, No. 5.*

Quintetto Boccherini.
ANGEL 45006/7. Two 12-in. $3.98 each.

As pleasing a pair of discs as has come along in many a day. Each side contains a complete quintet and a detached movement or two from another. Boccherini is

seemingly seldom at a loss for melodious ideas, and his manipulation of them shows a highly skilled and inventive mind at work. Even though there are two cellos, the texture is not bottom-heavy. The slow movements, which can be very expressive, make one think now and then of Schubert. Boccherini is well aware of the effectiveness of an accented dissonance, and the device is all the more effective because he uses it sparingly. In mood the music ranges from the lightheartedness of the gentle bird and hunting calls in Op. 11, No. 6 to the introspective brooding of the *Grave* in D minor. The extract from Op. 13, No. 5 is *the* famous minuet, the only work of Boccherini's known to most music lovers. Records like the present ought to go far towards correcting that unfortunate situation. The players turn in a first-rate job. They sing nicely and can be delicate without being namby-pamby, robust but not scratchy. The recording is excellent.

These records are in Angel's new "Library Series," which is planned to contain chamber music and other items not likely to sell in large quantities. The sleeves are not as elaborate as those in Angel's "factory-sealed" packages though quite good enough, but the notes are skimpy. N.B.

BRAHMS: *Symphony No. 1, in C minor, Op. 68*

Symphony of the Air, Igor Markevitch, cond.
DECCA DL 9907. 12-in. $3.98.

It is hard to work up much enthusiasm for the twentieth or so LP version of this overplayed symphony. There is nothing wrong with Markevitch's performance: it has vitality, a sense of musical direction, and an uncomplicated approach. The recorded sound is of the brilliant, close-up variety, and special attention has been paid to the percussion, which bangs away in an alarmingly thunderous manner. In short, a good though rather souped-up disc. But equally good are those of Boult, Ormandy, Steinberg, Toscanini, Walter, and Van Beinum, to mention but six fine conductors who have recorded the Brahms First in a manner ranging from thoroughly acceptable to, in the cases of Toscanini and Walter, really distinguished. H.C.S.

BRAHMS: *Variations on a theme of Haydn, Op. 56a* — See Schubert: *Symphony No. 8, in B minor ("Unfinished").*

CHOPIN: *Etudes (12), Op. 10; Allegro de Concert, in A, Op. 46*

Claudio Arrau, piano.
ANGEL 35413. 12-in. $4.98 (or $3.48).

The more romantic the music, the more leeway there is in interpreting it and the more the listener's own prejudices come into play. Some like it hot, some like it cold. My opinion of Arrau's performance of Op. 10 is, quite frankly, an almost exact account of my prejudices about Chopin playing. Arrau is a wonderful technician and a serious artist. But, to me, he gives the blueprint of the music rather than an interpretation — clear and exact (as in the recorded sound, too) yet somehow uninteresting, without the flair, color, and excitement (not to mention the poetry) that the great Chopinists have brought to the music. Compare his picky, awkward-sounding version of the arpeggiated E flat Etude with Lhevinne's performance on Camden CAL 265. Lhevinne is all grace, suppleness, and subtlety, while Arrau's rubato sounds like a hiccup. It is a pity that Victor has never transferred to microgroove the only great performance of Op. 10 ever released in America, the Cortot version of 1938.

In the seldom-played *Allegro de Concert* Arrau is at his very best, giving a glittering performance. But this is a weak piece, one of Chopin's very few Lisztian endeavors, with a salonlike theme around which all kinds of technical didos sparkle in a superficial manner. H.C.S.

CLAFLIN: *La grande bretèche*

Patricia Brinton (s), Sheila Jones (s), William Blankenship (t), Earl Gilmore (t), Richard Owens (b); Vienna Symphony Orchestra, F. Charles Adler, cond.
COMPOSERS RECORDINGS CRI 108-X. 12-in. $4.98.

This work does not belong in the company of *Wozzeck* and other modern operas which are milestones in the history of music and theater; but it is one of the most effective and well-constructed modern operas obtainable on records, and the records make one eager to see it on the stage. Some of you will have seen it on television, in its NBC Opera Theater presentation early this year.

The libretto, by George R. Mills, is based on a story by Balzac. A jealous husband suspects, with good reason, that his wife has hidden her lover in her bedroom closet. He has the closet walled up before her eyes, and then he turns on the lady and does her in. Mills's handling of this plot makes the most of its dramatic porentialities, but it also leaves the composer plenty to do.

The composer, Avery Claflin, knows his Strauss, his Puccini, and his Massenet, but the idiom he has synthesized under these influences has its own power, its own subtleties, its own shape and color. It is particularly admirable in its consistent lyric flow; this is an opera for singers, not, like many American operas, a recitation with orchestral accompaniment.

Performance and recording are excellent, and the story is easily followed, thanks to the skillfully written synopsis on the record sleeve and the singers' all but perfect English enunciation. A.F.

DUKAS: *Variations, Interlude, and Finale*
†Franck: *Prélude, choral et fugue*

Lenore Engdahl, piano.
M-G-M E 3421. 12-in. $3.98.

It was quite natural for Dukas to turn to Rameau for the theme of this major piano composition, since he edited a modern edition of the eighteenth-century composer's works. Here, however, a pleasant but somewhat innocuous little melody is not so much used as a basis for embellishment and amplification as, according to Alfred Cortot's analysis, employed as a "pretext." Rameau's theme is recognizable only at the very beginning; after that, only little fragments are used as points of departure for each of the twelve variations, the last of which forms the dynamic Finale. The eleventh and twelfth variations are separated by the rather introspective Interlude.

Lenore Engdahl's performance, the first domestic representation of this work on microgroove, is forthright and generally clear, though one might ask for a bit more warmth and lyricism both here and in the Franck *Prélude, choral et fugue.* The reproduction of the piano tone is reasonably faithful throughout. P.A.

DVORAK: *Concerto for Cello and Orchestra, in B minor, Op. 104*
†Fauré: *Elégie, in C minor, Op. 24*

Janos Starker, cello; Philharmonia Orchestra, Walter Susskind, cond.
ANGEL 35417. 12-in. $4.98 (or $3.48).

Dvořák's great cello concerto has not lacked representation on microgroove but this new version by Janos Starker goes right to the top. A Hungarian-trained instrumentalist now resident in America, Starker has been the first cellist of several major American orchestras but he has given very few recitals. One wonders at his reticence, for he is among the greatest of living cellists — a fact previously established by a magnificent series of discs he made for Period several years ago. In this recording of the Dvořák concerto he displays a soaring style and the most melting tone that any cellist has brought to the score. His pitch is staggeringly close to perfect, even in the octave passages and in the last movement's sustained trill on high B, which is the complete undoing of most cellists. As a technician he is of an altogether superior order though, curiously, he simplifies the nasty spot (bars 327-328) in the first movement and avoids the harmonics at the end of the slow movement. Nelsova, on her London disc, plays the first movement measures as written; and Cassadó, in his recent Vox recording, copes with the slow-movement harmonics.

Otherwise Starker's playing is a model of what the romantic approach should be. He is flexible without being mannered.

When he takes a ritard, or when he varies his style of bowing, it is for a convincing reason. His line is always well drawn — no smears or exaggerations. Susskind unfortunately offers a routine orchestral accompaniment, simply failing to bring out the delicate balances and little counter melodies that the score is full of. And he (or the engineers) has kept the wood winds much too far in the rear. On the other hand, the over-all recorded sound has a spacious quality and the string tone is gorgeous.

Of the competing versions, there are three to consider. The Casals version, which dates from the Thirties, is, of course, a recorded classic. It has been transferred to an RCA Victor LP. Zara Nelsova's interpretation, released by London several years ago, is superb in every respect, though the recorded sound does not have the immediacy of the new Angel disc. The recent Cassadó performance on a Vox disc (not to be confused with a recording Cassadó made some time ago for Remington) is a splendid job, even if Cassadó does not have the amazing control of bow and fingers that Starker possesses.

As for the Fauré *Elégie* which fills out the overside of the disc, it originally was written as a piece for cello and piano. The notes imply that the composer was responsible for the orchestration, but I can find no reference to substantiate the statement. The point is not important. It is a lovely work, sensitive and melodically haunting, and Starker plays it in an aristocratic manner. H.C.S.

DVORAK: *Serenade for Strings, in E, Op. 22; Serenade for Winds, Cellos, and Contrabass, in D minor, Op. 44*

Arthur Winograd String Orchestra, Arthur Winograd, cond., in the *String* Serenade; M-G-M Chamber Orchestra, Arthur Winograd, cond., in the *Wind* Serenade.
M-G-M E 3489. 12-in. $3.98.

Dvořák was never greater than when he was exuding folklike charm in music like his *Slavonic* Dances, *Slavonic* Rhapsodies, and these two Serenades. Though both Serenades are relatively early works, free of any profound complications, they are so delightful in every way that they make ideal musical antidotes for present-day tensions.

Mozart and Brahms had an indirect hand in fashioning these two Serenades, Mozart in the lightness and flexibility of style, as well as in the marchlike introduction to the Serenade in D minor, Brahms in the unusual scoring of the latter work — two oboes, two clarinets, three bassoons, three horns, cellos, and basses — which is not very different from that for his Serenade No. 2, in A. But the music itself is pure Dvořák. The texture and mood of the Serenade for Strings is lighter than that for the *Wind* Serenade, but there is a suggestion of cyclical form in the former, which brings back in the Finale several themes from earlier movements.

Coupling these two works on a single disc was a happy inspiration, and Winograd's performances are equally felicitous — well planned, carefully phrased, and full of spirit — considerably better than those he lately gave the Dvořák *Symphonic Variations* and *Scherzo capriccioso*. Something has happened, too, to the quality of M-G-M's domestic recording; the expert instrumental playing is reproduced as faithfully as ever, but now it is surrounded by more studio space, allowing the tone freedom to breath and resound. P.A.

EGK: *French Suite after Rameau*
†Hartmann: *Symphony No. 6*

RIAS Symphony Orchestra, Ferenc Fricsay, cond.
DECCA DL 9861. 12-in. $4.98.

Apparently some themes by Rameau lie back of Werner Egk's *French* Suite, but their treatment is that of Offenbach's period, with false notes. The joke is fairly tedious.

Karl Amadeus Hartmann's Sixth Symphony, on the other side, is highly romantic and rhapsodic in form, full of energy and spirit, with several magnificent fugues, and a general air of shrewdly controlled creativity at white heat. In his jacket notes, William Flanagan draws a parallel between Hartmann and Alban Berg, but Bartók might have been a better referent. At all events, this work makes a fine case for its composer as the most important of the Germans to emerge since the war. Excellent performance and recording. A.F.

FAURE: *Elégie, in C minor, Op. 24* — See Dvořák: *Concerto for Cello and Orchestra, in B minor, Op. 104.*

FRANÇAIX: *Concertino, for Piano and Orchestra*
†Honegger: *Concertino, for Piano and Orchestra*
†Strauss, Richard: *Burleske, in D minor*

Margrit Weber, piano; Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra, Ferenc Fricsay, cond.
DECCA DL 9900. 12-in. $3.98.

Coupled here are three modern miniature concertos for piano and orchestra, each a little gem and each colored by many moments of refined musical wit. Longest and most imposing of the trio is the Strauss *Burleske*, written when the composer was only twenty-one, yet containing prophecies of *Der Rosenkavalier*. Jean Françaix's *Concertino* dates from his twentieth year, yet remains one of his most popular works, an amazingly succinct, four-movement *bon mot*. In the Honegger *Concertino*, the work of a more mature musician, the mood is still light, though the harmony more complex. Its principal feature is the employment of jazz idiom in the finale, one of the earliest demonstra-

Toscanini's First Seventh, Memory-Laden

OF NOT MANY recordings can it be said that the world was waiting for them when they came out, but this was certainly so in the case of the Beethoven Seventh Symphony made by Toscanini and the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra in 1936. By that time, through its Sunday afternoon broadcasts, the Philharmonic had become the orchestra best known of any to musical Americans. Yet it had produced comparatively little in the way of discs; Toscanini had a strong aversion to recording.

Further, there was need for a new Beethoven Seventh. Victor's Stokowski version was beginning to sound ancient. The Weingartner, though newer, suffered — as did most of the Vienna Columbias — from "compression" of the loud parts. Beethovenians yearned for a Toscanini recording. And, for a wonder, he made one. He did it in April; everyone knew about it at once; and there was a terrible time of suspense until it was issued in September. But it was worth waiting for. The new electrical techniques had lived up to the tyrant's demands. There were *real* pianissimos, and *real* fortes, which would shred a cactus needle in next to no time. It seemed a marvel.

It still seems a marvel, in Camden's new microgroove reprint, though of course in a different way. Most important is that it brings back, with considerable sonic verisimilitude, a Toscanini whom today's young listeners hardly have heard before, conducting an orchestra trained to his earlier taste, not nearly so lean and astringent in tone as the NBC Symphony was. The lyrical passages are rich and gentle; the fast parts are driven by human rhythms, not by the bodiless fury we learned to expect in later years. There is one change from the 78-rpm original, as Robert Charles Marsh has pointed out: the master disc of the first side (in old M-317) was damaged, and a spare take (slightly faster) was used in the taping for microgroove.

The taping, incidentally, was done in 1951, for the new Camden was derived from the same tape as the Collector's Treasury version, LCT 1017, issued five years ago, now withdrawn. I tell you this because otherwise you would not know it. The LCT reprint was bad — thin, unreal, short of dynamics. The Camden is not. It is not quite high fidelity. You can hear the stylus fighting the 78-rpm grooves of the master. But the intent of the sixty-nine-year-old conductor, still young enough to be Italian and love singing strings and golden horns, comes through, and there is glory in it.

I suspected that the people at Camden had made judicious application of a volume expander in the processing, but I am told they didn't; it wasn't necessary. Anyway, they did come to the conclusion that they had something special on their hands, for this $1.98 record has jacket notes, unlike any of its predecessors. And the sleeve itself represents artistic labor of no mean sort. You won't believe it when you see it, but the Ray Lee Jackson cover portrait, well chosen, was originally a black and white photograph. Whoever tinted it should have got a credit line, too.

JOHN M. CONLY

BEETHOVEN: *Symphony No. 7, in A, Op. 92*

New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra, Arturo Toscanini, cond.
RCA CAMDEN CAL 352. 12-in. $1.98.

tions of its use in a concert composition.

Margrit Weber, a Swiss pianist, is an executant artist with a clean technique which serves her well in these essentially transparent works. Fricsay, too, has long been noted for the clarity and crispness of the playing he elicits from an orchestra. The combination works to best advantage in the Françaix, which is impeccably set forth in just the proper spirit. Elsewhere, the interpretations are a bit on the cautious side, especially in the Strauss, where the tempos are too slow. This causes the music to lose much of its delightful sparkle. Reproduction on the present disc is commensurate in fidelity and transparency with the keyboard and orchestral performances. P.A.

FRANCK: *Prélude, choral et fugue*—
See Dukas: *Variations, Interlude, and Finale.*

GLUCK: *Orphée et Euridice*

Maria Stader (s), Euridice; Rita Streich (s), Amor; Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (b), Orpheus; RIAS Chamber Choir, Berlin Motet Choir, Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra, Ferenc Fricsay, cond.
DECCA DXH 143. Two 12-in. $7.96.

Recently, a few hundred people had the opportunity of hearing a New York concert which occasioned from Paul Henry Lang certain remarks about the treatment of Gluck's *Orpheus* as if it were a nineteenth-century oratorio. Here, as though in illustration of that criticism, Decca has issued an album in which Gluck's drama has been enshrined in a performance of deep reverence, solemnity, and incredible boredom.

Dynamics and tempo are the trouble. The former are consistently too subdued, and the latter are often too slow and still more often not well adjusted to one another. Gluck's tempos are difficult to gauge and present the conductor with a

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Bagdad Had a Barber, Too, and a Very Lively One

"THE Barber of What?," you will ask, and who wrote it?" Well, the barber really is of Bagdad, and both music and text are by Peter Cornelius — poet, composer, actor, translator, friend of Liszt and Wagner, and resident of Weimar during most of his rather short life (1824–74). The story of his opera comes from the twenty-fourth night of *A Thousand and One Nights*, and it concerns the well-meant blundering of a ninety-year-old Mesopotamian Figaro in the love affair of young Nureddin with the beautiful Margiana (whose father, naturally, has other and financially more promising plans for her future).

The Barber of Bagdad was first produced at Weimar under Liszt in 1858. Resentment and animosity directed against Liszt for musico-political reasons reduced the evening to a failure. Cornelius, a withdrawn and sensitive man, retracted his opera, and it was neither published nor performed again during his lifetime. After the composer's death, it was converted to a one-acter, subjected to more conventional but quite brutal cuts, reharmonized, and reorchestrated. Not until the early years of this century was the original text, recorded here, made available.

Without approving of the results, one can to some extent sympathize with the attempts to improve *The Barber* as drama, for there is no doubt that it does not completely come off. The first act, mainly expository, is masterful, but in the second act it becomes plain that this plot never will thicken. To the last curtain, comedy should allow the audience to imagine that something could still go wrong, but here the direct path to the happy end is never obscured for a moment. This amounts to a serious dramatic weakness and is, I am certain, what has kept *The Barber* from being a permanent success.

Nevertheless, *The Barber of Bagdad* is an opera fuller than most of ingenious and happy invention. Cornelius' verbal felicity alone is something quite exceptional in libretto writing. In every situation from patter song to love lyric the words are a pleasure to hear and read. The barber's pompous vocabulary is especially imposing, and at one climactic moment he blusters forth in a cloud of alliteration of which even Wotan might have been proud: "*Ruchloser Richter, der sich ungerecht rächt, / Doch höh're Richter, richten, Richter dich!*"

Musically, *The Barber* is fascinating and delightful. Most unexpectedly, considering Cornelius' personal and professional associations, it is a highly original work. One can detect traces of certain influences, among them that of Berlioz, but in its total effect Cornelius' musical language is fresh and independent. The composer displays wonderful harmonic ingenuity, particularly in his varied harmonizations in refrain forms. Abul Hassan's opening salutation to Nureddin, whom he has come to shave, consists of a string of solemn epithets, nice German seven-syllable adjectival nouns, and in music this emerges as a two-measure phrase repeated seventeen

Oscar Czerwenka

times, yet without the slightest suggestion of tedium because each cadence arrives at a new and unexpected destination. The score contains gem after gem of this quality, and the duet between Bostana and Nureddin, for instance, has no superior in the comic repertory between Mozart and *Falstaff*. In his excitement the boy repeats every two or three words after Bostana and a wonderfully amusing canon develops, its motion becoming the more intoxicating through the occasional rhythmic irregularities as sudden bars of 9/8 upset the regular 6/8 swing. The whole score is so full of musical mastery that its apparent loss to the stage through its inadequacies as drama is the greatest of pities.

Now Angel enables us to hear this sparkling music in a performance that is a complete joy. Erich Leinsdorf's conducting is all brilliance, lightness, wit, and grace; and in a score so full of instrumental solos the Philharmonia Orchestra provides pleasure after pleasure with its elegance of tone and musicianship. There should certainly be a solo curtain call for Walter Jellinek who trained the chorus to sing immaculate German and otherwise to perform with the utmost in warmth and brilliance. Schwarzkopf and Gedda both sing so well and with such seeming naturalness and ease that one wonders why their standards are the exception among contemporary singers, rather than the rule. Gerhard Unger makes an amusingly jittery old gentleman of Margiana's father, and I hope Grace Hoffman enjoyed singing Bostana as much as I enjoyed hearing her. The star of the occasion, however, is Oskar Czerwenka, who is absolutely splendid as Abul Hassan Ali Ebn Bekar, the Barber of Bagdad, or indeed, as he makes one feel, *the* barber of Bagdad. Outstanding musicianship, inexhaustible technical resources (complete to a handsome trill), an extraordinary sense of timing and, above all, of restraint, operate to make this young bass someone quite special.

The sound is of Angel's best quality, though with one peculiarity: the overture is recorded at a *much* higher volume level than the rest of the opera. The English libretto is an ancient one by the Rev. Marmaduke E. Browne, and it is not entirely satisfactory. Browne has supplied some good comic lines of his own, but the correspondence of his text to the German is frequently quite dim. That is, however, a minor flaw in a valuable and beautiful set of records.

CARL MICHAEL STEINBERG

CORNELIUS: *Der Barbier von Bagdad*

Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (s), Margiana; Grace Hoffman (ms), Bostana; Gerhard Unger (t), Baba Mustapha; Nicolai Gedda (t), Nureddin; August Jaresch (t), 2nd Muezzin; Rudolf Christ (t), 3rd Muezzin; Eberhard Wächter (b), 1st Muezzin; Hermann Prey (b), The Caliph of Bagdad; Oscar Czerwenka (bs), Abul Hassan; Philharmonia Chorus, Walter Jellinek, chorus master; Philharmonia Orchestra, Erich Leinsdorf, cond.
ANGEL 35394/95. Two 12-in. $10.98.

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formidable array of problems. The crux of dramatic production is pacing, and Ferenc Fricsay seems to lack the ability to hear the right speed in the music itself; moreover, as with most conductors of this music, he is handicapped by stylistic misconceptions that lead him into one wrong decision after another. The slack, soft, even sentimental treatment to which *Orpheus* is subjected here represents the modern musician's notion of the appropriate classical, elegiac, ideal style — and this in connection with the most cosmopolitan of composers and one most concerned with dramatic force and reality.

In another respect, however, the producers of this recording have shown a keener than usual sense of dramatic truth: they have assigned the part of Orpheus to a baritone, something that merely requires an octave transposition of the customary contralto part. Gluck originally composed *Orpheus* for a Viennese production to an Italian text, and with a *castrato* in the title role. For the Paris production, twelve years later, Gluck rewrote the title role for tenor, since *castrati* were no longer permitted in France. In 1859, the Paris Théâtre Lyrique commissioned Berlioz to construct a composite of the two versions, one that would restore the contralto voice, yet retain the other changes of the 1774 edition. Berlioz's version has been the basis for most revivals since then and, except for the transfer to the baritone range, is the basis of the present recording.

Since Orpheus is a fully mature and suffering man, the contralto voice cannot convey his image to us today, whatever the bright and radiant sound of the male contralto in the eighteenth century. The midnineteenth-century decision to restore the contralto was part of a tendency to classicize and to idealize a past period, a period that was no longer a living reality. In other words, poor Gluck had become a classic, and the contralto voice which had started out as a mere accidental factor of his opera became the very means of robbing the drama of its reality, of making it something ideal, elegiac, something "classical." The female contralto voice for Orpheus is completely wrong — wrong because of its intensely womanly sound and because of the irrelevant associations it inevitably evokes. I cannot applaude enough the courageous decision to experiment with the baritone voice in this recording.

The actual details of Fischer-Dieskau's inrerpretation are themselves not completely persuasive. His voice is of course very beautiful, and with such an artist it is inevitable that if he sings a sufficient number of minutes some quite stunning things will come out. I would nevertheless prefer a singer with a keener sense of eighteenth-century style. Maria Stader as Euridice is perfect, vocally and stylistically. Rita Streich as Amor has a somewhat unpleasant rapid tremolo, and in any case I should prefer someone who is less of a soubrette type. From the technical point of view, most of Fricsay's conducting is good, but he cannor produce an intelligible texture in the most beautiful number of the score, Orpheus' aria *"Che puro ciel."*

Ah yes, *"Che puro ciel"* is not *"Che puro ciel"* at all, nor *"Quel nouveau ciel,"* but *"Welch reiner Himmel,"* for, *horribile dictu*, everything is sung in German. *"Che farò"* becomes *"Ach, ich habe sie verloren,"* and the hero's name is "Orphoyce." This all amounts to a most unattractive aesthetic provincialism which will hardly make much sense to an American audience.

A few cuts are made, including as usual Orpheus' aria at the end of the first act. It isn't much of an aria, and difficult besides, but the end of the act as it stands is impossible. With the exception of a trio at the end, the other cuts are of ballet music that Gluck added in deference to Parisian taste, and including, or rather excluding, some lovely music. In view of those omissions, it is all the harder to understand the conscientious inclusion of the overture, a piece that is one of the notable landmarks in the history of inane music.

Gluck: Orphoyce met too many hazards.

Of the other recordings, Alice Raveau's is no longer available, to the regret of its legion of admirers. The London disc of excerpts offers a rather immature Ferrier in a role in which she was to rise to, alas, unrecorded greatness. More important, it offers the conducting of Fritz Stiedry, whose phrasing and pacing of *"Che farò"* shows superlative understanding of Gluck, though it has never satisfied those people who confuse that piece with "O rest in the Lord." Victor has a record of Act II with Toscanini demonstrating his unique sense of architecture and drama, and with labors virtually annulled by inferior singers and harsh sound. Urania offers the distinguished names of Klose and Berger, and nothing much else. For a review of the Epic album, with Rosbaud, Simoneau, and Danco, see this magazine for April 1957. The Decca album, considered here, unhappily will add little to the understanding and love of Gluck's moving legend. C.M.S.

HARTMANN: *Symphony No. 6* — See Egk: *French Suite after Rameau.*

HAYDN: *Concerto for Flute and Orchestra, in D* — See Telemann: *Concertos for Two Flutes and Orchestra.*

HONEGGER: *Concertino, for Piano and Orchestra* — See Françaix: *Concertino, for Piano and Orchestra.*

JOLIVET: *Suite Transocéane*
†Vincent: *Symphony in D*

Louisville Orchestra, Robert Whitney, cond. LOUISVILLE LOU 57-2. Available on subscription only.

This is a remarkable disc, first because it is far and away the best recording in the Louisville Orchestra series and second because it presents two immensely interesting works.

The *Suite Transocéane*, whose title is explained simply as "symbolizing a liaison between the two continents of Europe and America," is the weightiest work of André Jolivet so far to appear on American records. It reveals him as a big, brawling, thoroughly extroverted kind of writer; the suite is one of the noisiest things ever recorded, one of the most invigorating, and of the grandest in the sonority of its "barbaric yawp." Such music sometimes does not sustain its interest with repeated hearings, but on the first time through, at least, the *Suite Transocéane* is really a stunner.

John Vincent's Symphony in D is a work of a very different order. It is a symphony in one movement which grows, with impeccable logic, clarity, and precision, from an axiomatic germinal idea. This description may make it seem cold, but it is far from cold; on the contrary, the somewhat Coplandesque lyricism of its slow sections and the festive brilliance of its fast sections are expressive and satisfying to the highest degree. But it is the over-all satisfaction of its beautifully molded form that is the most important thing. A.F.

MARTINU: *Fantaisies symphoniques* — See Piston: *Symphony No. 6.*

MOZART: *Concertos for Piano: in C, K. 467; in B flat, K. 595; in G., K. 453; in C, K. 503*

Rudolf Serkin, piano; Columbia Symphony Orchestra, Alexander Schneider, dir. (in K. 467, K. 595), George Szell, cond. (in K. 453, K. 503).
COLUMBIA ML 5013 and 5169. Two 12-in. $3.98 each.

Four glorious works, gloriously played. Serkin's way with Mozart is manly as well as sensitive; especially, it sings. In K. 467 he gives full value to the quasi-martial spirit of the principal theme of the first movement as well as to the exquisite poetry of the andante. And he conveys successfully the autumnal quality of the B flat concerto, which goes through many of the motions of joy but is not really gay. (It is surprising, however, to find Serkin using an edition of K. 595 in which seven measures not in Mozart's manuscript are interpolated in the orchestral part of the first movement, to no useful purpose.) Sonically, the only serious fault to be found here is the occasional inaudibility of one wind instrument or another when it is an important voice in the conversation, and the horns sound rather tubby in tutti.

The G major concerto is one of Mozart's most ravishingly beautiful works. There is not a weak or dull moment in it, from the heavenly opening theme through the marvelous andante to the rousing *opera-*

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Malkō: an elegant Prokofiev pairing.

buffa-like ending. K. 503 is of another sort, more brilliant and majestic, less personal and more of a display piece. Serkin does equally well by both. The rapid and cruelly exposed triplets in the finale of K. 503 are as smooth as velvet. Without mooning over the slow movements or getting cute in the fast ones, he manages to convey the poetry and charm of the music. He is expertly assisted by the canny and thoroughly experienced Mr. Szell. I wish, however, that here too the flute and bassoons were more clearly audible in some of their important passages. Otherwise, balance and sound are first-rate. N.B.

MOZART: *Requiem Mass, K. 626*

Elsie Morison (s); Monica Sinclair (c); Alexander Young (t); Marian Nowakowski (bs); BBC Chorus; Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Sir Thomas Beecham, cond.
COLUMBIA ML 5160. 12-in. $3.98.

There is need for a thoroughly first-rate recording of this masterpiece, and one had high hopes of the present one. But alas, it has turned out quite differently. To begin with, Sir Thomas has his own ideas about the orchestration of the work. He does not hesitate to add instruments, not only to support the voices — for which there might be a modicum of justification, even though the chorus sounds numerous enough not to require such support — but to enrich the harmonic and instrumental color. This is not only unnecessary, but changes the character of the work.

Mozart and, undoubtedly following his instructions, Süssmayr avoid the bright color of the oboes, but Beecham puts them in, in the *Tuba mirum* and *Lacrimosa*. According to Brahms, Mozart indicated a solo trombone in the first eighteen measures of the *Tuba mirum*; Einstein thought that Mozart intended to shift from a trombone to a bassoon after the fourth measure; Beecham shifts from trombone to clarinet to cello in the one part. In the Agnus Dei there is a cut of six measures. Now it may be said in extenuation of this hanky-panky that most of it takes place in those portions that are by Süssmayr. Actually we shall never know how much of what he contributed was entirely his own and how much had been told him by Mozart. In any case, what is offered here is not Mozart-Süssmayr but Mozart-Süssmayr-Beecham; and if this were food for the body instead of the soul the label would have to say so.

All this might not have struck me as forcibly as it did if the performance had been an eloquent one. But the chorus sounds distant, contrapuntal sections are blurred, and the general approach is a detached one: at no time is there any hint that Mozart came to regard this work as a requiem for himself. N.B.

MOZART: *Symphonies: No. 25, in G minor, K. 183; No. 40, in G minor, K. 550*

Philharmonia Orchestra, Otto Klemperer, cond.
ANGEL 35407. 12-in. $4.98 (or $3.48).

These two symphonies were written fifteen years apart — almost half of Mozart's lifetime — yet they have certain qualities in common. In the "great" G minor Klemperer takes the two fast movements a shade slowly and stresses the music's tenderness and pathos, rather than its passion and drama. This approach is understandable and no doubt will appeal to many. It is aided by the transparency of the performance and recording; one hears, in the tutti, wood-wind figures and lines that are usually buried. The daemonic quality that one misses in Klemperer's playing of K. 550 is present, however, in the "little" G minor. The conductor gives this work, extraordinary in the output of its extraordinary seventeen-year-old composer, its full sweep and intensity. N.B.

ORFF: *Carmina Burana*

Agnes Giebel (s), Paul Kuen (t), Marcél Cordes (b); Chorus of West German Radio, Cologne Radio Symphony Orchestra, Wolfgang Sawallisch, cond.
ANGEL 35415. 12-in. $4.98 (or $3.48).

According to the jacket, this version of *Carmina Burana* was "recorded under the personal supervision of Carl Orff," and it may therefore be accepted as authoritative. The interpretation is less biting, vehement, and parodistic than the one recorded by Jochum for Decca, but it has plenty of humor and life, and its emphasis on the folkloric nature poetry of the score is most attractive. The recording is superb, far better — especially in dynamics — than that of the Decca. A.F.

PARAY: *Mass for the 500th Anniversary of the Death of Joan of Arc*

Frances Yeend (s), Frances Bible (ms), David Lloyd (t), Yi-Kwei-Sze (bs); Rackham Symphony Choir, Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Paul Paray, cond.
MERCURY MG 50128. 12-in. $3.98.

Paul Paray's great success as a conductor has obscured the fact that he is also a prolific composer. The work here recorded is in the tradition of the religious music of Gounod and Saint-Saëns; it is distinguished for a mellifluous and occasionally saccharine "effectiveness" more appropriate to opera than to liturgy. The recording is magnificent. A.F.

PISTON: *Symphony No. 6*
†Martinu: *Fantaisies symphoniques*

Boston Symphony Orchestra, Charles Munch, cond.
RCA VICTOR LM 2083. 12-in. $3.98.

These are two of the fifteen works commissioned for the Boston Symphony's seventy-fifth anniversary celebration last year. The Piston is typical of that composer's symphonies — lofty, serene, and so adroitly made that each of its four movements seems shorter than it actually is. The adagio is wonderfully moving and may well be singled out as one of Piston's noblest pages, but it is not disproportionately significant in the context of the symphony as a whole.

Martinu's *Fantaisies symphoniques* is a set of three pieces, all of the most effervescent, ebullient, and dramatic kind; there are also rich implications of folklore in the thematic substance which help to give this work its character. Martinu is always clever; this work also has a sincerity that is sometimes lacking in his music.

The performances sound superbly authoritative, but the recording is merely good, falling somewhat short of the high standard one expects both of the Boston Symphony and RCA Victor. A.F.

PROKOFIEV: *Sonatas for Piano* (complete)

Yury Boukoff, piano.
WESTMINSTER XWN 18369/71. Three 12-in. $3.98 each.

This is the first complete recorded edition of Prokofiev's piano sonatas. The first four sonatas are on XWN 18369, the fifth, sixth, and seventh on XWN 18370, and the eighth and ninth on XWN 18371. The interpreter, Yury Boukoff, is a young Bulgarian who has studied mostly in Paris. He has a nice sense of Prokofiev's humor and lyricism and is well equipped to handle the steely, monumental, overwhelming sonorities which the sonatas often demand. His dry, crisp, lively tone has been beautifully registered, and the whole is one of the most successful ventures into wholesale recording in the current catalogue. A.F.

PROKOFIEV: *Symphonies: No. 1, in D, Op. 25 ("Classical"); No. 7, in C sharp minor, Op. 131*

Philharmonia Orchestra, Nicolai Malko, cond.
RCA VICTOR LM 2092. 12-in. $3.98.

Some thirty-five years separate these, the first and last of the late Sergei Prokofiev's symphonies. In the First he alternately paid homage to, and poked fun at, Mozart; in the Seventh he returned, after many stormy excursions, to a relatively simple, though highly colorful style, marked by a few echoes of Tchaikovsky. The *Classical* deserves a little niche all its own; the Seventh, while an admirable and pleasing work, nowhere approaches in stature the sweeping and imaginative proportions of Prokofiev's greatest work in this form, the Fifth.

Malko chooses exceptionally conservative tempos for the *Classical*, particularly

Continued on page 62

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in the first two movements, but he maintains the pseudoclassical elegance and proportion all the way through. His conception of the Seventh is somewhat leaner in tonal exploitation than that by Ormandy for Columbia, but then he doesn't have the suave-sounding Philadelphia Orchestra to exploit. Some may prefer his somewhat austere approach, though in so doing they will be sacrificing the exquisite wood-wind solos in the Philadelphians' performance. This is nor to imply that the Philharmonia doesn't play admirably; and the British engineers have provided wide-range sonics with plenty of acoustical depth. P.A.

ROUSSEL: *Symphonies: No. 3, in G minor, Op. 42; No. 4, in A, Op. 53*

Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Ernest Ansermet, cond.
LONDON LL 1495. 12-in. $3.98.

Except for an old, indifferent German version of the Third, neither of these celebrated symphonies has pteviously appeared on the LP lists. Both are distinguished for their flavorsome mixture of energy, humor, elegance, and formal ingenuity. They are, in all probability, Roussel's finest works in any form, and they have been beautifully handled by Ansermet and by London's technical staff. A.F.

SCHUBERT: *Moments Musicaux, Op. 94; Sonata for Piano, No. 15, in C (Moderato* and *Andante* only)

Rudolf Serkin, piano.
COLUMBIA ML 5153. 12-in. $3.98.

Schubert's *Moments Musicaux* are among his best known and most frequently played works; his Sonata in C has been recorded only once before. Cast in the four movement form, there are a few bars missing at the close of its *Minuet* and *Rondo* movements. The earlier recording by Ray Lev included these as completed by Ernest Křenek. Serkin omits them, thereby offering the sonata in a somewhat stunted form.

Taken as half a loaf, this is a welcome release, since the sonata is a grand work and Serkin's performance a most persuasive exposition of its glories. One can almost hear in it orchestral sonorities, which adds conviction to the theory that this — rather than the *Grand Duo* in the same key — might be the lost *Gastein* Symphony.

The recording is excellent and made all the more human by the occasional vocal intrusions of the artist.

Equally well recorded, the six *Moments Musicaux* are now available in the long play catalogue in an edition that captures the Schubertian warmth without sentimentality and gives us as satisfactory an account of this music as we can expect from any living pianist. R.C.M.

Ansermet repolishes two Roussel gems.

SCHUBERT: *Symphony No. 8, in B minor ("Unfinished")*
†Brahms: *Variations on a theme of Haydn, Op. 56a*

Philharmonia Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan, cond.
ANGEL 35288. 12-in. $4.98 (or $3.48).

Heard in concert (with the Berlin Philharmonic) last autumn, Karajan's *Unfinished* restored freshness and interest to a score I feared had gone forever stale. His is a bold, heroic conception, similar in spirit to Toscanini's of some years ago, but executed in German orchestral textures. There are twenty-four editions of this score in the current catalogue, but none of them is better played, better recorded, or more faithful to Schubert's intentions.

The approach to the Brahms is approximately midway between those found in the Walter and the Toscanini sets. This puts it right up in the top three or four of the fifteen versions of this work, with one's individual choice depending a lot on how one feels about secondary points of interpretation. My preference is still the Toscanini. R.C.M.

SCHUMANN: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, in A minor, Op. 54*
†Strauss, Richard: *Burleske, in D minor*

Rudolf Serkin, piano; Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond.
COLUMBIA ML 5168. 12-in. $3.98.

What makes this disc especially attractive is Serkin's blazing performance of the Strauss *Burleske*. In the Schumann concerto he is brisk and businesslike. His playing is altogther assured, with a slight nervous edge to it, and obviously a superior artist is at work. And when the strings of the Philadelphia Orchestra sing out the theme of the slow movement in a manner unduplicated on LP, the listener can only admire. But there are on LP several performances of equal distinction: the intensely lyric Novaes (Vox), in a recording that is a little boomy but quite acceptable; the Lipatti version, (Columbia), one of breadth and power with remarkable control (it remains my own favorite); the sane, well-balanced account by Haas (Decca); the romantic playing of Rubinstein (Victor), which still retains its beauty. Of other available versions, I would avoid the listless, inaccurate Gieseking disc (Angel) and the slow, mannered Kempff one (Decca). I find Demus (Westminsrer) and Haskil (Epic) little more than routine and sometimes not even that.

In the *Burleske*, of which there are about a half-dozen prior versions on microgroove, Serkin leaves all competition behind. He revels in the pyrotechnics of the piece, turning in a sensational performance. His playing sounds free and relaxed, and one gets the impression that he is having a lot of fun. And the *Burleske*, despite the fact that some listeners sneer at it as early Strauss (he was twenty-one when he composed it) and as *Kitsch* of the worst German sort, *is* a lot of fun. It unabashedly flaunts its sentimental themes, and right good themes they are; it gives the piano all kinds of neo-Brahmsian virtuoso stunts; it even gives the timpani a solo. Those who pass up this disc will be missing not only some of the most athletic piano playing ever recorded, but also a really delightful piece of music: a better piece, I think, than some of the more pretentious tone poems and operas that Strauss eventually was to compose. H.C.S.

SMETANA: *The Bartered Bride*

Vilma Bukovetz (s), Mařenka; Sonia Khochevar (s), Esmeralda; Bogdana Stritar (ms), Ludmilla; Elza Karlovatz (ms), Hata; Yanez Lipushchek (t), Vasek; Miro Brajnik (t), Jenik; Slavko Shtrukel (t), Springer; Mirko Cherhigoj (t), Muff; Vekoslav Yanko (b), Krusina; Vladimir Dolnichard (bs), Micha; Latko Koroshetz (bs), Kecal. Chorus and Orchestra of the Slovenian National Opera, Dimitri Gebré, cond.
EPIC SC 6020. Three 12-in. $14.94.

It is a characteristic of the great comedies of the operatic literature that they introduce unforeseen depths and cast unexpected light and shadow onto their subjects. *The Bartered Bride* is built about a plot that is itself a bit thin, and Smetana's commitment to his characters is not deep. For that reason, *The Bartered Bride* has never seemed a work of great stature in spite of good music, completely appropriate to story and action, and even though everything about it is done very expertly — enough so to have kept this story of a tiny matrimonial problem a secure theatrical success since its 1866 première, at least in those countries at home with its rather folksy tradition.

Listening to *The Bartered Bride* without seeing it is not a completely nourishing experience. The work belongs very much to the stage, and the polka-ing and Pilsner-swilling villagers contribute surprisingly toward creating a three-dimensional reality which the music alone cannot quite achieve. The opera is a highly practical one: given a director who can set a simple and unaffected tone for the production, one can go ahead without the participation of stars and virtuosi. It might be good to hear it with Jurinac and Gedda, but it really goes very, very well with Bukovetz, Brajnik, and the Slovenian National Opera, which actually is the opera of Ljubliana, a Yugoslav provincial capital about the size of Springfield, Illinois. It offers a balanced ensemble of soloists, an unusually effective chorus, and a good orchestra. Its conductor, Maestro Gebré, has no striking profile of his own, but he

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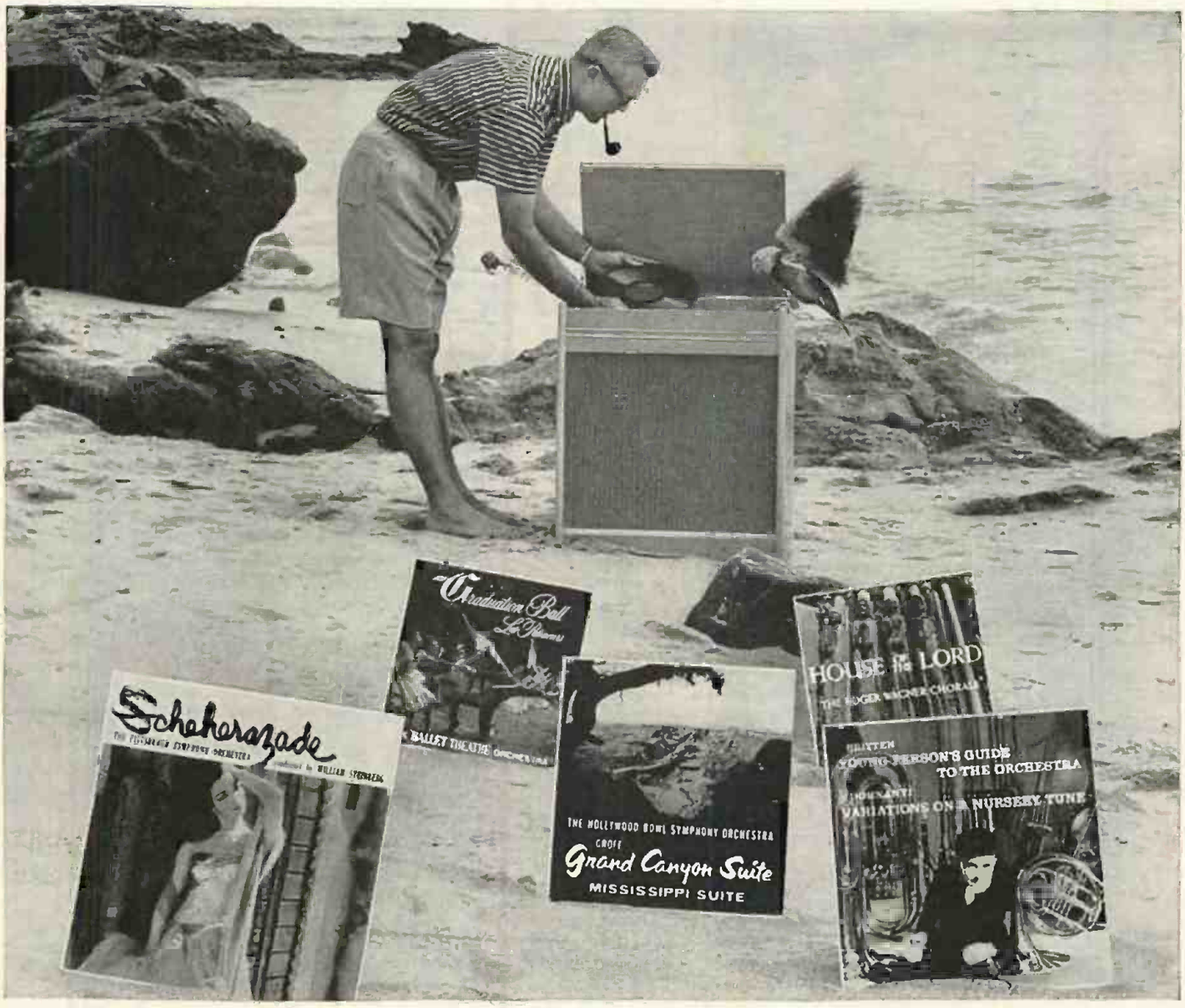

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shows quite clearly that he not only has the music securely in hand, but also has the authority to impose a uniformity of style on his associates.

The principal boy and girl have attractive voices which they use tastefully. Lipushchek uses a very lovely lyric tenor as best he can in the nearly impossible role of the stuttering Vasek, and in the smaller parts I enjoyed particularly Slavko Shtrukel as a singularly vivacious circus manager. I might register very slight disappointment with the bass Latko Koroshetz, who portrays the marriage broker Kecal. This part is potentially a fat plum indeed, but Koroshetz does not come close to exhausting the possibilities inherent in the great art of acting with the voice. The choruses and the familiar dances are very well done, and the circus scene has a nice realism with good use of crowd noises, applause, etc.

The sound itself is good, the processing less so. Silences are not immaculate, and the empty grooves too often resound with echoes, both "pre" and the normal kind. A parallel Czech-English libretto is provided, and I am afraid I have to take its accuracy on faith. The competition for this new *Bride* consists of two Urania sets, a Prague National Theater version with more polish and less zest, and a Berlin Civic Opera set (*auf deutsch*, and with a fine funny Kecal in Kurt Böhme) much less musically distinguished. C.M.S.

STRAUSS, JOHANN JR.: *Fledermaus: Overture and Suite; A Thousand and One Nights*
†Strauss, Josef: *Music of the Spheres; Sword and Lyre*

Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond.
COLUMBIA ML 5166. 12-in. $3.98.

Some twenty years ago when Ormandy recorded the *Fledermaus* Overture with the Minneapolis Symphony he approached the work with a freshness and zest that produced a disc capable of retaining its popularity long after its normal date of obsolescence.

This new version has no comparable charms, but suggests, rather, that the conductor has gone stale on a work he has been playing too often for too long. The urge for speed is here more apparent than the search for Viennese gaiety.

The suite Ormandy has concocted from the opera gets somewhat more appropriate treatment, although the Krauss group of excerpts (London LL 305) remains a more attractive collection.

Filling out the disc are three waltzes in the polished manner typical of Ormandy's better performances of Viennese music. R.C.M.

STRAUSS, JOSEF: *Music of the Spheres; Sword and Lyre* — See Strauss, Johann Jr.: *Fledermaus: Overture and Suite.*

STRAUSS, RICHARD: *Burleske, in D minor* — See Françaix: *Concertino, for Piano and Orchestra.*

STRAUSS, RICHARD: *Burleske, in D minor* — See Schumann: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, in A minor, Op. 54.*

STRAUSS, RICHARD: *Tod und Verklärung* — See Tchaikovsky: *Romeo and Juliet.*

STRAVINSKY: *The Rite of Spring*

Orchestre du Conservatoire de Paris, Pierre Monteux, cond.
RCA VICTOR LM 2085. 12-in. $3.98.

By far the most perfectly recorded of all the existing *Sacres*, and from the point of view of interpretation the most authoritative after Stravinsky's own. A more beautiful registration of orchestral sound simply does not exist. A.F.

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Romeo and Juliet*
†Strauss, Richard: *Tod und Verklärung*

Philharmonia Orchestra, Alceo Galliera, cond.
ANGEL 35410. 12-in. $4.98 (or $3.48).

The word is formidable!

Maestro Galliera's *Romeo and Juliet*, recorded in the richly resonant spaces of London's Kingsway Hall, offers a brilliantly clean and effective performance taped on a very wide dynamic range.

This is no edition for small machines and so-so speakers. It'll wreck 'em. Those who want a demonstration record, on the other hand, ought to get this *sans* delay.

The Munch version, reviewed in April, is still in the running and the points pro and con are pretty small. The Angel recording has a bit too much resonance in one or two passages; the Munch is a little too tight and at moments lacking in tenderness. If in doubt, flip a coin. You can't lose on either of these sets.

Since coupling is a factor in such decisions, it ought to be added that the Strauss is a little too slow in the opening largo and lacks throughout the powerful sense of movement that comes from a firm, well-controlled rhythmic pulse. It has some beautiful playing, however. (Munch offers a fine performance of *Francesca da Rimini*.) R.C.M.

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Symphony No. 5, in E minor, Op. 64*
Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in D, Op. 35

DOUGLASS GLASS, LONDON

Galliera's Tchaikovsky: speaker-smasher.

Erica Morini, violin (in the concerto); Philharmonic-Symphony of London, Artur Rodzinski, cond.
WESTMINSTER XWN 18355 and 18397. Two 12-in. $3.98 each.

The symphony tape here rereleased (it appeared earlier in two-disc format in the W-Lab series) was made in the autumn of 1954. At the time Rodzinski was in very poor health and had a nurse attending him at the recording sessions, a state of affairs one would never suspect from the brilliance and vitality of the performance.

Recorded nearly two years later, the concerto offers the same conductor and orchestra in the same hall, and Westminster's newer engineering again provides exceptionally good sound.

In many ways this is the finest available edition of the symphony. The only thing one can say against it is that Rodzinski follows his usual practice of making a cut of 119 bars (following bar 205) in the final movement. There is traditional justification for the excision, but it strikes me as hard to accept, particularly when there are fine, uncut, editions available under Solti and Mravinsky.

Morini's way with the concerto has a dramatic clarity that is all to the good but won't suit those who want an Elmanesque approach. Polished tonal beauty is not her primary objective. It is an exciting performance with lots of fire and feeling, and if you like your Tchaikovsky that way, this ought to be an eminently satisfactory record. R.C.M.

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Symphony No. 6, in B minor, Op. 74 ("Pathétique")*

Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Ernest Ansermet, cond.
LONDON LL 1633. 12-in. $3.98.

As might be expected, Ansermet doesn't waste time or energy weeping and wailing over this symphony, as far too many conductors do. Yet he never eschews warmth and interpretive passion where the music calls for them. The over-all effect of his interpretation is one of power and conviction. Continuity of musical line seems also to be of prime importance, and he insists upon transparency of the orchesrral texture, achieved through precise execution. The engineers have seen eye-to-eye with his goals, and have preserved a cleanliness and vibrancy of sound throughout. This may not be the most exciting *Pathétique* on records, but it has been solidly and sanely conceived, and is likely to be among the more durable disc versions of this too often overplayed symphony. P.A.

TELEMANN: *Concertos for Two Flutes and Orchestra: in A minor; in B flat*
†Vivaldi: *Concerto for Two Flutes and Orchestra, in C, P. 76*
†Haydn: *Concerto for Flute and Orchestra, in D*

Vienna Philharmusica Orchestra, Paul Anger, cond. (in the Telemann and Vi-

Continued on page 66

RONE, LACK, HISS

Jazz Impressions of the S.A." is a record (in more an one sense) of a tour made st year by the Dave Brubeck uartet. Dave himself tells how it evolved: "A music otebook is as important to the aveling musician as a sketch id is to the artist. When lled by the sounds of travel, e drone of the plane, the ack of the wheels, or even e hiss of the radiator in a range hotel room, themes ring suddenly into nsciousness. If a sketchbook handy, the elusive idea is ptured to be developed, ranged or changed. 'Jazz mpressions' is a group of mpositions created in just ch a manner, from notebook ribblings made while on tour." mprovising on these sketches, e Quartet conveys, in jazz rms, its impressions of oadway, Chicago, New leans, various portions of the de open spaces and, finally, ome"—which in Mr. Brubeck's se is Oakland, California.

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NEWPORT GOES ON RECORD

The American Jazz Festival at Newport, Rhode Island, owes its existence to a young couple, Louis and Elaine Lorillard, who decided a few years ago that what Tanglewood had become to longhair music in the summertime, Newport could become to jazz. In three short years the Festival has become the annual affair in jazz; jazz has moved into the Social Register (where else can you see a dowager chatting happily with Eddie Condon or J. J. Johnson); and Newport's salt air has resounded to performances by all but a few of the major jazzmen. Moments of inspiration have been frequent, and some, like Ellington's "Diminuendo and Crescendo in Blue" (on CL 934) have already become legends. This series, taken from the 1956 Festival, is the first and only recorded documentary to be released from this internationally famous event.

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COLUMBIA RECORDS

CONTEMPORARY AMERICANS

In a recent general record catalog which lists some twenty-three different recordings of Beethoven's "Fifth" it is disturbing to discover how few contemporary American compositions are available in even a single version. Columbia's Modern American Composers Series was inaugurated a few years ago in an attempt to set things right. We were warned at the time that this was definitely thin-ice department for a record company. Since then we have been pleased (and frankly amazed) at the wholehearted acceptance of this project. Two composers whose music has been especially popular are Leon Kirchner (above) and William Schuman (below). This latest release in the series, containing new works by both, could very easily add you to the ranks of modern music enthusiasts.

WILLIAM SCHUMAN: Credendum (Article of Faith)—The Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, Cond. **LEON KIRCHNER:** Piano Concerto—the composer as soloist with the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York, Dimitri Mitropoulos, Cond.
ML 5185 ($3.98)

valdi); Scheck-Wenzinger Chamber Group (in the Haydn).
URANIA UR 8005. 12-in. $3.98.

A curious example of musicology in reverse is afforded by the Vivaldi performance. According to Pincherle, the manuscript is marked as for two *flauti traversieri*, but instead of the ordinary transverse flutes thus called for, the work is played here on recorders. These hollow-sounding instruments are employed in the Telemann concertos also, but seem to be correct there. In any case, there is nothing in either the Vivaldi or the Telemann to lift these works above pleasant mediocrity. In the D major concerto, which according to Larsen is not by Haydn, a flicker of interest is aroused by the finale but not before. This work is less well recorded than the others. The unnamed soloists in all four play quite competently. N.B.

TURINA: *Cuentos de España, Series I and II*

Esteban Sánchez, piano.
CAPITOL P 18039. 12-in. $3.98.

Three or four of these pieces have been recorded before, but this appears to be the first recording of the entire group of fourteen "Impressions" of Spanish sights and scenes.

The record serves in another role as the disc debut of twenty-year-old Esteban Sánchez, who has in his blood the power of interpreting Spanish works and who shows every sign of being able to do well by other styles.

Several of the pictures of the first series come from northern Spain, but the second group are all drawn from Córdoba and suggest the mixture of the Moorish, the gypsy, and the Spanish that never fails to evoke a sensual mood in Nordic breasts. If you like Spanish music, this ought to prove a welcome addition to the available repertory. R.C.M.

VINCENT: *Symphony in D* — See Jolivet: *Suite Transocéane.*

VIVALDI: *Concerto for Two Flutes and Orchestra, in C, P. 76* — See Telemann: *Concertos for Two Flutes and Orchestra.*

RECITALS AND MISCELLANY

CARMEN DRAGON: *Nocturne*

Grieg: Nocturne from *Lyric Suite*, Op. 54. Massenet: *Elégie* from *Les Erinnyes*; *Méditation* from *Thaïs*. Fibich: *Poème*. Humperdinck: *Prayer* from *Hansel und Gretel*. Schumann: *Träumerei* from *Kinderszenen*, Op. 16. Schubert: *Ständchen* (Serenade) from *Schwanengesang*. Debussy: *Rêverie*. Wagner: *Song to the Evening Star* from *Tannhäuser*. Brahms: *Wiegenlied* (*Cradle Song*), Op. 49, No. 4.

Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra, Carmen Dragon, cond.
CAPITOL P 8363. 12-in. $3.98.

In this "Miltown Age" mood music albums are very much in vogue. Put this disc down as symphonic mood music of a high, relaxing caliber. There may be only one actual nocturne in the entire collection, but the quiet, nocturnal mood is evoked by most of the music here. The Grieg, Humperdinck, and Massenet *Méditation* are presented in their original orchestrations; the remaining pieces have been transcribed by Dragon with tasteful simplicity and a not inappropriate favoritism for the Hollywood orchestra's full-voiced strings. The conductor also knows how to phrase intelligently, another factor which, along with Capitol's well-defined sound, helps to impart more than the usual dignity and appeal to this frequently overworked and overmutilated music. P.A.

DINU LIPATTI: *His Last Recital*

Bach: Partita No. 1, in B flat. Mozart: Sonata in A minor, K. 310. Schubert: Impromptus in G flat and E flat, Op. 90, Nos. 3 and 2. Chopin: Waltzes (13).

Dinu Lipatti, piano.
ANGEL 3556B (35438/9). Two 12-in. $9.98 (or $6.96).

Dinu Lipatti, age thirty-three, was a very sick man when he gave his last recital, at the Besançon Festival on September 16, 1950. He managed to get through nearly all of the recital but felt too weak to play the last piece on the program, Chopin's Waltz No. 2, in A flat. A few months later, on December 2, he died.

Fortunately for posterity, Radiodiffusion Française taped the Besançon recital, and

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Long Play—LM-2081

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did a good, clear, ungimmicked job of recording. The audience co-operated, too. Not a cough mars the tape, and the background is so clear it puts many a studio session to shame.

Almost everything that previously had appeared on Lipatti's Columbia discs is present in the new Angel set. Only the pair of Schubert impromptus is new. From the Besançon recital only a Bach chorale, mentioned in the album notes by the pianist's widow and presumably played as an encore, is missing.

Lipatti was a great pianist and would have been a greater one. He had everything — tone, technique, and musicianship. His art was in a process of growth, as a comparison of the earlier discs with the contents of this new album will show. In the Columbia disc of the Chopin Waltzes, which Lipatti had recorded previously, the playing is just a shade square and inflexible. More freedom is encountered in the Besançon recital. And even though Lipatti seems to have been in a shocking physical state at the time of the event, his playing, except for one or two slipped notes and one sloppy passage at the end of the A flat Waltz (Op. 64, No. 3) — no more than might ordinarily occur during the course of a live recital — sounds calm, assured, and fully controlled.

This is well-nigh perfect playing. Lipatti was not a fiery pianist, and one feels that every last quartet note and phrase mark had been carefully planned. Which, from what they say about Lipatti, was actually the case. But his playing never sounds pedantic or labored. It is marked, above anything else, by judiciousness — in tempo, in metrics, in dynamics. It is extraordinarily intelligent, logical, musicianly playing, backed by a good strain of poetry and an equality of finger technique that few pianists are ever able to achieve. Judging from his records, he had a tone somewhat similar to Rachmaninoff's, marked by a singing quality and never blurred by excess of pedal. He had the best qualities of the old school of piano playing, and the best of the new, though his inclinations definitely tended toward the romantic school. H.C.S.

MUSIC OF THE GREAT KEYBOARD MASTERS

Paganini-Liszt-Busoni: *La Campanella.* Liszt: *Consolation No. 3.* Chopin: Polonaise, in A, Op. 40, No. 1 (*Military*); Etude, in G flat, Op. 25, No. 9 (*Butterfly*). Debussy: *La Fille aux cheveux de lin*; *Feux d'Artifice.* Godowsky: *Al Wien.* Schumann-Tausig: *The Contrabandist.* Rachmaninoff: Barcarolle, Op. 10, No. 3; Prelude, in E flat minor, Op. 23, No. 9. Prokofiev: Gavotte; *Suggestion diabolique.* Paderewski: Minuet, in G.

Sascha Gorodnitzki, piano.
CAPITOL P 8374. 12-in. $3.98.

The gimmick here is that all the composers were themselves great pianists. (Debussy, though he never had a concert career, was by all accounts an exceptional virtuoso when he was in practice.) Almost every piece on this disc is well known and very popular, though the Prokofiev *Suggestion diabolique* does not turn up on present-day concert programs very often. In the late Thirties there was no escaping it. Come to think of it, how long has it been since the Paderewski Minuet in G (incorrectly labeled in the liner notes as G minor) has been played in a concert hall? We are very sophisticated these days.

Gorodnitzki goes about his work in a clear, efficient, depersonalized manner. He has superior technique, but he does not put it to much emotional use, and some of the playing is bleak-sounding indeed. Even an exceptionally accurate *La Campanella*, which Gorodnitzki takes with virtually no pedal cover, somehow lacks style. The recorded sound is very clear. If you listen carefully you will hear the pianist humming along in many of the pieces. This seems to be the latest fad. The time will come when every musician, to prove his raptus with the music, breaks into song while recording for posterity. Either that, or hi-fi will have to become lo-fi. A 3000 cycle cut-off is recommended. H.C.S.

SLATKIN: *Symphonic Dances*

Tchaikovsky: *The Sleeping Beauty*: Waltz. Kabalevsky: *The Comedians*: Galop. Grieg: *Norwegian* Dance, No. 2. Weinberger: *Schwanda*: Polka. Ravel: *Pavane pour une infante défunte.* Glière: *The Red Poppy*: *Russian Sailors' Dance.* Bizet: *L'Arlesienne*: Farandole. Massenet: *Le Cid*: Navarraise. Delibes: *Sylvia*: *Pizzicato*

Continued on page 70

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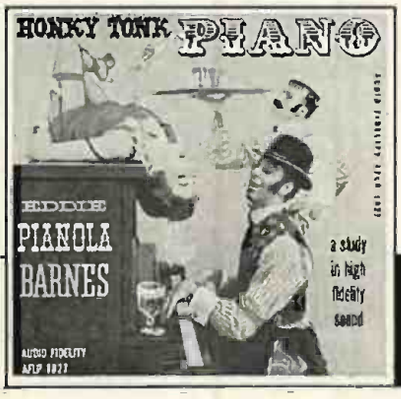

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Polka. Khachaturian: *Gayne*: *Sabre* Dance. Saint-Saëns: *Samson et Dalila*: Bacchanale.

Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra, Felix Slatkin, cond.
CAPITOL P 8369. 12-in. $3.98.

In several of his recent recordings with the Hollywood Bowl Orchestra, Felix Slatkin has shown that he is one of our best conductors of the so-called "light classics." In the present varied and well-selected program, he again displays his mastery of style, presenting each dance in just the right tempo and spirit, at the same time drawing from his players some crisp performances with a freshness and sheen that have been perfectly captured in Capitol's crystalline recording.

From his grasp of this music, it is obvious that Slatkin had nothing to do with the jacket notes, which are decidedly misleading. It's the music that counts, however, and this attractive disc will prove ideal for informal light summer listening or for those who are just starting a record library with easy-to-take music. P.A.

TOSCANINI: *Miscellany*

Brahms: *Variations on a theme of Haydn*. Mendelssohn: *Midsummer Night's Dream*: Scherzo. Mozart: Symphony No. 35 (*"Haffner"*). Rossini: *Il Barbiere*: Overture.

RCA CAMDEN CAL 326. 12-in. $1.98.

The most recent recording in this group is nonetheless of voting age and the oldest is seven years its senior. High fidelity is not to be expected, but very reasonable and attractive sound is still forthcoming, and praise rather than complaint is in order. The original masters were good; their refurbished contents are still welcome to our ears.

This is the better of the two *Haffner's* recorded by the Maestro, and although the other three works have been duplicated acceptably, these performances are nothing short of first class and a bargain at the price. R.C.M.

VIENNESE NIGHT AT THE "PROMS"

Die Fledermaus: Overture; *Pizzicato* Polka: *Perpetuum Mobile; Tales from the Vienna Woods*; *Der Zigeunerbaron*: Overture; *Radetzky* March; *Annen* Polka; *On the Beautiful Blue Danube.*

Hallé Orchestra, Sir John Barbirolli, cond. MERCURY MG 50124. 12-in. $3.98.

One does not usually associate Barbirolli with the waltzing Strausses (Johann, Senior and Junior, and Josef), yet a glance at the program books of the New York Philharmonic reveals that he included a group of these waltzes, overtures, and polkas every season he was at Carnegie Hall. To listen to the present disc, however, is sufficient to convince anyone that he knows his way around this music just about as well as any master of the genre. Though a few passages may be hurried, he usually takes time to linger fondly and properly over introductory upbeats and the more languorous waltz

Continued on page 72

The Music Between

by Murray Schumach

LEROY ANDERSON, whose own true loves are music (vocation) and carpentry (avocation), is probably the only American composer who is approached by artisans in the construction trades with ideas for songs, symphonies, suites — or just "things." He has utilized in his music the suggestions of sandpaper (*Sandpaper Ballet*); clocks (*The Syncopated Clock*); sleighs (*Sleigh Ride*); penny whistle (*Penny-Whistle Song*); and any stray handyman who happens to know this pale-eyed New Englander assumes the right to propose anything from a polka about a power saw to a cantata on a hydroelectric plant.

Fortunately for Mr. Anderson's privacy, he is not a celebrity recognized on sight as the master of a special form of composition, generally running about three minutes, that is as accurate as a well-behaved guided missile in finding the heart of a wide American musical market with a taste midway between sentimental pop and cacophonic modern. His *Blue Tango* alone has sold more than 1,250,000 records and *The Syncopated Clock*, as the theme for the CBS television network's "Early Show," "Late Show," and "Late Late Show," seems second only to the national anthem.

An excellent sampling of Mr. Anderson's style has recently been released on a Mercury record called *Music of Leroy Anderson* (MG 50130). With the Eastman-Rochester Pops Orchestra, conducted by Frederick Fennell, the disc contains such spritely selections as *Sleigh Ride, Irish Suite, Forgotten Dreams, Serenata, A Trumpeter's Lullaby, The Penny-Whistle Song, Sandpaper Ballet,* and *Bugler's Holiday.*

The other day, between a visit to the dentist and conferences on music for a Broadway musical he is doing with Walter and Jean Kerr, the composer discussed some of his odd pieces and what he regarded as his own position in American music. With the articulateness befitting a man who went through Harvard on a scholarship and emerged with Phi Beta Kappa trimmings, he quickly put himself in perspective.

"Symphony men think I'm a pop man," he said. "Pop men — and that includes jazz men — think of me as a symphony man. I'd say I'm right in between. Naturally, without looking for it." His soft voice and narrow face became intense. "What you write is what you do well. You shouldn't write symphony just because you've studied symphony a long time. For that matter a knowledge of symphonic composition doesn't mean you can write pop either. Some men think they can sit down and dash off a pop piece between what they consider their more serious music. When it doesn't go, they don't understand. They say: 'It had all the popular elements'."

Mr. Anderson, having studied all sorts of music since boyhood in his native Cambridge, Massachusetts, does not sell pop music short. He has never tried to do more than four pieces a year. And into those pieces he puts the experience of forty-eight years that have included piano study at the New England Conservatory, composition at Harvard; instruction in the organ, bass fiddle, trombone, tuba; membership in radio and hotel bands; conductor of the Harvard Band; choirmaster of the East Congregational Church, in Milton, a Boston suburb; study of orchestration under Walter Piston and Georges Enesco; arranger for the Boston Pops Orchestra.

Part of the stoop in his tall frame is probably attributable to bending over too many scores at night in a sound-proofed room of his home in Woodbury, Connecticut. And whatever portion of his grey hair, now thinning, did not come from his military career — mostly Army Intelligence in World War II and the Korean War — probably came from trying to make compositions sound as ebullient as though they had popped out of a champagne bottle. He has made his works seem so simple that recently a plumber suggested he dash off a "Steamfitter Blues."

There is, of course, no formula for writing music, Mr. Anderson says. In the case of *Syncopated Clock*, for instance, the title came first. With *Fiddle Faddle* he went through three completely different versions — and countless variations of each. *Sandpaper Ballet* was, he thought, almost finished, when he realized he did not have the correct rhythm for the tss-tss of the sandpaper. He did a complete rewrite.

Between musical chores, Mr. Anderson relaxes with carpentry around the house. (He is something of a hi-fi man, incidentally.) As a sideline, he used to pick up languages. He already knows Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, French, Italian, Portuguese, Icelandic. But with a wife and four children, he doubts he will learn any more languages for a while. His fan mail has continued to increase, with requests for autographs and photographs. For some mysterious reason he gets many letters from South Africa. "They must," he says, "like to write there." His family, however, rarely comments on his records. Mr. Anderson thinks this quite reasonable. "By the time I've finished with a piece," he explains, "and bring home the first test records, they're sick of it." The American audience, though, to judge by steadily rising royalties and enormous sheet music sales, seems capable of enduring the Anderson style for some time.

The perdurable Mr. Leroy Anderson.

FOR the most part, pop recordings this month have been below par. Perhaps I am particularly disappointed because two records that promised much were poor. Like most of the population I had expected a good deal of the latest Rodgers and Hammerstein musical, *Cinderella.* The show was not impressive on television, for which it was written, and seems even less satisfactory on the Columbia recording (OL 5190). The music and lyrics are evenly matched for dullness, with *Do I Love You Because You're Beautiful* and *In My Own Little Corner* the best of a bad lot. The only antidote for this record, which not even Julie Andrews was able to salvage, is to play *My Fair Lady* at least twice.

I was even more disgruntled by *The Romantic Guitar of Vicente Gomez* (Decca DL 8439). For quite a few years I've been looking for an excuse to sound off against the practice of ruining good musicians with elaborate backgrounds. This gripe goes back to the days when Fats Waller's delightful combo was expanded into a "big" band. The same mischief was performed, more recently, against George Shearing. But this offense against Vicente Gomez's guitar is the most inexcusable — a taut, intense, beautiful instrument is boiled in oily orchestral background.

Some things, on recent pop records, however, were worth hearing. First, was *Pipes and Drums of the 48th Highlanders of Canada* (Columbia CL 972). In the marches of these bagpipes and drums is the stirring spirit of a great martial tradition as no other kind of music can capture it. On the Golden Crest label entitled *When Your Love Has Gone* (CR 3009), Pat O'Day reveals a warm, insinuating voice. Miss O'Day's repertoire includes ballad and rhythm song. On this record her feeling and phrasing are equally tasteful in *How Are Things in Glocca Morra* or in *Lover, Come Back to Me.*

Generally, showboat music is played for laughs — and usually fatuously. Epic, on *Here Comes the Showboat* (LN 3329), tries it straight and comes off pretty well. With orchestra, chorus, male and female soloists, this record is for anyone who would like, for a change, to hear *Take Back Your Gold, On the Banks of the Wabash, Polly Wolly Doodle,* and *By the Light of the Silvery Moon* without dated vaudeville antics.

movements. The only two spots about which I might cavil are his heavy ending to the *Perpetuum Mobile*, which should halt in mid-air, and the small cut he makes in the coda of the *Blue Danube*. Otherwise, the latter is accorded an exceptionally sensitive reading, while that of *Tales from the Vienna Woods* — which uses reduced strings in place of the zither in the introduction and coda — is the only one I know on records that observes every repeat. The playing of the Hallé Orchestra is crisp and spirited, and Mercury's sound, though amply full, is kept within proper bounds and reproduces the strings with unusual luminosity. P.A.

THE SPOKEN WORD

JACOB AND WILHELM GRIMM

Tom Thumb; The Old Man and His Grandson; The Frog Prince; The Elves and the Shoemaker; Sleeping Beauty; Rumpelstiltskin; The Star-Money; Rapunzel.

Selections from Grimm's *Fairy Tales*, read by Joseph Schildkraut.
CAEDMON TC 1062. 12-in. $5.95.

Perhaps I am too far removed from my small years and have forgotten how "my" grownups sounded to me as they read me fairy tales before bedtime; but somehow they seemed to create a far more vivid picture of Rapunzel and Rumpelstiltskin than I get from Mr. Schildkraut's readings.

He is first and foremost (as one can readily detect) an actor, not a reader with a literary bent; and though these tales should be read with expression, I do not feel they have to be as tense and artificially dramatic as they sound here. The average child has imagination. If read to in an intelligent quiet way, he will draw his own picture of each character. (Of course, with a record one cannot peer over the shoulder and see an illustration and this, I confess, is a drawback — for which Mr. Schildkraut may be compensating with intense, theatrical characterizations.)

However, in this modern day, when children apparently must *pat* the bunny (in the book), *hear* the train puff, and *smell* (impregnated with *Arpège*, no doubt) the cherry blossoms pictured on each page in order to imagine what they're like, perhaps these tales are well told. For grownups I find them disappointing.

MIRIAM D. MANNING

POETRY READINGS

A selection of English verse, read by Dame Peggy Ashcroft.
LONDON LL 1503. 12-in. $3.98.

In the face of this miscellany, potpourri, or hodgepodge, one is reduced to the reviewer's clichés: "*De gustibus* . . ." and "*Caveat emptor*." Included on the disc are Browning's long children's poem *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*, Keats's *Ode to a Nightingale*, four Shakespearian sonnets and lines from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Romeo and Juliet*, a selection of Edward Lear's nonsense verse, and brief

lyrics of Blake, Sidney Dobell, Herrick, Donne, Tennyson, and Shelley. For my taste, Dame Peggy Ashcroft's reading is on the overly expressive side. J.G.

SOPHOCLES: *The Antigone*

A reading in Greek, by members of Columbia University.
FOLKWAYS FP 97-12. 12-in. $5.95.

Scholars have conjectured that Sophocles' *Antigone* was first produced in 441 B.C., but for many of the 2,400 years of its existence it occupied the study rather than held the stage. It is in the last two decades that this ancient tragedy's relevance to the contemporary historical situation has impelled, not students of classical literatures alone, but ordinary thinking men and women to a reconsideration of its values.

Put crudely, *Antigone* relates the story of a young girl's revolt against what she considers the tyrannous exercise of authority. Creon, ruler of Thebes, has decreed that the body of the rebel Polynices, Antigone's brother, ". . . shall lie / Unwept, unburied, lovely to the eye / Of staring vultures . . ." From Antigone's point of view, Creon's edict is a barbarous violation of the rules of human decency, but even more it is an impious flaunting of divine law. She buries her brother. Trapped by his own pronouncement of death for the disobedient, Creon is forced to condemn his niece and prospective daughter-in-law; agonized by the death of his betrothed, Creon's son Haemon commits suicide; grief stricken at the loss of her first-born, Eurydice, Creon's wife, also dies by her own hand. The King is forced to the recognition that "All that was in my hands awry hath fled, / And left a moveless doom to crush my head."

Here then are the universal and timeless problems of the individual in relation to the state, of human as against divine will. Folkways presents the play complete, except for a few minor cuts; and insofar as one who is not an authority on classical Greek can judge, the roles are well spoken. Antigone sometimes sounds like a shrew instead of the moody, impulsive, brutally scornful but absolutely uncompromising martyr; but the sister Ismene is properly yielding and gentle; the seer Tiresias conveys the enigmatic quality of the prophet; and Creon preserves the complex character of the dictator who is also a more or less decent, if deluded, human being.

The Greek text is provided, but no synopsis and no translation. The traditional-minded will want to reread Gilbert Murray's translation in rhymed verse. Others will enjoy the English version of Dudley Fitts and Robert Fitzgerald, published in the early 1940s. J.G.

FOLK MUSIC

by Edward L. Randal

A FRUITFUL wedding between reasonable authenticity and overwhelming commercial success is a rare thing in the realm of folk singing. But at least one group, The Tarriers, seems to have turned the trick. These three young men — Erik Darling, Alan Arkin, and Bob Carey — are represented on a Glory release, *The Tarriers* (PG 1200). Here, in top drawer sound, they harmonize fourteen folk and folklike tunes. Included is their own Jamaican-type composition, *The Banana Boat Song*, a phenomenally successful veteran of the "Hit Parade" top spot. An ingratiating record in every way.

From Tradition comes another first-class recording of a totally different kind. On *Classic Scots Ballads* (TLP 1015), the craggy baritone of Ewen MacColl, charmingly abetted by the voice and instrumental accompaniments of Peggy Seeger, is heard in what probably is the most stirring single record of old Scottish songs — even though the sound, while adequate, is lacking in presence. Admirers of traditional ballads cannot afford to miss this one.

Another Tradition offering, somewhat better engineered, features Oscar Brand on *Laughing America* (TLP 1014). Mr. Brand performs skillfully, often singing two-part harmony thanks to the marvels of tape editing. However, most indigenous American songs of humorous stripe — at least those that are printable — are far from being legslappers. Ideas of humor certainly differ, but to my mind these songs, which are typical of their kind, remain pretty banal fare.

Jim Reeves, a bright star in the firmament of Nashville's Grand Ole Opry, is heard to advantage on RCA's *Bimbo* (LPM 1410). A genuinely talented vocalist with a pleasant baritone, Reeves shuns most of the nasal excesses of his colleagues. Even those — and thank God their name is legion — who lift an eyebrow at country music may surprise themselves by enjoying this disc, although its songs will arouse no deep emotional response. Also from Victor comes *Hawaiian Guitar* (LPM 1384). In a series of golden legatos, the Stars of Hawaii Orchestra offers an evocative selection of island songs along with some, such as *Pagan Love Song*, that just sound insular. Because Hollywood has made Hawaiians of us all, this is mood music to arouse nostalgia even in a six-year-old.

Anyone who prefers flamenco with the rough edges polished away will find his desires satisfied on Montilla's *Antonio Molina Flamenco Styles* (FM 90). Though a rather light-textured tenor, Molina has a talent that cannot be obscured even by the crashing orchestral accompaniment which replaces the traditional guitar. Excellent sound.

In the welter of synthetic calypso that threatens to engulf us, beset by the idiocies of Tin Pan Alley and countless inane Mary Annes endlessly sifting sand, it is a relief to hear the voice of that old pro, the Duke of Iron, raised on Victor's *Calypso Carnival* (LPM 1386). With good cause, the Duke has long billed himself as the champion of them all. He is in customary zestful fettle as he tirelessly pursues rhyme and meter while detailing the foibles, fancies, follies, failures, and fulfillments of the world around him. The Duke's years in New York have not left him free of a certain jazzy imprint, but he still operates in the true tradition of calypso spontaneity. RCA's sound is splendid, and the record has great value as an antidote to current capers.

THE BEST OF JAZZ

by John S. Wilson

AL COHN QUINTET

The Lady Is a Tramp; Good Spirits; A Blues Serenade; Lazy Man Stomp; Ill Wind; Chlo-e; S-h-i-n-e; Back to Back; So Far So Good; Winter; I Should Care; Bunny Hunch.

Al Cohn, tenor saxophone; Bob Brookmeyer, valve trombone; Mose Allison, piano; Ted Kotick, bass; Nick Stabulas, drums.

CORAL CRL 57118. 12-in. 39 min. $3.98.

Bob Brookmeyer is given only featured billing on this disc, but it is at least as much his as Cohn's. This is not to underrate Cohn's contributions, which are generally excellent; but Brookmeyer, a sturdy, deep-rooted jazzman who is becoming better and better, has rarely been heard to as good advantage. Like Gerry Mulligan, Brookmeyer is a present-day jazz musician who seems to have absorbed the feeling of early jazz and to be able to express it in terms that are neither narrowly modern nor old-fashioned. He stomps, he swings, he evolves a flowing, many-noted solo—all with apparent ease and a delightful leathery tone. He has also brought several arrangements to this session, the best being a slithering *Ill Wind*, a vigorous, swinging *S-h-i-n-e*, and a swaggering original called *Lazy Man Stomp*.

Although Cohn rarely achieves the very personal distinction that is Brookmeyer's, he is one of the breeziest of the post-Lester Young swinging tenors. He shows this side frequently here, along with a rich mood style on one of his own tunes, *Winter*. But his best contribution, and the highest point in a generally high-spirited collection, is his imaginative arrangement of *The Lady Is a Tramp* which he and Brookmeyer lash into with leaping zest.

DOC EVANS AND HIS BAND

Chattanooga Stomp; Up a Lazy River; Gettysburg March; Workingman Blues; Alexander's Ragtime Band; San; Basin Street Blues; Weary Blues; 1919 Rag.

Doc Evans, cornet; Hal Runyan, trombone; Dick Pendleton, clarinet; Knocky Parker, piano; Bill Peer, banjo; George Tupper, tuba; Warren Thewis, drums.

AUDIOPHILE AP 44. 12-in. 37 min. $5.95.

Dippermouth Blues; Smokey Mokes; The Chant; Some of These Days; High Society; Jackass Blues; Shim-Me-Sha-Wobble; Richard M. Jones' Blues. Same personnel as above.

AUDIOPHILE AP 45. 12-in. 36 min. $5.95.

I know of no other cornetist playing today who can match the range, fluidity, and perception of Doc Evans. Working almost exclusively in a relatively small area north of Chicago, he is the most unpublicized and generally minimized of the major talents in jazz. On these two discs he is a complete delight as he bounces along with airy delicacy, snarls through a mute, and provides the impetus for magnificently exuberant

ensembles. Through it all shines his pure, beautiful tone and the warm, excited sense of discovery that he brings to these well-aged selections.

The band that he leads is, aside from himself, scarcely remarkable musically. Trombonist Runyan is a forceful descendant of the Miff Mole school and clarinetist Pendleton plays with strength and assurance, but neither man is much of a hand at subtlety. The thinness of Knocky Parker's piano is given unfortunate emphasis in these strong-voiced surroundings. What these men *do* have that is missing from many groups which play this type of jazz is an easy, flexible group feeling. With Evans as their lodestar, they have produced stirring, clean-cut performances on these two discs which rank with (and occasionally outrank) the classic 1939 recordings of Muggsy Spanier's Ragtime Band. Exceptionally good recording.

HAL McKUSICK: *Jazz Workshop*

Lydian Lullaby; Ain't Nothin' But a Memory Now: Hal McKusick, alto saxophone; Barry Galbraith, guitar; Milt Hinton, bass; Osie Johnson, drums.

The Day John Brown Was Hanged: George Russell, drums, added.

Just Leave It Alone; Blues Train: Russell out; Art Farmer, trumpet, added.

Miss Clara; One Score and Eight Horns Ago; Tommy Hawk; Alto Cumulus: Farmer; McKusick; Galbraith; Hinton; Johnson; Jimmy Cleveland, trombone; Sol Schlinger, baritone saxophone.

Jambangle; Blues for Pablo: Jimmy Raney, guitar, added.

RCA VICTOR LPM 1366. 12-in. 47 min. $3.98.

Jazz at the Academy

Give 'Em Hal; When the Sun Comes Out; Can't Get Out of This Mood; These Foolish Things; Out of This World; This Is New; Over the Rainbow; Serenade in Blue; Prelude to a Kiss; Irresistible You: McKusick; Galbraith; Hinton; Johnson.

CORAL CRL 57116. 12-in. 45 min. $3.98.

It has been apparent for a long time that alto saxophonist Hal McKusick is an able technician but, for reasons of his own, he has chosen to limit himself by working in a chilly, emotionless style — a light, precise emission of uninflected notes. On his *Jazz Workshop* disc he finally emerges from this cocoon, revealing a swinging warmth that is a most welcome change. In loosening up, he has chosen to lean heavily on relatively formal composition, but within this formality he has ample opportunity to play with a rich, gracious flow, particularly in the blues-tinged section of *Lydian Lullaby* and *Blues for Pablo*. His use of both a quartet and an octet and the markedly differing styles of his six writers (George Russell, Jimmy Giuffre, Gil Evans, Johnny Mandel, Manny Alban, and Al Cohn) provide McKusick with both the balance and the variety that have been noticeably missing from much of his previous work on discs.

Jazz at the Academy is in the rather monotonous vein that McKusick has escaped from in the RCA Victor disc. This

collection is dominated by his colorless placidity although it has its moments of life — as when Milt Hinton uses his bass to remove the saccharinity from *Over the Rainbow*, and when McKusick is given a figure that just can't help swinging on *Give 'em Hal*.

OSCAR PETTIFORD: *The Oscar Pettiford Orchestra in Hi-Fi*

The Pendulum at Falcon's Lair; The Gentle Art of Love; Not So Sleepy; Speculation; Smoke Signal.

Ernie Royal, Art Farmer, trumpets; Jimmy Cleveland, trombone; Julius Watkins, David Amram III, French horns; Gigi Gryce, alto saxophone; Jerome Richardson, tenor saxophone, flute; Lucky Thompson, tenor saxophone; David Kurtzer, baritone saxophone; Tommy Flanagan, piano; Janet Putnam, harp; Oscar Pettiford, bass, cello; Whitey Mitchell, bass; Osie Johnson, drums.

Nica's Tempo; Deep Passion; Sunrise — Sunset; Perdido; Two French Fries.

Danny Bank, baritone saxophone, in place of Kurtzer; Janet Putnam, Whitey Mitchell out.

ABC-PARAMOUNT 135. 12-in. 39 min. $3.98.

There is an attractive mixture of solid big band playing and imaginative new ideas in this set. Pettiford has assembled a remarkably talented and versatile group to perform arrangements by Gigi Gryce and Lucky Thompson. They move in familiar directions but find new and interesting ways of getting there. Pettiford's haunting tune, *The Gentle Art of Love*, is worked out as a gently expressed duet between Janet Putnam's harp and Pettiford's plucked bass. Pettiford's cello weaves in and out of *Not So Sleepy*, French horns low distantly from time to time, and now and again a flute is heard. All of this is well beyond the *ad instrumentum* approach which prevailed when these instruments were first brought into jazz. The Look-Ma-No-Hands attitude has given way to a proper integration which has widened the tonal spectrum of jazz immeasurably. The flute, the horns, the cello, the harp are used here because they are as useful in their own ways as the trumpets, trombone, or saxophones in contributing to the ensembles and to the spots of solo color. The foundation on which Pettiford's band works is swinging jazz with many fine solos by Lucky Thompson and several by Pettiford and Ernie Royal. The appearance of a disc such as this suggests that there really may be a future for big band jazz.

SHORTY ROGERS AND HIS GIANTS: *The Big Shorty Rogers Express*

Blues Express; Pink Squirrel; Coop De Graas; Infinity Promenade; Short Stop; Boar-Jibu; Pay the Piper; Home with Sweets; Tale of an African Lobster; Contours; Chiquito Loco; Sweetheart of Sigmund Freud.

Continued on page 78

The Sidemen Are Moving Way Out Yonder

INTEGRATION is not a problem that is limited to sociology. Jazz has been wrestling with it, without much success, for several years. Fortunately, there is nothing racial about the jazz version of the integration problem. It is strictly a musical one: how to integrate the scope available to the writer of "serious" music with the special talents of jazz musicians. So far, efforts in this direction have usually fallen between two stools — the "composition" which is simply a long jazz performance (as in Duke Ellington's longer works) or compositions that allow for practically no jazz quality (as in some pieces recorded by Stan Kenton).

But a sliver of light has suddenly pierced the murk. One side of *Music for Brass* is given over to three compositions by jazz musicians — J. J. Johnson, John Lewis, and Jimmy Giuffre — written for an ensemble discreetly seasoned with jazzmen. All three make knowing use of the tools and approach of the serious composer and, in the Johnson and Lewis works, the tools and approach of the jazz musicians have been so ably worked in that they are filled with an undeniable jazz sense. There is no "shoehorning" of the jazz sections, such as Rolf Lieberman was guilty of in his *Concerto for Jazz Band and Symphony Orchestra*. This is serious, or, if you will, learned writing that swings readily in the hands of the musicians to whom it has been delivered.

Johnson's *Poem for Brass*, the most outwardly swinging of the three, is highlighted by contrasting trumpet solos by Miles Davis and Joe Wilder — Davis in his customary close, breathy style, but warmer and more outgoing than he normally is in a small jazz group; Wilder lithe and pure-toned. Davis is heard to even better advantage in the second section of John Lewis' *Three Little Feelings*, a gentler, darker, and more gracefully melodic composition than Johnson's. Davis' chief contribution is a lazily reminiscent solo, worked out over the superb supporting tuba of Bill Barber, who plays brilliantly on both selections. J. J. Johnson also has an improvised trombone passage that is unusually melodic for him — and quite becoming, it might be added. It is startling to find that both Davis and Johnson are more consistently interesting playing within a context, as they do here, than in their customary long, lonesome solos.

Jimmy Giuffre's *Pharaoh* is a stately, picture-making piece which lacks the development and interest of the other two. It also has the least jazz feeling, which may or may not be related to the fact that Giuffre is the only one of the three who has studied composition extensively.

Gunther Schuller's *Symphony for Brass and Percussion*, which completes the disc, has no connection with jazz but is designed, according to Schuller, to show off the neglected potential of horns and trumpets. His annotation makes his symphony sound like a technical challenge, which it may be, but to my jazz-conditioned ear it also

Dimitri Mitropoulos leads the brass.

has some moving moments of exposition, which Dimitri Mitropoulos, conducting, makes the most of.

Very much in the vein of the Johnson, Lewis, and Giuffre compositions are some of the works by Alonzo Levister on *Manhattan Monodrama*. Levister is a young, conservatory trained pianist and composer who classifies himself as neither a jazz nor classical musician. His music, he says, is the result of "a mixture of equal love for Blues, Bartók, Bach, and Baptist shouting." He writes in a mixed jazz and classical idiom for a mixed group of jazz and classical musicians. The six short pieces on this disc are most successful when his writing is least formal, when he allows his musicians to collaborate with him rather than forcing them down narrow alleys. His most convincing selections are the slow, lyrical *Black Swan*, a musical impression of Miles Davis, a warmly evocative portrait built around lovely clarinet and trumpet interplay; and *Slow Dance* which provides a framework for languorous, controlled improvisations by Teddy Charles and Louis Mucci.

Duke Ellington's latest try at a wider jazz palette, *A Drum Is a Woman*, is built around an idea that should be a natural for him: An interpretation of the history of jazz in terms of Ellington's music. He sees jazz as a drum and this drum, he says, is a woman who'll haunt you all day long. With her, he dashes through a review of jazz from Congo Square to 52nd Street. But the Duke is haunted by something other than a drum or a woman. He is haunted by words, all his own — lyrics of distressing banality, narration that goes on and on and on. And when the music comes through, it is a good deal less than one expects of Ellington when he is really trying.

There are, of course, moments when something in the vast and talented Ellington ménage breaks through. Johnny Hodges has one such moment in a blues that evolves into a waltz, and Joya Sherrill, a fine, husky, outgoing singer, enlivens even her most trivial songs. But over-all there is the dampening effect of Ellington's words (he also serves as narrator, a mighty precious one who frequently sounds as though he is kidding the whole project) drowning out what little vitality there is in Ellington's music.

A very different approach to somewhat the same thing turns up in Paul Weston's *Crescent City*, a suite which is subtitled "The Moods of New Orleans." Just as Ellington's history of jazz lingers at length in New Orleans, so Weston's portrait of the city is frequently painted in jazz. A small group (including Matty Matlock, clarinet, Eddie Miller, tenor saxophone, Dick Cathcart, trumpet, and Ted Nash, alto saxophone) steps forward together and individually from time to time, but most of the suite is played by a lush string ensemble, identified as Weston's "Music from Hollywood." As if to prove the validity of this claim, the opening section is in the vast, vacuous "main title" style. It's an unfortunate and rather misleading start, for Weston has some pleasant things to say once he becomes sufficiently involved in Creole songs, blues, spirituals, river boats, and early jazz to forget about his spongy, mood music habits.

JOHN S. WILSON

THE BRASS ENSEMBLE OF THE JAZZ AND CLASSICAL MUSIC SOCIETY: *Music for Brass*

Gunther Schuller: *Symphony for Brass and Percussion*. Dimitri Mitropoulos, cond. J. J. Johnson: *Poem for Brass*; John Lewis: *Three Little Feelings*; Jimmy Giuffre: *Pharaoh*. Gunther Schuller, cond.
COLUMBIA CL 941. 12-in. 42 min. $3.98.

ALONZO LEVISTER: *Manhattan Monodrama*

Conclave; Leap Frog; Black Swan; Sugar Hill Strut; Slow Dance; Manhattan Monodrama.

Alonzo Levister, piano; John LaPorta, alto saxophone and clarinet; Louis Mucci, trumpet; Lorin Bernsohn, cello; Teddy Charles, vibes and percussion; Morris Lang, tympani. Jackson Wiley, cond.
DEBUT 125. 12-in. 31 min. $4.98.

DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA: *A Drum Is a Woman*

COLUMBIA CL 951. 12-in. 47 min. $3.98.

PAUL WESTON AND HIS MUSIC FROM HOLLYWOOD: *Crescent City*

Crescent City; Vieux Carre; Riverfront Blues; Storyville; Bayou St. John; High Society; Creole Songs and Dances; Miss Lucy; Ferryboat to Algiers; Esplanade at Sunset; Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen; Mardi Gras.

COLUMBIA CL 977. 12-in. 40 min. $3.98.

RCA VICTOR 1350. 12-in. 42 min. $3.98.

Two-thirds of this disc is a reissue of a ten-inch Shorty Rogers disc of a couple of years ago. It is mentioned here not because a great treasure has been restored to circulation, but because of the four newly recorded selections which make their first appearance — *Blues Express*, *Pink Squirrel*, *Pay the Piper*, and *Home with Sweets*. For these numbers, Rogers has written some ensembles of magnificent harmonic intensity. His band plays them brilliantly, and they have been recorded superbly. It is the kind of swirling, gutty drive that hasn't been heard from a big band since Woody Herman's first Herd exploded a dozen years ago (Rogers was part of that explosion). The solos that burst or sneak out of these ensembles are appropriately assertive, particularly Rogers' trumpet and an unbilled alto saxophonist. This is brash big band jazz at its best. The reissued selections are less directly swinging, more concerned with evolving lacy designs but, of their kind, good.

Other June Jazz

From the Archives: The first of the jazz-disc-by-mail clubs, the Jazztone Society, has recently changed its pattern of selections from a fairly even balance between new and reissued material to complete emphasis on reissues. The change follows acquisition of the club by Crowell-Collier, which has gained access to several reissue sources not previously available to the club. One of these sources is the well-stocked RCA Victor catalogue from which Jazztone has already acquired some important selections. *The Early Jazz Greats* (Jazztone 1249. 12-in. 35 min.) is a sampler which repeats material once available on the "X" label but now cut out. It's a fascinating mélange of pre-swing jazz by Jelly Roll Morton, Johnny Dodds, King Oliver, Bix Beiderbecke, Earl Hines, and so forth. The follow-up, *The Early Jazz Greats*, No. 2 (Jazztone 1252. 12-in. 35 min.) is split between Morton and Dodds, again mostly from the "X" series, plus three Dodds numbers that haven't been available since the Bluebird reissues of 20 years ago.

RCA Victor has also provided Jazztone with a varied and unhackneyed cross section of Waller works for *Fats Waller Plays and Sings* (Jazztone 1247. 12-in. 35 min.) and an even better group of performances by the hard-riding little bands with which Lionel Hampton recorded before he formed his big band — *Lionel Hampton's All Star Groups* (Jazztone 1246. 12-in. 34 min.). *The Great Swing Bands* (Jazztone 1245. 12-in. 36 min.) certainly has name value — Goodman, T. Dorsey, Shaw, Basie, Lunceford, Hines, Glen Gray — but the tunes are less than representative (Goodman does *Flat Foot Floogie* and *Estrellita*, for instance).

For the other end of the historical spectrum, Jazztone has drawn on Pacific Jazz for a light and sinuous *Anthology of West Coast Jazz* (Jazztone 1243. 12-in. 43 min.) with Gerry Mulligan, Chico Hamilton, Bud Shank, and Chet Baker among the Coasters. Two of them share another disc, *Mulligan and Baker!* (Jazztone 1253. 12-in. 38 min.) with Mulligan's early quartet salted by the saxophone of Lee Konitz, and Baker at the head of one of his most recent (and best) groups.

Some of the now classic Charlie Parker Dial discs (with the original thin sound ably doctored) are paired with six of Stan Getz's best recordings, originally on Roost, and played by the group which included pianist Horace Silver, on *The Saxes of Stan Getz and Charlie Parker* (Jazztone 1240. 12-in. 33 min.).

Vanguard has also opened its files to the club, with the result that two of Vanguard's most successful discs — *Listen to the Blues with Jimmy Rushing* (Jazztone 1244. 12-in. 43 min.) and *The Jo Jones Special* (Jazztone 1242. 12-in. 40 min.) — have been reissued intact. The latter disc is a sparkling set-to which involves Count Basie, Lucky Thompson, and Emmett Berry along with Jones.

Other Reissues: RCA Victor hasn't turned everything over to Jazztone. On its own it has produced a bright and bouncing collection of small group jazz, mostly from the Thirties, on *A String of Swingin' Pearls* (RCA Victor LPM 1373. 12-in. 48 min. $3.98). The pearls are cast by Bud Freeman (*The Eel*, *Easy to Get*), Jack Teagarden, Bunny Berigan, Wingy Manone, and Jess Stacy. *Bob Crosby and His Orchestra 1936–1956* (Coral 57089. 12-in. 35 min. $3.98) shows how well the spirit of the Crosby band has kept marching on even during the fifteen years that it has existed only in recording studios. *The Jazz Greats: Drum Role* (EmArcy 36071. 12-in. 34 min. $3.98) is, fortunately, a collection of pieces on which a choice crew of drum stars — Max Roach, Shelly Manne, Cozy Cole, Buddy Rich, Ray Haynes, Art Blakey — show their wares in context rather than as unrelenting soloists. Kid Ory's 1944 and 1945 discs which helped to spark the traditional jazz revival of the Forties, gathered on *Kid Ory's Creole Jazz Band* (Good Time Jazz 12022. 12-in. 47 min. $4.98), sound a bit stiff and dated by Ory's present standards. Another figure of this revival, Lu Watters, is represented on *Dixieland Jamboree* (Verve 1008. 12-in. 52 min. $3.98) by a group of thinly recorded but spirited performances.

Big Bands: The big bands are still a long way from being back in their once high position of acceptance but they are turning up on discs with increasing frequency. There's a titillating display of imagination in the arrangements Jerry Fielding has written for his spit-and-polish band on *Fielding's Formula* (Decca 8450. 12-in. 39 min. $3.98). Count Basie's band gives evidence of moving out of the rut of rote on *April in Paris* (Verve 8012. 12-in. 35 min. $4.98) and *Basie's Best* (American Recording Society G 422. 12-in. 38 min. By subscription). Each disc includes selections which have previously been released on the other label. *Dizzy Gillespie's Big Band Jazz* (American Recording Society G 423. 12-in. 40 min. By subscription) appears to be the work of several different Gillespie groups and is not as consistently interesting as his recent "World Statesman" disc on Norgran. There's also an unpretentious and pleasant group of performances by a band led by Tommy Shepard, a trombonist in the suave Tommy Dorsey manner, on *Shepard's Flock* (Coral 57110. 12-in. 33 min. $3.98).

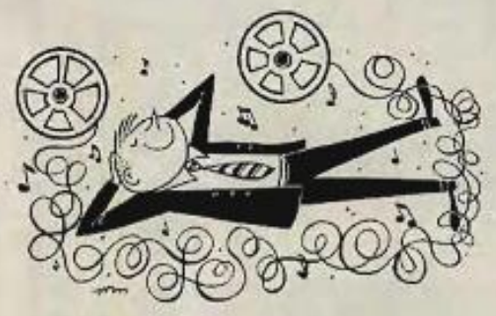
Something Different: An obvious gimmick that turns into an unusual and interesting musical experience falls into the man-bites-dog category. The dog is bitten on *Hi-fi Suite* (M-G-M 3494. 12-in. 40 min. $3.98), a group of selections by Dick Hyman and Leonard Feather bearing such titles as *Feedback Fugue*, *Flutter Waltz*, *Tweeter*, *Woofer*, and so on, which are both amusing and appealing and are played to the hilt by an excellent group of musicians. On *Bix Duke Fats* (Atlantic 1250. 12-in. 39 min. $4.98), Thomas Talbert produces rather incongruous results by clothing the compositions of three lithe and sinewy writers in precious arrangements. *Jazz Flamenco* (RCA Victor LPM 1422. 12-in. 49 min. $3.98) offers the odd aural experience of Lionel Hampton's band trying vainly to swing through the metronomic clacking of castanets. Also to be noted as an oddity is Illinois Jacquet making an apparently determined (and frequently successful) effort to play with taste on *Swing's the Thing* (Verve 8023. 12-in. 33 min. $4.98).

From Various Corners: *Recorded in New Orleans*, Vol. 1 and Vol. 2 (Good Time Jazz 12019 and 12020. 12-in. each. 38 min., 43 min. $4.98 each) is a commendable effort to catch some New Orleans veterans while they are still active. Ironically, it proved to be the last recording session for the youngest leader represented, George Girard, who died last January at twenty-six. Some of the older groups — the bands of Bill Matthews, Paul Barbarin, and Eddie Pierson — are getting a little wobbly, but bands led by Johnny Wiggs, Sharkey Bonano, and Santo Pecora play with zestful assurance. Armand Hug contributes three piano solos which are, in an interesting way, just this side of what currently passes as honky-tonk piano. Pecora also has a lively but unshaded disc of his own, *Dixieland Mardi Gras* (Vik LX 1081. 12-in. 45 min. $3.98). From England, which more often than not sends us uncompromisingly traditional New Orleans jazz, comes a grab bag that is generally on the modern side, *Jazz Britannia* (M-G-M 3472. 12-in. 38 min. $3.98), played by five groups of which the most impressive are Johnny Watson's rich and graceful orchestra and Don Rendell's quartet.

Record Market

by R. D. DARRELL

The Tape Deck



Note: As usual, all tapes reviewed are 7.5 ips and — unless specifically noted as stereo — are 2-track single-channel recordings. The symbol • • prefixed to a review indicates stereo tape. If a date in parentheses is appended to the review, it refers to the issue of HIGH FIDELITY in which the corresponding disc review appeared.

BACH: *Concertos for Violin and Orchestra: No. 1, in A minor, S. 1041; No. 2, in E, S. 1042. Concerto for Two Violins and Orchestra, in D minor, S. 1043* (on Phonotapes reel only)

Jascha Heifetz, violin; Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, Alfred Wallenstein, cond.
RCA VICTOR AC 22. 5-in. $6.95.

Reinhold Barchet, Willi Beh (in S. 1043), violins; Pro Musica String Orchestra (Stuttgart), Walther Davisson, cond.
PHONOTAPES-SONORE PM 154. 7-in. $8.95.

The choice here might have been a vexing one if either Heifetz had not developed mightily as a Bachian interpreter or his German rivals were not so lacking in vitality. As it is, the advantages of having all three concertos in an integrated set are partly negated by Barchet's stolidity and completely so by the dispirited conducting of Davisson and the suggestion of tubbiness in the recording of the little Stuttgart ensemble's lower register. This reel (like the original Vox LP, PL 9150) is likely to satisfy only those who insist on a relaxed chamber-music approach to the concertos and for whom dreamy lyricism is sufficient in itself.

Heifetz's performance of the two solo works is, in complete contrast, vivacious, intense, and dramatic — perhaps a shade too brusque at times, but exhilarating and happily free from the "expressiveness" which marred his earlier recorded ventures into the baroque repertory. As in the original LP version (LM 1818), Wallenstein's accompanying ensemble plays with less distinctive character than the soloist, but it is cleanly recorded and with proper justice to the *continuo* harpsichord, which is almost inaudible in the Davisson performances. (Heifetz, Feb. 1955; Barchet-Beh, Aug. 1955)

• • BRAHMS: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in D, Op. 77*

Ricardo Odnoposoff, violin; Frankfurt Opera Orchestra, Carl Bamberger, cond.
CONCERT HALL CHT/BN 20. 7-in. $17.90.

The second stereo appearance of this indestructible war horse hardly could be more markedly different from its blazingly brilliant race under the electrifying whips of Heifetz and Reiner (in RCA Victor ECS 4, reviewed here July 1956). This is strictly a local-track workout calculated to delight a very special parochial public. To most Americans it well may seem intolerably slow, broad, and ponderous; certainly Brahms has never sounded more characteristically and completely German than he does here. And as one's ears adjust themselves to such aural as well as interpretative monumentalities, it becomes hard indeed not to be profoundly impressed by both Odnoposoff's and Bamberger's eloquence. Furthermore, the weighty sonorities and the ultrareverberant acoustics are somberly translucent in the stereo recording, and the off-centered location of the soloist is of inestimable further aid in enabling the recorders to achieve a sense of big-auditorium spaciousness as well as of titanic mass and weight.

• • BRAHMS: *Quartet No. 2, in A minor, Op. 51, No. 2*

Fine Arts Quartet.
CONCERTAPES 23-4B. 7-in. $11.95.

A commendable, if perhaps overearnest, reading, most satisfying when some of the ensemble's intensity is relaxed — as in the lighter, brisker passages of the last two movements. The particular distinction of this edition is, in fact, the sonic lucidity of the stereo recording, which opens up these close-knit Brahmsian textures so that they float with unexpected buoyancy. Following the tape with a score, I found that the tonal lines yield nothing to the printed ones in individual definition, while still blending into a homogeneity that notation can only suggest. There should be an additional word of praise, too, for leader Leonard Sorkin's resolute avoidance of the usual temptation of first-violin dominance.

• • HANDEL: *Messiah* (excerpts)

Adele Addison (s), Lorna Sydney (c), David Lloyd (t), Chorus of the Handel and Haydn Society (Boston); Zimbler Sinfonietta, Thompson Stone, cond.
BOSTON (via Livingston) BO 7-9 BN. 7-in. $11.95.

For many months now I have taken inexhaustible pleasure in an original taping (loaned by Richard L. Kaye of Boston's station WCRB) of the last third or so of the *Messiah* performance issued on microgroove by Unicorn as UNS 1. A complete commercial stereo version is still only a promise, but now at last a group of excerpts is available.

While the reel omits seven of the selections on the excerpts disc UN 1043 (but adds two others), the wondrously assured and eloquent Addison "*I know that my Redeemer liveth*" and Lloyd "*Thou shalt break them*" represent the best of the soprano and tenor solos; and the three choral sections ("*And the glory*," "*For unto us a child is born*," and "*Hallelujah!*") demonstrate better than any verbal argument exactly why I am so convinced that no single-channel recording has ever done comparable justice to the combination of big chorus and orchestra as heard in a big hall. Stereo, moreover, gives a more graciously natural "presence" to the soloists and more cleanly focused definition of the polyphony, as well as contributing uniquely to the sonic mass and expansiveness of dramatic music. Listening spellbound, the critic here can only abdicate his ivory-tower objectivity to join personally in the jubilant ejaculations of the chorus: "Wonderful!" and "Hallelujah!" (UNS 1, Feb. 1956)

• • LISZT: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1, in E flat*

Artur Rubinstein, piano; RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra, Alfred Wallenstein, cond.
RCA VICTOR BCS 31. 7-in. $8.95.

Here Rubinstein assumes his familiar role of dramatic hero, but with an *élan*, authority, and blazing vitality unsurpassed even in his own long recording career — and even more explicit in stereo than in the unanimously praised LP edition (included first in "The Concerto" omnibus LM 6039; more recently with the Rachmaninoff *Paganini* Rhapsody only, in LM 2087).

If I could ever catch my breath during these fireworks long enough to mutter any reservations, I'd demur feebly to the soloist's center location (no physical piano surely ever commanded so grandly the wing and tone spread of the stereo image here) and the tendency of Wallenstein's only so-so orchestra to overshoot the discreet limits of both expressiveness and

Continued on next page

TAPE DECK

Continued from preceding page

blatancy. But Rubinstein and his rejuvenated Lisztian veteran dominate the entire scene so imperiously that few listeners will bother with these trifles or even pause to appreciate consciously the felicity of such other details as the gentle, distant, yet glittering recording of the notorious triangle part. (LM 6039, Sept. 1956)

• • MENDELSSOHN: *Symphony No. 3, in A minor, Op. 56 ("Scottish")*

Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra, Walter Goehr, cond.
CONCERT HALL CHT/BN 25. 7-in. $17.90.

I can hardly recommend the no more than competently routine reading and performance here to anyone who has once tasted the finer-grained, more blithely piquant, best LP versions; and even stereo devotees must recognize that the present clarity of sonic detail honors Mendelssohn's scoring better than it does his musical conception. In one respect, however, the tape does transcend its performers: in conveying the invigoration of the composer's stormy sea- and windswept landscapes.

MOZART: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 17, in G, K. 453; Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 4, in D, K. 218*

Ralph Kirkpatrick, piano; Alexander Schneider, violin; Dumbarton Oaks Chamber Orchestra, Alexander Schneider, cond.
BERKSHIRE BH 1007. 7-in. $6.95.

Those who remember the old Haydn Society LP coupling (HS 1040) of these two works certainly never could realize how much was lost from the master taping until they hear the present transfer, which although it cannot purify the tonal coarseness of the orchestral playing, does immeasurably more justice to the scholarly performances of the scrupulously restrained soloists and in particular to the distinctive qualities of the Challis reproduction of an eighteenth-century instrument played by Kirkpatrick. There have been many more exciting versions of both these fine works, but I doubt whether any of them would sound more authentic to the listeners of Mozart's own time.

• • MOZART: *Missa Brevis, in D, K. 194*

Soloists; Oberlin College Choir and instrumental ensemble, Robert Fountain, cond.
LIVINGSTON 713 BN. 7-in. $11.95.

Livingston's enterprising repertory director, seeking out both music and artists well off the beaten recording paths, came close to beating the Paumgartner Epic LP in the race for the first recording of this extremely light-weight yet charming *Short* Mass composed just 183 years ago, June 24, 1774. I dare say the original Salzburg chorus and strings sang and played with much of the nonprofessional simplicity of the present collegians (although, for Mozart's sake, I hope that they infused their performances with at least a bit more dynamic and coloristic variety). However, this tape has the advantages as well as the handicaps of amateurism: fresh, unspoiled voices to match the disarming naïveté of the music itself. Again, the powerful stereo illusion that we are listening in the auditorium itself.

• • DAVID RANDOLPH: *A Stereophonic Study in Double Choruses*

Masterwork Chorus of Morristown, N. J., David Randolph, cond.
SONOTAPE SWB 8020. 7-in. $9.95.

Despite all the hullabaloo about stereo's sound-source locational capabilities, inexplicably little attention has been paid so far to recording the only type of music in which this characteristic has some genuine artistic significance. In one special repertory composers themselves deliberately made expressive use of spatial relationships: hence the exceptional suitability to stereo recording of the antiphonal and "echo" choral writing in which the Venetian Gabrielis and their school were the pioneers.

In this belated stereo debut of some later examples of this kind of writing, it is perhaps the sheer novelty of hearing them in authentically spread reproductions which justifies the quasi-documentary treatment — where the program itself is introduced by a cross-channel colloquy between the conductor and Westminster's recording director, Kurt List, describing as well as sonically illustrating the choral-section placements in relation to the two microphones. Informative as this commentary is, however, it (and even more the briefer announcements prefacing each selection) is justifiable only on first acquaintance, becoming unbearably wearisome on repetition every time one wants to hear the music, and only the music, itself.

That is admirably chosen, even though the Gabrielis themselves are lamentably unrepresented. Schütz's "*Singet dem Herrn*" and "*Vasto mar,*" together with Allegri's "*Misere mei,*" are fine examples of double-chorus (now alternating, now uniting) techniques, while Lassus's more familiar echo madrigal ("*Ola! O che bon eccho!*") achieves for the first time in recordings the haunting effectiveness dependent on an aural distinction between the main chorus on the left and the echo group some forty feet back on the right. Yet how comparatively unimportant these rather naïve antiphonal tricks really are is clearly demonstrated by the fact that the most impressive of all the performances here are the non-divided Lotti *Crucifixus* and Monteverdi *Lagrime d'amante* No. 3, which have never sounded as properly luminous in any single-channel reproduction.

Interpretatively, all of Randolph's readings are straightforward and expressive enough despite a constant tendency towards limpness; as performances they are severely handicapped by lack of assured skill and verve, as well as the usual curses of amateur and semiprofessional choirs — unsteady and shrill sopranos, and inadequate numbers of tenors and basses to balance with and support the upper voices.

• • SIBELIUS: *Symphony No. 2, in D, Op. 43*

Philharmonia Orchestra, Paul Kletzki, cond.
COLUMBIA (Great Britain) BTA 101-2. Two 7-in. £6. 6. (in England).

These first examples I have heard of British "stereosonic" tapes issued under the Columbia label (made available, like earlier HMV importations, through the courtesy of Mr. A. E. Foster and the Magnetic Recording Co. of Newark, N. J.) are characteristic products of the special EMI technique of using coaxially mounted stereo microphones. The results obtained by this method are a close match in impressiveness for those typical of the wider-spaced miking favored in this country, sometimes superior in naturalness of orchestral sonorities, and more uniformly free from the so-called center-hole effect. Particularly characteristic is the paradoxical combination of sonic transparency and substantialness.

As can be attested by anyone who knows Kletzki's performance of this (Angel 35314) and the other Sibelius symphonies on LP, he spares neither his players nor his listeners in draining the last drop of distilled drama from the Sibelian weepings and wailings and gnashing of teeth. Interpretatively, this is far too grandiloquent for my tastes, but I must admit that I've never before heard (outside a concert hall) more darkly brooding wood winds and menacing pizzicatos, to say nothing of more searing brass perorations. Whatever his intellectual opinion of this music, I strongly doubt whether any listener to the present stereo version could thwart a polygraph's (i.e., lie-detector's) testimony that the experience is one which has all the physiological impact of chilling, stark terror. (Aug. 1956)

• • STRAUSS, RICHARD: *Salomé: Dance of the Seven Veils; Final Scene*

Inge Borkh (s); Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Fritz Reiner, cond.
RCA VICTOR CCS 23. 7-in. $10.95.

The notorious *Dance* differs here only slightly (primarily in enhanced tonal bloom) from the popular single-channel version included with *Also sprach Zarathustra* in LM 1806. In the present concert-solo performance of "*Ach! du wolltest mich nicht dein Mund küssen, Jochanaan*" (derived from an LP miscellany, LM 6047), Miss Borkh's unsteadiness and intensity strike me as incommensurate with the general critical accolade she has won. In her calmer, less strained passages, however, I can echo that praise less reservedly, while the huzzas for Reiner's orchestral playing, as judged in single-channel reproduction only, seem to me — for all their fervor — notably inadequate. Just how good (how precise in every intricate detail, how immaculately incisive even in the broadest climaxes) it is can only be comprehended when it is heard in full stereo dimensionality. (Dec. 1954; Nov. 1956)

• • TCHAIKOVSKY: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in D, Op. 35*

Erica Morini, violin; Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of London, Artur Rodzinski, cond.
SONOTAPE SWB 8016. 7-in. $9.95.

Continued on next page

TAPE DECK

Continued from preceding page

Let's have no further nonsensical male chauvinism: Miss Morini is a great violinist, not just a great *woman* violinist. That isn't to say, of course, that her performance of this particular work necessarily excels those of Heifetz, Milstein, Oistrakh, *et al.*, but that it is — no less than theirs — incomparable in the sense that it is uniquely distinctive. The impassioned gypsylike fervor which she first brought to the Tchaikovsky concerto nearly a decade ago in RCA Victor 78s with Defauw is no less characteristic of her matured reading, given far superior orchestral support by Rodzinski on the recent Westminster XWN 18399; but no one who cherishes that brilliant LP could continue to do so as happily once he has had a chance to hear the present stereo taping. For it takes the two-channel medium to give the soloist's high harmonics their eerily whistling authenticity . . . to clarify every detail of her fleetest passage work . . . and above all to keep the orchestra in its natural but not overmodest background during the accompanying sections while still enabling it to speak out with uninhibited rich sonority in the tuttis. Both Miss Morini and Dr. Rodzinski obviously relish the powers at their command and exploit them with immense verve and skill.

REEL MUSIC NOTES

BEL CANTO: Whoever dreamed up *Memories of France* must have had a wandering mind, for an inexplicable *Humoresque* and *Vilia* creep in among the Gallic *Mer*, *Frère Jacques*, etc. But it hardly matters, since the discreetly anonymous conductor of the "Paris Theatre Orchestra" might just as well be leading a dispirited salon ensemble in Singapore as far as any kind of national character is evident in the playing here. It's a shame, too, for the bold, widespread stereo recording deserves better materials than these flaccid performances. (• • ST 4, 7-in., $9.95)

BERKSHIRE: The present tape transfer of Schubert's *Wanderer* Fantasia and *Moments Musicaux* demonstrates that the recording (Haydn Society 9000) must be a comparatively recent one, for it is technically notably superior to any of the previous Berkshire piano tapes, most of which date back a number of years. And at any rate Walter Hautzig proffers admirably straightforward, sweet yet never sentimentalized performances of the songful *Moments*. He brings spirit and sincerity too to the big Op. 15 Fantasia, but here he is far from virtuoso or dramatist enough to meet either the executant or interpretative demands. His true forte seems to be lyric intimacy, and I'm looking forward to hearing him again in a more consistently suitable recorded program. (BH 1015, 7-in., $6.95)

CAMBO: I never thought the day would come when I could listen to a Hawaiian steel guitar with unqualified pleasure, but its glittering accentuations are a major

factor in the incisive brilliance of the *String Band Music of New Orleans*, a digest of the best performances of the "Six and Seven-Eighths" ensemble drawn from the Folkways LP FP 671 (Sept. 1956). The other instruments are a mandolin, Spanish guitar, and string bass (with the guitarist doubling as a wondrously gruff vocalist in *Green River*), and the recording does no less justice to their wealth of steep wavefronted transients than they do to an infectiously swinging medley of New Orleans favorites, heard here in refreshingly novel guises. (PMC 1008, 5-in., $2.98)

CONCERT HALL: Walter Goehr and the Frankfurt Opera Orchestra tackle the *Nutcracker* Suite as if they knew in advance they had no prayer of competing with the Rodzinski or Malko stereo masterpieces and were merely going through the routine motions. But the coupling, Sibelius' *Finlandia* with the Utrecht Symphony Orchestra under Paul Hupperts, is a tremendously exciting performance — one that surely would seem unduly coarse, bass- and brass-heavy, in single-channel reproduction, but which in stereo achieves formidable dynamic impact — and incidentally allows the tuba to emerge for once from its usual subterranean obscurity into a star's spotlight. (● ● CHT/BN 15, 7-in., $11.95)

EMPIRICAL (via Livingston): *Bob Mielke's Bear Cats* is a five-man San Francisco band which is hard to place stylistically since it combines an easygoing barrelhouse rowdiness with a monotonous Dixieland banjo beat and — in *Blue Guaiac Blues* — remotely Ellingtonian jungle growls and exotic coloring. Some of the pieces ramble nowhere in particular, but *My Lovin' Imogene*, *Bogalusa Strut*, and *Yes, We Have No Bananas* achieve a helter-skelter exuberance admirably captured in the clean, unexaggerated, yet naturally expansive stereo recording. (● ● EM 7-7 BN, 7-in., $11.95)

HIFITAPES: Bruce Prince-Joseph, known to discophiles by his pedal-harpsichord playing on a Cook LP, returns to his better-known role as an organist in a recital miscellany (available on LP as Hi-Fi-Record R 709) played on the Aeolian-Skinner instrument of St. Paul's Chapel at Columbia University. The final tonal qualities of the organ itself and the reverberant acoustics of the chapel are admirably captured in open yet unblurred recording, but the musical interest is restricted to a sturdy if pedestrian Marcello 19th Psalm, a flowing Duke Johann Ernst Concerto, and an excessively mannered Liszt Prelude and Fugue on B-A-C-H. For the rest, Prince-Joseph goes in for *divertissements* like Elmore's *Donkey Dance*, Weaver's *The Squirrel*, and his own Toccata, which presumably represent a church organist's sense of weekday musical humor, but which to at least one other pair of ears are simply insufferably cute (R 709, 7-in., $6.95; also available in a stereo version, $12.95, which I have been mercifully spared).

PHONOTAPES-SONORE: Except for the welcome first recording of the gracefully piquant dances from Bizet's almost forgotten one-act *opéra-comique*, *Djamileh*, of 1872, there seemed to be nothing in Jonel Perlea's otherwise hackneyed *Opera Ballets* program (also on Vox PL 9550) which I had the slightest desire to hear again. Yet once I started this reel spinning, I found myself willy-nilly relishing not only the *Aïda*, *Faust*, and *Samson et Dalila divertissements*, but even the *Gioconda Dance of the Hours* — if not for the too familiar pieces themselves, at least for the unexpected freshness with which Perlea recaptures their original delicacy and verve. The conductor's restrained skill is perfectly matched by transparent recording in which the reserves of power available are evident only in the brilliant climaxes. (PM 156, 7-in., $8.95)

RCA VICTOR (Opera Highlights): The first two reels to reach me of an extensive series of "potted" operas are those devoted to Verdi's *La forza del destino* (available earlier in the LM 1916 LP of Feb. 1956) and *Un ballo in maschera* (LM 1911 of May 1955). Both are a hodgepodge in their choice of selections, but the former is notable for several of Milanov's finest performances (including the magnificent "*Pace, pace*") originally recorded on the LM 1777 recital of 1954. Her later "*Me pellegrina*" and Finale with Peerce, Warren, and Moscona are less distinctive, while the Peerce and Warren solos and duo are routine for all their vocal and recording robustness (DC 32, 7-in., $12.95). *The Masked Ball* potpourri is the documentarily invaluable commemoration of Marian Anderson's tragically belated Met debut of Jan. 7, 1955, and of course no admirer of the great contralto can afford to miss it, even though she appears only briefly here (in "*Re dell' abisso*") and with only hints of her earlier vocal security and color. More happily, Milanov is beautifully restrained and expressive in "*Morrò, ma prima*"; Peters is fresh-voiced if brash in "*Saper vorreste*"; and Peerce and Warren sing with practiced authority if not much animation. The true star, however, is Mitropoulos, who conducts both the overture and the accompaniments throughout with restraint, resilience, and Verdian insight. The recording, too, is consistently fine. (DC 33, 7-in., $12.95)

RCA VICTOR (Pops): As only an occasional listener to popular LPs these days, I am one of the few who hadn't heard Harry Belfonte's *Calypso* (LPM 1248) — and never realized how much I was missing until the same captivating program came along on tape. Now, of course, I won't be happy until everyone else joins me, however belatedly, in climbing on the bandwagon, for at his best (as in *Star-O*, *Hosanna*, and several others), Belfonte's haunting voice and manner are sheer enchantment (BP 48, 7-in., $8.95). I'm more dubious about *André Previn Plays Gershwin* (from LPM 1011), for while there are some fine examples here of the songmaster's less hackneyed inspirations, Previn himself can't seem to choose between a wholly progressive-jazz or wholly night-club-piano style of treatment. Nevertheless, his intricate arrangements and deft pianism are consistently interesting, if not

Continued on next page

TAPE DECK

Continued from preceding page

always as successful as in *Looking for a Boy*. (AP 40, 5-in., $6.95)

SONOTAPE: If you've wondered whether the sensational effectiveness of the *Westminster-Sonotape 1956 Audio Show Demonstration Tape* could be repeated at home, it's now available for personal trial and study. The narration, even in the straightforward delivery of Lloyd Moss, may get a bit tiresome on repetition I find, but both the classical and pops selections continue to amaze one by stereo's finest brilliance and dramatic force. But if you're a subway user, you'd better pass up the glorification of its aural terrors here: these trains are much too real! (• • SWB Dem 1, 7-in., $6.95). Yet there is a perhaps even more impressive revelation of uniquely stereo powers to be found in a comparison between Ferrante and Teicher's *Sound Proof!* in its best-selling LP edition of last fall (Westminster WP 6014) and the current stereo taping. Many of the synthetic tones which sounded merely eccentric or exotic in single-channel reproduction now assume far more natural (for all their oddity) warmth and appeal. This might be called stucco music, as compared with *musique concrète*, but at its best (as in *The Man from Mars* and *What Is this Thing Called Love?*) it represents a fascinating expansion of orthodox sonic resources — and is uncommon listening fun besides. (• • SWB 8007, 7-in., $9.95)

STEREOPHONY, INC.: This new exclusively stereo producer from St. Paul, Minnesota (distributing through EMC Recordings Corporation) makes its debut with a big batch of mostly pops and jazz tapes, which will of course be reviewed here individually in due course. Meanwhile they may be met in part in the *Stereophony Sampler Vol. 1*, which along with clear indications of the program-material diversification gives an excellent notion of the high technical standards met by the recorders and in particular their emphasis on naturally balanced, blended, unexaggerated stereo sound. There are vocal announcements, but only the lowest-pressure plugs, and each of the some ten pieces, while short, is complete. (• • C 80, 7-in., $4.95) — In addition, there also is a valuable, and long needed, *Test Tape for Stereo Balancing*, which contains a 1-kc tone for left-channel identification, a series of alternate-channel short 3-kc and 100-cps tone bursts for level balancing, and a series of spoken passages by an announcer describing his movements from far left to far right and in a center position. Short as this tape is, both its materials and low price make it a must for everyone setting up a home stereo system for the first time. But I hope that users will trust their own ears more than they do the speaker-placement advice in the descriptive notes included in a separate booklet, which also covers annotations on the other Stereophony releases. (• • T 50, 4-in., $1.98)

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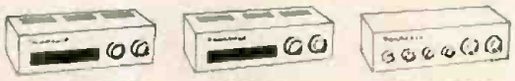

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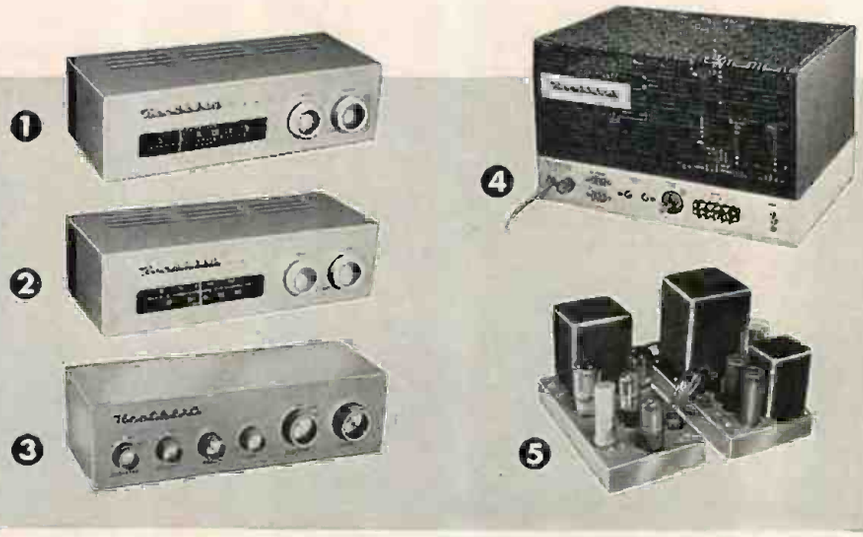

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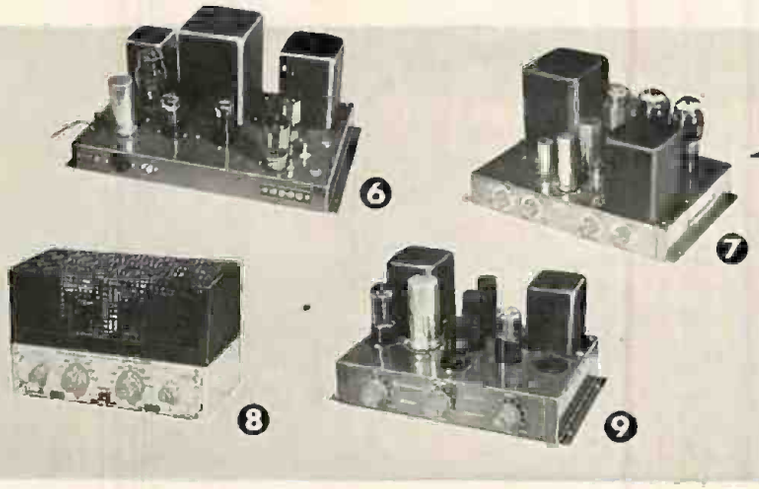

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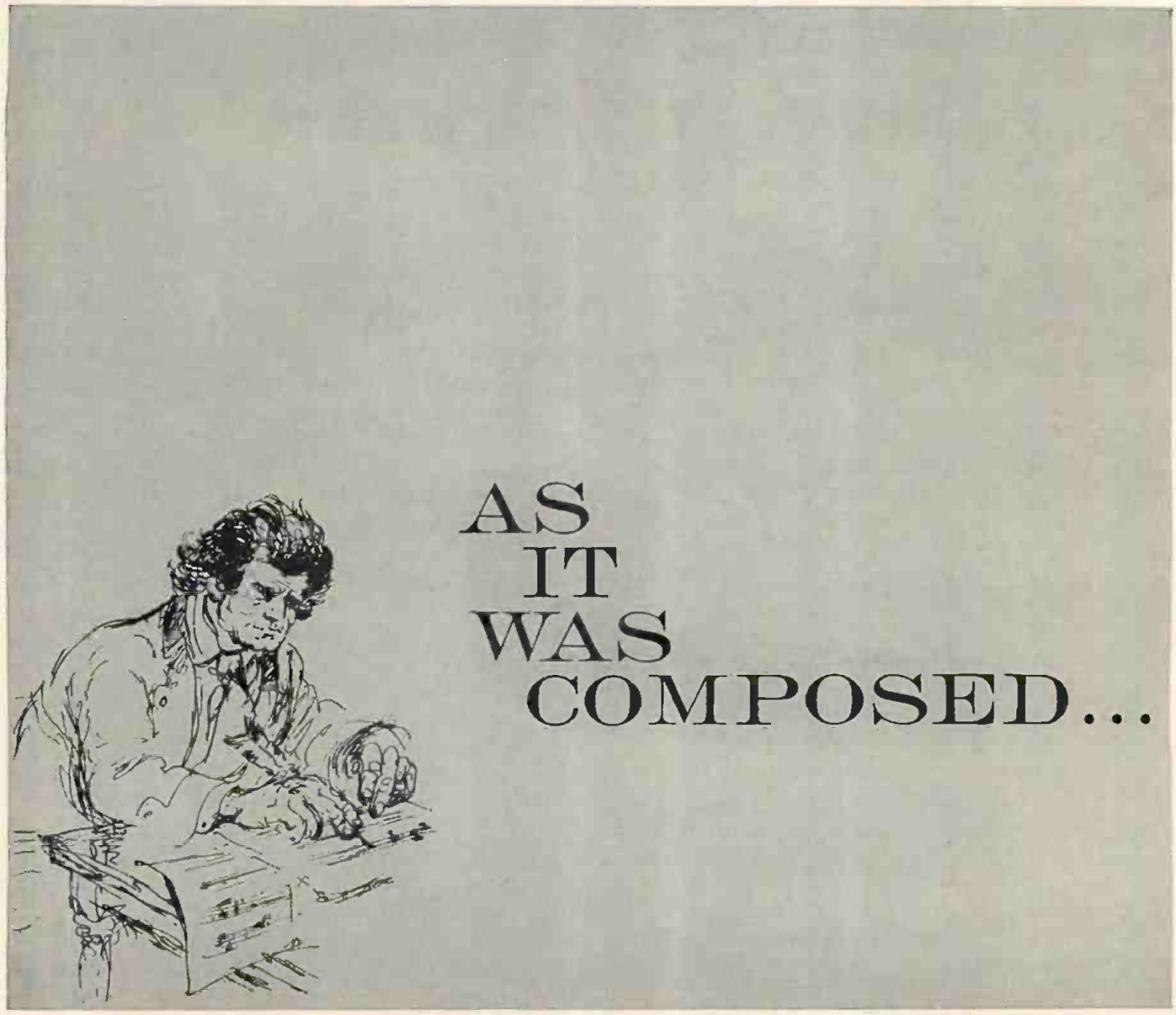

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Altec 306A FM-AM Tuner

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): a basic AM-FM tuner. **FM SECTION — Frequency response:** ±0.5 db, 20 to 20,000 cycles. **Distortion:** below 1% at 100% modulation, below 0.4% at 1 volt output. **Sensitivity:** 2.5 uv for 20 db quieting. **Selectivity:** 6 db bandwidth, 185 kc; 20 db bandwidth, 300 kc. **Tuning range:** 87 to 109 mc. **Image rejection:** 48 db. **IF rejection:** 72 db. **AM SECTION — Frequency response:** ±2 db, 15 to 3,000 cycles. **Distortion:** below 1.5% at 30% modulation. **Sensitivity:** 3 uv. **Loop sensitivity:** 50 microvolts per meter. **Selectivity:** 6 db bandwidth, 11 kc; 40 db bandwidth, 27 kc. **Image rejection:** 66.5 db. **IF rejection:** 58.5 db. **Inputs:** 300 ohm FM antenna, AM Ferrite loopstick, AM external antenna, Ground. **Controls:** selector (Off, AM, FM, FM-AFC); tuning. **Output:** low impedance, from cathode follower. **Tubes:** 2 — 6BQ7A, 6AB4. 3 — 6BA6, 2 — 6AU6, 6AL5, 6BE6, 12AU7. **Dimensions:** 13 13/16 in. wide by 4 11/16 high by 8½ deep, over-all. **Price:** $183, without cabinet; blonde or mahogany cabinet, $15. **MANUFACTURER:** Altec Lansing Products, 9356 Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills, Calif., or 161 6th Ave., New York 13, N. Y.

It should not be long before some smart manufacturer is announcing an AM-FM tuner with no knobs whatsoever. A signal-seeking doohickey such as is now available on automobile radios will sweep the dial. It will be actuated by a thermal relay — or something — near the top of the tuner cabinet. Lean your hand gently on the left side of the cabinet, and the tuner will scan the FM band. Hand heat on the right side would cause scanning of the AM band.

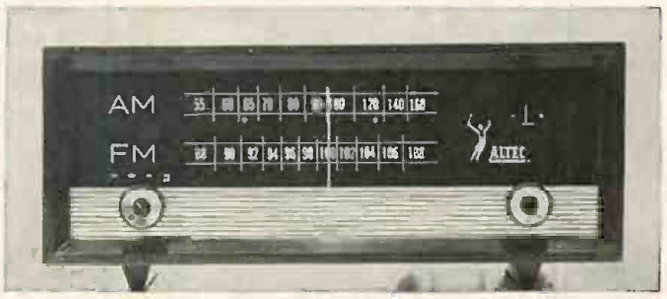
Until this knobless tuner arrives, we'll have to make do with the Altec 306A, which, from the point of view of simplicity, is the next thing to our knobless dream. At the right is a tuning knob. Above it is the tuning meter; center tuning for FM, maximum deflection for AM. The knob at the left selects these operations, as labelled: OFF, AM, FM, FM-AFC.

And that's all there is! Even the back of the chassis holds no rewards for the dedicated knob twister. There is an output connection (cathode follower); two sets of antenna terminal screws for AM and FM; a ferrite loopstick antenna for AM . . . and not even an output level control. Altec has assumed, apparently, that this tuner will be used only with deluxe control units equipped with input level controls. Output from the tuner is quite high, and might overload an average input channel were it not equipped with a level control.

We commend Altec for simplifying things the way they have. The control unit, in our opinion, should rightfully be the center of control. One little touch of gadgetry that we would not object to, however, is a logging scale. Maybe not necessary in the city, but most helpful in our fringe area. Scale length, from 88 to 108 mc., is about 5⅛ in.

Everything about the tuner is straightforward, including its operation. Sensitivity is quite high, and is uniform over the entire FM band. Quieting is fine, AFC action firm but not too vigorous, though there is a substantial "splash" of sound when you fall into a station. Tuning appears to be flat and sharp-sided over the width of a station, rather than having a sharp center-station spot, and there is no wash-over of sound from one channel to the next.

The AM operation seems standard for high quality tuners. The ferrite rod was inadequate for our fringe use (that's standard, too!), but with a 25-foot wire, AM sensitivity and selectivity were excellent, and the sound was fine. AM bandwidth appears to be a compromise between the narrow and wide bands of variable bandwidth tuners. The specifications show a 6 db bandwidth of 11 kc.



The 306A FM-AM tuner has simplified controls.

All in all, a nice performer. — C.F.

MANUFACTURER'S COMMENT: The FM sensitivity rating for the 306A tuner is for a standard 300-ohm antenna, and not for some less commonly used input impedance that would give a more favorable rating. Also, the 306A tuner is covered by Altec's standard "Performance Guarantee" which warrants each unit to meet every specification claim, as well as the usual warranty of materials and workmanship.

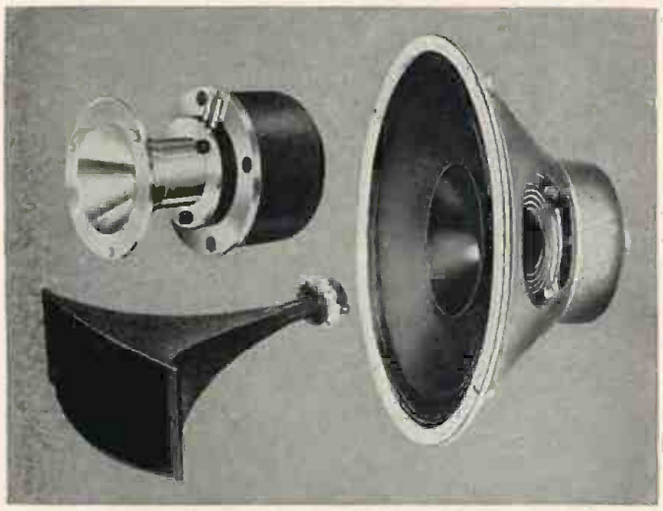
Goodmans Speakers

SPECIFICATIONS: (furnished by manufacturer): wide-range speaker and midrange and high-frequency-range drivers. **AXIOM 100** — 12-in. twin-cone wide-range speaker. **Frequency range:** 40 to 15,000 cycles. **Impedance:** 15 ohms. **Power rating:** 20 watts continuous. **Dimensions:** 12 1/8 in. diameter by 5½ deep. **Price:** $27. **MIDAX** — midrange compression driver with cast metal exponential horn. **Frequency range:** 400 to 8,000 cycles. **Recommended crossovers:** 750 and 5,000 cycles. **Impedance:** 15 ohms. **Power rating:** 25 watts (British); 50 watts (American). **Dimensions:** 19½ in. deep by 13¼ wide by 6 high, over-all. **Price:** $58.80. **TREBAX** — high-frequency compression driver and integral horn. **Frequency range:** 2,500 to 20,000 cycles. **Recommended crossover:** 5,000 cycles. **Impedance:** 15

ohms. **Power rating:** 25 watts (British); 50 watts (American). **Dimensions:** 2½ in. diameter by 3 5/8 deep. **Price:** $27. **DISTRIBUTOR:** Rockbar Corp., 650 Halstead Ave., Mamaroneck, N. Y.

While these three items are not designed expressly to serve together as components of a three-way speaker system, they could be so used.

The Axiom 100, for instance, is designated as a full-range speaker, with a rated range of 40 to 15,000 cycles. As such it performs quite well, producing (from a properly tuned bass reflex enclosure) superb bass and showing very good balance, with an extended and fairly smooth high end. Checks with an audio oscillator indicated very linear response from 35 cycles (it's conservatively rated to 40) up to about 400 cycles. There was a small dip in the response from there to



The Goodmans Trebax, Midax, and Axiom 100.

around 1,000 cycles, followed by a slight rise to 6,000 cycles, several sharp but moderate peaks beyond that, and diminishing response above 10,000 cycles. Its over-all sound is full, crisp, and well balanced, with a slightly "zippy" high end that enhances some musical tones but also exacerbates the edginess of worn or imperfectly recorded discs.

Considering its price, the Axiom 100 sounds better than it has any right to, but for those who demand smoother or more extended middle and upper response, Goodmans suggests adding the Trebax tweeter or a Trebax with the Midax midrange speaker. Both of these are compression drivers with exponential horn loading, and either or both can be used in 15-ohm speaker systems.

The Trebax, a treble range extender, is designed for a 5,000-cycle crossover, although its response will permit crossovers down to 3,000 cycles at slightly lower power levels. Its efficiency is high enough to match any direct-radiator and many horn-type woofers, so to obtain proper balance with most woofers it should be used with an attenuator control. When properly adjusted, it adds just enough crispness and projection to effect a marked increase in sonic transparency. At levels up to moderate room volume it is about as smooth as any of its type that I have heard, but at higher levels it exhibits traces of roughness.

The Midax midrange speaker, which is added to the Trebax and a woofer to form a three-way system, is slightly more efficient than the Trebax, so it too requires a level-set control for proper balancing. Also a 15-ohm driver, it is recommended for use between 750 and 5,000 cycles, and within this range it is remarkably smooth. It too has the projected forwardness of sound that so many people like about horn-loaded drivers, and it adds an impressive quality to the sound of middle-range brass and stringed instruments.

Used together, as a complete three-way system, these components produce nicely blended and well-integrated sound, and adjustment of the mid- and high-range balance controls can match the system to practically any listener's taste in balance or brightness. — J.G.H.

MANUFACTURER'S COMMENT: The Midax and Trebax were basically designed to complement the Goodmans' Audiom line of woofers. The 15- and 18-inch units of this line are highly efficient reproducers, and the differences in efficiency between them and the two pressure drivers are much less marked than with a speaker like the Axiom 100.

In any case, however, balance controls are desirable in order to permit adjustment to suit individual tastes.

Staticmaster Up to Date

The irresistible attraction between vinylite discs and airborne dust has brought forth many remedial devices, of widely varying merit. Sprays, elixirs, and chemically treated cloths have been developed to tame the static electricity which draws dust to discs, and in this radioactive era it does not seem surprising that atomic energy has also been harnessed for the service of phonophiles.

A pair of these radioactive devices, the Staticmaster* brush and utility ionizer, were TITHed in December 1955 and found to be highly effective in decontaminating records. This evaluation applies to the new Staticmaster system, only more so.

For the benefit of those who missed the earlier report, a few words of description. The Staticmaster system is comprised of two items: a wide, soft-bristled brush equipped with a strip of radioactive polonium, and a utility unit containing a polonium strip ionizer and minus the brush. The brush is used for removing dust from discs, while its radioactive strip sprays alpha particles onto the vinylite, killing the static charge that might attract a new layer of grime. The utility model comes into action while the record is playing. According to Nuclear Products Company, a neutralized disc

The Staticmasters clean and discharge discs.

will regain its static charge while playing, because of the friction between stylus and groove. The utility model Staticmaster, which is mounted on a flexible stem that holds the alpha radiator over the disc while it is playing, suppresses

Continued on page 94

*Nuclear Products Co., 10173 E. Rush St., El Monte, Calif.

The 121-C Dynaural Equalizer Preamplifier

The most versatile control and compensation unit ever offered. Record equalizers on the 121-C can be adjusted for any record quality and recording curve-past, present or future. Two magnetic inputs are available for connection of both a turntable and a record changer. Outstanding features also include tape monitoring and recording provisions and the patented Dynamic Noise Suppressor, essential with any wide range high fidelity system.

SPECIFICATIONS

Description: The 121-C is a self-powered equalizer and preamplifier, complete with dynamic noise suppressor. It is equipped with Green Dot control settings. • Input Facilities: 2 magnetic inputs, switched on front panel; crystal or ceramic input; five high-level channels, each having its own level control, including provision for tuner, tape and TV sound. • Continuously variable equalizer facilities. • Tape Recording and Monitoring: Two special tape recorder output connections, plus monitor channel with monitor-playback switch. • Tape Playback: Separate channel, with NARTB tape equalization, for playback of tape direct from tape heads. • Frequency Response: Flat from 19 cps to 35 kc. • Total hum and noise: On high level inputs 85 db below full putput; on low level inputs, 3.2 microvolts equivalent noise input. • Dimensions in mahogany case: 13½" x 5" x 9⅛" $159.95. Mahogany Case $19.95.

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SPECIFICATIONS

• Power ratings: 80 watts on music wave-forms (short-time maximum r.m.s.); long-time continuous output 65 watts r.m.s. Instantaneous peak output 160 watts. Frequency response: Flat from 12 cps to 80 kc. • Dynamic Power Monitor: Reduces possibility of speaker burnout on overload by limiting maximum continuous output to any value desired between full power and 10 watts. • Speaker Damping control: Permits continuous adjustment of output impedance to any value between 3% and 200% of load impedance. • Total Hum and Noise: 90 db below full output. • Harmonic Distortion: Less than 0.5% • First-order difference tone IM distortion: Less than 0.1% • Outputs: 3 to 24 ohms and 70 volt tap. $199.95

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TESTED IN THE HOME

Continued from page 92

the renewed static charge at its source, and keeps the disc static-free at all times.

Among the changes effected in the new Staticmaster brush are a restyling of its case (to improve appearance and to eliminate the sharp corners that, on the early model, could scratch records if the brush was pushed too snugly against the grooves), and repositioning of the alpha-emitter, to increase its potency. The utility model has also been modified to permit easy shortening of the flexible stem, simplifying installation in cramped quarters.

At the same time, there have been reductions in the prices of both components — a rather rare combination of improvements. The brush now sells for $14.95, the utility model with positioner for $19.75. Total cost of the new system is $32.50 — a premium price, but worth the money to anyone who considers pristine surfaces a prerequisite to pristine sound. — J.G.H.

Components Test Records

DESCRIPTION: a series of 7-in., 33⅓ rpm discs, for testing phonograph equipment performance. **Price:** 89¢ each from dealers; $1.00 postpaid. **MANUFACTURER:** Components Corporation, Denville, N. J.

These test discs from Components Corporation are unusual in two respects. First, the instructions supplied for their use are in the form of spoken commentary rather than a printed sheet — an approach that is unique as far as I know — and second, they cover some aspects of phono pickup performance testing that have not heretofore been available to the home user.

Three of these records, waggishly entitled *Wow! And Flutter Too!*, *How's Your Stylus?*, and *Quiet Please!*, provide tests that have been included in some other general-purpose test discs, but even these have some unusual aspects of presentation that greatly improve their usefulness.

Wow! And Flutter Too! (record #1106) is a test for speed regulation and pitch constancy. Side 1 of the disc is devoted to a description of the causes and effects of wow and flutter, and it includes samples of a 3,000-cycle tone with ½ per cent and 1 per cent wow and flutter content. Then follow several suggestions for remedying speed variation, and a description of an instrument test for flutter and wow, using an oscilloscope and a 100-cycle tone. The reverse side has two long recorded tone bands, one at 3,000 cycles for use in ear-testing, and the other at 100 cycles for the oscilloscope test.

How's Your Stylus? (#1107) assigns side 1 to a discussion of stylus life and the factors affecting it, and side 2 has two recorded 1,000-cycle bands on it, one cut near the outside of the disc, and the other in near the label. Played with a new stylus, the two bands will sound identical; on a worn one, the inner band will be heard with harmonics and fuzziness added to it.

Quiet Please! (#1108) discusses the causes and cures of turntable rumble, with frequent casual references to Components Corporation's "Hydrofeed" cutting lathe and Professional turntable, both of which are used as examples of low-rumble equipment. Side 2 contains short recorded 1,000-cycle bands, one at the standard 7-cm/sec level, and the other at 60 decibels below this, for use as a reference. The rest of the side has a long-duration band of unmodulated grooves that can be used for rumble-testing a turntable either by ear or by instrument.

Record #1109, entitled *Tracking Special*, is a test for arm resonances. Side 1 describes sources of resonance and a few methods of overcoming them in existing equipment. Its major value is to the prospective purchaser, who is apprised of the requirements for an ideal arm-and-cartridge combination, and the means for testing them. The reverse side of *Tracking Special* carries a continuous slow sweep tone covering the range from 100 to 10 cycles, with identifying bands at 80, 60, 40, 30, 20, and 15 cycles. When played on a less than satisfactory arm and cartridge, a peak of some severity will be measured or heard at some point above 20 cycles.

The *Vertical-Lateral Response* disc (#1110) is unique in the field of test recordings, and tests an aspect of pickup performance that is unfamiliar to many phono users. Commercial disc recordings are recorded laterally, with the grooves swinging from side to side rather than varying in depth. The fact that they are cut with a stylus having a triangular cross section means that, on sharp swings, the grooves will become narrower, tending to pinch the spherical playback stylus up out of the groove. This pinch effect requires that a playback pickup have a certain amount of vertical compliance, to avoid excessive groove wear. At the same time, however, the stylus' vertical motion must not produce output from the pickup. If it does, it will superimpose unwanted harmonic components into the reproduced signal. Thus, the ratio between a pickup's vertical and lateral response should be as high as possible. The test section of this record starts off with a band of *vertically* recorded 600-cycle tone, and follows this with a series of diminishing-level lateral tones. The idea is to find that lateral tone whose reproduced volume matches the volume heard when playing the vertical band on this disc. The indicated decibel level of the lateral tone will then give the vertical/lateral response ratio of the pickup. A number of suggestions are given on the disc for improving a cartridge's vertical/lateral response ratio, but these measures can't be expected to cure a cartridge which tests very poorly. Incidentally, two of the best-sounding pickup cartridges I know showed up quite poorly on this test, so I am inclined to be dubious of its validity. A lower test frequency might have been more useful.

Test disc #1111 is, I think, likely to prove by far the most useful of this entire series. It is entitled *What! No Hum?*, and it offers on two sides of a 7-inch disc a compleat handy home serviceman's guide to hum reduction. Side 1 starts with audible samples of 60-cycle, 120-cycle, and harmonic hum — the three types encountered in 99.9 per cent of American home hi-fi systems. The record then continues with remarkably concise and complete instructions for tracing each type of hum to its source in a system. Side 2, the test side, provides an ingenious means of measuring, in decibels, the hum level of any system. It is unusual in that it does not involve the use of instruments, but relies on the generation of audible beat frequency tones. The results obtained coincide closely to the system's *measured* hum level, so the test procedure can be considered very valid. During the latter stages of this test, surface clicks and pops on the disc become quite intense, so it is a good idea to turn all treble controls fully down to protect the speaker system's tweeter from damage.

These are highly useful test records, but I should inject a word of warning about them. If you are absolutely certain your system is of the very highest caliber or if you have enough spare cash on hand to replace components that *aren't* of the very best, then you may safely purchase these discs. Otherwise, they are likely to be a source of profound disillusionment. — J.G.H.

MANUFACTURER'S COMMENT: We are studying the general reaction to our #1110 record with the thought of possible modification, although we do feel that the test conditions are realistic. Actually, this is a much neglected aspect of phono pickup design, and the chances are that any pickup which measures poorly on a vertical-lateral response test will introduce some even-order harmonic distortion at high recorded volume levels, and if lacking in vertical compliance will cause excessive wear of these loudly recorded grooves. We are planning to alter the frequency and levels of the #1110 test tones so as to reduce slightly the severity of the test.

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when it sounds like this...

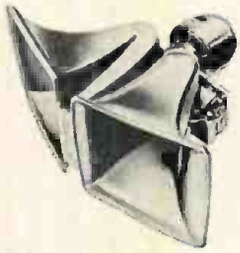
instead of this...

it's time for...

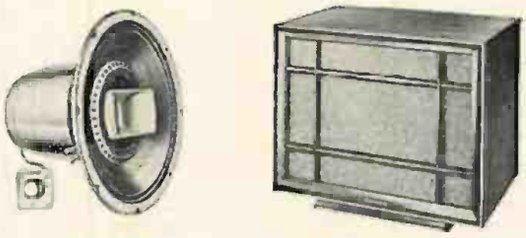
University

A FEW OF UNIVERSITY'S MANY

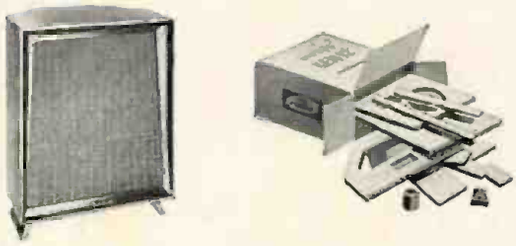
WOOFERS AND TWEETERS,



MID-RANGE AND NETWORKS,



DIFFAXIALS AND SYSTEMS,



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A Do-It-Yourself Stylus Force Gauge

by JOHN J. STERN, M.D.

THE STYLUS FORCE of a phono pickup is of paramount importance in obtaining clean sound and minimum record and stylus wear. Most manufacturers specifically recommend the optimum values for their cartridges, and some of them try to simplify things even further by supplying more or less elaborate gauges to measure the stylus force.*

Most of these gauges are not very expensive. However, if you have more time than money, you yourself can build a very effective, accurate, and inexpensive stylus force gauge in an hour or two by adapting the principle of the old-fashioned letter scale (see figure 1). I shall describe the model I have made for myself, but I am sure that many improvements and refinements can be added by mechanically inclined do-it-yourselfers. (The improvements would be mainly in appearance; functionally my crude model has withstood severe tests for accuracy.)

This stylus force gauge avoids two of the objections to many other types. It measures the stylus force with the tone arm at record level rather than above or below the turntable, and it does not use springs, which may tend to vary in accuracy as the temperature changes. Its accuracy depends upon the precision of its original calibration, and it will maintain this accuracy indefinitely.

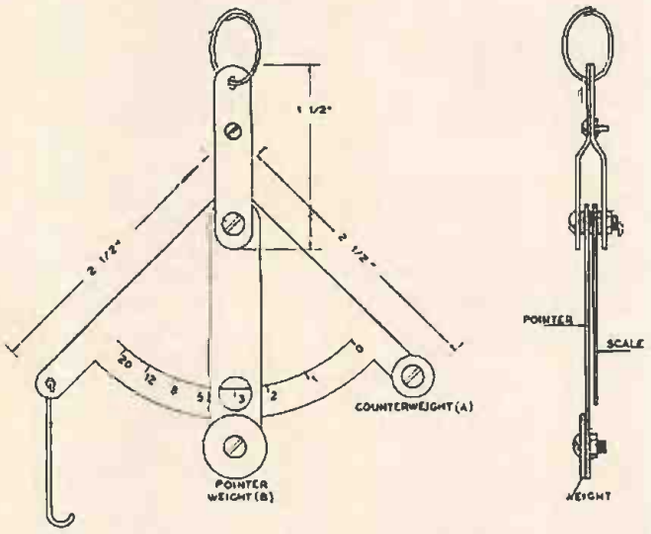

Figure 1. A hole drilled through the pointer provides a convenient marker for calibrating and reading the scale.

The best material to use for this gauge is sheet aluminum, which can be worked with wood-cutting tools, and has the added advantage of not "clinging" to strongly magnetic pickup cartridges. A few small screws and nuts are needed, and the two counterweights may be made out of anything at hand — screws, washers, nuts, or small discs of lead or other heavy metal.

After the pieces for the handle, the triangular scale, and the pointer have been cut out according to figure 1, the edges are smoothed with sandpaper or a fine file. The parts can be cut out by hand with tin shears, heavy household scissors, or a coping saw, although if a saw is used, it is advisable to clamp the metal sheet between two pieces of quarter-inch plywood for easier cutting.

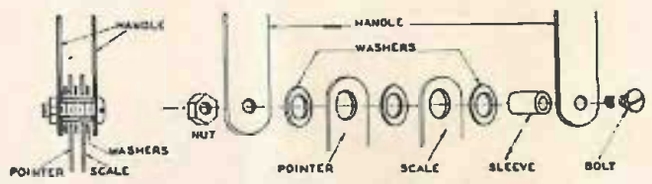

Figure 2. Assembly and exploded views of the main bearing.

The two parts of the handle are assembled with a fine screw and nut (figure 2). Then a small hole is drilled at the top, for the wire finger-lift loop, and a third hole is drilled through the other end of both strips for a second screw, which acts as the pivot for the scale and pointer. This bottom screw passes through a sleeve or spacer that butts firmly against the handle strips, and over which the pointer and scale fit loosely. It is important that these two moving parts be able to swing freely on the sleeve, and the three washers shown in the sketches are to aid in reducing friction. The pointer and scale are then slipped over the sleeve, and the end of the screw is secured with a nut, clamping the two parts of the handle against the sleeve. The sizes for the holes and for the sleeve depend on the size of screw used. Then a small weight (B) is added at the end of the pointer, to keep it suspended vertically.

The next step is to add the wire ring handle and pick-up hook, as shown, attach a five-cent piece to the pickup hook (using cellulose tape), and then experiment to find a counterweight (A) which will swing the scale to about the halfway mark. Then fasten the counterweight and calibrate the scale, using some precision gram weights borrowed from a friendly druggist and marking the position of the pointer on the scale each time more weight is added. For better visibility of the scale, a strip of paper can be pasted on the metal, and after calibration, the marks on it can be protected by an application of clear plastic spray.

To use the gauge, slip the wire hook under the edge of the tone arm, at a point directly beside the stylus and with the stylus resting on a record. Then slowly raise the gauge until the stylus just lifts clear of the record. If the scale was calibrated carefully, the reading will be a precise indication of stylus force at the record surface.

*Force is the correct term; *pressure* refers only to the amount of force exerted over a specific area of contact. — ED.

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PHONOGRAPH

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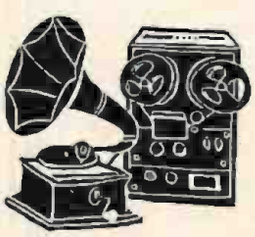
divorces is a cramping thought to novelists who keep Hollywood in view. The *Sérénade* became the first of many recordings that Stravinsky was to make for French and English Columbia.

In the early 1920s Stravinsky began his career as conductor. In 1925–6 he conducted recordings of *Pétrouchka*, *Fire Bird*, and the *Rite of Spring* for English Columbia. These are still extant in many libraries. I often heard them at school through earphones — and usually when our music appreciation assignment required us to listen to something of the order of the *Caucasian Sketches*! The three ballets were followed by a series of landmarks in Stravinsky's phono-biography, his performances of *L'Histoire du soldat*, the Octet, the *Symphonie de Psaumes*, the Violin Concerto, and the Concerto for Two Pianos, all made in Paris between 1929 and 1936. Stravinsky says that in those years he preferred to record in Paris, where he achieved "an *entente cordiale* with the musicians." However, Columbia's studio near the Porte d'Orléans was prey to street noise. During the recording sessions of *L'Histoire du soldat* a neighborhood dog barked loudly under one of the windows until its owner had been duly bribed. The bribe had to be renewed every half hour, however, and no amount of tribute could keep the silence longer. The *Soldat*, the *Symphonie de Psaumes*, and Octet, were all French Columbia albums, while the Violin Concerto was contracted for by Japanese Polydor. In addition, Stravinsky recorded *Les Noces* in London, in the summer of 1934, for English Columbia



and the *Card Party* in Berlin, a few years later, for Telefunken.

The recording of the Concerto for Two Pianos (with Soulima Stravinsky) was made in Paris in 1937 just after Stravinsky's South American tour. It was released by French Columbia; the record has never been issued here. This album also contains Stravinsky's only recorded performance of non-Stravinsky music, Mozart's C minor fugue for two pianos, K. 426. Apropos of this, one may complain that no entrepreneur has thought of inviting Stravinsky to conduct for records music of other composers, music which he — almost alone among living musicians — knows in direct tradition: the Glinka operas, the ballets, operas, suites, and symphonies of Tchaikovsky, perhaps even Dargomijsky's *Stone Guest*. He could show us much in style and tempo in all of the Russian music of his background. He should be invited also to record the Bach cantatas he loves, or other music of his choice, and the Mozart Divertimento, the Falla Concerto, the *Brandenburg* Concertos he has made illuminating in concerts.

To conclude our chronicle we need only list the admirable series Stravinsky has done in the United States, chiefly for Columbia, from the 1940 *Rite of Spring* to the soon-to-be-released *Perséphone*, his first stereophonic recording. What are Stravinsky's own preferences from the work of all those seventeen years? I would guess the Symphony in C, *Pulcinella*, and *Baiser de la Fée* with the Cleveland orchestra, and on the recent Columbia chamber-music record the *Dylan Thomas: In Memoriam*, the *Japanese Lyrics*, and the songs with flute, harp, and guitar.

Not many Stravinsky pieces still remain unrecorded, but many works in old recordings have been dropped from the Stravinsky discography, the most lamented being Stravinsky's own performances. He should rerecord such works as the Violin Concerto, *Capriccio*, *Les Noces*, the Symphony No. 3, in Three Movements, and do for the first time *Marva*, *Renard*, *Le Rossignol*. Then, to replace his old pre-tape RCA discs, he ought to record again the Mass, *Apollon Musagète*, the String Concerto, *Orpheus*, *Danses concertantes*, *Scherzo à la russe*. Stravinsky is not an admirer of other people's recordings of his music (Monteux's *Rite of Spring* being a rare exception) and he ought to be given the opportunity to show us why, in his own definitive recordings. He values his existing ones as models to an extent that in some few instances they are given equal validity with the printed music. In two or three questions of tempo, when recorded tempo contradicts the printed instructions of the music, Stravinsky regards the recording as a correction.

What records of other music does he like? His collection contains mostly Renaissance and baroque music. The records I list represent Stravinsky's taste as much for the music itself as for performance or sound. Here are some well-worn items: Mario Rossi's *Falstaff*, Toscanini's *Otello* (Stravinsky regrets the lack of a good *Don Carlo* and of a good *Guillaume Tell*), the Glyndebourne Mozart operas conducted by Busch (Stravinsky cannot endure any other performance of *Don Giovanni* or *Così fan tutte*), Scherchen's Bach and Haydn, Deller's Tallis and Purcell,

Continued on next page

PHONOGRAPH

Continued from preceding page

Cuenod's Couperin, Goehr's *Incoronazione di Poppea.*

I do not know if the word "phonogenic" is original with Stravinsky. It is, anyway, characteristic Stravinskyan vocabulary; and so is "phonograph" as a verb, i.e., "Busoni's *Faustus* should be phonographed." But what, since all kinds of music are now recordable, does phonogenic mean? I think Stravinsky means by it music that when played as written sounds by itself naturally balanced. Certain other kinds of music, especially of the Renaissance and baroque, are naturally unbalanced — from our point of view; balance used in our sense in reference to such music is an anachronism and a notion that would have been thought extremely superficial. This music is unphonogenic, we think, because it requires radical recording adjustments. The sound engineer can "correct" its composer's "miscalculations," can balance it in a way neither intended nor desired by the composer.

Stravinsky himself does not in general protest this sort of phonographic treatment. He will say: "'I like to hear everything; for example, the lute in the *Johannes Passion*, which is always drowned in strings. Whether Bach favored the instrument in a certain acoustical position, whether his strings were softer, the point is that in our bad concert halls we do not hear it without amplification. Phonography is amplification in the widest sense." "Phonography," he will continue, "'also has its evils, and they are serious: machines are sometimes faulty in pitch and a musician's true pitch sense is easily damaged. Also, bad interpretations can become as permanent as good ones. The danger of musical passiveness I will not argue, as I have no information but only my suspicions that the numbers of amateurs playing violins are on the decline. An unexpected danger is that records can compete harmfully with concert organizations in the struggle to play non-repertory music, though this is the failure of our concert life and not the fault of recording, with the result that our orchestras can be confined even more, if that is possible, to the same 150 pieces; a piece of tough contemporary music cannot compete in a three-rehearsal concert with a recorded performance. On the other side, the 'what you want when you want it' means today a truly large choice. And for the contemporary composer a phonograph record is as real a value as the score it interprets. It may supplant printed music altogether as it is now doing with the young electronic composers: their publisher sells you discs of their compositions instead of a score."

SELF-INTERPRETER

Continued from page 43

analyzed objectively, but it is none the less a very positive phenomenon. A conductor gives an orchestra his own characteristic timbre, and two conductors presiding over the same orchestra at successive concerts may make it sound like two totally different ensembles. Monteux's *Rite* is directed by a man whose ear was formed in the school of Debussy, Stravinsky's by a man whose ear leads the school of Stravinsky. Monteux's concern for color, for the distinction between the sounds of flutes, clarinets, oboes, trumpets, horns, trombones, and strings, is very great. Stravinsky's sonority, on the other hand, is drier, less sensuous, and lower in its degree of contrast between the colors of the instruments.

This is the main difference. Each orchestra bears the sonic signature of its conductor, and the Stravinskian sonority is in keeping with the total character of his more recent works. His performance of the *Rite* falls on the side of his symphonies and his *sec*, vivacious *Danses concertantes* rather than on the side of *The Fire Bird* and *Pétrouchka*. A comparable sonic signature could not, apparently, be placed upon *The Fire Bird* and *Pétrouchka* themselves without extensive revision in the orchestral fabric. These revisions Stravinsky has provided,

and he has recorded the new versions of the suites from both ballets, but to many of us the later approach seems less successful than the original. *The Fire Bird* and *Pétrouchka* are perhaps better left as they were; the *Rite* is the Great Divide.

Comparing Stravinsky's *Rite* not only with Monteux's but with a whole group of competitive recordings (Dorati, Ormandy, Steinberg, Ansermet) brings out several other facets of his interpretative point of view. Stravinsky's general tempo is faster — it is almost invariably faster than anyone else's, no matter what the work — and he makes less dramatic

Continued on next page

SELF-INTERPRETER

Continued from preceding page

contrast between the tempos of the separate movements. Within the movement, he makes practically no contrast at all; once the pace of a given section is set, it does not change, and there are no momentary accelerations or retardations. That he is intensely concerned for the definition of voices goes without saying; in short, the recording of the *Rite* demonstrates that Stravinsky meant what he said when, in the *Poetics*, he lashed out against the "follies" of interpreters in these words: "Thus it follows that a *crescendo*, as we all know, is always accompanied by a speeding up of movement, while a slowing down never fails to accompany a *diminuendo*. The superfluous is refined upon; a *piano, piano pianissimo* is delicately sought after; great pride is taken in perfecting useless nuances—a concern that usually goes hand in hand with inaccurate rhythm."

The comparison suggested here in the case of the *Rite of Spring* holds true for other works that have been recorded both by Stravinsky and by other conductors—*Oedipus Rex*, *Symphonie de Psaumes*, and the above-mentioned *Histoire*. Nothing equals the swagger and bite of Stravinsky's own *Histoire*, 1954 version; the majesty of his *Symphonie de Psaumes* (the one work he takes a shade slower than his colleagues) and the classical grandeur of his *Oedipus* are also major exhibits in the case for Stravinsky as conductor.

In two cases, *Pulcinella* and *Baiser de la fée*, Stravinsky has recorded complete scores while the competition has recorded only suites. The complete works are infinitely more important than the suites would indicate, and the Stravinsky recordings are preferable for this reason alone. The same thing is not true, in my opinion, of *The Fire Bird*, a complete recording of which has been produced by Ansermet. Most deplorably, nearly all the records Stravinsky made for RCA Victor—*Apollon*, *Orpheus*, the Mass, the Piano Concerto, and the Concerto Grosso—have been withdrawn, so that it would be pointless to pursue the contrast between the composer's records and those of others much further. Saddest of all is the fact that there is no other *Orpheus* to which a comparison could be made; that masterpiece is now lost to the record public, but one hopes that eventually someone else will awaken to the fact that it exists. In the context of the present article one need do little more than mention those works of Stravinsky which are available only in his recorded versions. The most important of these are the Symphony in C, the Symphony No. 3, in Three Movements, the *Rake's Prog-*

ress, the Cantata, the Octet, the Septet, and the choral piece entitled *In Memoriam: Dylan Thomas.*

Stravinsky concludes a chapter of his autobiography written in 1935 with a long, dire warning against the passive attitude toward music which, he feels, recording is likely to spread among the general public. He says "the active faculties of listeners without which one cannot assimilate music, gradually become atrophied" through listening to records, and he is much afraid that the "irrational overfeeding" which the disc makes possible will make the audience of the future "lose all appetite and relish for music." There are two answers to this, the more important of which is that it hasn't happened. The second answer is that, with the exception of one or two insignificant piano pieces, every last note of Stravinsky's music presupposes the professional virtuoso and is completely beyond the capacity of the nonprofessional executant; for the composer to cry out against the "absence of active effort" among today's music lovers therefore will not do. But it is difficult to imagine people listening to most modern music, and above all to the music of Stravinsky himself, in a state of passivity or torpor. This is not a music that lulls. It engages the mind and points away from lethargy. And no one performs it with more galvanic energy than its creator.

POMP AND POETRY

Continued from page 46

Brahmsian (it never was the last very much) but purely his own.

For Elgar the *Enigma* Variations opened the way to world music in more senses than one. This work won him entry to the wider arena. He entered it and issued a series of challenges: the two concert overtures; the Introduction and Allegro, Op. 47; the two symphonies; the two concertos; the "symphonic study" *Falstaff*. This is the body of music by which (with *Gerontius*) Elgar stands or falls. He had swum out from the cosy, provincial backwater into the strong main current of world art. To his contemporaries it was so remarkable to see him there at all—there were no true precedents in British music for the symphonies and concertos—that one can hardly be surprised at the number of enthusiasts, not only English ones, who lost their heads.

That Elgar was overpraised in his lifetime hardly anyone would deny today. This in itself suggests that he belongs too much to a period and that he lacks depths which it takes time to explore. I believe both implications are true. The first weakness will be no

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POMP AND POETRY

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longer harmful when the Edwardian age is as remote as the age of rococo; the second entails the recognition that one doesn't want to live with Elgar. But we must guard against the undervaluation which is now fashionable. If one doesn't want to live with him, as one does with (say) Brahms, the first meeting can still be (I am told) an overwhelming experience. And one does quite often want to go back to him for the sake of the exquisite things one finds in him and him alone. Those things tend to be all of a certain kind — here I can speak only for myself, though I know I am by no means alone in my feelings — the kind I have described in commenting on *Gerontius* and the Variations: the quiet and the gentle things. When Elgar the man was boisterous, the boisterousness was half genuine (a hangover of immaturity), half a mask assumed to conceal the too sensitive tenderness that was innate.

So it is with his music. The romantic *Sturm und Drang*, the chromatic striving and yearning quite as much as the patriotic swagger, make me feel uncomfortable; the quiet diatonic poetry goes right home and there is nothing else in all music quite like it. I would give the whole of the rest of the Violin Concerto for the utterly simple opening bars of the slow movement and the brooding, commenting entry of the soloist. So with the two dream interludes of *Falstaff*, a work which the true Elgarians value very highly but which seems to me a total failure *except for those two wonderful glimpses of pure poetry*. The same poetry shines out clearly from many pages of *Enigma* (most characteristically in the *Ysobel* variations), from the Introduction and Allegro, sometimes more soberly as in the first movement of the Cello Concerto, sometimes half playfully as in the *piacevole* movement of the String Quartet. In such passages Elgar seems to forget his audience, the people with whom he has to communicate and whom he wants to convince and impress, and talk only to himself. All too soon he wakes from his daydream, but the dream pursues him and the sympathetic listener learns to follow the dream, the tender lyrical thread, through all the welter of rhetoric and of overstrained emotion.

AUDIO FORUM

SIR:

Recently I have been looking around for a tape recorder, and on comparing the specifications of different products, I am astonished to find that some machines in the lowest price brackets outperform some of much higher price. Obviously, the specifications do not seem to tell the whole story.

I inquired about some recorders at nearby dealers; some of them don't seem to know what they are talking about, their demonstrations tell me only how the recorders sound, and they will not tell me anything about the mechanical durability of competing recorders.

There are also some recorders that are not stocked by the dealers I have visited. Can you suggest any way in which one may choose a good recorder from published specifications?

Randolph Kwei
New Haven, Conn.

If the published specifications on a tape recorder are complete, and do not omit such things as decibel limits for frequency response, speed variation, signal-to-noise ratio, and distortion at full recording level, you will be fairly safe in purchasing from specifications any recorder which appears to meet your requirements in other respects.

As for long-term durability, this is something that cannot be readily established, although it usually accounts for the difference in price between recorders having comparable performance specifications.

SIR:

I have noticed that some of the highest-quality power amplifiers have screwdriver adjustments for balancing the output tubes and the driver stages.

Precisely what is the purpose of these adjustments? Is output tube balance so important that it should be set to the nth degree of accuracy, or are these balancing controls just frills to make the amplifiers appear more attractive to compulsive knob-twisters?

A. H. Parks
Des Moines, Iowa

The effectiveness of a push-pull output stage in suppressing distortion depends to a great extent on the signal balance between the two halves of the circuit. The signal voltage applied to both output tubes should be identical, and these tubes should be drawing the same amount of current and introducing the same amount of amplification.

The driver balance controls equalize the voltages being fed to the output tubes, and the output balance control equalizes the current through them (or adjusts their relative gain) for minimum distortion. These controls are not frills for the gadget-minded; they are useful in reducing distortion to the lowest level of which an amplifier is capable.

SIR:

I have what seems to be a problem of conflicting room acoustics requirements.

As advised by several authorities, I had been using my speaker system at the end of a large rectangular living room having rather live, bright acoustics. Now I have converted to stereophonic tape, and I find that this room is totally unsatisfactory. When I sit right in front of the speakers, the stereo effect and the mid-speaker fill-in seem fine, but the room garbles the sound as soon as I move farther away, so I lose both the directionality and the realism of stereo playback. In my usual listening position, at the opposite end of the room, I can barely tell the difference between monaural sound piped through both speakers and stereophonic sound. On the other hand, when I sit close to the system on monaural playback, the sound seems constricted and thin.

Do you have any suggestions, other than keeping two chairs handy, one for stereo listening and one for monaural?

Erlin M. Hagarty
Philadelphia, Pa.

Since the cost and the potential quality of stereophonic sound are higher than that of monaural sound, it would seem advisable to favor your stereo playback.

Either move your listening position closer to the speakers or add a large carpet, drapes, and some padded furniture to deaden the room acoustics. The latter would probably be the best solution, since you could then sit far enough from the speakers to obtain good blending on monaural program material, while the deadened room acoustics would much improve the stereophonic reproduction.

If your speaker systems consist of direct radiator speakers (rather than incorporating compression horn-loaded drivers), you may well get best results with them located at one side of the room rather than at the end. The side

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AUDIO FORUM

Continued from page 105

location will tend to excite fewer of the room resonances and will minimize the effects of room acoustics, and the closer seating will give the effect of listening "through" the speakers rather than to them. However, close seating is not usually recommended for speaker systems incorporating nonidentical driver units, since it tends to reduce the blending between the drivers.

SIR:

Your recent article on biamplification [Roy F. Allison, "Why Biamplify?," Nov. 1956] left one question in my mind. If an electronic crossover is set to the lower ranges (100, 200, or 400 cycles), is there any danger of blowing out the high frequency driver?

I am worried about meddlesome fingers at the crossover controls.

William T. Price
Burlingame, Calif.

A tweeter or midrange speaker should never be used at a crossover frequency lower than that recommended by its manufacturer. A lower crossover will tend to limit the tweeter's power-handling ability, and may do it permanent damage.

Your electronic crossover should be set to the recommended values and then placed in an inaccessible spot. Otherwise, the knobs should be removed from the crossover controls.

SIR:

I would like a clear, concise, understandable explanation of impedance. Will you please answer the following questions: What is impedance? What is the difference between impedance and resistance? (Both are rated in ohms, I notice.) What is the difference between impedance and reactance? (I notice that both of *these* are rated in ohms, too.)

Can you help me in my confusion?

William P. Simpson
Albany, N. Y.

The resistance *(in ohms) of an electrical conductor is an expression of the opposition it offers to the passage of an electrical current. A resistor in an electrical circuit introduces the same amount of opposition to DC or AC: it passes all alternating frequencies with the same degree of facility as it passes DC.*

The reactance *of an electrical conductor is an expression of the resistance (in ohms) that it offers to the passage of alternating current,* regardless *of its effect on DC. DC resistance is not in-*

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volved in reactance ratings, even though it may be present. When DC resistance is considered as well, the resulting expression is one of impedance.

The impedance of an electrical conductor is an expression (in ohms) of the combined effects of resistance and reactance in the circuit. It is defined as the root-mean-square of the circuit's resistive and reactive values.

Any circuit containing a reactive component (a capacitor or inductor) will exhibit varying opposition to different frequencies, as distinguished from resistive circuits, which are not frequency-selective.

SIR:

I wish to add a tweeter and a crossover unit to my single wide-range speaker. The amplifier has an 8-ohm output impedance, and is connected to the 8-ohm tap on the speaker. (The speaker is of a type which provides a choice of 4, 8, or 16 ohms).

The tweeter I would like to add is rated at 15 ohms. By wiring the speakers in parallel, with 15 ohms on the tweeter and using the 16-ohm tap on the woofer, the circuit would seem to result in close to an 8-ohm match for the amplifier. But the crossover unit has 15-ohm input and output impedance. Would using this crossover unit adversely affect the quality of the sound? What would be the impedance of the circuit after the unit is installed?

Can a T-pad or L-pad be used to balance the level of sound between the tweeter and woofer? I have seen these pad controls listed in a parts catalogue, but it did not say that they could be used for this purpose.

M. G. Hango
Handel
Sask., Canada

Since the speakers in a two-way system are carrying different parts of the audible spectrum, the total impedance at a given frequency will be the same as that of each speaker by itself. Connect to your woofer's 16-ohm terminals, add the tweeter and network, and connect the system to the amplifier's 16-ohm terminals.

A T-pad may be installed between the high-pass filter capacitor and the tweeter. Its resistance should be the same as the tweeter's rated impedance.

SIR:

I am no expert in the field of electronic engineering, nor do I claim extraordinary knowledge in the field of psychology. I have only this to say

from observation: recorded sound, either monaural, binaural, stereophonic or what have you, is at best still only *reproduction* of an original source. The very fact that the performer is not actually present constitutes what seems to me an insurmountable obstacle, no matter how excellent may be the high-fidelity reproducing system.

What this means, in essence, is that we cannot simply substitute a loudspeaker, amplifier, and pickup for the actual presence of twenty to a hundred musicians and scores of listeners, and neither can any amount of sonic perfection replace the other sensations of which we are aware when attending a concert. I have spent a great deal of money and even more time to get realism from reproduced sound, but I have come to the conclusion that it is beyond the reach of anyone as long as the sound is "canned." The source must be real if the sound is to be real. I am sure others must find this to be the case.

Irwin B. Pollner
Passaic, N. J.

True, it is not possible to re-create via high fidelity all of the sensations that contribute to one's enjoyment of an evening at a concert, but neither is this high fidelity's intent.

The best that can be done with sound alone is to create the illusion *of a live performance, but even where this is not fully successful, a reasonable semblance of the real thing is enough to provide musical enjoyment for people who cannot attend live performances. High fidelity is not, however, intended to replace live concerts for those who are within easy reach of the real thing. If it did, there might cease to be orchestras to record, and we would end up listening to electronically produced music, which is no fidelity at all.*

SIR:
I plan to expand my present system to include stereophonic playback facilities, and would like to ask your advice before I make my purchases.

Will I need a second complete high-fidelity system for stereo, or will just a second loudspeaker system suffice?

Since I cannot at this time afford a good tape recorder, would you advise that I purchase one of the dual pickup arms for playing stereophonic records?

What is the difference between listening to a binaural broadcast and listening to a regular broadcast over FM, playing through two loudspeaker systems? Why are binaural broadcasts transmitted over FM and AM, if FM is the better sonic medium? Why not both over FM?

Edgar E. Thompson
Hicksville, N. Y.

For stereophonic reproduction, you will need two totally independent amplifier and loudspeaker channels, which in your case means adding a second speaker and a second power amplifier.

Since nearly all stereophonic recordings are currently released on tape, you should wait until you can afford to purchase a stereophonic tape player or a combination recorder and playback unit. If the tape player contains its own playback preamplifiers, your entire stereo system can then consist of the tape player, two power amplifiers, and two loudspeaker systems. The loudspeakers should preferably be identical, although good results can be obtained with one speaker having full bass response and the second one having restricted bass range but the same over-all balance.

The essential difference between stereophonic sound and "multi-channel" monaural sound is that the former originates with two separate microphones, spaced several feet apart. These two sources are then fed through a pair of isolated channels, and are reproduced through a pair of widely spaced loudspeakers. An FM-AM radio station normally uses a single microphone to feed both transmitting media, so it is not possible to get true stereophonic sound by simultaneously reproducing both the AM and FM signals through separate channels. Both channels would be originating from the same point in the studio.

AM and FM are used for stereophonic broadcasts because it is common for a single radio station to transmit its regular programs via both media, so two independent channels are readily available. There are not, however, any stations that we know of that have been assigned two different commercial frequencies on the FM band, so to maintain the necessary isolation between stereo channels, they must use FM for one channel and AM for the other.

SIR:
To what extent does a crossover net-

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work affect the loudspeaker damping imposed by an amplifier?

My amplifier has a damping factor of 40, which I understand is quite high, and I would like to know how much of this will be sacrificed by using a loudspeaker crossover network.

Tom A. Smith
Grosse Pointe Farms, Mich.

Inserting a divider network between an amplifier and its loudspeaker tends to reduce the effective damping imposed on the speaker. This is because the choke coil inserted in series with the woofer adds some DC resistance to the speaker circuit, slightly raising the effective source resistance as seen by the speaker.

A power amplifier incorporating a large amount of inverse feedback imposes considerable damping on the loudspeaker, because any voltage that is developed by spurious speaker cone motion is automatically cancelled out when the feedback reapplies it to the speaker as an opposing voltage. The process that causes a speaker cone to move when voltage is applied to its voice coil works equally well in the opposite direction, so if the cone has any tendency to move out of synchronism with the applied voltage, the spurious motion will generate impulses that were not present in the original signal. In counteracting these, the amplifier's feedback circuit acts as a short circuit for these unwanted impulses — it damps them out. And the extent to which the amplifier short-circuits these spurious voltages is the measure of its damping factor.

The damping factor of an amplifier is expressed as the ratio between its nominal output impedance and its effective source impedance from that particular output tap. For instance an amplifier which has an effective source impedance of 1/5 ohm at its 8-ohm output tap would be said to have a damping factor of 40. However, if an inductance connected in series with the speaker leads introduces a resistance of, say, 4/5 ohms, this would make the total source impedance equal to 1 ohm. The damping factor would then be 8.

This loss of damping can be minimized by using a very low-resistance woofer choke or by using an electronic crossover in a biamplifier system.

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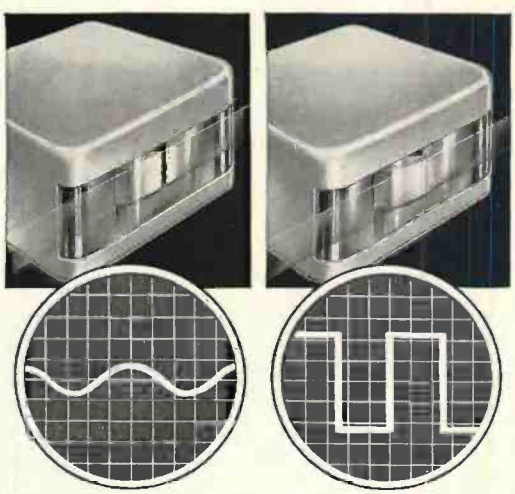

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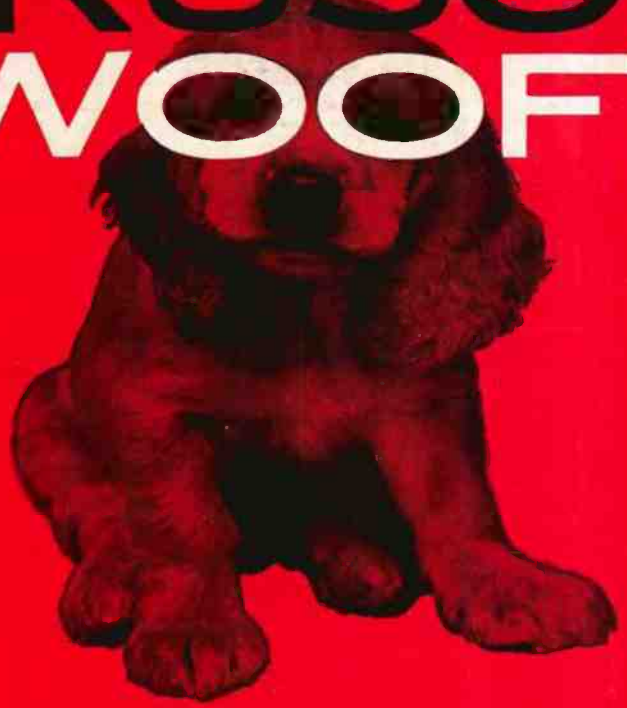

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